

General Information

Academic Year:	2016-2017
College:	Business
Department:	Accounting
Program:	Accounting (BBAMACY/MACY)
Program Code:	52.03
Outcome Type:	Student Learning (GR)
Degree:	Masters
Coordinator/Contact:	Dr. Ann L. Watkins, Chair
Status:	Data Entry Closed

Mission Statement

The mission of the MACy program is to facilitate students preparation for and passage of the CPA exam as well as preparation for successful careers in the accounting profession. The MACy program emphasizes oral and written communication and technical and research skills needed for a career in public or private accounting.

Evidence of Improvement

Majors changes were made to the MACy program beginning in fall 2016. There are now only four core accounting courses required for the degree. A number of prior learning goals were similar and the faculty decided to merge several learning goals. Additionally, students have exceeded expectations on prior **Outcome 8. Demonstrate Reflective Thinking** for a number of years so it was decided to focus faculty attention to improvement in other areas. We went from assessing 8 learning outcomes to assessing 5 learning outcomes. Results for 2016-2017 were compared to prior years with the following areas of improvement identified:

Outcome 1. (Combined Outcome 1 and 2 from prior years): Accounting students will use advanced analytical and critical thinking skills to apply accounting knowledge in new and unfamiliar circumstances. Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate information, solve problems, and make justifiable decisions in the different areas of accounting.

In ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation) students participated in solving 6 tax problems in class, while lectures were used to aid understanding of the problems. 89% of students achieved 75% or better when applying analytical and critical thinking skills to solve accounting tax issues. This is a slight improvement over last year. In ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research), students were required to research and provide their solution on an accounting for income tax case. Students had to determine whether a valuation allowance account for a deferred tax asset could be reduced and suggest tax planning strategies. This semester an example case was worked through during class earlier in the semester with unknown terms and information so that it could be pointed out to the students earlier not to ignore information they do not understand. Overall, 89% of students met or exceeded the goal and 11% were below, which is an improvement over last year's 86%.

Outcome 4. (Outcome 5 in prior years): Accounting students will conceptualize a complex issue into a coherent, persuasive written or oral statement. Students will develop well-written reports, memos, and projects that explain findings, organize ideas into a coherent train of thought, and justify a conclusion or recommendation. Students will make effective oral presentations that explain findings, organize ideas into a coherent train of thought, and justify a conclusion or recommendation.

Students have demonstrated improvement in their oral presentations and discussions in ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance). Eighty-two percent of students met expectations on method 2 of this outcome assessment, demonstrating a slight improvement over the 81% last year. Since the debates take place only once during the semester it is difficult to measure improvement over the semester. However, students do appear to continue to gain more confidence throughout the semester and their ability to support a particular position and clearly articulate their position seems to improve during class discussion of topics over the semester compared to initial open discussions in class.

Outcome 5. (Outcome 7 in prior years): Accounting students will apply ethical reasoning for resolution of ethical dimensions of accounting and reporting in the business world. Students will be able to recognize an ethical dilemma, apply ethical reasoning to resolve it and provide support for the resolution and effects on stakeholders.

Students were asked to read a case and to write a memo outlining their professional judgment on a given issue. Students were required to render a decision with respect to type of audit opinion based on a set of facts. Students were asked to identify the ethical issue, the relevant facts supporting their decision, the various stakeholders, accounting and auditing issues, operational issues and various alternatives. Ninety percent of students met expectations on this measure. This is an improvement over the 85% meeting expectations in 2016-2017.

Action Plan

MACy students appear to be meeting with learning goal expectations and showing improvement in over half of the identified learning goals. There are several areas where improvement has not been consistent and sustained. Recommendations for addressing those areas are discussed in specific action plans for each outcome for each relevant course below.

Outcome 1

Category: Student Learning Outcome

Accounting students will use advanced analytical and critical thinking skills to apply accounting knowledge in new and unfamiliar circumstances. Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate information, solve problems, and make justifiable decisions in the different areas of accounting.

Outcome 1 - Method 1

Many of the graduate accounting courses will use embedded test questions to assess critical thinking skills and the application of accounting principles in new and unfamiliar circumstances. Test questions common to all sections of the following specified courses will be used. Related expectations for scores on the questions are also indicated.

