Department of Accounting

Illinois State University
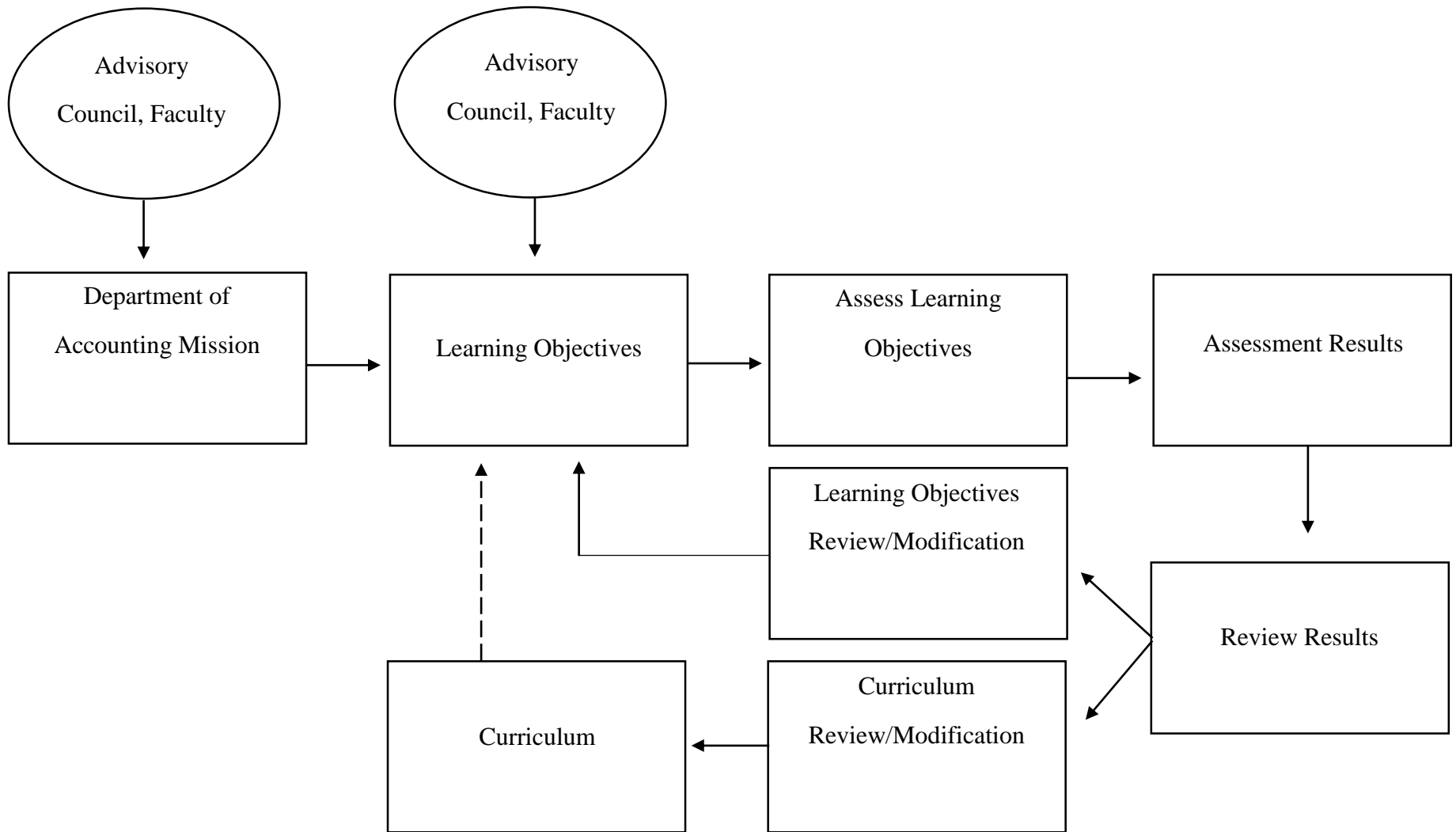

Assurance of Learning
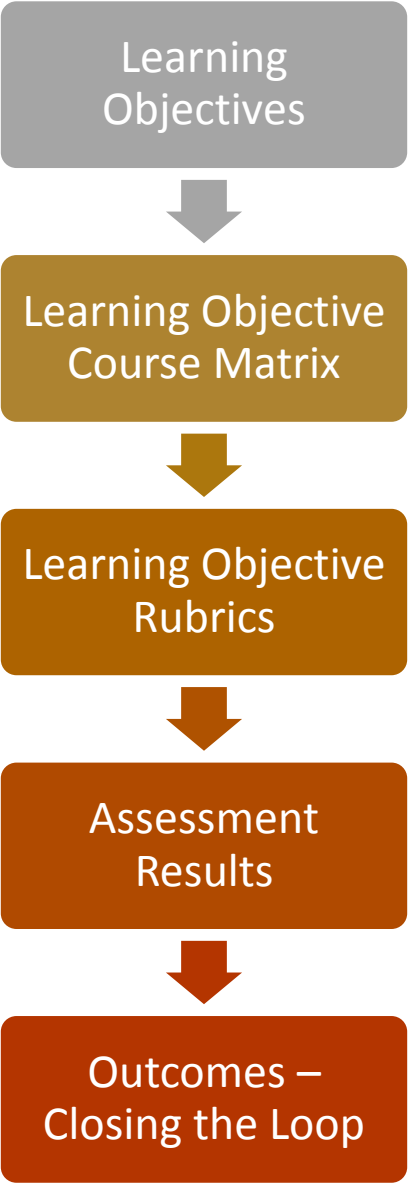
M.S. Accountancy

Assurance of Learning Process

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 │ Council,    │         │ Council,    │
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│ Department of  │───▶│   Learning     │───▶│ Assess Learning│───▶│  Assessment    │
│ Accounting     │    │  Objectives    │    │  Objectives    │    │   Results      │
│ Mission        │    │                │    │                │    │                │
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Department of Accounting Mission

Learning Objectives

Assess Learning Objectives

Assessment Results

Learning Objectives Review/Modification

Curriculum Review/Modification

Curriculum

Review Results

Learning Objectives of the M.S. in Accountancy (Updated June 24, 2016)

1. Students recognize ethical dilemmas in professional situations and are able to apply personal judgment and professional standards to respond thoughtfully to such dilemmas.

2. Students can communicate accounting and business-related information effectively through written and oral forms.

3. Students will have the ability to analyze and understand the outcomes of implications of accounting research, and will develop skills at identifying and summarizing the results.

4. Students will demonstrate a broad awareness and an appreciation of the enabling technologies and management issues surrounding the development, implementation, and use of information technology (IT) in organizations.

5. Students will demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge in financial accounting theory, accounting research, and management information systems through the measurement, analysis, and communication of financial and other information.

(Updated June 24, 2016)

M.S. Accounting

Learning Objective Course Matrix

Learning Objective	Assessed	Assessment Instrument
