

## **Accounting Major Assessment Plan University of Wisconsin - Parkside**

### **1. Introduction**

This document describes an assessment plan for the Accounting major at UW-Parkside. Following the discussion by such experts as Barbara Walvoord, Kathryn Martell and Thomas Calderon, the assessment plan is based on four fundamental steps (Martell and Calderon, 2005; Walvoord 2004).

1. Articulate goals for student learning.
2. Identify courses in which material related to these goals is taught and the course(s) in which these goals will be assessed.
3. Gather evidence on how well our students meet these learning goals using direct and indirect measures.
4. Use the evidence gathered in Step 3 for continuous improvement.

The rest of this assessment plan is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses five distinct program level learning goals for the Accounting major degree program. This section also identifies Accounting courses that provide students opportunities to develop skills and knowledge related to these learning goals. Section 3 presents rubrics (direct measures) for each of the five learning goals. Section 4 presents a plan on how this evidence will be used for improvement of the Accounting major. Section 5 indicates other factors to consider for the Accounting major assessment. This section also presents a few indirect measures that we will use to assess student learning.

### **2. Learning Goals for the Accounting Major**

Accounting faculty of the Department of Business collectively identified five learning goals for accounting majors. These learning goals are referred to as ACCTLG1 (Accounting Learning Goal 1) thru ACCTLG5 (Accounting Learning Goal 5), and are consistent with the objectives of the Accounting program as articulated in the “Authorization to Implement Accounting Degree” document developed by the Department of Business and approved by the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents in 2013.

The learning goals are:

1. ACCTLG1-Students will be able to prepare corporate financial statements and to analyze corporate annual reports.
2. ACCTLG2-Students will be able to apply cost concepts to support management decision making.
3. ACCTLG3-Students will demonstrate an understanding of the audit process and audit reports including internal auditing, governmental auditing, and operational auditing.
4. ACCTLG4-Students will demonstrate an understanding of federal income taxation concepts and principles, and will develop the ability to prepare and consult on tax returns for individuals, “C” corporations, “S” corporations, partnerships, and estates and trust.

5. ACCTLG5-Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Common Law, Uniform Commercial Codes, the law of contracts, torts, bankruptcy, as well as other areas of law. Professional and ethical guidelines will also be addressed using real life case studies.

Table 1. Accounting Learning Goals (ACCTLG) versus Course Matrix.

	ACCTLG1 (Financial Statements)	ACCTLG2 (Mgr. Acct)	ACCTLG3 (Audit)	ACCTLG4 (Tax)	ACCTLG5 (Law)
ACCT 201	R				
ACCT 202		R			
BUS 272					R
ACCT 301	R				
ACCT 302	R				
ACCT 305				R	
ACCT 306	R			RA	
BUS 372					RA
ACCT 400	RA				
ACCT 403		RA			
ACCT 404			RA		
ACCT 405				R	

A=Assessed

R=Required: Currently required in official course objective

Table 1 presents a matrix with these five learning goals and the courses in which content related to these learning goals is taught and assessed. An “A” at the intersection of a row-column in this matrix indicates that the ACCTLG is assessed in that course. An “R” indicates that the material is required in that class. Other classes may also teach the material, but it is at the instructor’s discretion. Even though several courses can be used to measure each ACCTLG as indicated by Table 1, in the next section we propose collecting data from only one course for each ACCTLG. Using one course per ACCTLG has the following advantages:

- It leads to implementation simplicity, since we are beginning measurement based on rubrics,

- Measuring each ACCTLG in a single course may lead to better consistency, since the results will be based on a single, consistent set of assignments.

The Accounting learning goals map to the university's undergraduate shared learning goals. Table 2 highlights the relationship between the learning goals.

Table 2: Mapping between ACCT learning goals and the university's shared learning goals.

<b>ACCTLG</b>	<b>University Shared Learning Goal</b>
ACCTLG 1-Financial Statements	Reasoned judgment, Communication, Social and Personal Responsibility
ACCTLG 2-Mgr. Acct	Reasoned judgment, Communication, Social and Personal Responsibility
ACCTLG 3-Audit	Reasoned judgment, Communication, Social and Personal Responsibility
ACCTLG 4-Tax	Reasoned judgment, Communication, Social and Personal Responsibility
ACCTLG 5-Law	Reasoned judgment, Communication, Social and Personal Responsibility

Successful Accounting graduates must possess the reasoning ability, communication skills, and responsibility reflected in these learning goals. However, they must also possess the abilities of a business major. Consequently, Accounting majors are also assessed according to the business learning goals that are specified in the undergraduate business assessment plan.