Course	Target(% of students and desired score)
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ACC 5316 (Advance Accounting)	
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ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation)	75% will score 75% or better
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Outcome 1 - Method 1 - Result

ACC 5316 (Advanced Accounting)

Results:

ACC 5316 was only taught in the fall of 2016. Open ended test questions were used to assess critical thinking skills and application of accounting principles. Questions tested students' ability to apply concepts of financial statement consolidations. Eighty percent of students scored a 75% or above.

Action Plan:

The instructor will evaluate the test question for rigor. If it is determined to be an acceptably challenging question, similar questions will be used in the future but since this is a graduate course we may consider raising the expectation of 75% will score 75% or better to 75% will score 80% or better.

ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation)

Results

This course was taught only in the fall. On the first day of class a framework for analyzing tax problems was presented. Students participated in solving problems in class, while lectures were used to aid understanding of the problems. 89% of students achieved 75% or better. This is a slight improvement over last year.

Action Plan

The instructor will continue to emphasize problem solving and class participation in exercises. Lecture will be utilized as a supplement to solving exercises. The instructor will continue to introduce a framework for analyzing tax problems during the first class day. We will continue to monitor performance in the short semester verses the long semester.

Outcome 1 - Method 2

Many of the graduate accounting courses will use a project, case, or professional memos to assess critical thinking skills and the application of accounting principles in new and unfamiliar circumstances. A faculty developed and agreed upon rubric will be used in the assessment.

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance) will utilize a research paper and it is expected that 70% will meet expectations of 75% or better.

ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research) will utilize professional memos and it is expected that 85% will meet 80% or better.

Outcome 1 - Method 2 - Result

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance)

Results

Students were asked to read a case and to write a memo outlining their professional judgment on a given issue. Students were required to render a decision with respect to type of audit opinion based on a set of facts. Students were asked to identify the ethical issue, the relevant facts supporting their decision, the various stakeholders, accounting and auditing issues, operational issues and various alternatives. **Ninety percent** of students were able to apply professional judgment to identify the appropriate audit opinion provided a given set of facts.

Action Plan

With revision of the MACy program, this was the first time that ACC 5389 was used to assess this learning outcome. We will continue to select assessment data using the metric. With several more semester's worth of data we will be able to better evaluate student performance on this measure.

ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research)

Results

ACC 5350 was only taught in the fall semester. Students were required to research and provide their solution on an accounting for income tax case. Students had to determine whether a valuation allowance account for a deferred tax asset could be reduced and suggest tax planning strategies. This semester an example case was worked through during class earlier in the semester with unknown terms and information so that it can be pointed out to the students earlier not to ignore information they do not understand. The case subject matter was revised from the previous year to begin integrating topics that are not covered in Intermediate I or II. This will help as the course transitions to integrate the topics from ACC 5315, the current Topics course, as that course is deleted from the curriculum. Overall, **89% of students met or exceeded the goal and 11% were below, which is very similar to last semester's 86%. The goal of 85% was met.**

Action Plan

Next year, continue to work through an example case during class early in the semester with unknown terms and information so that it can be

pointed out to the students earlier not to ignore information they do not understand. The case subject matter was revised from the previous year to begin integrating topics that are not covered in Intermediate I or II. This will help as the course transitions to integrate the topics from the current Topics course which will be removed from the curriculum. Next year, the 5350 Research course will integrate topics that are currently covered in the 5315 Topics course, to be implemented fully in Fall 2017.

Outcome 2

Category: Student Learning Outcome

Accounting students will apply information technology skills in decision making at a level expected of a master's student for practice and research. Students will demonstrate the ability to use information technology (IT) and be able to apply IT in analysis and communication.

Outcome 2 - Method 1

ACC 5366 (Entity Taxation) or ACC 5316 (Advanced Accounting) will use a project to evaluate IT skills in an analysis. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet the 80% skill level. Established rubrics will be used to assess student performance on the assignments.

Outcome 2 - Method 1 - Result

With the revisions to the MACy program in fall 2016, ACC 5371 is no longer a core course requirement. Faculty decided that IT skills should be assessed using ACC 5366 (Entity Taxation) or ACC 5316 (Advanced Accounting).

ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation)

Results:

This fall ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation) used a research case to evaluate IT skills in an analysis. Students were assigned a case outlining a tax issue and required to use RIA Checkpoint, a commercial database, to find information to enable students to determine a supportable solution to the tax issue. The complexity of the issue made it difficult to just "Google" and find an acceptable solution. 92.5% of students were able to meet the expectation of finding sufficient support for their position using the RIA Checkpoint database, so expectations were met on this metric for this outcome. Last year 93% of students met the stated expectation using and XBRL case in ACC 5371 (AIS). Although results indicate that students are maintaining improvement with respect to use of IT, the assignments were very different in nature so may not be comparable.

