

# Correlation Between the Competency Assessment Course (CUSTAR 425) and Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) of AIMS BSCA Graduates: Basis in the Enhancement of Pre-Board Competency Assessment Course

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## Abstract

It is imperative that examinees of professional licensures shall have certain level of intelligence and wit to pass the licensure examination, while corresponding higher education institutions (HEIs) shall cement the foundation of knowledge in various areas of expertise. The Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) is one of those examinations facilitated in by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and undertaken by students who have completed a 4-year degree in Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA). In the “5-Year AIMS Comparative Report of Customs Brokers Licensure Examination (CBLE) from 2017 to 2022,” there are inconsistencies that were observed in terms of the school’s achievement. More so, although there were years with passing marks, the passing rates, however, are not enough to be considered as an outstanding performance for the institution. Henceforth, by analysis of previous studies, pre-board review courses are important factors in achieving higher passing rates in licensure examinations. This led the proponents to analyze the performance in, and the correlation between, the Competency Assessment Course (CUSTAR 425) and the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) of AIMS students from school years 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Descriptive-correlation was used in determining the relationship between the CUSTAR 425 grades and the CBLE results of AIMS students. Outsourced from the Center for Research and Institutional Development (CRID) and the Center for Records and Certification (CRC), the CBLE exam and CUSTAR 425 grades came from sixty-one (61) BSCA graduates from school years 2019, 2021 and 2022. To analyze the data, frequency count, percentage, weighted mean and Pearson r were used.

Based on the findings, majority of the BSCA graduates across the three school years had generally performed in CUSTAR 425 as evidenced by the following: 3 gained an “Excellent” achievement (96 to 100), 13 received a “Very Good” performance (90 to 95), and 24 earned a “Good” performance (84 to 89). However, the CBLE performance can be contextualized between fair to poor as only 27 had passed the licensure examination out of the 61 examinees. More so, although the school made a good passing rate of 56% when compared to the NPP of 46.46% in 2022, and 44% against the 40.08% NPP in 2019, these surpassing rates cannot be treated as good performances as the results did not meet the top performance qualifications of 50 or more examinees per year and with at least 80% overall passing percentage, as per

PRC Commission Resolution No. 2017-1058 (C) series of 2017 (“November 2021 Customs Broker Licensure Examination,” 2021). In terms of correlation, no significant relationship exists between CUSTAR 425 and CBLE. Though the computed Pearson  $r$  of 0.25, and the  $p$ -value of 0.052, indicated a certain degree of relationship, the degree is however weak, hence, not significant. Strong recommendation is hereby given to the Customs Administration (CA) Department of AIMS to revisit and review its Competency Assessment Course (CUSTAR 425) and identify areas for enhancement. Perhaps, the department could ponder on the “five-step revision process” of McGahan (2018)

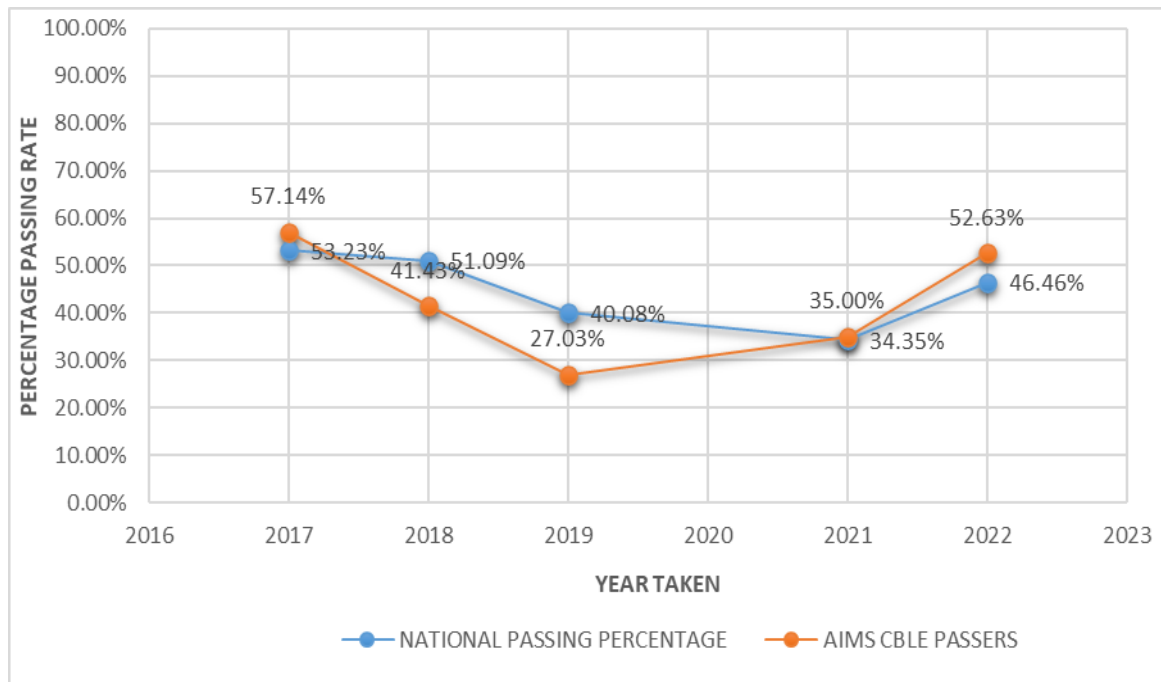
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## 1. Introduction

