Announcing the Final Examination of Melissa Francisco for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Time & Location: June 18, 2014 at 10:00 AM in UCF Engineering II 312
Title: A Framework of Critical Success Factors for Business Organizations that Lead to Performance Excellence Based on a Financial and Quality Systems Assessment

One of the most important tasks that business leaders undertake in order to achieve a superior market position is strategic planning. Beyond this obligation, business owners desire to maximize profit and maintain steady growth. In order to do this, resources must be invested in the most efficient way possible in order to achieve performance excellence. Adjusting business operations quickly, however, especially in times of economic uncertainty, is extremely difficult. Business leaders therefore need insight into which elements of organizational improvement are most effective in order to strategically invest their resources in order to achieve superior performance in the most efficient way possible.

This research examines the results of companies which have a demonstrated ability to achieve performance excellence as defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. This research examined award-winning applications to determine common input factors, compared the business results of a subset of those award-winners with the overall market for a time-frame of 11 years, and then investigated the profitability, liquidity, debt management, asset management, and per share performance ratios of award-winners compared with their industry peers over 11 years as well.

The main focus of this research is to determine whether participation in performance excellence best practices have created value for shareholders and business owners. This objective is achieved through the analysis of performance results of award winning companies. This research demonstrates that the integration of efforts associated with performance excellence is in-fact advantageous.

Major: Industrial Engineering PhD

Educational Career:
Bachelor's of Business Management Information Systems, BS, 2003, University of Central Florida
Master's of MBA; Industrial Engineering MS, MS, 2011, University of Central Florida

Committee in Charge:
Ahmad K. Elshennawy, Chair, Industrial Engineering & Management Systems
Waldemar Karwowski, Industrial Engineering & Management Systems
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Petros Xanthopoulos, Industrial Engineering & Management Systems
Gamal Weheba, Wichita State University, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering Department

Approved for distribution by Ahmad K. Elshennawy, Committee Chair, on May 29, 2014.

The public is welcome to attend.