THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

Working Group on Outcome-Based Education

Projects on Promoting Outcome-Based Education
2010-12
Application for OBE Funding

PART I: General Information

1. Title

Building an improved integration and mapping of OBE objectives and communication competency into assessment of students' content subject assignments.

2. Name(s) of Applicant(s)

Project Leader

Name	Dept	Post	Groupwise	Ext.
Mr. Johan de Rooy	AF	Teaching Fellow	afderooy@inet.polyu.edu.hk	7076

Team Member(s)

Name	Dept	Post	Groupwise	Ext
Dr. Sunny Sun	AF	Assistant Professor	afsunny@inet.polyu.edu.hk	4056
Dr. Susana Yuen	AF	Associate Professor	afsyuen@inet.polyu.edu.hk	7059
Dr. Janet Yong	AF	Senior Teaching Fellow	afjanet@inet.polyu.edu.hk	3455

3. Total funding requested

HK$ _____

4. Expected duration of project: _____16_____ months

Proposed commencement date: March 2011

Expected completion date: June 2012

PART II: DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

1. Project objectives and significance

(What are your objectives in initiating this project? How does it align with the goals and targets of the University, your faculty/ school or your department in implementing OBE?)

The goal of this proposal is to address the instructing and learning challenges of merging and mapping OBE content competencies and English communication skills into assessment tasks. This proposal seeks to take this outcome to the next level by innovatively, collaboratively and cooperatively work with a team of course coordinators/instructors, specialists in English instruction, Faculty with experience in designing assessment tasks and markers to build assessment exercises and experiences which are engaging, varied and thoughtful and mapped and embedded into the OBE's of identified courses.

Succinctly, the proposal will design a process for innovative mapping and merging of OBE skills and English communication skills into courses. Once a prototype model for this integration has been executed successfully and evaluated accordingly, the next step would be to roll it out into other courses. If OBE skills and English communication proficiency matter, then evaluating them fairly, consistently, regularly, continuously and explicitly will improve learned outcomes. This pilot project will build a methodology to achieve this goal for all AF courses. By careful planning and design, achieving this objective will be improved.

This means that on the completion of the BBA programmes, the learning outcomes expect the students to be able to communicate in writing and speaking in English at a level of effectiveness sufficient for a business and professional presentation will be improved.

Another closely related aspect of this proposal is to improve the integration, coordination and utilization of English language resources into the assessment process. One feature of students is that their learning behaviours are closely related to rewards (grades and GPA). English competencies need to be constructively incentivized. Students will take in optional English classes if they can see a connection between these activities and grades. The deliberate involvement of experts in English instruction is to allow them to design workshops which will ex ante focus on the English skill aspects of the specific assessment assignments. For example, if the students are told that they must critique specific articles; English experts can use this as permission to design a series of classes on critiquing articles. With the explicit approval of the course leaders involved, similar or related articles could be used as instructional platforms to help the students improve their skills and learned outcomes before the assignments are due.

Implementation of the project will enable both the University and FB to meet the major objectives listed below. It is expected that the experience and knowledge derived will allow the authorities to better plan for the implementation of a prototype model of this integration with an English language provision in the four-year undergraduate programme.

The major project objectives are to:

i. Design assessment exercises which are engaging and varied with the cooperation of a team of course coordinators/instructors and specialists in English instruction.

ii. Develop a set of outcome based assessment criteria and descriptors and suggested answer keys to align with FB's four BBA Programme outcomes that relate to the skills and language needed for the assessment referred to in (iii) below.

iii. The deliberate involvement of experts in English instruction is to allow them to design authentic workshop tasks which will ex ante focus on the English skill aspects of the specific assessment assignments so that the ex poste results will be more valid in their language component.

iv. Provide formative feedback to students with the aim of helping them to achieve the Programme learning outcomes.

v. Provide summative feedback to FB regarding the overall achievement of the Programme learning outcomes.

vi. Validate alignment of FB Programme outcomes relating to English communication competency.

vii. To sequence assessment tasks to they are more frequent and spaced out throughout the semester rather than all near the end of the term.

