

**Assessment Report Form for Instructional Programs
2008– 2009 Academic Year**

Name: **Barbara E. Roper** Department: **Accounting & Finance** Program: **Accounting**

Outcomes

1. Basic knowledge of business principles and concepts.
2. Knowledge of the activities of business, for profit and nonprofit organizations, and of the environment in which they operate including the major economic, legal, political, social and cultural forces and their influences.
3. Ability to identify problem areas in unfamiliar settings and solve by applying appropriate business strategies.
4. Understanding of interpersonal and group dynamics in business.
5. Ability to identify business ethic issues and to resolve the conflicts by applying a value-based reasoning system to ethical situations.
6. Basic knowledge of finance, including financial statement analysis, financial instruments and capital markets.
7. Ability to present, discuss, and defend organizational views effectively, through written and spoken language.
8. Understanding of the process of identifying, gathering, measuring, summarizing, and analyzing financial data in business organizations.
9. Identification of concepts, methods, and processes of control that ensures the accuracy of and integrity of financial data and the safeguarding of business assets.
10. Ability to prepare financial statements – Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Retained Earnings, Statement of Cash Flows, and Statement of Comprehensive Income.
11. Ability to prepare bank reconciliation.
12. Understanding of the attest function and the conceptual and the procedural basis for performing them.
13. Understanding of content, concepts, structure and meaning of reporting for financial operations.
14. Ability to use a computer. Technical knowledge in general ledger software packages, spreadsheets, word processing software.
15. In depth knowledge in one or more specialized areas, such as management accounting, taxation, information systems, auditing, accounting information systems, and nonprofit accounting.
16. Application of accounting knowledge to solve real-world problems and lifelong learning.

Method of Assessment

The **Senior Exit Questionnaire** was the **only instrument** administered for the **2008/2009** report period. All graduating seniors are expected to complete the senior exit questionnaire when they pick up their signed graduation applications from the department office.

Assessment Findings and Interpretations/Conclusion:

For this academic year, 15 students completed the senior exit questionnaires. Although the average ratings for this year indicate high overall satisfaction with the program, the ratings for most categories are lower than AY 07/08.

Students perceive that CSU's **general education courses** are very effective/effective in helping them to: write clearly (3.71/5.0), think for themselves (3.93/5.0), develop solutions to problems (3.86/5.0), develop leader skills (3.86/5.0), use mathematical concepts (3.93/5.0), interpret statistical data (3.80/5.0), perform mathematical calculations (3.86/5.0), use computers in their major field of study (4.14/5.0), understand human behavior & relationships (3.79/5.0), speak persuasively and confidently (4.0/5.0) and have confidence in their intellectual abilities (4.14/5.0).

Students were asked to rate the **quality of certain amenities** (overall instruction by faculty, accessibility of instructors, individual attention from instructors, academic advising, availability of needed courses, library collection, preparation for employment and preparation for graduate school) at the **university level** and at the **major level**. The ratings were slightly higher (**3.50/4.0 to 2.79/4**) at the **major level** than the **university level (2.93/4.0 to 2.36/4.0)** for each of amenities listed.

College activities regarding **experiences with faculty**, for four of the five questions are rated as just above average (2.80-2.33/4.0). For this academic year, students rated the ability to discuss career plans and ambitions with faculty lower (2.80/4.0) than AY07/08 (3.00/4.00). College activities as it relates to **student involvement in learning** (class and assignments) is rated more highly (3.67-2.64/4.0). The question of **involvement with clubs and organizations** received less than average ratings (2.36-1.71/4.0).

In the **Business Core courses**, students rated their understanding of Accounting (3.80-3.07/4.0) and Management (3.27-2.73/4.0) concepts, principles and topics fairly high. Management Information Systems (3.0-2.33/4.0) and Marketing (2.67-2.31/4.0) continue to lag behind. Students' understanding of the time value of money Finance concept received lower ratings (2.73/4.0) than AY 07/08 (3.50/4.00) Although the ratings are above average (scores>2.0), the attached **assessment report summary** shows the concepts, principles and topics that fall short of students' expectations.

