

**FCBE Assurance of Learning “Closing the Loop” Committee Report
Master of Science in 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 and conclusions. Be specific and relate conclusions and recommendations to specific findings.
6. Discuss the entire process with appropriate faculty in the college to assure input and that your recommendations represent faculty in the college.

Degree Program: MS Accounting

Goal 1: The student will be knowledgeable in accounting and its functional support of organizations.

Objective 1.1: Understand and process the information and outputs needed by various organizations using appropriate documentation.
(ACCT 7320, ACCT 7610)

Mean: 4.61

Rubric: 27% Exemplary

Findings: Of the students assessed, only twenty-seven percent were found to have an “exemplary” (level 7-9) ability to demonstrate an understanding of the information and outputs needed by various organizations using appropriate documentation. Fifty-five percent assessed in the “good” category. The implication is that students are marginally able to understand and process the information and outputs needed by various organizations using appropriate documentation, and significant opportunity exists for improvement.

Objective 1.2: Demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in the graduate’s area of concentration.
(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7510, ACCT 7420, ACCT 7928)

Mean: 7.64

Rubric: 73% Exemplary

Findings: Seventy-three percent of the students assessed were found to have an “exemplary” level of competence in the graduate’s area of concentration. The vast majority of the remaining students assessed were in the highest level of the “good” category.

Objective 1.3: Demonstrate an acceptable level of competence in the financial accounting area. (ACCT 6211, ACCT 7120, ACCT 6926, ACCT 6927)

Mean: 8.08

Rubric: 97% Exemplary

Findings: This objective was achieved with seventy-eight percent of the students demonstrating an “exemplary” level of competence in the financial accounting area. The balance of the students assessed in the “good” category.

Conclusions: The faculty believes this program goal is met to a large extent with the exception of demonstrating an understanding of the information and outputs needed by various organizations using appropriate documentation, where opportunities for improvement obviously are indicated.

Recommendations: The faculty recommends that our MS course Acct 7610 be modified to emphasize the information and outputs needed by various organizations using appropriate documentation.

Goal 2: The student will be an effective communicator and team member.

Objective 2.1: Deliver an organized and persuasive oral presentation that demonstrates focus, time management, and effective visuals.

(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7320, ACCT 7120).

Mean: 6.48

Rubric: 64% Exemplary

Findings: Sixty-four percent of the students assessed at the “exemplary” (7-9) level on this measure. The implication is that students are marginally able to deliver organized, persuasive, oral presentations, but significant opportunity exists for improvement.

Objective 2.2: Create a clear, well-organized paper using quantitative tools and documentation when appropriate.

(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7320)

Mean: 6.28

Rubric: 70% Exemplary

Findings: Seventy percent of the students scored “exemplary” on this measure. The indication is that students are somewhat better capable to prepare a written proposal as compared to an oral presentation. This objective has been marginally met.

Objective 2.3: Collaborate effectively in a team environment on a course project.
(ACCT 7120, ACCT 7320, ACCT 7928)

Mean: 6.98

Rubric: 84% Exemplary

Findings: A large majority of the students scored “exemplary” in collaborating effectively in a team environment on a course project. An implication of this and the previous two objective assessments is that students perform better in a group than when working alone on written or oral projects.

Conclusions: Overall, students are effective communicators when working in a team environment. However; improvement is needed when working alone on oral or written projects. In the MS-Accountancy program, students are expected to work effectively in teams. In the previous assessment in 2009, we found that for a significant number of students, these team skills had not been developed. At that time, we recommended an increase in the emphasis on team projects throughout the MS program. Similarly, we recommended that there be more team projects in the undergraduate accounting program as a majority of MS students are graduates of the MS undergraduate program. The results of the current assessment suggest that our implemented recommendations were successful. On the other hand, individual skills as assessed fell short of those in the previous time period. The reasons for this change are uncertain. We hope the successful emphasis on team projects did not occur at the expense of developing individual skills.

Recommendations: We recommend a continued emphasis on team projects throughout the MS program and team projects in the undergraduate accounting program as a majority of MS students are graduates of the MS undergraduate program. To address the need for students to deliver organized, persuasive, oral presentations, we recommend that faculty not only require oral presentations, but that we stress the characteristics of presentations that constitute quality and persuasiveness.

