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This document provides background information about efforts to make historical course data accessible to researchers, as well as FAQs for specific datasets. Click the hyperlinked text below to navigate directly to each section.

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Introduction

HBS course outlines typically include, at minimum, the course name and a list of all cases used in the course, including those from other business schools. Please note that while all cases are listed, only HBS-authored cases are documented in this project. For the time period covered by the outlines, all cases are retired; although not all cases are included in the HBS Retired Case Collection.

Course outlines might also contain information about the course instructor(s) and/or the semester in which it was taught. Rarely do they contain detailed descriptions of the course or individual cases. Course outlines are organized by academic year and program.

The Collection contains a mix of typed and handwritten outlines, including typed outlines with handwritten additions. Data was transcribed as it appears in the digitized collection, including incomplete case and instructor information. Every effort was made to transcribe as much data as possible, but image quality (too dark or light) and legibility issues (faint type or handwriting) occasionally resulted in data that could not be transcribed.

Once transcription was completed, the information was quality controlled:

- Retired case inventories were searched for missing case numbers and case names. If a case could not be confirmed as an HBS case, it was deleted from the dataset. If a case had both a case number and a case name, it was left as is; these cases were not searched in the retired case inventories.
- When just the instructor's last name was listed in the outlines, faculty information in the course catalogs dataset was searched to determine their full name.
- Certain data elements were standardized:
    - Casebook citations
    - MBA course names, where the name in the course outlines was matched to the preferred name in either the course catalogs (for outlines before 1974-1975) or the MBA program brochures (for outlines from 1974-1975 and later)

Hyperlinks were added to the HOLLIS or Internet Archive record for each casebook listed in the course outlines.

General FAQs: Course Outlines

Q: *What is the time period for the Course Outlines dataset?*

A: The data in these datasets originated from the HBS Course Outlines Collection for academic years 1932-1933 through 1978-1979.

Q: *What information is not contained in this dataset?*

A: The dataset does not include the following:

- Documents that are not course outlines – such as information for students about second-year MBA course, class schedules, and faculty lists.
- Course outlines that do not list cases.
- Lists of cases that could not be linked to a specific course.

Q: *Why are there three different types of case numbers?*

A: Cases were first numbered using an alpha-numeric system containing one or more letters (often equivalent to a course name or subject) followed by a one through four-digit number.

EA-F 182

A fully numeric system was first used during the 1970-1971 academic year, however the older alpha-numeric case number system was still in use. During this transition period, alpha-numeric case numbers were used with decreasing frequency, and older cases that were still in use in the 1970s were sometimes given new numbers. Numerical case numbers were fully adopted for the 1976-1977 academic year.

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Cases distributed through the Intercollegiate Case Clearing House, based at HBS at the time, were given case numbers that start with “ICH.”

ICH 4G98

Most ICH numbers were changed to the HBS numerical case system. The ICH number was kept in the dataset when:

- The retired case inventory contained something unusual in the case number field (the field was left blank or was populated with a word like “HARVARD” instead of a case number).

- The case has multiple viable case number options.
- The retired case inventory only lists a numerical case number (used in the 1970s and later) and the case in question was used before the 1970s. If it could not be confirmed that the ICH case had an HBS case number, or it wasn't found in an inventory of retired cases, it was deleted from the dataset.

Q: *Why do some cases not have a case number?*

A: Occasionally, a course outline only lists the case name. The name was recorded and searched for in inventories of retired cases and within the course outlines. The case number was left blank when:

- The search returned multiple viable case number options for a case.
- The search returned a case number from a different time period than the course in which the case was used. Ex: A case was used in the mid-1960s, it wasn't used elsewhere in the outlines, and the inventories only list a 1970s-era numerical case number.

Case numbers for cases in casebooks often were not listed in the outlines; because these cases are accessible through casebooks, their case numbers were left blank.

Q: *Why do some numerical case numbers have six digits, while others have seven?*

A: Course outlines list seven-digit case numbers, and the retired case inventory lists six-digit case numbers. They were transcribed as they appear.

