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| **Assurance of Student Learning Report**  **2020-2021** | |
| Gordon Ford College of Business | Accounting Department |
| Master of Accounting | |
| Assessment Coordinator: Stacy R. Bibelhauser | |

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| ***Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages.*** | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome 1:**  Professional Knowledge: **Students will be able to *apply* advanced-level accounting skills.** | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Embedded questions covering technical skills administered during required courses within the program. | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | | **Met** | **X Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 2:** Professional Skills: **Students will be able to *integrate* professional accounting skills to solve organizational problems.** | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Cases or comprehensive problems assigned in appropriate MAcc courses and assessed using a department-approved rubric | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.**  This SLO was not assessed during the current year. A number of assignments have been added to the graduate information systems/analytics course. A capstone project is currently under construction that will incorporate the skills necessary to assess this student learning objective. | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 3:**  Professional Communications: **Students will be able to *display* proficiency in professional communication skills.** | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Cases or comprehensive problems with required written communication of results assigned in appropriate MAcc courses. | | |
| **Instrument 2** | Oral presentations assigned in appropriate MAcc courses | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | **X Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 4:** Professional Ethics: **Students will be able to *incorporate* the principles in professional codes of conduct to various ethics-related situations.** | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Ethics case administered and evaluated in graduate Advanced Auditing Standards, Applications, and Fraud course (ACCT 540) | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 4.** | | **X Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Program Summary (Briefly summarize the action and follow up items from your detailed responses on subsequent pages.)** | | | |
| The MAcc program at WKU has historically ranked well on all metrics. Because the faculty of the program strive for continuous improvement and pay attention to the changing landscape of the accounting profession, the requirements of the program are being expanded. A revised Masters program will begin in the Fall 2021 semester that incorporates required data analytics courses. Enhanced data analytics projects involving accounting are also encouraged in each of the required graduate courses. | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 1** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | **Students will be able to *apply* advanced-level accounting skills.** | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT: Each of five core graduate accounting courses evaluated reported the results of 8-10 embedded multiple-choice questions and/or results of comprehensive projects that test the various course learning objectives or major topical coverage. | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | The overall score on the embedded questions must equal or exceed 75%. | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | A minimum of 75% of students will correctly identify at least 75% of the answers related to the learning objectives. | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 63.3% | |
| **Methods** | Fall 2020: 15 students were evaluated on their mastery of “professional knowledge” involving audit risk, managerial/cost accounting, and internal controls/accounting information systems through questions included on various exams, quizzes and projects throughout the semester. **Audit:** Eight course objectives were measured. Less than 75% of students met the target in five of the eight course objectives. The overall average on the embedded questions totaled 65.9%. **Managerial Accounting:** Overall results produced a 77.9% average on the questions covering course objectives. However, only 66.7% of students reached the success target of 75% correct responses in 2020. **Information Systems/Data Analytics:** In 2019, slightly less than 75% of students achieved the targeted level of success in two course objectives. In 2020, both of these areas had a student success rate of 80%. The course objective related to audit sampling resulted in a 46.67% correct response rate in 2020 which is a decrease from the 2019 correct response rate of 52.63%. Finally, a course objective related to knowledge of revenue controls only showed mastery by 73.3% of students. This same objective showed acceptable results in the prior year.  Spring 2021: Nine students were evaluated on their mastery of applying specialized accounting principles to financial reporting issues and exploring tax issues. **Financial Reporting:** There are four course objectives. The average score on all embedded measures exceeded 75% in each of the course objectives. Between 77% and 100% of students met the target in three of the four objectives. Only five of the nine students (55.6%) met the target of 75% on the objective related to using financial statement analysis to conduct trend analysis. After further analysis, the only topic within the financial statement analysis area that fell below the targeted outcome involved understanding and interpreting the common-size income statement. **Tax:**  All nine students met the targets for mastery of tax topics.  In all, student mastery of 30 course objectives was measured. The target was met in 19 of the 30 course objectives resulting in a success rate for the program of 63.3%. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | | | | **Met** | **X Not Met** |
