

Part 1. 2006-2007 Program Assessment Report*

Name of Department/Unit: Accounting

List of Programs: Bachelors of Science in Accountancy

Department/Unit Mission: The B.S. in Accountancy degree provides educational opportunities to those students who have demonstrated an aptitude to pursue a career in accounting. Our students complete a rigorous program that develops their technical proficiency as well as skills in critical thinking, teamwork, and communication.

Department/Learning Goals:

General Learning Goals:

1. Our graduates are able to recognize and analyze ethical problems in practical business and accounting situations and to select and defend a course of action.
2. Our graduates are able to effectively communicate complex business and accounting concepts both orally and in writing.
3. Our graduates are able to apply critical thinking skills when analyzing and solving problems.

Accounting and Management Specific Goals:

1. Our graduates are able to apply their conceptual understanding to both structured and unstructured problems in accounting.
2. Our graduates are able to research accounting literature for both structured and unstructured problems in accounting.
3. Our graduates understand the cross-functional and interdisciplinary nature of business problems.
4. Our graduates understand and can apply basic business concepts.

Name of Assessment Liaison: Leah Marcal

Name of College: College of Business and Economics

**The deadline for submitting this report to the Associate Dean is Sept. 24th.*

Part 2. 2006-2007 Assessment Activities for the Accountancy Program

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Dates	Assessment Procedures	Summary of Findings	Use of Findings for Program Improvement
<p>Recognize and analyze ethical problems in practical business and accounting situations and to select and defend a course of action</p>	<p>Fall 2006 and Spring 2007</p>	<p><u>ACCT 350</u>: (spring only) Students' ability to recognize and respond to an ethical dilemma was assessed within a letter written to a client.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: (fall only) Students' understanding of ethics was assessed with five multiple-choice questions on the final exam.</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: (fall only) Students' understanding of ethics was assessed with an ethics case analysis wherein students must apply ethical theories and recommend a course of action.</p> <p><u>FIN 303</u>: (fall only) Multiple-choice exam questions covered students' knowledge of financial ethics and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p><u>ACCT 350</u>: Some 93% of students met or exceeded the desired ethical response in their work.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: On average, students correctly answered 74% of the questions covering ethics.</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: Most students (87%) demonstrated a good or very good understanding of ethics in their case analysis.</p> <p><u>FIN 303</u>: More than 85% of students correctly answered questions covering ethics and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p><u>BUS 302</u>: Over the past year, Gateway faculty have made a concerted effort to improve their coverage of ethics.</p>
<p>Effectively communicate complex business and accounting concepts both orally and in writing</p>	<p>Fall 2006 and Spring 2007</p>	<p><u>ACCT 351 COM</u>: Course embedded assessment of students' writing skills consisted of a pre and post writing assignment and a pre and post diagnostic exam.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: (fall only) Students' writing skills were assessed with memos which used a detailed grading rubric (4 factors for the writing component).</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: (fall only) Students' writing skills were assessed with case analysis and students' oral presentation skills were assessed with a formal oral presentation of their written case analysis. Students received all grading rubrics (e.g., for written work and presentations) at the start of the semester so they understood what was expected.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: (spring only) Students' writing skills were assessed with a situation audit.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: Essay exam questions were used to assess students' ability to clearly communicate and interpret results from operations management problems.</p>	<p><u>351 COM</u>: Results (since spring 2004) show that students are improving their scores on the post writing assessment and the post diagnostic exam.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: The average of the 4 factors suggests that 25% of the students' writing is not acceptable; 55% is acceptable; and 20% is above average. A comparison of the students' first and last written memos shows that average scores rose from 66% to 78%.</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: Roughly 93% of students' written work was deemed good or very good. And 99% of students' oral presentations were good or very good.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: Some 85% of the students' writing was deemed acceptable or good, and 15% was deemed unacceptable.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: In fall (spring), some 67% (91%) of students demonstrated good or very good writing skills; while 32% (9%) demonstrated writing skills that were considered not good enough.</p>	<p><u>351 COM</u>: More emphasis is being placed on reasoning, logical flow, and synthesizing information from the case (facts) and the accounting technical material (standards).</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: Despite the use of turn-it-in, instructors continue to have an unacceptable problem with plagiarism. Consequently, students are now asked to perform various citation exercises and their work is returned until it is done correctly.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: Given college-wide concerns about students' writing skills, all instructors will now require a written case in addition to regular homework and exams.</p>