Q: *What is a Sub-Program?*

A: The HBS Course Outlines Collection contains course outlines for five distinct programs and several smaller programs. The five main programs are: MBA, Military, Radcliffe, Doctoral, and Executive Education. The smaller programs are grouped together into a Miscellaneous program category. There exist smaller programs within some of the general program category headings; these smaller programs are called Sub-Programs.

Q: *How do I view the actual course outline?*

A: Clicking on the permalink in the dataset will take you to the page of the course outline where a particular case is located. From there, you can navigate to the beginning of the outline. Many, but not all, course outlines

have title pages. Alternatively, you can view course outlines starting from the list view of the complete course outlines collection, which is accessible through the Digital HBS Resources webpage.

FAQs: Doctoral Program Course Outlines

Q: *What information does this dataset contain?*

A: This dataset contains Doctoral Program course outlines from academic years 1957-1958 to 1978-1979.

FAQs: Executive Education Course Outlines

Q: *What information does this dataset contain?*

A: This dataset contains the following Executive Education course outlines:

- Management Training Course (1944-1945)
- Advanced Management Program (1945-1946 to 1978-1979)
- Advanced Management Program in Hawaii (1953-1954 to 1962-1963)
- Middle Management Program (1953-1954 to 1957-1958)
- Program for Management Development (1960-1961 to 1978-1979)

Q: *Which Sub-Programs are in the Executive Education program category?*

A: There are five Sub-Programs within the Executive Education program category:

- Management Training Course
- Advanced Management Program
- Advanced Management Program in Hawaii
- Middle Management Program
- Program for Management Development

FAQs: HBS Wartime Schools Course Outlines

Q: *What are the HBS Wartime Schools?*

A: When the United States entered World War II, Harvard Business School (HBS) found its enrollment dropping as men were called to fight overseas. Simultaneously, the U.S. military was facing an increased need for officers trained in statistics and supply chain logistics. In 1939, HBS Dean Wallace B. Donham proposed

that the school assist with the war efforts, in part by enrolling students in a new program in Industrial Administration. This program began in 1940.

In the same year, the Navy Supply Corps School consolidated its multiple operations to one location at HBS. Several programs were inaugurated over the next few years: the Army Quartermaster Course, the Navy War Adjustment Course, the Army Air Forces Statistical School, the Army Supply Officers Training School, the Army Air Forces War Adjustment Course, the Navy Industrial Accounting Course, the Navy Supply Corps Midshipmen-Officers Corps, and the Navy Surplus Disposal Indoctrination Course. These programs were taught primarily by HBS faculty using the case method and following a curriculum jointly designed by HBS and the military.

For more information see the Wartime Schools Collections and HBS Wartime Schools.

Q: *What information does this dataset contain?*

A: This dataset contains course outlines for the following World War II-era programs:

- Navy Supply Corps Midshipmen-Officers School (1943, 1944, 1945)
- Navy Industrial Accounting Officers (1943, 1944, 1945)
- Army Supply Officers Training School (1943)
- Navy War Adjustment Course (1944, 1945)
- Army Air Forces War Adjustment Course (1944)
- Surplus Disposal Indoctrination Course (1945)
- Retraining for War Production Supervision (1943)
- War Production Training Course (1943, 1944)
- War Industry Training Course (1944)
- One course outline for an MBA Reserve Officers' Training Corps Course (1942)

Q: *Which Sub-Programs are in the Military program category?*

A: There are 10 Sub-Programs within the Military program category:

1. Army Quartermaster Corps Reserve Officers' Training Corps

2. Navy Supply Corps School
3. Navy Industrial Accounting Course
4. Navy War Adjustment Course
5. Army Supply Officers Training School
6. Army Air Forces War Adjustment Course
7. Navy Surplus Disposal Indoctrination Course
8. War Production Training Course
9. Retraining for War Production Supervision
10. War Industry Training Course

The first seven mentioned above were affiliated with the armed services and were military courses; their Sub-Program names match their names as found in their finding aids.