| **Actions** | | | | | |
| **Audit:** Students will receive additional instruction through an assigned case (Assessing Audit Risk at Tesla Motors) which will emphasize the options available for the auditor when the acceptable level of audit risk decreases during the audit engagement.  **AIS/Analytics:**  The course material related to audit sampling was moved to the Information Systems course. Unfortunately the area still fell short of the target performance of 75%. Additional coverage and discussion of this topic will be implemented in the course. Follow up will occur after the Fall 2021 semester. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** | | | | | |
| **AIS/Analytics:**  In the Fall 2021 semester, an audit risk diagram was created to emphasize the difference between the sampling risk in test of controls and the sampling risk in substantive tests. Within the sampling risk in test of controls, the diagram explains the difference between the risk of overreliance and the risk of underreliance. Within the sampling risk in substantive tests, the risk of incorrect rejection is differentiated from the risk of incorrect acceptance. Performance in these areas of the course was unsatisfactory in prior years, but have now met the targets for success.  **Tax:**  In 2019, students fell slightly short (73%) of meeting the 75% target on one of two questions examining the deductibility of expenses on the cash basis. In 2020 the instructor increased emphasis on tax reporting while decreasing material on historical events and tax processes. The curricular change led to all nine students successfully meeting the performance targets for all learning objectives.  **Mastery of the course objectives will be reassessed through embedded questions. Additional questions may be added for objectives where less than 75% of students correctly identified the answers in order to more fully understand the weaknesses.** | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** | | | | | |
| A graduate Exit Exam will be constructed that encompasses the former embedded questions. This exam will be given during the student’s final semester. The exit exam will be administered in the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 2** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | **Professional Skills: Students will be able to *integrate* professional accounting skills to solve organizational problems.** | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT: A number of instruments may be used to assess this learning objective.  - Performance levels on rubrics used to assess research and analytical skills  - Responses to open-ended questions on specific graduate courses reported on post-graduate student surveys may be included when we are evaluating our “closing the loop” activities in significant problem areas.  - Performance levels on cases in various classes that measure students’ abilities to recognize, employ, and present the appropriate analytic methods related to the assignment | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | A ranking of “3.0” out of 5 where 5=Distinguished and 3=Proficient | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 70% of students should score in the “distinguished” or “proficient” categories of the rubrics. | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | This outcome was not evaluated in the 2020-21 academic year. | |
| **Methods** | A capstone case study in the graduate Advanced Accounting Information Systems and Data Analytics course will be used to assess students’ ability to “research complex accounting issues and apply findings in various decision settings.” The project will have an emphasis on identifying issues, researching the authoritative literature, using appropriate analytic methods to solve the problem, and communicating analyses and results. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.** | | | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| The Advanced Accounting Information Systems and Data Analytics (ACCT 510) course incorporated 8 data analytics projects and 3 research papers during Fall 2019. A major overhaul of the data analytics content for this course occurred in the Fall 2020. A new textbook "Introduction to Data Analytics for Accounting" and its 50 Excel and Tableau assignments is now being used to cover the data analytics segment of the course.  The faculty voted in September 2020 to add 3 additional required Business Data Analytics, thus changing the focus of the program to a combined accounting and data analytics curriculum. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| A capstone project is being implemented in the Fall 2021 semester to assess the students’ mastery of the concepts referenced in the learning objectives. The projects and papers implemented in the current year will facilitate the learning process. The capstone project will provide the assessment.  The proposal to change the graduate program to require 3 business data analytics courses was submitted in the 2020-21 academic year. The degree will be a Masters in Accounting and Business Analytics. The changes have been approved by the University. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** | | | | | |
