

## Designing a World-class Undergraduate Transportation and Logistics Program with Benchmarking

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### **ABSTRACT**

The need to have a world-class undergraduate business program comes from two areas of requirements: AACSB assurance of learning and the ever-changing business environment. AACSB views student learning as the central activity of higher education (AACSB.edu, 2008) and elects assurance of learning standards to evaluate how well the school accomplishes the educational aims at the core of its activities. However, each higher education institute selects these core activities differently. The changing business environment creates employers that look for and demand more complex skill-sets from existing employees as well as new hires. However, each higher educational institute defines these core curriculum activities differently and the sought-after employee skill-sets are widely varied among different industries and employers.

To solve these problems, we will use benchmarking to identify best practice in our nation’s best undergraduate transportation and logistics programs. To do this, we first identify the top 25 universities that offer undergraduate programs in the areas of either transportation, logistics, or supply chain management; next, we look at these 25 programs by analyzing four areas of emphasis or orientation: quantitative methods, technology, core areas, and skill sets/customer orientation. We then analyze best practice by articulating a set of core values that are central to a modern undergraduate transportation/logistics program.

Benchmarking is a technique used by organizations to compare their processes to their peers’ best practices. In recent years, educators and researchers have used this method to understand best practice in curriculum and program development (Dunn et al., 2007; Gonzalez et al., 2008). We think this research will benefit our own institution as transportation is a fast-growing field in our region; it will also benefit other institutions in terms of understanding best practice in undergraduate transportation and logistics programs and potential employers who look for these complex skill-sets from employees.