1. Students recognize ethical dilemmas in professional situations and are able to apply personal judgment and professional standards to respond thoughtfully to such dilemmas.	ACC 435	Ethics Essay Question
2. Students can communicate accounting and business-related information effectively through written and oral forms.	ACC 439	Essay Questions and individual accounting topic presentation
3. Students will have the ability to analyze and understand the outcomes of implications of accounting research, and will develop skills at identifying and summarizing research results	ACC 497 ACC 430	Essay Questions requiring references
4. Students will demonstrate a broad awareness and an appreciation of the enabling technologies and management issues surrounding the development, implementation, and use of information technology (IT) in organizations.	ACC 468	Exam questions and cases
5. Students will demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge in financial accounting theory, accounting research, and management information systems through the measurement, analysis, and communication of financial and other information.	ACC 430 Comp Exams	Exam Questions Comp Exams

6. Learning and Teaching

Provide an overview of major curricula revisions that have occurred since the last review. Describe the factors that led to the revisions. Summarize in a brief statement learning goals for each degree program, along with a list of the assessment tools, procedures, and results used to demonstrate progress toward achievement of expected learning outcomes. Ensure documentation is available to the Peer Review Team that details the structure of all degree programs. If degree structure is not clear to a Peer Review Team, the team may request a curricula map indicating how each degree program addresses the content guidance in Standard A6. Summarize joint or partnership degree programs and transfer credit policies. Summarize how high quality teaching is encouraged, supported, and developed. Summarize continuous improvement activities of faculty focused on teaching enhancement. Be prepared to discuss how instructional development is supported across diverse delivery modes.

