

**FCBE Assurance of Learning “Closing the Loop” Committee Report**

**Bachelor of Business Administration - Accountancy**

**Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

**Fogelman College of Business and Economics  
University of Memphis**

**Committee Members:**

**Kenneth Lambert  
Craig Langstraat  
James Lukawitz  
Larry Moore  
Jerry Turner  
David Spiceland, Chair**

**Submitted to:  
Lloyd Brooks, FCBE Director of Assessment  
Carol Danehower, FCBE Associate Dean of Academic Programs**

**Spring 2009**

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 School of Accountancy to assure input and that your recommendations represent faculty in the School of Accountancy.

**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. 7.09**

**Rubric: 83% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by 83% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 17% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that this objective is generally being met.

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

**Mean. 7.18.**

**Rubric: 81% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by 81% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 19% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that this objective is generally being met.

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

**Mean. 7.18**

**Rubric: 87% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by 87% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 13% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that this objective is generally being met.

**Objective 1.4. Present the topic in a professional manner.**

**Mean. 7.00**

**Rubric: 88% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (88%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 12% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that this objective is generally being met.

**Objective 1.5. Synthesize and report written and oral conclusions in a rational, persuasive manner.**

**Mean. 8.00.**

**Rubric: 86% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (86%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 14% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that this objective is generally being met.

**Objective 1.6. Create an effectively written or oral report using appropriate analytic tools and presentation software (e.g., SPSS, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint).**

**Mean. 8.18.**

**Rubric: 100% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a 100% of the BBA accounting students assessed, indicating that this objective is being met.

### **Goal 1 Conclusions:**

Based on an overall assessment of the six objectives it appears that a large percentage of our students are reasonably successful in communicating effectively. Overall, though, roughly 20-25 percent still show opportunities for improvement, 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, second hand conversations conveyed through FCBE Dean Rajiv Grover suggest the need for improved communication and confidence in professional interactions between our students and the Memphis business community.

**Recommendations:**

Improve instructional opportunities in UG accounting classes relating to 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.

Modify and standardize student resumes.

Have instructors require professional dress for student presentations.

**Goal 2. Students will be critical thinkers.****Objective 2.1. Identify and summarize the important aspects of an issue and then determine relationships that are integral to analysis of the problem.**

**Mean.** 7.19

**Rubric:** 79% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by 79% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 21% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, the committee feels that students are generally able to identify and summarize the important aspects of an issue and then determine relationships that are integral to analysis of the problem.

**Objective 2.2.** Present, assess, and analyze appropriate supporting data/evidence relating to the problem or issue.

**Mean.** 7.52

**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, this objective is generally being met.

**Objective 2.3.** Identify and assess conclusions, implications, and consequences that support decision making.

**Mean.** 7.41

**Rubric:** 91% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (91%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 9% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, this objective is generally being met.

**Objective 2.4.** Identify the problem and then formulate a summary.

**Mean.** 7.26

**Rubric:** **85% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by a large majority (85%) of the BBA accounting students assessed and 15% 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.

**Objective 2.5.** Identify other perspectives in the problem that are important to determination of the solution.

**Mean.** 7.30

**Rubric:** **82% Exemplary**

**Findings.** This objective was met at the exemplary levels (scores 7-9) by 82% of the BBA accounting students assessed and 18% were evaluated in the good (scores 4-6) range. As a result, this objective is generally being met.

## **Goal 2 Conclusions.**

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

## **Recommendation.**

No specific additional action is indicated but the faculty feel 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.** 7.78.

**Rubric:** 83% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met by 83% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) and was met by 17% at the good level (scores 4-6). Many corporate problems can be attributed to situations where the participant is unaware that his or her behavior is unethical. Thus, addressing this objective is essential.

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

**Mean.** 7.89.

**Rubric:** 97% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met by 97% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) indicating an 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.** 7.89.

**Rubric:** 92% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met by 92% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9) and was met by 8% at the good level (scores 5-6). This suggests a general understanding by most students of the consequences that result from unethical behavior.

#### **Objective 3.4. Select an appropriate course of action in order to avoid unethical behavior.**

**Mean.** 8.22.

**Rubric:** 100% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met by 100% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (scores 7-9). It appears that this objective is being met.

**Objective 3.5. Demonstrate an understanding of major ethical concerns.**

**Mean.** 7.89.

**Rubric:** 83% Exemplary

**Findings.** This objective was met by 83% of the accounting students assessed at the exemplary level (score 7-9) and by 17% at the good level (scores 5-6), indicating an adequate understanding of major ethical concerns.

**Goal 3 Conclusions:**

An overall assessment of the five objectives suggests that a large majority of our students are knowledgeable about ethical factors in the business environment, suggesting that no specific additional action is needed in this area.

**Recommendations:**

No specific additional action is needed regarding teaching ethical factors in the business environment.



**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. 6.86.**

**Rubric: 73% Exemplary**

**Findings.** Seventy-three percent (73%) of the accounting students evaluated performed in the 7-9 range, while 27% 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. 7.05.**

**Rubric: 68% Exemplary**

**Findings.** About 2/3 of BBA accounting students evaluated assessed (68%) show exemplary level of awareness on this dimension, but about 1/3 scored in the good (4-6) range, suggesting an opportunity for improvement.