Within the **accounting major**, the respondents rated their understanding, knowledge/proficiency of accounting concepts, principles and topics very highly (4.0-2.47/4.0). Their understanding of financial statement consolidations: purchase & pooling accounting contracts was perceived as least understood (2.47/4), followed by essential elements of (2.87/4.0), followed next by business combinations: Equity method of accounting (2.93/4.0). For any concepts, principles and topics that a particular student rated at 2.0/4.0 or less, they were asked to write comments. The specific comments are listed on the attached Summary of Senior Exit Questionnaire spreadsheet. When asked what other accounting courses they would like to see offered at CSU, students suggested a Masters program, a CPA review course, the auditing course split in two, accounting for a university, forensic accounting, accounting critical thinking, and small business or entrepreneurial accounting.

In describing their experiences at CSU with respect to the COB and the Accounting program, most of the respondents have some **positive comments**, including – knowledgeable professors with real world experiences, professors being helpful to students, and the opportunity to network with other students. Some of the **negative comments** include: the long lines and bureaucratic process for registering and purchasing books, the need for greater understanding by advisors for students’ schedules, and tutoring for higher level accounting courses. All the comments are listed on the attached Summary of Senior Exit Questionnaire spreadsheet.

Decision Making Using Findings

It is evident from the findings of the questionnaires completed by **accounting majors** that the greatest attention should be paid to the areas of finance, management information systems and marketing. To address these needs, the following actions will be taken:

- Review the curriculum of those areas receiving the lowest ratings to identify ways to strengthen the curriculum. In particular discuss how and where to incorporate computer application functions into the core curriculum, since this has been a continuing problem. Although the rating indicates that students are more proficient in the use of computer applications, continue to encourage the faculty who teach accounting courses to include assignments that involve the use of computer technology.
- Identify the business core and accounting courses that students made comments on and discuss with faculty who typically teach those courses. The same action will be taken for those accounting courses covering the learning outcomes that are consistently rated below 3.0/4.0 in terms of students’ understanding, knowledge and proficiency.
- Although there was an increase in the number of graduating students who completed the senior exit survey in AY0809 (15) over AY0708 (8), the department must strive for greater compliance. Students must be required to submit and collect their graduation applications from the department office personnel. Currently, some students go directly to an advisor who reviews their applications on the spot, rather than inform the students of the correct procedure. This practice contributes to the low percentages we have experienced in the department.
- The pre and post exam direct assessment instrument will be revised and administered in the Intermediate Accounting I and II classes for Fall 2009 (pre) and Spring 2010 (post).
- Although our assessment plan lists a standardized exam being administered in the Mgmt 4890/389 capstone course, this has not been done for several years. The matter will be discussed with the Dean, Associate Dean and Chairperson to see what should be done.
- The department should implement the assessment plan as it is currently written and also printed in the 2008-2010 undergraduate catalog; or review and revise the plan and ensure that future catalogs correctly reflect the plan.

Demonstrating Improved Learning

No direct assessment instrument was administered. Based only on students’ responses on the Senior Exit Questionnaire, it appears there is no significant improvement in student learning. Their understanding of some topics improved over AY 0708, while there was a decline in others.

Publicizing Student Learning

At this time our assessment results are not publicized. To my knowledge, no discussion about what data or results will be used, and the means of internal and external publication has taken place within the department or the college.

Accomplishments and Challenges

Our accounting majors continue to represent the University well at NABA conferences/workshops and SIFE competitions. Additionally, because of the performance of recent accounting graduates, the Big Four CPA firms and several Fortune 500 companies are interviewing on campus for internships and career positions.

One of our greatest challenges is how to motivate more of our graduates to sit for and pass the CPA exam. Even prior to the 150 hour requirement, a very low percentage of our graduates actually sat for the exam and an even smaller percentage were successful. Passing the CPA exam is very often one of the criteria used to assess an accounting program. Today, with the 150 hour requirement it is a more difficult task, but one that we address by encouraging accounting majors to select minors and/or going onto graduate schools. The College of Business is seeking approval for graduate programs – Master of Business Administration and Master of Accounting.

At this time there is no one assigned to coordinate the assessment efforts of the College as a whole. To ensure a cohesive and effective assessment plan, there must be greater communication among the COB assessment coordinators, the COB administrators and the Department Curriculum Committees – at the departmental and college levels.

The assessment report **summary** of the Senior Exit Questionnaire is submitted in a separate Excel file.