

FCBE Assurance of Learning “Closing the Loop” Committee Report

BBA - Accountancy

Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

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This report consists of a summary of the experiences gained, lessons learned, and recommendations for future improvement. In addition, this report details specific findings, conclusions, recommendations, and comments. All data used by this committee can be found on the FCBE Assessment website: <http://www.fcbeassessment.net>. The committee was given a general charge, as well as additional charges as follows:

General Charge to FCBE “Close the Loop” Committees

1. Review the assessment rubrics carefully for the degree program to assure a thorough knowledge of the goals and objectives established by faculty for the degree program.
2. Review data analysis and graphic representation for each objective to determine the degree that reasonable expectations were met. State the reason for your finding. If not met, what is needed to increase the likelihood that the objective will be met during a subsequent assessment—delete the objective, revise the objective wording, add specific assignments in courses, change in prerequisites, suggest a support activity, and so forth?
3. Include an appropriate statement for each objective to reflect findings that support your review comments so that a third reader can understand your reasoning and intentions.
4. Include specific review recommendations and/or comments for each learning goal for the rubric.
5. After all assessment data for the degree program have been reviewed. The committee should develop a team report in narrative form to summarize findings, conclusions and recommendations. Be specific and relate conclusions and recommendations to specific findings.
6. Discuss the entire process with appropriate faculty in the School of Accountancy to assure input and that your recommendations represent faculty in the School of Accountancy.
7. The expected standard is that 70 percent or more of the students will score in the Exemplary category. If not, corrective action will be recommended.

Degree Program: BBA Accounting

Goal 1. Students will be effective communicators.

Objective 1.1. Develop a clear and concise topic statement of the issues to be addressed.

Mean. 6.10

Rubric: 62% Exemplary

Findings. Almost 2/3 of BBA accounting students assessed (62%) show exemplary level of ability to develop a clear and concise topic, but about 1/3 scored in the good (4-6) range and 6% in the fair range, suggesting an opportunity for improvement.

Objective 1.2. Explain the approach taken to evaluate an issue relating to a business topic.

Mean. 7.37.

Rubric: 84% Exemplary

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) by 84% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 16% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, this objective is being met.

Objective 1.3. Summarize the results of the analysis of an issue in a clear set of conclusions.

Mean. 5.38

Rubric: 64% Exemplary

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by only 64% of the BBA accounting students assessed. As a result, an opportunity exists for improvement.

Objective 1.4. Present the topic in a professional manner.

Mean. 6.21

Rubric: 45% Exemplary

Findings. Fewer than half of BBA accounting students assessed (45%) show exemplary level of ability to present a topic in a professional manner, suggesting significant opportunity for improvement.

Goal 1 Conclusions:

Based on an overall assessment of the four objectives, it appears that a large percentage of School of Accountancy students are in need of improvement in communicating effectively--particularly concerning presenting in a professional manner. This result correlates with the School of Accountancy Board of Advisors as well as the SPARKS-BBER focus group Number Six (made up almost exclusively of business focus group members), both of which identified a lack of professional manner as a key deficiency in the University of Memphis undergraduate student. For example it was stated by many employers concerning University of Memphis students that, "their personal appearance was not acceptable for an interview, they were not dressed professionally, and they were not prepared." While they possessed reasonable "...technical and written communication skills..." students lacked verbal communication skills and business manners." In addition, conversations conveyed through FCBE Dean Rajiv Grover suggest the need for improved communication and confidence in professional interactions between students and the Memphis business community.

Recommendations:

Increase opportunities in UG accounting classes relating to improving verbal communication skills as part (Communication) of the College's 4 C's initiative.

Primarily through Beta Alpha Psi activities, open to all accounting majors, improve instruction relating to students exhibiting professional appearance, professional etiquette, and confidence during one-to-one communications, including job interviews.

Have instructors require professional dress for one or more student presentations.

Goal 2. Students will be critical thinkers.

Objective 2.1. Present, assess, and analyze appropriate supporting data/evidence relating to the problem or issue.

Mean. 8.31

Rubric: **93% Exemplary**

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (93%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 7% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, this objective is being met.

Objective 2.2. Identify and assess conclusions, implications, and consequences that support decision making.

Mean. 8.24

Rubric: **97% Exemplary**

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (97%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 3% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, this objective is being met.

Objective 2.3. Identify the problem and then formulate a summary.

Mean. 8.15

Rubric: **94% Exemplary**

Findings. This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (94%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 6% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, students are generally able to identify a problem and then formulate a summary.

Goal 2 Conclusions.

Results of assessment in this area suggest that this goal is generally being met and School of Accountancy students perform reasonably well as critical thinkers.

Recommendation.

No specific additional action is indicated, but the faculty feels this skill can be enhanced through learning opportunities in UG accounting classes relating to critical thinking skills as part (Critical Thinking) of the College's 4 C's initiative.

Goal 3. Students will be knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment.

Objective 3.1. Identify a dilemma relating to a potentially unethical behavior.

Mean. 3.76.

Rubric: 12% Exemplary

Findings. This objective was met by only 12% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) and was met by 27% at below the good level. Many corporate problems can be attributed to situations in which the participant is unaware that his or her behavior is unethical. Thus, addressing this objective is essential. Opportunity for improvement is apparent and essential.

Objective 3.2. Formulate stakeholders that are affected by a potentially unethical behavior.

Mean. 4.88.