Action Plan:

We will continue to use ACC 5366 and the RIA Checkpoint case to assess this outcome.

Outcome 2 - Method 2

ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research) will use online research projects using a common rubric. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet the 80% skill level.

Outcome 2 - Method 2 - Result

ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research)

Results

Students were required to research the online FASB Codification and provide the correct Codification number addressing the situation given, similar to the research simulations in the financial part of the CPA exam. This semester, students were given additional assignments similar to the research simulations in the FAR section of the CPA exam throughout the semester. Additional research assignments were given this semester at the beginning of the semester to allow students to become familiar with the databases before beginning the cases for the semester. Links to online tutorials on the research databases that will be used were provided to students early in the semester and appears to have aided the learning of the databases and provided a resource students found valuable. Additionally, students used the Becker Accounting Master for the first time as a platform for answering the research questions to further expose them to questions and the platform similar to the CPA exam. Meets 80%, Below 20%, which is not an improvement over last year.

Action Plan

The goal was exactly met. Next year, continue to give additional assignments similar to the research simulations in the financial part of the CPA exam. Also, give additional assignments at the beginning of the semester to familiarize students with the databases before assigning in depth cases in which the databases will be used. Provide students with links to online tutorials on the research databases that will be used. Continue to expose students to the types of research based questions they will see on the CPA exam. Use Becker AccountingMaster again if available.

Outcome 3

Category: Student Learning Outcome

Accounting students will acquire appropriate research skills needed for practice. Students will demonstrate the ability to use professional research skills, analyze the application to a problem, and communicate authoritative sources, findings, and conclusions.

Outcome 3 - Method 1

To assess MACy students' knowledge of research skills needed for practice, the following assessments will be accomplished.

In ACC 5366 (Advanced Tax), case write ups will be used. It is expected that 80% of the students will meet the 80% level. Grading will be done using established rubrics.

Outcome 3 - Method 1 - Result

With the revisions to the MAcy program in fall 2016, ACC 5320 is no longer a core course requirement. Faculty decided that research skills should be assessed using ACC 5366 (Entity Taxation) for assessment Method 1 and ACC 5350 (Financial Accounting Research) for assessment Method 2.

ACC 5366 (Business Entities Taxation)

Results:

Students were assigned a case outlining a tax issue and required to use RIA Checkpoint, a commercial database, to find information to enable students to determine a supportable solution to the tax issue. . Students were assessed based on their ability to weigh the authoritative effect of the references and use this to substantiate their tax position on the issue. 73% of students were able to meet the expectation, so expectations were not met on this metric for this outcome . Last year 83% of students met the stated expectation. Results indicate students are no longer meeting expectations on this metric.

Action Plan:

Instructors intend to dedicate more time to these issues and to provide samples of memoranda.

Outcome 3 - Method 2

Students must take one of two professional research classes to be CPA eligible. In ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research), students write research memos. It is expected that 80% of the students will perform at the 80% or higher level using established rubrics for scoring.

Outcome 3 - Method 2 - Result

ACC 5350 (Professional Accounting Research)

Results

As the course's main focus is on research needed for practice, the goal was increased this year to 85% of students meeting the expectation goals for research. Only 80% met the goal this year. Although additional assignments similar to the research simulations in the financial part of the CPA exam were given throughout the semester, this was the first time the Becker Accounting Master was used the platform to ask the research questions on the midterm exam as well as other assignments. Expectations were met and 80% represents a decline from the 86% in the prior year.

Action Plan

As 80% met the goal this we will continue to assess whether the new goal is more appropriate for the research class. We will continue using Becker Accounting Master if available and consider if the content is more challenging, thus resulting in lower performance on the assignment used for assessment, rather than a decrease in research skills of students. Additional data is needed in future semesters.

Outcome 4

Category: Student Learning Outcome

Accounting students will conceptualize a complex issue into a coherent, persuasive written or oral statement. Students will develop well-written reports, memos, and projects that explain findings, organize ideas into a coherent train of thought, and justify a conclusion or recommendation. Students will make effective oral presentations that explain findings, organize ideas into a coherent train of thought, and justify a conclusion or recommendation.