A professional license assures the consumer of services that the professional has been examined and has met the requirements of their profession (“Why licensure is important,” 2023). The assured service is specifically articulated to protect the safety of the society through implementation of standards for those who are only qualified in terms of educational background, experience and licensure (“Importance of licensure,” 2023). It is imperative that examinees shall have certain level of intelligence and wit to pass the licensure examination, while corresponding academic institutions shall possess a sound academic program to instill the best foundation to students. However, the latter element has a crucial role in increasing the chances of students in passing the licensure examination. Delegated as the seat of higher learning, higher education institutions (HEIs) cement the foundation of knowledge in various areas of expertise. With this role, HEIs shall therefore imbibe in the highest ideals the expertise and know-how in a specific field in order to equip students the proper knowledge and information and favorably resonate these in licensure examination results.

The Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) is one of those examinations facilitated in by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and be undertaken by students who have completed a 4-year degree in Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA). Passing the CBLE bestows the title of a “Licensed Customs Broker” (LCB). In the 2022 CBLE school performance manifest issued by PRC (2022), Batangas State University topped the list of performing schools with 58 passing students (82.86%) out of 70. Second was Lyceum of the Philippines – Manila with 43 (71.67%) passing students out of 60 while its Batangas campus earned the fourth spot with 38 passing students (67.86%) out of 56. The third place was earned by Southwestern Institute of Business & Technology with 46 passing students (68.66%) out of 67. The above marks have indicated good institutional performances taking into consideration the number of licensure takers. Out of these good results, where do Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) stand?

In the “5-Year AIMS Comparative Report of Customs Brokers Licensure Examination (CBLE) from 2017 to 2022” (Figure 1), issued by the Center for Research and Institutional Development (CRID), data shows that the highest CBLE passers during the years 2017 to 2022 was in 2017 with a passing rate of 57.14% (40 out of 70 examinees) while the National Passing Rate (NPR) is 53.23%; and, in 2022 with a passing rate of 52.63% (10 out of 19 examinees) while the NPR is 46.46%. It is evident that AIMS surpassed the NPP these years. Moreover, two of the passers in 2017, Noel Maraya Base and Mhickey Mae Herrera Babon, ranked 6th place and 7th place, respectively, in the national ranking.



**Figure 1. Comparison between CBLE results and NPP, SY 2017 – 2022**

However, in the 2019 AIMS CBLE, the institution gained the lowest passing rate for the last five years, with 27.03% (20 out of 74 examinees) against the NPR of 40.08%. Low achievement was also reflected in 2021 with 34.35% passing rate (7 out of 20 examinees) which is a bit short from the 35% NPR. Pondering on the above report, there are inconsistencies that can be observed in terms of the school’s achievement. More so, although there were years with passing marks, the passing rates however are not enough to be considered as an outstanding performance for the institution. Therefore, factors affecting this performance shall be determined to address the matter. Henceforth, by analysis of previous studies, pre-board review courses are important factors in achieving higher passing rates in licensure examinations. According to Rengarajan (2018), pre-board examination is important as this will be the basis in recognizing students’ weaknesses, make strategic preparation, calculate time to finish each part, and eventually have a better licensure exam result. These essentials have shown worth in the study of Ong et al. (2012) entitled “Predictors of Nurses’ Licensure Examination Performance of Graduates in Cebu Normal University, Philippines.” In their study, results revealed that the course performance of students in their collegiate program as well as their performance in the pre-board competency assessment course are important bases in knowing if they will perform or not in their licensure examination. Therefore, review sessions are very imperative in aiming a high examination result. However, to make effective of the review sessions, the design and content of review courses shall also be given valuable considerations. According to Gurung (as cited in Bord, 2008), well-designed review sessions help students organize the materials to be studied.

The Customs and Tariff 425 (CUSTAR 425) is the competency assessment course of the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) program of AIMS. Embedded in the BSCA curriculum, the course covers competency enhancement and assessment on the following areas: customs laws and procedures; principles of importation and customs administration; customs control and system and collection of duty and tax; customs jurisdiction and remedies; smuggling, exemption, exportation and

transit; and tariff laws and jurisprudence with focus on the Philippine Tariff System and International Trade Agreement.