Rubric: 49% Exemplary

Findings. This objective was met by only about half of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) indicating an opportunity to improve understanding of the stakeholders that are affected by a potentially unethical behavior.

Objective 3.3. Analyze alternatives and identify consequences that result from unethical behavior.

Mean. 4.18.

Rubric: 22% Exemplary

Findings. This objective was not met by only 78% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9). This suggests a general misunderstanding by most of our students of the consequences that result from unethical behavior.

Goal 3 Conclusions:

An overall assessment of the three objectives suggests that School of Accountancy students are not as knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment as is desirable. Because this issue is so important, specific action is needed in this area.

Recommendations:

Discussions about ethical issues relating to the accounting and business environment should be included in several specific accounting classes. These classes should be identified by the Director of the School of Accountancy and appropriate faculty and monitored by the Director to assure that discussions of ethical issues are being provided and measured in a systematic manner.

Goal 4. Students will be knowledgeable about the global environment of business.

Objective 4.1. Demonstrate an awareness of the economic, social, and cultural environments within which international businesses operate.

Mean. 6.29.

Rubric: 75% Exemplary

Findings. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the accounting students assessed performed in the 7-9 range, while 23% of the group was evaluated in the 4-6 range. These results indicate that students are generally aware of the international economic, social and cultural environments of business.

Objective 4.2. Demonstrate an awareness of the political and technological environments within which international businesses operate.

Mean. 6.71.

Rubric: 85% Exemplary

Findings. Eighty-five percent (85%) of BBA accounting students assessed show an exemplary level of awareness on this dimension, suggesting that students are generally aware of the political and technical environments of business.

Objective 4.3. Demonstrate an awareness of the legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions that are components of global business operations.

Mean. 4.62.

Rubric: 80% Exemplary

Findings. Eighty percent (80%) of the accounting students evaluated performed in the 7-9 (exemplary) range, while 20% of the group was evaluated in the 4-6 range. These results indicate that students are generally aware of the legal, institutional and financial types of international transactions that are components of global business operations.

Goal 4 Conclusions:

The assessment results collectively indicate that School of Accountancy students are generally knowledgeable about the global environment of business. This is perhaps attributable to improvements made in the previous Close the Loop effort which were:

Improve instruction relating to students developing a better understanding about how contemporary international events influence global business. Add an UG course in International Accounting. Begin instruction related to IFRS in Introductory Accounting. Increase coverage of IFRS in Intermediate Accounting.

Recommendations:

No recommendations for improvement related to this Goal 4 are being made.

Goal 5: Students will be proficient users of business presentation and analysis technology.

Objective 5.1: Demonstrate analytical skills and technological expertise while developing and presenting business information.

Mean 6.50

Rubric: 77% Exemplary

Findings: Over three-fourths of the students evaluated demonstrated “exemplary” analytical skills and technological expertise while developing and presenting business information; no students demonstrated less than a “good” ability.

Objective 5.2: Utilize internet technology to perform queries and searches to locate relevant and accurate information.

Mean 8.67

Rubric: 100% Exemplary

Findings: All (100%) of the students evaluated demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to utilize internet technology to perform queries and searches to locate relevant and accurate information; the remaining students a “good” ability. This indicates that the assessment objective is being met.

Objective 5.3: Use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems.

Mean 7.00

Rubric: 93% Exemplary

Findings: A large majority (93%) of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems suggesting that this objective is being met.

Conclusions: Overall, the students assessed are generally proficient users of business presentation and analysis technology. This is perhaps attributable to improvements made in the previous Close the Loop effort which were:

Improve instructional opportunities in UG accounting classes relating to using and understanding computer hardware and software.

Recommendations: No recommendations for improvement related to this Goal 5 are being made.

Goal 6: The student will be knowledgeable in accounting and its functional support of organizations.

Objective 6.1: The graduate will be able to understand and process the information and outputs needed by various organizations while using appropriate documentation. (4240, 4241, 4020)

Mean 7.26

Rubric: 89% Exemplary

Findings: The vast majority (89) of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to understand and process the information and outputs needed by various organizations while using appropriate documentation, suggesting that this objective is being met.

Objective 6.2: The graduate will be able to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in financial reporting. (3110, 3120, 4211)

Mean 6.51

Rubric: 61% Exemplary

Findings: Fewer than two-thirds (61%) of the students assessed demonstrated “exemplary” understanding of the core competencies in financial reporting; only 2% demonstrated less than a “good” understanding. The implication is that some improvement is needed relative to students’ abilities in this area.

Objective 6.3: The graduate will be able to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in managerial accounting. (3310)

Mean 4.91

Rubric: 25% Exemplary

Findings: Only 25% of our students demonstrated a proficiency in the core competencies in managerial accounting, suggesting a significant opportunity for improvement.

Objective 6.4: The graduate will be able to demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in taxation. (3510, 4520)

Mean **6.00**

Rubric: **64% Exemplary**

Findings: Sixty-four percent of the students demonstrated “exemplary” understanding of the core competencies in taxation; 12% demonstrated less than a “good” understanding. An opportunity to improve this understanding is indicated.

Conclusions: Overall, the students evaluated demonstrated a greater understanding of how to process the information and outputs needed by various organizations while using appropriate documentation. However, there is an opportunity to improve students understanding of specific accounting functional areas, particularly managerial accounting.

Recommendations:

Identify and stress a proficiency in the core competencies in all Accounting undergraduate classes. Update the faculty’s knowledge of the skills and knowledge tested on the CPA exam.