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Dates	Assessment Procedures	Summary of Findings	Use of Findings for Program Improvement
Apply critical thinking skills when analyzing and solving problems	Fall 2006 and Spring 2007	<p><u>ACCT 351</u> (spring only): Students' case analysis was assessed with an extensive grading rubric which contains 4 components (and 15 related traits) of critical thinking.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: (fall only) Students' critical thinking skills were assessed with memos which used a detailed grading rubric (5 factors for the critical thinking component).</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: (fall only) Students' ability to think critically was assessed with written case analysis. Students must clearly state the problem; clarify key ideas; use a strategic perspective; separate advocacy statements from fact; and make a clear decision.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: (spring only) Students' critical thinking skills were assessed within a situation audit.</p>	<p><u>ACCT 351</u>: The sub-score for critical thinking indicates that 77% of students' work is acceptable, while 23% is not acceptable. A comparison of findings between spring 2005 and spring 2007 suggests that student performance has improved in the areas of identifying the correct accounting issues; selecting and supporting a solution; and researching the appropriate literature. However, students' ability to identify and state the relevant facts has fallen somewhat.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: The average of the 5 factors suggests that 21% of the students' work is not acceptable; 58% is acceptable; and 21% is above average. A comparison of the students' first and last written memos shows that average critical thinking scores rose from 66% to 79%.</p> <p><u>BUS 302</u>: Almost all students (98%) demonstrated good or very good critical thinking skills when writing up their case analysis.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: Some 48% of the students' work was deemed good; 42% was acceptable; and 10% was unacceptable.</p>	<p><u>ACCT 351</u>: Three corrective steps have been taken. (1) students are provided a grading rubric with emphasis placed on stating the relevant facts, so they know what is expected; (2) students will list the relevant facts in a special memo format; and (3) feedback has (again) been communicated to the BUS 302 coordinator to have 302 instructors spend more time on helping students identify all the case facts in a systematic fashion.</p>
Apply conceptual understanding to both structured and unstructured problems in accounting	Fall 2006 and Spring 2007	<p><u>ACCT 351</u>: (spring only) Students' application of conceptual understanding to real world problems was assessed within case analysis.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: (fall only) Students' conceptual understanding was assessed with memos which used a detailed grading rubric (2 factors for the conceptual understanding component).</p> <p><u>ACCT 460</u>: (fall only) Students' conceptual understanding of the audit process was assessed by a comprehensive essay question on the final exam. Five factors were used to determine students' understanding of the audit process.</p>	<p><u>ACCT 351</u>: Some 81% of the students' work was deemed acceptable; and 19% was not acceptable. This is an improvement over spring 2005 results when only 63% of students' work was deemed acceptable.</p> <p><u>ACCT 440</u>: The average of the 2 factors suggests that 61% of the students' work is not acceptable; 37% is acceptable; and 1% is above average. A comparison of the students' first and last written memos shows that average scores rose from 48% to 66%.</p> <p><u>ACCT 460</u>: The average of the 5 factors suggests that 61% of the students' work was acceptable, while 39% was not acceptable. Students had the most difficulty (i.e., 75% unacceptable) with properly supporting their conclusions with appropriate reasoning and evidence.</p>	<p><u>ACCT 460</u>: The following four steps were taken to address this problem within the course: (1) provide coaching in how to support conclusions; (2) explain common types of errors in supporting conclusions; (3) discuss the connection between unclear responses and the failure to think through the issues clearly; and (4) provide examples of good and poor solutions to sample questions.</p>

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Dates	Assessment Procedures	Summary of Findings	Use of Findings for Program Improvement
Research accounting literature for both structured and unstructured problems	Fall 2006	<u>ACCT 440</u> : Students' ability to research the tax code and its regulations was assessed with memos.	Some 82% of the students' work was deemed acceptable and 18% was deemed not acceptable.	No course or program changes are associated with these findings.
Understand the cross-functional and interdisciplinary nature of business problems	Fall 2006	Students' ability to apply cross-functional and discipline-based knowledge was assessed in BUS 302 with case analysis wherein students must correctly apply major concepts from six lower-division business core classes.	Almost all students (98%) demonstrated good or very good ability to apply major concepts from the lower-division core in their case analysis.	No course or program changes are associated with these findings.
Understand and apply basic business concepts	Fall 2006 and Spring 2007	<p><u>ETS-MFT</u>: The Major Field Test in Business was given to 84 randomly selected students enrolled in the capstone course. 120 multiple-choice questions test students' knowledge of accounting, economics, management, quantitative business analysis, finance, marketing, legal environment, information systems, and international issues.</p> <p><u>BUS 302L</u>: Students take a multiple-choice exam in each of the six lower-division core business subjects: financial and managerial accounting; business law; micro and macroeconomics; and statistics. Students must score a minimum of 50% on each exam to pass BUS 302L and they have three opportunities to take each exam.</p> <p><u>FIN 303</u>: (fall only) Multiple-choice exam questions were used to assess students' knowledge of investment decisions, finance decisions, and the use of financial data.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: (spring only) students' knowledge of marketing principles was assessed within a situation audit.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: Students' knowledge of basic operations management concepts was assessed with exam questions; and their ability to analyze operations management problems was assessed within a short business case (spring only).</p>	<p><u>ETS-MFT</u>: A breakdown of mean scores by subject area shows that students scored highest on the information systems, management, and finance questions (53% to 54% correct) and lowest on quantitative business analysis, legal environment, and marketing questions (43% to 45% correct).</p> <p><u>BUS 302L</u>: Consistently high failure rates (i.e., roughly 15%) are seen in the financial and managerial accounting exams and the statistics exam. Alternatively, fairly low failure rates are seen in the business law exam (less than 6%).</p> <p><u>FIN 303</u>: Roughly 81% of students correctly answered questions covering investment decisions; 71% correctly answered questions covering financing decisions; and 77% correctly answered questions covering the use of financial data.</p> <p><u>MKT 304</u>: Some 27% of the students' work was good; 68% was acceptable; and 5% was unacceptable.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: Students appear to do fairly well with basic concepts as 87% (83%) of their answers were deemed good enough or very good in fall (spring). Their success in solving operations problems was not as strong with 77% falling into the categories good enough or very good.</p>	<p>Poor performance on the ETS-MFT statistics questions has been reported to the BUS 302 director who plans to assign more cases with statistical content. Additionally, there is some discussion of covering more statistical concepts in the SOM 306 class.</p> <p><u>BUS 302L</u>: Relevant departments (systems and operations management, business law, economics, and accounting) are reviewing and updating their exam questions. Online review materials are also being improved. (This process is ongoing.) The BUS 302 steering committee is also working to construct reliability measures for the exam questions.</p> <p><u>SOM 306</u>: Many faculty suspect that students' difficulty in solving operations problems is caused by poor math background. It is hoped that the newly adopted MATH 103 course will better prepare future students.</p>