

Brief Description of BA130 Course Development

The BA130 Comprehensive Skill Test has been designed following the standards of the Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) Certification Examination for MS Office 2000. The skill expectation covered approximately 70% of the skill list for the certification examination. The list of skill expectation for BA130 has been clearly stated in a BA130 Unified Syllabus, which has been issued to every student in every BA130 course section since 2000.

BA230 was designed as a companion course that covered some of the intermediate level skill, thus completing the preparation of students for the MOUS certification examination. However, BA230 was eliminated as a requirement in the new BBA degree program, creating a gap in the IT skill preparing for students. However, BA130 was considered adequate preparation for students in the Micronesia region.

Delivery of BA130 was a challenge due to the inadequate mathematics background of students, and lack of prior computer usage experience. Much instructional time was devoted to the remedial training of students for high school level of skills. The systematic raising of course prerequisites helped to alleviate the situation, and the widespread availability of computers in the region permitted more vigorous training since the Fall semester of 2006.

A systematic review of course contents was performed every 15 – 20 months, with systematic upgrade of training materials, and skill expectation. Student performances were closely monitored with input from all instructors before raising the bar on skill expectation. Skills that most students have mastered before entering the course were systematically phased out. Operation Systems and PowerPoint skills have been phased out to shift instructional time to more advanced application software skills. However, students were still assessed on these skill sets through exercises and minor quiz.

Problem-based learning and Learner-centered Education were some key improvements to BA130, with careful attention paid to the learning materials and learning environment. We are confident that we are making progress towards student-led learning, and outcome-based learning assessment. Students are evaluated more on their abilities, and less on the time they spent in the classroom, with evidence of creativity as learning outcomes.

More information is available at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/bibasbpa/>