The ultimate aim is to ensure that the majority of the BBA students achieve the FB's relevant Programme objectives as outlined in the University's:

I. Strategic Objective 1.1: Academic departments and relevant centres to review and strengthen curricula, teaching and assessment methods, and to ensure the inclusion of components that would help students to attain the qualities listed in the objective.

II. Role Statement: Provision of high value-added education, with a balanced approach leading to the development of all-round students with professional competence.

2. Target users:

(Who are the intended users of the deliverables of the project?) If the target users are students, complete the table below:

Programme subject code	Programme/subject title	Credit units	Mode of study (see key below)	Approx. Student intake quota per year	Session 2011/12-
AF 2108	**Common Core Course** Financial Accounting	3	1, 2, 3	800	Semester 1
AF 2110	**Common Core Course** Managerial Accounting I	3	1, 2, 3, 4	800	Semester 2

Key: 1. BBA – Accountancy (total - 4)

2. BBA – Accounting and Finance (total – 4)

3. BBA – Financial Services (total – 4)

4. BBA – Accountancy Mixed Mode (total – 3)

3

The evaluation of the results is crucial. Using SFQ, instructor feedback, marker feedback and observation, refinement to the pilot projects will be made. The second semester course will have the advantage of learning from the first semester; continuous improvement should allow for a tried and tested process to emerge.

3. Outcomes and deliverables

(a) Major outcomes and deliverables

(What will be the major outcomes and deliverables of the project?)

This pilot project will build a model for implementing improved mapping of OBE skills and English competencies into other courses. This project seeks to make OBE/English more embedded and holistic in course design and assessment. The assessment process and grading of assignments will be more integrated, carefully designed and feedback timely so that students will be more likely to commit to improving their English competencies. Thus, critical to achieving this outcome is the careful design and consideration of the specific assessment requirement and the marking key to be used. The pilot will also identify challenges and modifications to the assessment mapping exercise which must be remedied before this model is used in other courses.

Another outcome will be to stagger the assessment tasks over the semester. Too often the submissions are due near, or at the end of the semester, which challenges the feedback loop, student work load management, marking time constraints and the effectiveness of the assessment exercise. Inversely, marker time resources are under-utilized early in the semester. What is envisioned is scheduling assessment assignment over the term, with some early on, midway and towards the end of the course. Careful attention must be given to scheduling of assignments relative to other courses, but the deliberate attempt to schedule some earlier on can only make life better. And by making the tasks shorter, the overwhelming nature of the homework can be reduced.

	Major outcomes and deliverables with descriptions
(a)	Design and build a battery/menu of smaller assessment tasks to be assigned more frequently and which will provide a quicker and timelier feedback.
(b)	Frame questions and tasks using specific terms and format and develop marking rubrics and answer key for content, technical and English skills.
(c)	Test and refine prototypes of the style and design of assessment tasks for piloted courses.
(d)	Offer subject specialist, English language marker and instructor assistance.
(e)	Ensure better balance of student (and marker) work load as more assessment tasks are moved to earlier weeks of the semester.
(f)	Undertake collaboration between the subject matter and English experts in the design of assessment tasks by providing tailored and integrated workshops on the English skill sets implicit in the assessment tasks.
(g)	Provide detailed formative feedback to students and summative feedback regarding faculty-wide achievement of BBA program outcomes regarding their performance in subject, technical and language skills in the piloted courses.
(h)	Stimulate students for creative thinking, self-appraisal, reflective thinking and learning to learn.

Please insert rows in the table if more space is required for additional information.

(b) Plan for developing and piloting / implementing the deliverables

(Detail the plan and procedures that you will adopt to develop and pilot/ implement the outcomes and deliverables. Also specify the dates of the pilot / implementation period)