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

**Mean. 7.20.**

**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.

**Objective 4.4. Demonstrate awareness about how contemporary international events influence global business.**

**Mean. 6.90**

**Rubric: 68% Exemplary**

**Findings.** About 2/3 of BBA accounting students evaluated assessed (68%) show exemplary level of awareness on this dimension, but about 1/3 scored in the good (4-6) range, suggesting an opportunity for improvement.

**Objective 4.5. Demonstrate an understanding about basic domestic, international, and host country laws and regulations regarding human rights and other labor related issues.**

**Mean.** 6.10.

**Rubric:** 42% Exemplary

**Findings.** Only 42% of our students show an understanding of domestic and international laws and regulations in the 7-9 (exemplary) range and a majority (58%) exhibit a level of understanding of these issues in the 4-6 range. This objective was achieved at a lower level than any of the other global objectives, suggesting significant opportunity for improvement.

#### **Goal 4 Conclusions:**

The assessment results collectively indicate that BBA Accounting students have not achieved Goal 4 to a satisfactory extent. The results also indicate that there are opportunities for improvement in three of the five dimensions assessed.

#### **Recommendations:**

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.

**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** 6.92

**Rubric:** 71% Exemplary

**Findings:** Almost 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. The implication is that this objective is being met, but some improvement is needed in students’ abilities in this area.

**Objective 5.2: Demonstrate knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, the internet, and electronic commerce.**

**Mean** 4.89

**Rubric:** 67% Exemplary

**Findings:** The majority of students evaluated demonstrated an “exemplary” knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, the internet, and electronic commerce. However a significant segment – 14% - demonstrated less than “good” knowledge, indicating room for improvement.

**Objective 5.3: Utilize internet technology to perform queries and searches to locate relevant and accurate information.**

**Mean** 8.15

**Rubric:** 94% Exemplary

**Findings:** A large majority (94%) 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 this assessment objective is being met.

**Objective 5.4: Create substantial and/or multiple presentations using text, and animation.**

**Mean** 7.69

**Rubric:** 94% Exemplary

**Findings:** Results indicate that students are proficient in creating presentations while using text, graphics, and animation with all students tested demonstrating “good” or higher (94% “exemplary”) ability.

**Objective 5.5: Use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems.**

**Mean** 5.13

**Rubric:** 55% Exemplary

**Findings:** Fifty-five percent of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to use computer software tools to organize data for analysis to solve business problems. Also, 37% percent demonstrated a “good” ability. The remaining students showed a “fair” ability. An opportunity to improve this ability is indicated.

**Objective 5.6: Utilize business presentation software to effectively portray ideas in a structured presentation format.**

**Mean** 8.23

**Rubric:** 94% Exemplary

**Findings:** Results indicate that students are proficient while using business presentation software to effectively portray ideas in a structured presentation format (94% “exemplary”).

**Conclusions:** Overall, the students evaluated demonstrated a greater ability to use technology to effectively present ideas and solutions than to formulate those problems, analyze data or to understand the technology. In general, the faculty feels this goal is met, but wants to confirm the findings in multiple presentation and problem-solving settings. Also, the faculty recommends exploration of how we might avoid having a significant segment of our students having only a fair knowledge of computer hardware and software, networks, databases, the internet, and electronic commerce.

**Recommendations:**

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

**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 5.68**

**Rubric: 28% Exemplary**

**Findings:** Twenty-eight percent of the students demonstrated an “exemplary” ability to understand and process the information and outputs needed by various organizations while using appropriate documentation. Sixty percent demonstrated a “good” ability. The remaining students showed a “fair” ability. An opportunity to improve this ability is indicated.

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

**Mean 7.14**

**Rubric: 76% Exemplary**

**Findings:** Over three-fourths of the students evaluated demonstrated “exemplary” understanding of the core competencies in financial reporting; only 1% demonstrated less than a “good” understanding. The implication is that this objective is being met, but some improvement will increase 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 7.80**

**Rubric: 92% Exemplary**

**Findings:** Students demonstrated a proficiency in the core competencies in managerial accounting (92 % exemplary; none less than good). This objective is being met.

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

**Mean** 5.25

**Rubric:** 52% Exemplary

**Findings:** Fifty-two percent of the students demonstrated “exemplary” understanding of the core competencies in taxation; 9% demonstrated less than a “good” understanding. An opportunity to improve this understanding is indicated.

**Conclusions:** Overall, the students evaluated demonstrated a greater understanding of financial reporting and managerial accounting than of taxation or how to process the information and outputs needed by various organizations while using appropriate documentation. In general, the faculty believes there is an opportunity to improve students’ understanding of accounting and its functional support of organizations.

**Recommendations:**

Identify and stress a proficiency in the core competencies in each of our undergraduate classes. Update faculty knowledge of the skills and knowledge tested on the CPA exam.