### **3. Rubrics for Accounting Learning Goals**

*Communication of the learning goals to students.* The learning goals for the Accounting program and the rubrics are published at the following web-site.

<http://www.uwp.edu/departments/business/>

The learning goals and the rubrics also will be made part of course syllabus and outline documents where appropriate. The learning goals and rubrics applicable to each course will be discussed in the first class by each instructor.

*Communication of the learning goals to new instructors.* The department chair will meet with every new faculty member and communicate the requirements of assessment for the course(s) they are scheduled to teach. The Accounting program level learning goals and the corresponding rubrics for assessing student learning will be clearly discussed.

*Process for development of these learning goals and rubrics.* These learning goals are arrived at collectively by the current Accounting faculty: Jamie Wang, Rizvana Zameeruddin, Ting He, Tom Determan, and Mike Cholak in collaboration with Interim Associate Dean Michele Gee. In addition, this document will take feedback from other business faculty members and the College advisory board.

*Organization of this section.* Sections 3.1 through 3.5 present rubrics for the Accounting learning goals ACCTLG1 through ACCTLG5. The rubrics for each learning goal are designed based on individual student work. In other words, each student must work on his/her own to complete the assignments/exams/quizzes/projects discussed in the rubrics statements.

### 3.1 Rubric for ACCTLG1

**ACCTLG1:** Students will be able to prepare corporate financial statements and to analyze corporate annual reports.

Course in which this learning goal is assessed: ACCT 400, Advanced Accounting.

Course Embedded Activity for Assessment: Case Study

Assessment Rubric:

<b>ACCTLG1</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
Balance Sheet Analysis	Correct data used without any errors	Correct data used with minimal errors	Incorrect or inappropriate data used
Income Statement Analysis	Correct data used without any errors	Correct data used with minimal errors	Incorrect or inappropriate data used
Statement of Cash Flows Analysis	Correct data used without any errors	Correct data used with minimal errors	Incorrect or inappropriate data used
Notes/ Supporting Schedules Analysis	Able to identify information and issues needed	Mostly able to identify information and issues needed	Unable to identify information and issues needed
Ratio Analysis	Correct data used without any errors, or assumption(s) made for unavailable data; accurate interpretation of financial ratios	Correct data used with minimal errors; mostly accurate interpretation of financial ratios	Incorrect or inappropriate data used for ratio calculation; vague and minimal knowledge of financial ratios
Industry Comparison	Correct competitor identified; correct comparison and conclusion drawn	Correct competitor identified; generally correct comparison and conclusion drawn	Inappropriate competitor identified; incorrect comparison and conclusion drawn

### 3.2 Rubric for ACCTLG2

**ACCTLG2:** Students will be able to apply cost concepts to support management decision making.

Course in which this learning goal is assessed: ACCT 403, Advanced Cost Accounting.

Course Embedded Activity for Assessment: One case study to assess different dimensions.

#### Assessment Rubric:

<b>ACCTLG2</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
Student identified and analyzed correct cost accounting issues (including ethical issues) for the decision making situation	Student identifies the correct cost accounting issues (including ethical issues), gathers correct information, applies appropriate cost accounting concepts/method and/or ethical principles, and makes correct calculations for an appropriate management decision	Student correctly identifies cost accounting issues and applies appropriate cost accounting concepts/method and/or ethical principles, but makes some incorrect calculations.	Student is unable to identify the cost accounting issues (including ethical issues). Student is unable to apply appropriate cost accounting concepts/methods and/or ethical principles. Students made incorrect calculations.
Student linked management decision making to cost information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors.	Student develops an appropriate conclusion based on cost information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors.	Student draws an appropriate conclusion based on cost information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors. However, the student does not provide sufficient fact/arguments to support the conclusion.	Student does not correctly draw an appropriate conclusion based on cost information, strategy, ethical behavior, or other related factors. Little or no understanding of fact/arguments to support the conclusion.
Written communication and documentation skills	The writing is essentially error free in terms of spelling and grammar. Student develops concise sentences and arranges information in a logical order to persuasively develop decision.	Minor errors in spelling and grammar. Sentence structure is adequate. Student uses paragraphs but not organize information in a logical manner.	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling and grammar which interfere with understanding. Student uses words that are unclear and inadequate sentence structure. Student does not arrange information to easily accessible

### 3.3 Rubric for ACCTLG3

**ACCTLG3:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the audit process and audit reports including internal auditing, governmental auditing, and operational auditing.