Outcome 4 - Method 1

To evaluate the written and oral communication skills of MAcy students, the following assessments will be conducted. Established rubrics will be used on all of the written and oral communication components.

ACC 5389 (Corporate Governance and Ethics) will use written projects to assess written communication skills. It is expected that 80% of the students will make an 80% or better on the written communication portion of projects.

Outcome 4 - Method 1 - Result

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance)

Results:

Students were required to develop a well-written memo using facts outlined in a case that explained findings, organize ideas into a coherent train of thought, and justify a conclusion or recommendation. Writing was assessed on style, flow, and analytical content. Ninety percent of graduate students met expectations. Expectations were reached on this metric of assessing written communication skills.

Action Plan:

With program revisions implemented in fall 2016, ACC 5315 and ACC 5320 are no longer required core courses. This was the first year ACC 5389 was used for this method of assessing written communications. Students outperformed last years results taken from ACC 5366 (Corporate Tax), performed essentially the same as results taken from ACC 5320 (Auditing) but faired far below results taken from ACC 5315 (Current Topics in Accounting). This is most likely due to the fact that the content and issues addressed in each of these courses can be very different. We plan to continue assessing writing skills in ACC 5389, but will add an assessment component to ACC 5366 (Corporate Tax) due to the very different challenging nature of the course content.

Outcome 4 - Method 2

ACC 5389 (Corporate Governance and Ethics) uses ethics debates to assess oral communication skills. It is expected that 90% will make an 85%

or better on the oral communications assignments.

Outcome 4 - Method 2 - Result

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance)

Results:

The debates continue to challenge students. Last year the Action Plan called for considering additional debates during the semester. As long as class size continues to exceed 20 graduate students, adding from debates is prohibitive. Eighty-two percent of students met expectations on this metric, demonstrating a slight improvement over the 81% last year. Since the debates take place only once during the semester it is difficult to measure improvement over the semester. However, students do appear to continue to gain more confidence throughout the semester and their ability to support a particular position and clearly articulate their position seems to improve during class discussion of topics over the semester compared to initial open discussions in class.

Action Plan:

Continue to work on reducing class size in this course so that more than one debate can be scheduled during the semester.

Outcome 5

Category: Student Learning Outcome

Accounting students will apply ethical reasoning for resolution of ethical dimensions of accounting and reporting in the business world. Students will be able to recognize an ethical dilemma, apply ethical reasoning to resolve it and provide support for the resolution and effects on stakeholders.

Outcome 5 - Method 1

ACC 5389 (Corporate Governance and Ethics) will use term papers. It is expected that 90% of the students will demonstrate the ability to correctly identify, apply ethical reasoning and provide support for the resolution by scoring at least an 80% on these papers. An established rubric will be used for grading.

Outcome 5 - Method 1 - Result

With changes to the MACy program, ACC 5320 (Auditing) is no longer a required course in the MACy core. This year only ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance) was used to assess this learning outcome.

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance)

Results:

Students were asked to read a case and to write a memo outlining their professional judgment on a given issue. Students were required to render a decision with respect to type of audit opinion based on a set of facts. Students were asked to identify the ethical issue, the relevant facts supporting their decision, the various stakeholders, accounting and auditing issues, operational issues and various alternatives. Ninety percent of students met expectations on this measure. This is an improvement over the 85% meeting expectations in 2015-2017.

Action Plan:

We will continue to use assignments in ACC 5389 to assess this metric. We will also consider using ACC 5366 (Entity Taxation) as the course content is different and the ethical issues arising in a tax context is very different than that of an auditing context.

Outcome 5 - Method 2

Students ability to apply ethical reasoning in an accounting environment is also assessed through the required exit exam. There are 12 multiple-choice questions contributing to the assessment of this ethics related outcome. It is expected that 90% of the students will score 75 or better on these questions during the first attempt and the remaining 10% of students will score 75 or better on the second attempt.

Outcome 5 - Method 2 - Result

ACC 5389 (Ethics and Corporate Governance)

Results:

Feedback from the prior year results was provided to instructors. AICPA Code of Conduct rules provide the foundation for most of the questions used in assessment. These tend to be extensive and highly technical. Faculty placed more emphasis on this material and adjusted content coverage in classes accordingly. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 51 students took the Exit Exam. 53% scored 75% or better on the selected questions. Although students continue not to meet expectations on this measure, there was a substantial improvement over last year's results.