With the above rationale, a contention is now being raised whether the CUSTAR 425 is still relevant in terms of its contents and instructions. This contention has led the proponents to analyze the correlation between the CUSTAR 425 course and the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) of AIMS from school years 2019, 2021 and 2022 as no available studies have been done, both national and international levels, in the field of customs administration. Essential findings will be used in the enhancement of the present pre-board review course of the BSCA program.

## 2. Literature Review

**2.1 The Importance of Licensure Examination.** Licensure examination is no doubt an important aspect in affirming the knowledge, skill, and competency of an individual towards his chosen profession. For instance, in the engineering industry, licensure is the mark of a Professional Engineer (PE) as rigor and hard work have been exhausted in acquiring the title. A PE license entails an engineering degree with several years of continuous experience under a superior engineer, and a well-rounded understanding of engineering philosophies as justified by a licensure exam. When license is acquired, the PE shall continuously maintain and hone his abilities to keep the license (“The benefits of earning....,” 2023). However, while not all engineers find licensure mandatory for their chosen career paths, engineering graduates frequently think if the efforts done to become a professional engineer is of essential value (“Advantages of licensure,” 2023). But still, the PE initials after their names can provide many advantages (“The benefits of earning....,” 2023).

In the field of medicine, professional license is also of paramount importance prior to practice. In the United States, obtaining a license to practice medicine is tedious undertaking. Interested individuals shall comply with the required qualifications which include completion of a medical course, on the job training or internship, and passing the national medicine licensure examination. Applicants shall forward evidences of their educational achievement and training as well as their corresponding work experience. Additional requirements include disclosing pertinent information which can have an impact in disposing their work as a medical professional such as health status and any legal problems. When meted, permission to practice the medical profession will be granted (“About physician licensure,” 2018). In addition, besides the professional license as practicing physician, a board certification (Price, 2016) by a single or several American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) signifies that a physician has achieved the required training to present competency in a specific field.

Physicians shall meet the same medical licensure requirements if they intend to acquire ABMS Board Certification. This includes a minimum of three years of laborious residency or fellowship training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. They should also provide letters of confirmation coming from their school officials indicating their good academic performance. Lastly, they shall have passed a written examination given by the ABMS Member Board (Price, 2016).

In the field of customs administration, the licensure examination in customs is held as one of the toughest examinations to pass in the United States of America (USA). With an average of 2,600 examinees a year, about 15% will only have the chance to pass (“Do you want to become.....,” 2022). Majority of examinees shall take a preparatory course to gauge their knowledge of Custom-related aspects such as laws, procedures, regulations, and other valuable aspects necessary to extend essential service to importers and exporters (“Customs broker license exam.....,” 2023). An experience with import compliance, no matter

how extensive it is, does not guarantee one to pass the licensure examination. There have been instances, such as lawyers, where, after several takes, had passed the licensure exam while there were also some who took the exam one time, and without import experience, had passed the exam (“Do you want to become.....,” 2022).

In the Philippines, the Customs Broker Profession involves services consisting of consultation, preparation of customs requisite document for imports and exports, declaration of customs duties and taxes, preparation signing, filing, lodging and processing of import and export entries; representing importers and exporters before any government agency and private entities in cases related to valuation and classification of imported articles and rendering of other professional services in matters relating to customs and tariff laws its procedures and practices (“Republic Act 9280: Scope of the Practice of Customs Broker,” 2023).

With the above work scope, the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) is therefore important (Tan et al., 2015) to assess the graduates’ skills, knowledge and qualifications in the customs broker work. The licensure exam is an essential procedure to gauge the understanding of a customs student in all import regulations (Tucker, 2010; as cited in Tan et al., 2015). As a customs broker, a person shall embody the knowledge towards the import and export policies and procedures. Knowledge means, the understanding of customs valuation, documentary requirements and entry procedure (Delaney, 2010; as cited in Tan et al., 2015).

On the other hand, not only examinees will benefit from a favorable licensure examination result but also the academic institution. Tan et al. (2015) explicated that licensure examination has an essential role in gauging the performance of the institution in terms of the educational services they offer. This will assure the competency of the institution’s offered programs. It will generally indicate good performance in instructional delivery thus building the required intellectual capacity of students given the consistent good performance in board examination.