Course in which this learning goal is assessed: ACCT 404, Auditing.

Course Embedded Activity for Assessment: Final Project

Assessment Rubric:

<b>ACCTLG3</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
Identifies the scope of the issue.	The scope of the question was identified.	Attempted the assignment and tried to identify the issue but not completely on target.	Did not attempt the assignment or identify the issue.
An appropriate set of conclusions are drawn.	Demonstrated a logical and complete understanding of the issues and conveyed that information.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the issues but did not provide a complete response.	Did not present an appropriate conclusion.
Presented in an organized manner.	The written report was well done and appropriate for the venue.	The written report lacked a formal style (cover page and title) needed in this circumstance	Organization was totally inappropriate for the venue.
Communication skills shows correct grammar and spelling and is concise.	The written report was presented with correct grammar and spelling and was concise.	The written report was presented with few errors and was somewhat concise.	The written report was poorly written and not concise.

### 3.4 Rubric for ACCTLG4

**ACCTLG4:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of federal income taxation concepts and principles, and will develop the ability to prepare and consult on tax returns for individuals, “C” corporations, “S” corporations, and partnerships, and estates and trust.

Course in which this learning goal is assessed: ACCT 306, Business Taxation.

Course Embedded Activity for Assessment: One case study to assess different dimensions.

#### Assessment Rubric:

<b>ACCTLG4</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
Student identified and analyzed correct taxation issues (including ethical issues) for the decision making situation	Student identifies the correct taxation issues (including ethical issues), gathers correct information, applies appropriate tax concepts/method and/or ethical principles, and makes correct calculations for an appropriate management decision	Student correctly identifies taxation issues and applies appropriate tax concepts/method and/or ethical principles, but makes some incorrect calculations.	Student is unable to identify the taxation issues (including ethical issues). Student is unable to apply appropriate tax concepts/methods and/or ethical principles. Students made incorrect calculations.
Student linked management decision making to tax information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors.	Student develops an appropriate conclusion based on tax information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors.	Student draws an appropriate conclusion based on tax information, strategy, ethical behavior, and other related factors. However, the student does not provide sufficient fact/arguments to support the conclusion.	Student does not correctly draw an appropriate conclusion based on tax information, strategy, ethical behavior, or other related factors. Little or no understanding of fact/arguments to support the conclusion.
Written communication and documentation skills	The writing is essentially error free in terms of spelling and grammar. Student develops concise sentences and arranges information in a logical order to persuasively develop decision.	Minor errors in spelling and grammar. Sentence structure is adequate. Student uses paragraphs but not organize information in a logical manner.	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling and grammar which interfere with understanding. Student uses words that are unclear and inadequate sentence structure. Student does not arrange information to easily accessible

### 3.5 Rubric for ACCTLG5

**ACCTLG5:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Common Law, Uniform Commercial Codes, the law of contracts, torts, bankruptcy, as well as other areas of law. Professional and ethical guidelines will also be addressed using real life case studies.

Course in which this learning goal is assessed: BUS 372, Business Law.

Course Embedded Activity for Assessment: One case study to assess different dimensions.

#### Assessment Rubric:

<b>ACCTLG5</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
Identifies the legal issues, ethical issues or problems	Identifies the legal issues, ethical issues and problems in detail and is able to state with clarity	Able to identify most of the legal issues, ethical issues and problems	Does not understand the legal issues, ethical issues or problems involved in the case
Lists the facts that influence the decision	Lists all or most of the facts that would influence the legal or ethical decision	Lists some of the facts	Unable to correctly list the facts
Identifies those who might be affected by the decision	Clearly identifies all who would be impacted by the decision	Identifies most	Cannot identify
Determines a course of action	Identifies a course of action and is able to explain why this approach would be best	Identifies an acceptable course of action	Has difficulty identifying an acceptable course of action
Design document so that information is easily accessible	Paragraphs are used and information is arranged in a logical order to persuasively develop decision	Paragraphs are used but information is not organized in a logical manner	Does not use paragraphs to develop decision and information is not easily accessible
Language	Employs words with fluency, develops concise sentences	Sentence structure is adequate	Uses words that are unclear. Sentence structure is inadequate. Errors are distracting
Spelling and Grammar	The writing is essentially error free in terms of spelling and grammar.	Minor errors in spelling and grammar.	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling and grammar which interfere with understanding.