

Assurance of Learning

MAcc – Master of Accounting

Learning Goals, Objectives, & Assessment Processes/Methods

Timeline: calendar cycle for assessing and evaluating goals and objectives.

Learning Goals	F17	W18	S18	F18	W19	S19	F19	W20	S20
1	A, C	A	A	A, C	A	A	A, C	A	A
2	C		A	C		A	C		A
3	A	C		A	C		A	C	
4	A	C		A	C		A	C	

- Legend and definitions
 - A: Assessment (Collection of Data on Student Performance)
 - C: Close the Loop (Evaluation of assessed data + Recommendations for change; pedagogically and in terms of instruments and rubrics)
 - E: Re-evaluate instruments
 - R: Refine goal, objectives, and rubrics
 - F: Finalize goal, objective, and rubrics

Learning goal #1: Each accounting major is proficient in expanded conceptual and technical accounting knowledge.

- **Objective #1A:** Financial Accounting Theory
 - Students can recognize the two types of information asymmetry existing in a real world situation and explain how they create a demand for accounting information and regulation
 - Students can define market efficiency and explain the role of accounting in firm valuation
 - Students can explain what the economic consequences of accounting choice are and their implications to the investor, manager, auditor and regulators

- **Objective #1B: Corporate Taxation**
 - Students can calculate the tax consequences of transactions between the corporation and shareholders
 - Students can recognize the tax consequences of corporate restructurings
 - Students can compute income tax expense and tax liability under U.S. GAAP

- **Objective #1C: Financial Statement Analysis**
 - Students can analyze past financial statements and draw appropriate conclusions about past financial and operational performance
 - Students can research the economy, industry and firm and use the results of the research to forecast firm operations, identify resources to support such operations and forecast resulting cash flows

- **Objective #1D: Taxes and Business Strategy**
 - Students are able to convert before-tax returns to after-tax returns
 - Students are able to measure and understand different types of tax rates (explicit, implicit, marginal and effective) and use these rates appropriately in making economic decisions
 - Students are able to identify the tax implications of contracts to all parties in order to determine the most tax efficient contract structure

- **Objective #1E: Strategic Cost Management**
 - Students are able to select the most appropriate cost management technique or techniques to solve a problem including properly applying the technique and interpreting the results

Rubric

Assessment questions are course-embedded. We test the concepts from Objectives 1A-1E by equally weighting results and adding them up to determine a student's overall score for the entire LG 1. This indicates the level of a student's proficiency across the curriculum assessed. This is the basis for the measurements described below.

Assessment

- a. **Assessment:** Learning Objectives 1A through 1E are assessed through a multiple choice/short answer format examination created and approved by the Accounting Graduate Studies Committee.
- b. **Standard:** A score of 60% or above meets the standard. 70% of all students shall meet or exceed the standard.

Timeline

Assessed every term (fall, winter, spring). Results for the year are compiled in spring term.

Learning Goal	F17	W18	S18	F18	W19	S19	F19	W20	S20
1	A, C	A	A	A, C	A	A	A, C	A	A

Learning goal #2: Critical Thinking and Discipline Integration - Each student will think critically and integratively to solve complex business problems.

- **Objective #2A:** Students will apply critical thinking processes (vital question formulation, model identification, relevant information gathering, assessment and use, and evaluation of results, alternative explanation analysis) to solve a complex business problem.

Rubrics

Course: ACTG 631 Financial Statement Analysis and Valuation
 Learning Goal #2 Rubric *(See Appendix C)*

Assessments

- Assessment:** Part II of Final Course Project ACTG 631: Financial Statement Analysis and Valuation
- Standard:** 70% and above meets the standard
 This assessment's instrument was a rubric for a course embedded project. The three parts to the rubric are: assessment and evaluation, plausible explanation and information acquisition.
 Superior was assigned 1 point, competent .5 points and deficient 0 points.
 Standards for the Assessment Test are:
 Exceeds or meets: all three components competent or better
 Fails: one or more components less than competent

Timeline

Assessed spring term each year. Loop closed each fall term.

Learning Goal	F17	W18	S18	F18	W19	S19	F19	W20	S20
2	C		A	C		A	C		A

Learning goal #3: Research skills – each student will be able to conduct research techniques to solve complex business problems.

- **Objective #3A:** Students are able to identify pertinent questions in a situation, identify relevant authority, properly interpret the authority and draw appropriate conclusions.

Rubrics

Course: ACTG 610 Developing the Business Professional
 Learning Goal #3 Rubric *(See Appendix C)*

Assessments

- Assessment:** Course-embedded project
- Standard:** 70% and above meets the standard

Timeline

Assessed fall term. Loop closed each winter term.

Learning Goal	F17	W18	S18	F18	W19	S19	F19	W20	S20
3	A	C		A	C		A	C	

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Learning goal #4: Communication skills – each student will effectively communicate in writing the solution of a business problem.

- **Objective #4A:** Students are able to write an accurate, concise and clear analysis of a business problem.

Rubrics

Courses: ACTG 610 Developing the Business Professional
 Learning Goal #4 Rubric *(See Appendix C)*

Assessments

- Assessment:** Course-embedded project.
- Standard:** 70% and above meets the standard.

Timeline

To be assessed fall term. Loop closed late fall/early winter term.

Learning Goal	F17	W18	S18	F18	W19	S19	F19	W20	S20
4	A	C		A	C		A	C	

Status, Outcomes, & Results

How will you report and discuss your findings in your unit? This is where we describe the flow of data from collection to committee discussion, etc.

Until spring 2018, a separate graduate studies committee oversaw the curriculum of the MAcc and the AOL process. The faculty on this committee were primarily instructors in the MAcc. In spring 2018, the separate accounting undergraduate and graduate committees were replaced with an Assurance of Learning Committee. The accounting Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) which consists of tenured professors, the MAcc director and the School of Accounting outreach director assumed the curriculum oversight role. The AOL committee reports its findings and recommendations to the SPC.

All assessments are course embedded. The knowledge goal is subdivided into learning objectives by required classes. Questions from midterms and/ or the final that focus on these learning goals are collected and summarized by either the instructor of the course or the AOL coordinator. The knowledge goal is then evaluated from a programmatic level which examines how well have students done overall and at the individual course and objective level. The AOL committee reviews the results and if necessary discusses them with the instructor to determine a course of action to improve the learning if a particular objective is a concern.

The other three goal (critical thinking, research and writing) results are also discussed by the AOL committee. Since they are more general programmatic goals, if students underperform, discussion with the MAcc instructional team and committee results in some added emphasis to develop those skills.

Decisions, Plans and Recommendations

Describe a general process for transforming analysis into action plans for improvement. Describe how action plans will be revisited and evaluated at some future date.

Given that we endeavor to perform and review assessments of all learning goals and objectives each year, we can assess how changes made to curriculum have impacted student performance. If we find that student performance is not improving or not improving enough, we again discuss as a group what adjustments in presenting material needs to be made.

Aside from the analysis, review and action plans developed through the regular AOL process, the SPC and AOL committee are well-connected to the accounting profession and consistently seek advice about what types of skills and knowledge our students will need in the future. For example, the rapidly developing field of Big Data Analysis is changing and elevating the skills needed for entry level accountants. In response, instructors of two of the 5 required classes have included projects and instruction on analytical software. The School of Accounting is adding a course on Data Analytics and Accounting this coming winter 2019 that both MAccs and undergraduates can take.

Given this change in the professional landscape, the learning goals and objectives of the MAcc will be reviewed and modified to reflect these changes going forward.