**2.2 The Relevance of Pre-Board Review Courses.** Pre-board review courses are essential programs for students to undertake prior taking the licensure examination. Degree programs requiring board examination has a review course embedded in its curriculum. Besides this, a specialized review course offered by review centers, and undertaken after graduation, is also essential to equip students with the proper knowledge and information towards the specifics of the licensure examination.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), for instance, offers the “Licensure Exam Review Prep Course” with the aim to prepare students for their licensure exam through appraisal of the structure and content of examination including techniques for taking the assessment. Further included is the review of test questions and determining how to properly interpret them. Evading common mistakes to build competence is also recommended.

In the medical field, certification and recertification of medical student practitioners is an essential requirement. Thus, a medical board review course is also with utmost importance. The Student Doctor Network showed that board review courses are a must when preparing for certification or recertification in any specialty. Most specialty associations recommend that doctors use a multi-faceted approach to studying the certification or recertification exam and one of them is a board review course. Any board review system must provide efficient study tools that will reduce study time and increase success on questions (“Are board review courses.....,” 2018).



In the nursing profession, a review course is a pre-board study that inculcates basic nursing pedagogy including the delivery of patient care within the tenets of a professional nursing work (“RN and LPN review course,” n.d.) while in the engineering field, the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) supports examinees in various means and ways through evaluation of review courses in several platforms making it conveniently and economically available for their use (“Exam review and preparation,” 2023).

In the customs administration field, the Los Angeles Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association (LACBFFA) offers the US Customs Brokers Exam Preparation Course. A 10-week in-depth course designed to prepare students for the Customs Brokers Licensing Exam. The program delivers a wide-ranging review of licensure examination topics including Intellectual Property Rights, Drawback, Antidumping/Countervailing Duty, Prohibited & Restricted Merchandise, Broker Responsibilities, Country of Origin, NAFTA and other Trade Agreements, Entry Requirements, Valuation, and Classification (“U.S. Customs Broker Exam Preparation Course,” n.d.).

**2.3 Pre-Board Examination as a Major Correlate of Licensure Examination.** Several studies have been undertaken to examine the correlation between the pre-board examination and licensure examination in various fields. Some also determined the factors, correlates, and predictors of the licensure examination. Upon exhaustive review by the proponents, majority of the studies undertaken revealed a significant relationship between the two variables as well as an affirmation that pre-board examination predicts the licensure examination. In the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), Amanonce et al. (2020), determined the performance in the licensure exam and course achievement of education major graduates in a public university in Cagayan Province. Results revealed a significant relationship between the graduates’ course performance in the pre-board exam and the licensure exam for teachers. With the above result, the proponents recommended the creation of policies to level up the implementation of pre-board exam programs for the school. In addition, a validation of the exam instruments is also suggested. Likewise, the same result was found in the study of Fiscal et al. (2022) entitled “Pre-licensure examination as predictor of licensure examination for teachers result”. Applying linear regression analysis, scores achieved by the graduates in the pre-licensure exam for teachers can forecast the performance in the LET with increased level of confidence. It was therefore confirmed in the study that for the professional and general education elements of the exam, the pre-LET achievement of the graduates are noteworthy predictors.

In the Nursing Licensure Examination (NLE), Oducado et al. (2019) revealed that the Pre-board Examination was significantly correlated with the NLE rating. This came out as a result of their study entitled “Institutional Competency Assessment and other Factors Influencing the Nurse Licensure Examination” where 354 nursing graduates of West Visayas State University from 2015 to 2017 were used as main sets of data for the study. The proponents recommended that nursing institutions can gain from creating and implementing a school-wide standardized competency examination that shall be undertaken during the end of the nursing program. The purpose is to increase the probability of achieving high ratings in the National Licensure Examination (NLE). Similar result was yielded in the study entitled “Predictors of Nurses’ Licensure Examination Performance of Graduates in Cebu Normal University, Philippines.” Authored by Ong et al. (2012), it came out that all the correlates were significantly related with the licensure exam achievement. However, the pre-board exam significantly predicts the licensure

exam. It is therefore conclusive that the pre-board achievement is a significant foundation in knowing the success and failure of the graduates' exam performance.

### 3. Methodology

**3.1 Research Design.** The study employed the descriptive-correlational design. Descriptively, the study endeavored to analyze in-depth the performance of BSCA students in CUSTAR 425 and the CBLE. Through correlation, the study has further analyzed the relationship between the 2 variables. According to Romanchuk (2023), correlational design determines the extent of relationship of two or more variables without superseding the procedure and allowing the researcher to witness the relationship in the natural setting. More so, the study is “ex post facto” in nature (Sharma, 2023) as the independent variable (CUSTAR 425) is examined in recollection to seek probable and reasonable associations and likely impact that the changes it produced towards the dependent variable (CBLE). Henceforth, in specific application, the proponents have no direct control over the independent variable (CUSTAR 425 examination results) as they have directed the effects (CBLE examination results) which can no longer be altered. Drawn conclusions toward the relationship of the variables can be deduced without superseding the independent or dependent variables (“Ex-post facto research,”n.d.).

