

## **What spreadsheet and database skills do business students need?**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Principles of Information Systems course taught at a medium-sized Midwest University consists of Information Systems conceptual material plus Microsoft Excel and Access skills that the Information Systems faculty feel are most important to business students from all business disciplines. These skills range from using basic mathematic functions and formulas to complex “what-if” statements for Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and from simple tables of database construction to queries, forms, and reports for Microsoft Access. However, aside from a few comments from faculty teaching in accounting, economics, management, finance, or marketing, it is not known specifically what specific skills that faculty from other majors consider important for successful completion of their programs.

A survey consisting of 18 spreadsheet and database cases was sent to 86 business faculty requesting that they score each case as to its importance in their specific major by selecting the appropriate block on a Likert scale ranging from “not very important” to “very important” for each of all 18 cases. The cases range from using basic spreadsheet and database skills to ones using complex formulas and functions. The Information Systems faculty will then take the top six scored cases from Excel and the top four scored cases from Access and teach this in all Principles of Information Systems courses. Aggregate grades will then be taken in subsequent semesters to validate the change in the way the cases are selected for teaching.