March-June 2011	Plan for developing the assessments tasks: 1. Meet with course instructors and course leaders to plan the syllabi for the selected courses to be piloted in Semesters 1 and 2. 2. Write an inventory of assessment tasks which include an English component. 3. Build assessment tasks and marking rubrics for Semester 1 course 4. Establish marking rubric for content, technical and English skills, and answer key.
July-August 2011	1. Train markers on how to mark assignments and experiment with marking rubrics. 2. Build English instruction workshop materials to support the identified assessment task.
Semester 1: September-December 2011	Plan for Round 1 of implementation of the assessments: 1. Course instructors deliver lectures and give assignments needed for successful achievement of the subjects, and ultimately program objectives. 2. Assess students' content and English in the selected assessments and provide students with individual formative feedback aimed at assessing them to achieve the program outcomes more effectively. 3. Deliver the English instruction workshops. 4. Build assessment tasks, marking rubrics, English workshops for Semester 2. Use results and feedback from first phase to revise accordingly. 5. Design and complete processes and methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness of the first phase of the pilot program
Semester 2: January-April 2012	Plan for Round 2 of implementation of the assessments: 1. Course instructors deliver lectures and give assignments needed for successful achievement of the subjects, and ultimately program objectives. 2. Assess students' content and English in the selected assessments and provide students with individual formative feedback aimed at assessing them to achieve the program outcomes more effectively. 3. Deliver the English instruction workshops. 4. Complete round 2 of evaluation of the pilot program.
May-June 2012	Provide summative feedback to AF in order for the school to better assess how effective the selected BBA cohort has achieved this program's outcome (experimental group) compared with those from courses that are not included in this pilot program (control group).

Planned pilot / implementation period of the deliverables:
Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy):   March 2011
End Date (dd/mm/yyyy):   June 2012

4. **Dissemination and sharing plan**

   (How are you going to disseminate and share the outcomes and deliverables of your project?)

   This pilot program intends to disseminate the project, its outcomes and deliverables and its impact and values to three main audiences:

   (a) Within AF, there will be reporting and sharing meetings not only with the staff members involved in the development and teaching of the proposed subjects in this pilot study, but also with those involved in the development of other programs and subjects where some degree of embedded assessment is perceived as being potentially valuable and practical.

   (b) Within the group of pilot team members and lecturers involved, there will be review meetings to discuss problems (if any), revisions to be made, and progress of the pilot program.

   (c) Results of this pilot project could be presented at a local or international seminar/ conference.

5. **Evaluation plan**

   (How do you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, particularly its impact on the implementation of OBE in PolyU?)

   For the purpose of monitoring the quality of funded projects, an evaluation plan with clear evaluation objectives, appropriate methodologies and specific timeline must be included in the proposal.

   (a) The impact on student achievement of learning outcomes will be measured using their feedback in the SFQ with regards the extent to which they felt the more guided assessment tasks benefitted them.

   (b) The impact of the formative feedback provided to each student will be measured by a simple survey and/or focus group.

   (c) The impact on PolyU and the wider community will be evaluated in terms of response to the dissemination outlined in Section 4.

6. **Impact:**

   This pilot study aims to measure student achievement of programme level outcomes related to a generic competence and, in so doing, supports the University's targets for fully implementing an outcome-based approach to teaching, learning and testing. In particular, the measuring criteria and assessment approaches will be shared among other FB courses such as Management and Marketing and Maritime Studies and Logistics, as well as other faculty programmes as examples of good practice.

   Apart from the immediate impact in terms of refining alignment of assessment criteria with course subjects in achieving outcomes, this project has the potential to act as a model for the integration of English language assessment into a range of programmes across the university.
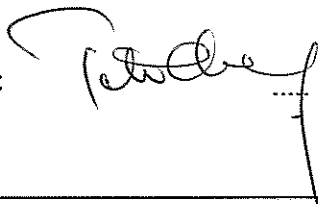
PART III: BUDGET OF PROPOSAL

Project Leader:

Jolly   Jolan deRoy

January 19th, 2011

PART IV: ENDORSEMENT

Endorsement by Head of Department (Host Department of the project leader):

Comments on the proposal:

Name: _Dr Peter Cheng_   Signature: _(signature)_   ·Date: _Jan 19, 2011_
         (in block letters)

Endorsement by Chair of F/SLTC (Host Faculty/School of the project leader):

Comments on the proposal:

Name: _____   Signature: _____   ....   Date: _____
         (in block letters)

Endorsement by Dean of Faculty/Director of School (Host Faculty/ School of the project leader):

and Chair of FLTC

1. Comments on the proposal:

   English competence is one of the Faculty's key concerns, which this project will address

2. Priority of the proposal (if there is more than 1 submission from the Faculty/School): # 1.

Name: _H DAVIES_   Signature: _(signature)_   Date: _19 Jan 2011_
         (in block letters)