**3.2 Sources of Data.** Data came from the examination grades of BSCA graduates distributed from school years 2019, 2021, and 2022. School year 2020 was not included as no exam was administered due to the pandemic. An aggregate of 113 BSCA students have graduated during the years 2019, 2021 and 2022. However, due to the unavailability of some CUSTAR 425 grades, performance analysis was only confined to 61 sample student grades which were available during the time of outsourcing. Hence, the application of convenience sampling. The samples were broken down as follows: 25 available grades (33.78%) out of 74 graduates from 2019; 18 available grades (90%) out of 20 graduates from 2021; and, 18 available grades (94.74%) out of 19 graduates from 2022. Likewise, the 61 samples had corresponding CBLE grades. Please refer on Table 1 below for a clear distribution of the samples.

**Table 1. Distribution of Available BSCA Sample Grades in CUSTAR 425 and CBLE According to Year**

Year	Total No. of Graduates	Available CUSTAR Grades	Corresponding CBLE Grades	Percentage*
2019	74	25	25	33.78
2021	20	18	18	90.00
2022	19	18	18	94.74
<b>Total:</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	

\*CUSTAR 425 grades or CBLE grades, divided by Total Graduates, multiplied by 100.

The subject graduates had undertaken their respective CUSTAR 425 courses at Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) as well as their respective Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) under the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). Respectively, the CUSTAR 425 examination grades were outsourced from the Center for Records and Certification (CRC) while the CBLE examination results were taken from the Center for Research and Institutional Development (CRID) as the office is in-charge in acquiring the CBLE results every year.

**3.3 Data Gathering Procedure.** In gathering the pertinent data of the study, a letter request was sent to the Center for Records and Certification (CRC) of AIMS to acquire the grades of the BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 from school years 2019, 2021 and 2022. Another letter request was forwarded to the Center for Research and Institutional Development (CRID) to gather the examination results of the BSCA graduates in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination of the same years. Upon acquisition of the grades and exam results, the data were reviewed, cleaned, and analyzed according to the requirements of the study. Valid data were then be compiled in preparation for the statistical treatment.

**3.4 Research Ethics.** The proponents were guided by the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 and the AIMS Research Ethics Policies of 2021 in acquiring the data. In adherence to these policies, required documents were properly requested from the custodial offices through a formal request letter. Besides the permission to use, the letter included promissory statements indicating the preservation and sanctity of the acquired data and that copies of the documents were only used for the purpose of the study. Necessary approval from respective offices, through either notation or a reply letter, were also acquired prior to utilization of the data.

**3.5 Statistical Treatment and Analysis.** To properly present and analyze the performances of the BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 and CBLE, the following statistical tools were employed:

1. Percentage. This was used in presenting the distribution of performances of BSCA graduates in both the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE. Distribution of performance in CUSTAR 425 was based on grades while distribution in CBLE was based on the number of passed versus the number of failed students.
2. Arithmetic Mean. This was used in determining the mean performance of the BSCA students in CUSTAR 425. The mean performances were presented on a per school year basis for better appreciation and analysis.
3. Pearson R. This was utilized to determine if significant relationship exist between the performances of BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 and CBLE. Pearson’s r is one of the best ways to test two variables on how strong their relationship with each other.

#### 4. Results

This part presents the statistical results on the performance of BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 and the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) from school year 2019, 2021 and 2022. The relationship between the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE performances is likewise presented.

##### 1. Performance of BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425.

**Table 2. Performance Distribution of BSCA Graduates in CUSTAR 425, School Year 2019, N=25**

Grade	Frequency	Percentage	Verbal	Mean Grade*
77 & below	1	4.00	Failed	
78 - 83	5	20.00	Passed/Fair	
84 - 89	12	48.00	Good	86.96
90 - 95	7	28.00	Very Good	
96 - 100	0	0	Excellent	
<b>Total:</b>	25	100.00		



*\*Sum of all grades, divided by 25.*

Table 2 presents the CUSTAR 425 performance of 25 BSCA graduates for the school year 2019. Almost half (48%), or 12 graduates, made a “Good” academic performance towards the course for earning a grade ranging from 84 to 89 while more than one fourth (28%), or 7 graduates, gained a “Very Good” performance as the graduates received a grade between 90 to 95. There were few (20%) who received a “Passed” performance while a margin (1%) did not perform (Failed). No graduate has achieved an “Excellent” performance. Gaining a mean grade of 86.96, the graduates of 2019 had generally performed “Good” in CUSTAR 425. Based on the mean grade, it can be assumed that the graduates will also perform good in the upcoming Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE).