Goal 3: The student will be a critical thinker and a problem solver.

Objective 3.1: The graduate will be able to identify and frame problems involving accounting issues.

(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7120, ACCT 7610).

Mean: 8.46

Rubric: 100% Exemplary

Findings: All of the students evaluated demonstrated exemplary ability to identify and frame problems involving accounting issues. An implication is that improvement is needed.

Objective 3.2: The graduate will be able to formulate and defend an effective strategy for solving problems. (ACCT 6211, ACCT 7120, ACCT 7511, ACCT 7610).

Mean: 7.85

Rubric: 94% Exemplary

Findings: Ninety-four percent of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to *formulate* an effective strategy for solving problems.

Conclusions: A dramatic improvement is indicated by the current assessment. In the previous assessment, the faculty recommended that these skills be practiced in a debate setting, a class presentation setting, and in a term project and that activities be increased related to multiple critical thinking and problem-solving settings. It was recommended that more emphasis is placed on identifying and framing problems involving accounting issues. Current results suggest that our implemented recommendations were successful.

Recommendations: None

Goal 4: The student will be aware of ethical ramifications and global business implications of decisions.

Objective 4.1: The graduate will understand the basic accounting ethical rules.
(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7320, ACCT 7610).

Mean: 5.85

Rubric: 37% Exemplary

Findings: Only thirty-seven percent of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” understanding of the basic accounting ethical rules. These results clearly demonstrate a need to increase the level of understanding of the basic accounting ethical rules among MS students.

Objective 4.2: The graduate will recognize the ethical ramifications of various accounting decisions in a written assignment.
(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7320, ACCT 7610)

Mean 5.64

Rubric: 41% Exemplary

Findings: Only forty-one percent of the students scored “exemplary” on this measure. These results clearly demonstrate a need to increase the level of understanding of the ethical ramifications of various accounting decisions in a written assignment.

Objective 4.3: The graduate will understand differences in.
(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7120)

Mean: 7.47

Rubric: 83% Exemplary

Findings: A large majority, 83 percent, of the students were rated at the highest level of exemplary on this objective. The remaining 17 percent were rated good.

Conclusions: The assessment results for Goal 4 and the related objectives indicate that students have a grasp of global accounting practices. This was an area in need of improvement in our previous assessment round in 2009. We might attribute the

improvement to benefits derived from our recommendations then (a) that a new international course in the UG program be created, as a majority of the MS students are graduates of the UG program and (b) that the 7120 course focus on IFRS. The assessment results for Goal 4 and the related objectives indicate that students have room for improvement in understanding ethics in business decision making.

Recommendations: The faculty recommends that our MS course Acct 7610 be modified to emphasize an essential understanding of business ethics and its ramifications. We feel also that the findings indicate a possible inconsistency in the way ethics is assessed and will meet as a group prior to the next assessment to formulate consistent scoring of the metrics.

Goal 5: The student will be technologically competent

Objective 1: The graduate will be proficient in the using online resources to solve problems relating to accounting applications.

(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7510).

Mean: 7.67

Rubric: 85% Exemplary

Findings: Eighty-five percent of the students assessed were found to have an “exemplary” proficiency in the use of online resources to solve problems relating to accounting applications. The remaining 15% of the students rated in the “good” category. The implication is that this objective is met.

Objective 2: The graduate will be proficient in using computer-based problem-solving aids to solve problems relating to accounting applications.

(ACCT 6241, ACCT 7320, ACCT 7420, ACCT 7510).

Mean: 6.71

Rubric: 75% Exemplary

Findings: Of the students assessed, 75% percent were found to have an “exemplary” proficiency in using computer-based problem-solving aids to solve problems relating to accounting applications. The implication is that this objective is met.

Conclusions: The MS students show acceptable competence in regard to technology. This represents an improvement over the previous assessment round in 2009 in which proficiency was deemed unacceptable. Perhaps the improvement is due, at least in part, to our implementation of recommendations at that time that the graduate curriculum be reviewed in regard to integrating more uses of technology into classes with coordination of those activities among courses.

Recommendations: Continue to integrate uses of technology into classes with coordination of those activities among courses.