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| **Assurance of Student Learning Report**  **2021-2022** | |
| 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** | Exit exam 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 MADA 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. | | **X 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 submitted questions (previously embedded) for an exit exam given in the students’ final semester of the program. The questions cover course learning objectives and 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** | 68.75% | |
| **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%.  Fall 2021-Spring 2022: Sixteen (16) students completed the exit exam. An average score of 75% or above in each knowledge area (or course area) and on the overall exam was achieved from the student pool as a whole. However, when measuring individual student success rates, only 11 of the 16 students scored above 75% which equates to 69% of the students. Another four students (25% of the population) scored 73% overall. While this level of success is below our target, it is considerably improved from the prior year. When looking at the details of the exam, the topical/course areas falling below the 75% target scores are taxation and auditing at 43.75% and 68.75% of students, respectively. Due to changes in the order of the tax curriculum, the exit exam was given prior to the coverage of specific topical areas. Students, predictably, did poorly in these areas as they had not been exposed to these topics. This situation will be remedied in the Spring 2023 semester. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | | | | **Met** | **X Not Met** |
| **Actions** | | | | | |
| **Audit:** The audit professor retired at the end of June, 2022. A new instructor will take over the course in the Fall 2022. The instructor will review the questions to be sure those concepts are met in the new course or that questions are updated to encompass learning objectives for the course.  **Tax:**  In Spring 2020, 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 2021 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 in 2021.  The exam given in 2022 included questions that had not yet been covered in the curricular material. The course topical order will change to accommodate the exit exam in the future. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** | | | | | |
| **Mastery of the course objectives will be reassessed through the exit exam. 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 2022 and Spring 2023 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** | 75-100% of students (n=20) scored “Proficient” or “Distinguished” in all categories evaluated for this learning objective. | |
| **Methods** | In the Spring 2022 semester, a case study in ACCT 500 was used to assess students’ ability to “research complex accounting issues and apply findings in various decision settings.” Students were assigned a project where emphasis was placed on identifying issues, researching the authoritative literature, and communicating analyses and results, all within the realm of financial statement analysis. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.** | | | | **X Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| 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. These courses will impact all students in the program beginning Fall 2022. The Professional Skills learning objective will be revised to include expanded use of analytics. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| The program is considering the use of a capstone project to more thoroughly assess the incorporation of more data analysis skills into the MADA program. This assessment will begin in the 2022-23 academic year as this is the year that all students will be required to take the additional data analytics courses that were incorporated into the new Masters in Accounting and Data Analysis program. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** | | | | | |
| This LO will be assessed in the 2022-23 academic year.. | | | | | |

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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: 95%  Language: 95%  Research: 79%  Format: 95% | |
| **Methods** | Research papers were evaluated for written communication skills using a department approved rubric. This portion of the objective was evaluated during the Spring 2022 semester using all 19 students enrolled in the course. The average score for each area of the rubric is reflected in the following chart:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Criteria | Ave Score | | Content | 3.89 | | Language | 3.95 | | Research | 4.26 | | Format | 4.26 | | Overall | 4.09 | | | | | | | |
| **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** | | Organization: 100%  Content: 100%  Language: 100%  Nonverbal: 79%  Visuals: 84% | |
| **Methods** | This learning outcome was evaluated for the 2021-2022 academic year in the graduate tax course (ACCT 530). Ten 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. Nine students presented individually on transactions accounted for differently for tax reporting purposes than for financial reporting purposes. These presentations were also assessed using the department-approved rubric. | | | | | | |
| **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 assignments are included in all required Accounting graduate courses. No changes are recommended at this 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 Spring 2023 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 70% of MAcc 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** | **Number of Students Scoring ≥ 7** | **Percentage ≥ 7** | | Identification of Ethical Dilemma | 19 | 100% | | Identification of alternative courses of action | 17 | 89.5% | | Identification of stakeholders affected by the dilemma | 19 | 100% | | Selection of an alternative to resolve ethical issue | 19 | 100% | | Determine which rights are most important | 19 | 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 2022 | | | | | |