**Table 3. Performance Distribution of BSCA Graduates in CUSTAR 425, School Year 2021, N=18**

Grade Range	Frequency	Percentage	Verbal	Mean
77 & below	4	22.22	Failed	
78 - 83	2	11.11	Passed/Fair	
84 - 89	6	33.34	Good	86.17
90 - 95	4	22.22	Very Good	
96 - 100	2	11.11	Excellent	
<b>Total:</b>	18	100.00		

*\*Sum of all grades, divided by 18.*

Presented in Table 3 is the performance of 18 BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 during the school year 2021. Favorably, 2 graduates, or 11.11%, gave an “Excellent” performance in CUSTAR 425 having earned a grade between 96 to 100. Respectively, a “Very Good” performance was also gained by 4 graduates (22.22%) earning grades from 90 to 95. On the average, one third (33.34%) of the total population earned a grade between 84 to 89, hence, made a “Good” performance. Unfavorably, there were 4 graduates (22.22%) who “Failed” the course while 2 gained a “Passed” performance, hence, earning a grade between 78 to 83. On the average, the mean grade of BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 during the school year 2021 is 86.17. With this achievement, it can also be inferred that the graduates will generally do good in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE).

**Table 4. Performance Distribution of BSCA Graduates in CUSTAR 425, School Year 2022, N=18**

Grade Range	Frequency	Percentage	Verbal	Mean
77 & below	4	22.22	Failed	
78 - 83	5	27.78	Passed/Fair	83.92
84 - 89	6	33.34	Good	
90 - 95	2	11.11	Very Good	
96 - 100	1	5.55	Excellent	
<b>Total:</b>	18	100.00		

*\*Sum of all grades, divided by 18.*

As reflected in Table 4, the performance of BSCA graduates in CUSTAR 425 during the school year 2022 can be analyzed as fair rather than excellent as only few (11.11% or 2 graduates) achieved a “Very Good” performance (grade between 90 to 95) while a margin (5.55% or 1 graduate) has received an “Excellent”

performance (grade between 96 to 100). One third (33.34% or 6 graduates) of the graduates earned a grade between 84 to 89 (Good) whereas more than one fourth (27.78% or 5 graduates) earned a “Passed” performance (grade between 78 to 83). There were 4 graduates (22.22%) who “Failed” from the course. As an overall analysis, the batch 2022 graduates will have a fair performance in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination as the mean grade of this batch is 83.92.

**2. Performance of BSCA graduates in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE).**

**Table 5. Performance Distribution of BSCA Graduates in CBLE, School Year 2019, 2021 and 2022, N=61**

School	Performance	Frequency	Percent	NPP*
2019	Passed	11	44%	40.08%
	Failed	14	56%	
2021	Passed	6	33%	34.35%
	Failed	12	67%	
2022	Passed	10	56%	46.46%
	Failed	8	44%	

\*NPP = National Passing Percentage (Source: PRC)

Table 5 presents the performance of the BSCA graduates in the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) during the years 2019, 2021 and 2022. The BSCA graduates from school year 2022 made a good passing performance in the CBLE with 56% (10 out of 18 examinees) passing percentage. The performance also surpassed the National Passing Percentage (NPP) of 46.46%. A not so favorable school year was in 2019 where AIMS gained only 44% (11 out of 25 examinees) passing rate. Though the school’s achievement surpassed the NPP of 40.08%, still, the BSCA performance in the CBLE for this school year is just fair. A much unfavorable result was in 2021 where only 33% (6 out of 18 examinees) of the total examinees passed the CBLE. Much to this is also the low performance of the school when compared to the NPP of 34.35%. In an overall analysis, the CBLE examination results of the BSCA graduates during the school years 2019, 2021 and 2022 can be contextualized between fair to poor performance.

**3. Relationship between the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE performances of the BSCA graduates.**

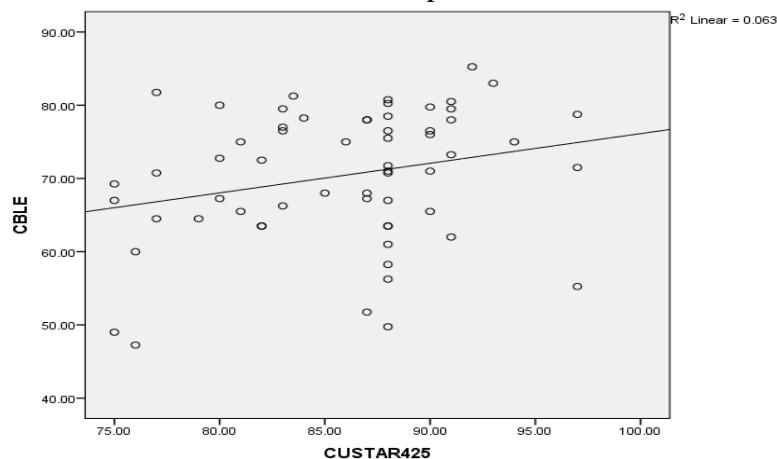


Figure 3. Scatterplot of the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE Ratings

Figure 3 presents the scatterplot diagram to indicate the relationship between the CBLE exam grades (Y-axis) and the CUSTAR 425 course grades (X-axis). As observed, there is a trace of increasing trend as shown in the scattered dots reflected in the figure indicating that a positive relationship between the two subjects occur. However, it can be further noted that the dots are more scattered away from the trend line. This therefore indicates a weak relationship between X and Y.