Action Plan:

The action plan is to continue to emphasize coverage of the AICPA Code of Conduct as well as the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy Code of Conduct.

Outcome 6

Category: Support Service Outcome

The academic program will promote and realize gains in student success.

Outcome 6 - Method 1

Student retention success will be measured by observing one year retention rates of students enrolled in the academic program from their first to second year. Data will be obtained from the university's certified enrollment records at the end of the fall semester. Rates of retention success will

be expected to be at or above the university average for this level of program.

Outcome 6 - Method 1 - Result

Of the 38 students starting the program in fall 2015, 28 remained in the program one year while 9 graduated. This represents a retention rate of 96.6%. Retention rate was 90.5% for 2015-2016 representing an improvement over the previous year. The retention rate of 96.6% is above the average of 83.5% for the university which exceeds the expected target.

Outcome 6 - Method 2

Student graduation success will be measured by observing the number of graduates from the academic program in during the fall, spring, and summer semesters and comparing the number of graduates to the number of students enrolled in the program. Data will be obtained from the university's certified enrollment records for the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The number of graduates is expected to be at or above the university rate of graduation for this level of program.

Outcome 6 - Method 2 - Result

In the last year the department has implemented program changes to enable students to complete the MAcy program in one to 1.5 years. It is anticipated that as we facilitate students ability to graduate within 18 months the program will become more competitive with peer institutions. In this program, 67 of the 104 students enrolled in the program graduated in the fall, spring, and summer semesters for a graduation percentage of 66.4%, exceeding the university master's average of 37.5% and meeting the expected target. The percentage of graduates in 2016-2017 exceeded the 44.4% of graduates in 2015-2016 showing an improvement.

Outcome 7

Category: Support Service Outcome

The academic program will promote and realize diversity among its student population.

Outcome 7 - Method 1

Student gender diversity will be measured by reviewing the number and percentage of male and female students enrolled in the academic program during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Data will be obtained from the university's certified enrollment records at the end of the fall semester. Student gender diversity will be expected to be balanced (50/50).

Outcome 7 - Method 1 - Result

The number male versus female student enrolled in the academic program during the 2016 fall semester provided the gender data. In this program, 51 of the 104 students or 49% were female while 53 of the students or 51% were male providing an almost perfectly balanced gender distribution and meeting the expected target. The percentage of female and male student in 2015-2016 was 55.6% and 44.4% respectively; thus, the male-female ratio has become more balanced in 2015-2016.

Outcome 7 - Method 2

Student racial and ethnic diversity will be measured by observing race and ethnicity of students enrolled in the academic program during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Data will be obtained from the university's certified enrollment records at the end of the fall semester. Student racial and ethnic diversity will be expected to mirror percentages in the population of the state of Texas.

Outcome 7 - Method 2 - Result

The number students of various ethnic backgrounds enrolled in the academic program during the 2016-2017 fall semester provided the data to assess ethnic and racial diversity. In this program, 9 of the 104 students or 8.65% (compared to 7.4% in 2015-2016) were African-American; 19 of the 104 students or 18.27% (compared to 10.2% in 2015-2016) were Hispanic; 61 of the 104 students or 58.65% (compared to 64.8% in 2014-2015) were White, non-Hispanic; 1 of the 104 students or .96% (compared to 11.1% in 2015-2016) were of other minority or unknown backgrounds; 6 of the 104 students or 5.7% (compared to 5.6% in 2014-2015) were of non-resident International students. During 2016-2017, other Emerging Research Universities in the state of Texas had populations consisting of 9.9% African American, 31.4% Hispanic, 35.7% White, non-Hispanic, 13.3% other minority or unknown background, and 9.7% non-resident International students. Thus, the data for this program indicate students represent a racial and ethnic diversity distribution unlike that of other Texas Emerging Research Universities, also indicating that the program is not meeting the expected target. Compared to 2015-2016, the student population in 2016-2017 appears to represent a more diverse background. Historically the accounting profession has been challenged to attract minorities. Perhaps a better initial target for this program would be the ethnic diversity of masters of accountancy programs at emerging research institutions.

Approval History

Approval History Event

Outcomes Approved Level 1
Outcomes Approved Level 2
Outcomes Audit Report Submitted
Results Approved Level 1
Results Approved Level 2

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