Portland State Business Minor
2022 Exit Survey Report

Summary

   In May of 2022 the Business Minor Marketing team created a Qualdrics survey with the intent to gather feedback and data from students who had just completed program. The survey was set to identify the different majors and minors that students were enrolled in, as well as their satisfaction, and any changes they would make to curriculum or modalities. This is valuable feedback that will help the school of business improve their class structure, and improve positive student experiences. The survey was sent to 127 students via email, 117 of those emails were received. Out of the recipients, 43 started the survey, 40 completed the first few questions, and 37 completed it, giving a 32% response rate.

Majors and Minors

   The majority of the students (33) reported that they were a Business Administration Minor (BAM). There were 7 students who reported being a Business Minor in Advertising Management, 6 for Graphic Design (ADMM), and 1 for Communication (ADCM). This is relatively similar to our findings from 2021, with a slight increase in ADMM, and decrease in ADCM.

   A total of 9 majors were reported by the participants, with 13 of the 40 identifying with a major not listed. Of the majors specified, Communication, Psychology, and Health Studies were the most represented; with 7, 5, and 4 students respectively. Having Communication as the most represented is no surprised. However, it is surprising that there were no Graphic Design students in our survey.

Why Students Chose the Business Minor

   There were 26 students who wanted *"To improve job prospects upon graduation"*, very similar to our findings from 2021. Students reported *"I want to run my own business", "I am interested in learning about business", "To double dip with the Design Thinking/Innovation/Entrepreneurship cluster"*, and "To supplement my major" as the other most important factors, with response rates all being within 12-14 people. Emphasis on double dipping and starting a business seems to be down from the previous year, which is a little surprising given our efforts.

Favorite Parts of the Program

   There were 23 students who identified *"The skills that I learned in the program"* as their favorite part of the program. Another popular answer was *"The way the program supplemented my major"* with 17 responses. The *"course schedule"* had a low response rate of only 5 students, but that is admittedly a somewhat undifferentiating part of our program. It's encouraging to see students continue to find value and education from the program.

Least Favorite Parts of the Program

   Similar to previous years, the #1 complaint was identified as *"I did not make any meaningful connections within the business community"* with 13 responses; the good news is this number is

significantly down from previous years. A close second was students noting how *"The program didn't let me specialize towards my major"* with 12 responses. This has also been an area we've been thinking about giving more attention to, so seeing this feedback is helpful moving forward. Complaints regarding how *"Group projects did not help my learning"* are down since last year, with only 8 students reporting this as a problem. As we return more and more towards in person education, we expect those numbers to continue to drop.

Desired Changes for the Program

Desired changes were consistent with the above information; students noted wanting to make *"More connections with the Portland Business Community"* with 17 responses. While those numbers are also down from last year's responses, this is still an area we need to make continued efforts in; our information channels need to improve so that students know what connections are available to them. Similarly, the second most popular answer was wanting *"Additional program options for different focus areas"* with 15 responses. Exploring flexible class options, with more electives, could be an option.

*Other comments:

"Adding an option to learn graphic design"

"Higher focus on how to find a job in the field" This could be integrated into our efforts to educate students on the resources and connections available to them.

What modalities would you like to see more of?

Since the covid-19 pandemic, there has been a bigger emphasis on the modalities that classes offer. Students reported wanting more options for *"Attend Anywhere"* with 15 responses, and *"On Campus"* with 12 responses. Hybrid and other remote modalities got moderate response rates, with *one or two week condensed* courses only receiving 3 responses. Importantly, 12 students reported being happy with the current structure. These findings suggest that students still want the flexibility that was expected during the pandemic, but that a continued return to in-person learning is needed.

What surprised you about the program?

"How quick it was"

"The knowledge of the professors because of professional experience"

"How few times the classes were offered"

"How you can learn so much in minor courses like this one"

In addition to modalities, class times are also a concern for students. There is probably less wiggle room here, given enrollment and the need to fill individual classes; still, this is an area we can try to revisit when scheduling classes.

It's encouraging to see students continue to praise the faculty and overall education. This has been a recurring theme from feedback. The professors are an asset and that is something we must continue to be vigilant with in our marketing efforts.

Additional questions

The business minor program has provided value to me:

Strongly agree: 19
Somewhat agree: 19
Neither agree nor disagree: 0
Somewhat disagree: 0
Strongly disagree: 0

The business minor has made me more marketable and competitive with potential employers:

Strongly agree: 14
Somewhat agree: 17
Neither agree nor disagree: 6
Somewhat disagree: 1
Strongly disagree: 0

The skills I learned in the business minor have helped me get a job or internship:

Strongly agree: 5
Somewhat agree: 12
Neither agree nor disagree: 14
Somewhat disagree: 6
Strongly disagree: 1

I would recommend the business minor program to other students:

Strongly agree: 16
Somewhat agree: 17
Neither agree nor disagree: 4
Somewhat disagree: 1
Strongly disagree: 0

With the exception of one or two students, these responses are very encouraging. The date here will give credibility to our value statement, and aid in marketing efforts.

A decent amount of students reported not being able to use their business skills towards a job or internship, with 20 total responses. This is somewhat concerning at face value. However many students complete the minor before graduating, and of those graduating, many haven't started their job search yet. This should be viewed as more of a "what are we doing right and how do we get more students to get the job search going sooner".

All that said, we could incorporate the marketability of a student and future employee into our broader class offerings in the future. Electives could be offered that focus on the individual, how to market or branding oneself to potential employers.

Which of the following additional skills would you have been interested in learning more about?

Students identified a vast array of interests. Some of the notable one's were *"Data analytics"* with 6 responses, and *"project management"* with 7 responses. It's good to know the data analytics are a topic of interest because it fits well into the business curriculum, and it could easily be adopted into the program. Project management would also be appropriate for the curriculum. One could argue that students already get a good amount of project management experience with group projects, but there is not much direction given for how to manage a group. Some thrive better in independent settings, like the one we offer, but others might prefer more direction.

Additional comments

"I am SO happy I chose to add an Advertising Minor to my degree! It has helped prepare me for an advertising or marketing career more than I could have ever imagined!"

"Group projects totally make or break a class! I had some awesome term-long group projects, but sometimes I was paired with less-than-engaged classmates and that kinda left me going "ugh, I have to go to marketing", or would leave me stressed out knowing that my final grade depended on these people, but not wanting to rat them out due to student solidarity."

It's good to see the smaller minors having an impact on students, given our bread and butter is the Business Administration Minor.

Group work is certainly a reoccurring theme in our program. While it is definitely a marketable advantage, there are those who still don't love it. The comments presented here tie directly back into the comments for a project management option. A lot of the nuances of handling group work could be fine tuned with more attention to project management - this would be beneficial for those that feel unequipped.

Final Thoughts

The feedback from our exit survey was generally positive, with 100% of the students indicating the program provided value, and 87% saying they would recommend the program to others. They also reported getting valuable skills. Double dipping still seems to be a driving force for many to enroll, but we need to drive that message harder to keep those numbers up.

Similar to past years, a connection to the Portland business community was a point of emphasis, fixing this needs to be a priority for us, as it seems to be the most reoccurring comment year after year.

We should also entertain the idea of increasing our class options to possibly offer more electives. This would be particularly applicable to BAM, which currently has no electives. This could give students more options to customize their education. Notably, offering project management could potentially help improve the students experience with group projects.

Lastly, our ability to change modalities needs to be fluid. As people readjust to post covid life, modalities will change for some, and remain remote for others.