**Table 6. Relationship between the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE Performances**

Variables	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
CUSTAR 425 and CBLE	0.25	0.052	Not Significant

Referencing the results from the scatterplot diagram in Figure 2, which shows a weak relationship between the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE exam, this result coincides with the computed relationship of the two variables (Table 6) where the Pearson r is 0.25, and with p-value of 0.052, indicating that the relationship, though positive and noticeable, is not significant. With this result, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant relationship between the CUSTAR 425 and CBLE exam results.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

The study endeavored to analyze the performance of BSCA graduates in both the CUSTAR 425 review course and the Customs Broker Licensure Examination (CBLE) covering the school years 2019, 2021 and 2022. Utilizing 61 conveniently outsourced student grades from both CUSTAR 425 and CBLE, the study employed descriptive-correlation to further analyze the relationship between the two variables under “ex-post facto” nature of data. Frequency, percentage, mean, and Pearson r were used in the derivation and analyses of the data.

In terms of CUSTAR 425 performance, majority of the BSCA graduates across the three school years, 2019, 2021, and 2022, had generally performed as evidenced by their achievement with the course. Specifically, out of the 61 student grades, 3 gained an “Excellent” achievement (96 to 100), 13 received a “Very Good” performance (90 to 95), and 24 earned a “Good” performance (84 to 89). A few (12 student grades) earned a “Passed” achievement (78 to 83) while 9 “Failed” the course (77 and below).

In terms of CBLE performance, the examination results of the BSCA graduates across the three school years can be contextualized between fair to poor performance. Out of the 61 examinees, 27 passed the licensure examination while 34 failed to perform. With respect to the National Passing Percentage (NPP), the school’s CBLE performance of 33% did not surpass the NPP of 34.35% in 2021. More so, although the school made a good passing rate of 56% when compared to the NPP of 46.46% in 2022, and 44% against the 40.08% NPP in 2019, these surpassing rates cannot be treated as good performances as the results did not meet the top performance qualifications of more than 50 examinees a year and having a minimum of 80% general passing percentage, as per PRC Commission Resolution No. 2017-1058 (C) series of 2017 (“November 2021 Customs Broker Licensure Examination,” 2021).

In terms of correlation, no significant relationship exists between CUSTAR 425 and CBLE. Though the computed Pearson r of 0.25, and the p-value of 0.052, indicated a certain degree of relationship, the degree is however weak, hence, not significant.

## 6. Conclusion

The finding above conforms with the study of Amamonce et al. (2020) where a significant relationship was revealed between the achievement in pre-board exam and the LET. although, with a weak correlation. According to Kendra (2022), this type of correlation signifies that, although both variables are inclined to go the same direction, the association is not very significant. This can therefore be concluded that, perhaps, a small portion of the students' achievement in CUSTAR 425 can be attributed to their performance in CBLE. Intriguingly, majority of the subject students performed well in CUSTAR 425 as evidenced by their achievement presented earlier. However, this did not go along when compared with their performance in CBLE as only less than 50% had passed the examination. Having established that CUSTAR 425 is not significantly correlated with CBLE, this directs the study to look for other correlates (or factors) which can be attributed to the weak CBLE performance of the school. In the study of Oducado et al. (2019) entitled "Factors Influencing the Nurse Licensure Examination" (NLE), results indicated that Nursing Aptitude Test, High School Grade General Average, College Admission Test, and College Grade General Weighted Average were significantly associated with NLE rating. It is essential to note that college performance had a strong influence toward licensure achievement. In the study of Amamonce et al. (2020), findings have shown that a strong correlation exists between the college GWA and the LET achievement. Same result was also yielded in the study of Ong et al. (2012) and Ignacio et al. (2016) where the College General Weighted Average significantly predicted the NLE performance. Additional correlates can also be considered such as the one revealed in the study of Faltado (2014) where the areas of curriculum and instruction, admission and retention, and faculty competence shown significant relationship with teacher education graduates' performance in licensure examination.