| This LO will be assessed in the Fall 2021 semester. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 3** | | | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | **Professional Communications (LO 3).** *Students will enhance their professional communication skills and will be able to:*   * Articulate thoughts clearly and concisely in professional business writing. * Produce professional quality business documents. * Deliver a professional oral presentation using appropriate technology. | | | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | Cases or comprehensive problems with required written communication of results assigned in appropriate MAcc courses. | | | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | A ranking of “3.0” out of 5 where 5=Distinguished and 3=Proficient | | | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | | We expect MAcc students’ average score on the rubric used to measure performance of students’ written communication skills to be at the “Proficient” level (3) or higher | | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | Content: 100%  Language: 100%  Decision-making: 78%  Format: 100% | |
| **Methods** | Research papers were evaluated for written communication skills using a department approved rubric. This portion of the objective was evaluated during the Spring 2021 semester using all 9 students enrolled in the course. | | | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 2** | Oral Presentations | | | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | A ranking of “3.0” out of 5 where 5=Distinguished and 3=Proficient | | | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | We expect MAcc students’ average score on the rubric used to measure performance of students’ oral presentation skills to be at the “Proficient” level (3) or higher. | | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | | 100%  All students scored at least a 4 out of 5 in each of the areas evaluated by the rubric (organization, content, language, nonverbal, visuals). | |
| **Methods** | This learning outcome was evaluated for the 2020-2021 academic year in the graduate tax course (ACCT 530). Students presented their research papers to the class. The presentations were given in teams of two, but the asessments were completed on an individual basis using a rubric that was approved by the department and the college. | | | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | | | | | **X Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | | | |
| This learning outcome has historically been very strong. Oral presentations and written communication is assigned and assessed in all graduate courses. Faculty are encouraged to include these activities in their courses. No changes are recommended for this outcome at the present time. | | | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | | | |
| N/A | | | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome) | | | | | | | |
| This LO will be assessed in the Fall 2021 semester. | | | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 4** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | **Professional Ethics (LO 4).** *Students will gain an appreciation of the importance of ethical behavior in the workplace and will be able to:*   * Identify ethical dilemmas. * Apply the principles in professional codes of conduct to various situations. * Discuss the consequences related to ethics violations. | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT: Cases or comprehensive problems assigned in appropriate MAcc courses. | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | A ranking of “7.0” out of 10 where 9-10=Distinguished and 7-8=Proficient | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | We expect MAcc students’ average score on the rubric used to measure performance of students’ ethical reasoning skills to be at the “Proficient” level (7) or higher. | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% | |
| **Methods** | The learning objective was assessed using a case administered in the graduate Auditing course (ACCT 540). The professor and another rater used a rubric with scores ranging from 5 – 10 (5-6 Novice; 7-8 Proficient; 9-10 Distinguished).   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Criteria** | **Average Grade** | **Number of Students Scoring ≥ 7** | **Percentage ≥ 7** | | Identification of Ethical Dilemma | 8.68 | 14 | 100% | | Identification of alternative courses of action | 8.82 | 13 | 92.9% | | Identification of stakeholders affected by the dilemma | 9.32 | 14 | 100% | | Selection of an alternative to resolve ethical issue | 8.64 | 14 | 100% | | Determine which rights are most important | 9.93 | 14 | 100% | | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 4.** | | | | **X Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| The case is compelling and realistic. However, the instructions are very detailed and may lead students to do well on the rubric. The case instructions will be altered for the upcoming semester to be sure that students have the critical thinking skills to assess the situation and think through the appropriate actions without too much hand holding. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| Professional ethics are touched on in each of the graduate courses. The tax course and the auditing course likely spend the most time on professional standards. Students have indicated on the exit surveys that they feel quite comfortable in their knowledge of the various codes of conduct and how to identify ethical situations. Our assessments have also indicated that students have a good handle on ethical issues and expected conduct from the profession. Consequently, there is no plan for additional follow up or changes to the curriculum at this time. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome) | | | | | |
| Fall 2021 | | | | | |