The last three mentioned above were civilian programs and their names were transcribed as they appear in the course outlines.

FAQ: MBA Course Outlines

Q: *Is this dataset a record of every case used in every MBA course ever taught at Harvard Business School?*

A: No. HBS Course Outlines from 1932-1933 through 1978-1979 are the source of this dataset, therefore the dataset only includes cases and courses from those years.

Q: *Were cases the only type of material used in MBA courses?*

A: During this period, printed cases were the predominant type of material used in courses. Various other types of materials – such as films, slide shows, tape recordings, and videotapes – were gradually introduced.

FAQs: Miscellaneous Course Outlines

Q: *What information does this dataset contain?*

A: This dataset contains every course outline that lists cases that do not belong with the Doctoral, Executive Education, MBA, Military, or Radcliffe course outline datasets.

Q: *Which Sub-Programs are in the Miscellaneous program category?*

A: There are 46 Sub-Programs within the Miscellaneous program category, including:

- Trade Union Program
- International Teachers Program
- Program for Health Systems Management

Q: *Why is the course name blank?*

A: Occasionally, a course outline was created for a short program that was not divided into courses. For example, the Advertising Federation of America Seminar had one outline for a program that lasted for one week.

FAQs: Radcliffe College Business Programs Course Outlines

Q: *What are the Radcliffe College Business Programs?*

A: Beginning in 1937, Radcliffe College offered a one-year certificate program for women: the Training Course in Personnel Administration. After World War II, this program was renamed the Management Training Program in order to reflect its broader scope that included human relations as well as production issues related to industry and government. In 1955 the program became the Harvard-Radcliffe Program in Business Administration (HRPBA), and its curriculum had many similarities to the HBS MBA program. Beginning in 1959, graduates of the HRPBA could apply for admission to the second year of the HBS MBA program. HRPBA officially ended in 1963 when women were directly admitted to the first year of the MBA program for the first time. For more information see the online exhibit, Building the Foundation: Business Education for Women at Harvard University, 1937-1970.

Q: *What information does this dataset contain?*

A: This dataset contains Radcliffe-affiliated course outlines from academic years 1942-1943 and every academic year from 1945-1946 to 1962-1963.

Q: *Which Sub-Programs are in the Radcliffe program category?*

A: There are three Sub-Programs in the Radcliffe program category which reflect the changes in the name of the business program at Radcliffe over time:

- Training Course in Personnel Administration
- Management Training Program
- Harvard-Radcliffe Program in Business Administration

FAQ: Datasets

Q: *I need help understanding what information is transcribed into these fields.*

A: The dictionary contains useful information about transcribed information.

Q: *What can be learned from viewing these spreadsheets?*

A: All columns can be filtered and sorted. Here are a few examples:

- Filter the case name field by case to learn when a case was used and for which course(s).
- Filter by course name field to learn which cases were used in a particular course.
- If you follow the persistent link, you will go to the specific page in the course outlines from where the data was transcribed.
- If you are interested in a particular case from a casebook, there are also links to the HOLLIS or Internet Archive record for each casebook transcribed into the course outlines spreadsheet.

Q: *Why are there blank cells?*

A: A cell was left blank when a course outline did not include the corresponding information. For example, instructor fields were left blank when an outline did not list an instructor.

Q: *Will the datasets be expanded?*

A: Not now; perhaps in the future if additional data sources are found.

Q: *Are all cases listed in the datasets available to researchers?*

A: The HBS Archives maintains a collection of retired cases, and this collection does not have a record of every case. Therefore, not every case listed in the datasets is in the collection of retired cases.

Q: *I'm interested in some of the cases named in a dataset. How do I access them?*

A: Special Collections and Archives can provide users with copies of retired cases for research purposes. Cases cannot be distributed or used for teaching. HBS Archives maintains an internal database of case information. Staff can search for retired cases by title, case number, and in some cases, author. General searches by topic, industry, author, etc. are not always possible. Contact Special Collections & Archives