## 7. Recommendations.

From the yielded results to the conclusions drawn, herewith are the recommendations of the study:

1. With the disparity of student performances in CUSTAR 425 and CBLE, where majority of the students performed well in the competency assessment course (CUSTAR 425) while less than half did not pass the licensure examination (CBLE), a strong recommendation for the Customs Administration (CA) Department to revisit, review and enhance the competency assessment course (CUSTAR 425) and identify areas for improvement. For efficient revision, the calibration shall be done in accordance to established revision standards. Perhaps, the CA Department could ponder on the five-step revision process of McGahan (2018) as presented below:
  - a. **Set revision goals.** Course revision shall go hand-in-hand with outward and inward goals. This means that the reviser shall not only focus on inward goals, such as improving structure, revising course materials and strengthening assessments, but also to focus on inward objectives, such as identifying personal time management issues and gaining a deeper understanding of the teaching process. The reviser shall also invest some time on reflective practice which is to have a critical eye on the deeper values of the course in order also to have a deeper insight (Bolton, 2010; as cited in McGahan, 2018).
  - b. **Review course structure, content, and assignments.** The purpose of this stage is to elicit items that needs to be revised on the course in order to enhance the learning of learners. Though there are direct and indirect ways in looking for issues in a course, set criteria shall still be the basis in finding the problems which can be addressed through revision of various course contents.
  - c. **Integrate student feedback.** No other group of people can give insightful feedback than the students who use the course syllabus. As the main user, the students directly interact with the syllabus through

content consumption and compliance to assessment requirements. With this constant interaction, students can therefore identify the weak parts and the parts which needs clarity. As guide on this part, the reviser can consider three important forms of student feedback (Kirkova, Mateva, Taneva, & Kireva, 2014; as cited in McGahan, 2018):

- i. **Unsolicited student feedback** – these are the emails, chats, texts and other form of written feedback given by students to their respective teachers (Plank, Dixon, & Ward, 2014; as cited in McGahan, 2018). By analyzing the contents of their communication, there can be points which can be gathered as valuable inputs for course revision.
  - ii. **Formative student feedback** – these are structured type of survey questions where the focus lies on the areas where there is a known problem in the course syllabus. The questions shall be moderately numbered so as not to burden nor bore the students in acquiring their feedbacks. Perhaps, three to five open-ended questions for each area of assessment. The survey shall also be administered three to four times during the semester. Conducting the survey beyond the once stated may result to faculty burdensome and student resentment (McCarthy, 2017; Zipser & Mincieli, 2018; as cited in McGahan, 2018).
  - iii. **Summative student feedback.** Almost similar to the formative feedback, this feedback mechanism is one that is most popular among teachers as this is done during the final assessment period. Feedbacks on this mechanism can also be essential in course revision. However, a caution in giving this student feedback is advised as this can affect the real objective of the evaluation due to the inflation and deflation of scoring (Cohen, 1981; Gulbis, & Hays, 2018; as cited in McGahan, 2018). Although the mechanism is very much feasible to use, it is not also encouraging to utilize as there are some specific limitations in having an end-of-course evaluation.
  - d. **Record reflections, findings, and observations.** Akin to noting lessons in a lecture class, this part points to the essentials of having a log paper where important notes pertaining to areas for course revision is jot down. Revisers can make use of this when they start to do the revision proper. Considering to be an indicator of success to students (Fahmy & Bilton, 1990; Gambill, Moss, & Vescogni, 2008; as cited in McGahan, 2018), note taking is also valuable to teachers when their course syllabus is evaluated.
  - e. **Implement revisions.** Having done all the previous stages, this stage considers to be the easiest part of the process – implementing the revisions. Still, possible challenges may occur on this level. It is not a guarantee that even though the best notes have been written down, and the pedagogy of revising is also exhaustible, doing the revision is not an overnight task and therefore shall not be implemented hastily. Ample period should be dedicated to properly interweave the notes and ideas inside the course. With this, the areas of revision shall therefore be spread out through the given period to ensure the complete revision of the course.
2. As the study did not yield a significant relationship between CUSTAR 425 and CBLE, further study can therefore be explored employing other correlates which could yield significant relationship with the CBLE. Pondering on the favorable findings of Oducado et al. (2019); Amamonce et al. (2020); Ong et al. (2012); and, Ignacio et al. (2016), a strategic investigation can therefore be explored if the college General Weighted Average of the BSCA students is significantly correlated with their CBLE results. If this finding yields a favorable result, then, perhaps a holistic learning shall be promoted and embodied towards the BSCA students. This shall encompass a good academic performance in both professional courses and general education subjects which will contribute in high scholastic



achievement through the General Weighted Average. Other correlates may also be considered such as (Faltado, 2014) the policies in admission and retention, curriculum and instruction and competency of faculties.

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