Curricula Management Process

A. New Classes or Major Curricula Changes

The Department strives to adapt and update curricula as needed to provide current skills to our accounting and BIS students. Our curriculum management system is triggered in many ways. First, our assurance of learning process may dictate curricular changes. For example, a new class may need to be developed because current classes do not include all of the material needed for students to be current in the field. Curricular changes are usually faculty-driven with input from other faculty, professional organizations such as NASBA, the AICPA, the PCAOB, the Department Advisory Board, alumni, recruiters, and other AACSB accredited accounting programs. Any new class or other major curricula changes are brought to the Department Curriculum Committee and discussed and worded appropriately. Faculty input is requested and once the Department approves the curriculum changes, it goes to the College Curriculum semester committee and then to the University Curriculum committee. Changes take effect the Fall after the approval of the University Curriculum committee.

B. Course Content Management and Updates

Our faculty monitor course content to make sure it aligns with the CPA exam, AACSB recommendations, other accounting programs, and recommendations from our advisory boards and recruiters. For example, faculty have recently started using heat maps to pinpoint areas on the CPA exam where our students did not do well so we can make changes to course content or our teaching methods. Course content updates are made by the faculty for their assigned courses and do not require faculty approval, although faculty input is common.

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C. Specific Curricula and Course Updates for the B.S. in Accounting or the B.S. in BIS.

Our undergraduate degree in accounting includes several career tracks. Students can participate in the BIS, AIS, Career, or Financial sequences under the accounting bachelor degree. Most of our students choose the financial sequence as it encourages courses that are suited for public accounting and the passage of the CPA exam. Those students seeking to take the CPA with an undergraduate degree often have a double major; frequently finance is the major. Other double majors are possible though. One area that the faculty has discussed to some degree is updating the career sequence. We have few students choosing that sequence and there is some discussion about future consideration of an international or forensic sequence instead of a career sequence. The Finance Department has recently expressed an interest in promoting the CMA exam, with our assistance, so that could be a replacement goal for the career sequence.

The curriculum changes most under consideration for our undergraduate program have to do with the integration of additional data analytics into our accounting courses. We have a discussion of those efforts later in this part of the report. We do presently offer an excellent class in advanced Excel for our accounting students and employers are extremely pleased with the skills that students have after completing that class. A new course has been developed that is next in the Excel sequence. We will take that course to the curriculum committees this Fall. The course will use excel techniques for forensic investigation. The goal is to eventually utilize this course in conjunction with a new forensic accounting course to be developed in the future. We also have discussed that we need to develop our own ethics course as our accounting students are taking business ethics from the marketing Department and we may be able to improve accounting specific coverage if we develop and offer our own ethics class.

The BIS major is an undergraduate major and many curricular changes have taken place here. There is a course on data analytics that has been taught for over a year and it encompasses several different tools including Tableau, Excel, and SQL. Additionally, we have a 3-D lab that is new since our last review and our BIS students enjoy independent studies with BIS professor (Matt Nelson) where they program the printers and assess cost issues and the manufacturing disruption potential of 3-D printed products. In the Fall of 2015, we had 79 students but expect the program to grow given the data analytic and 3-D printing offerings.

D. Specific Curriculum and Course Updates for the B.S./M.P.A. and M.S. degrees

For our graduate courses, the curriculum is always evolving to stay current. We have hired a new auditing professor to start in the Fall and the expectation is that he will integrate data analytic techniques into the "Advanced Auditing" class. Additionally, professors are always updating articles, cases, and videos to bring the most current information to their students. Further, graduate BIS courses in database management and Excel are being developed by our BIS faculty for the MBA program and those courses can be used to supplement the technology courses available to our graduate accounting students.

E. Instructional Delivery Model -- Face to Face Classes versus Online

In keeping with our mission, we offer the majority of our classes in a face-to-face classroom environment. This platform allows us to have individualized interactions with our students and promotes a welcoming learning environment.

The only exceptions that we have to the face-to-face format is some classes in the Summer session and two BIS courses that have been carefully developed and monitored for quality.

We offer our principles of accounting courses, cost accounting, and the beginning information systems courses online in the Summer. The reasoning for this is that students prefer an online format in the Summer so they can be at home or at an internship. We send our online instructors through the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) to learn how to develop an online course. This course is called DART. CTLT offers additional courses to improve the quality of courses and some of our faculty have taken those. The one online faculty member that we have (Carolyn Broadbent, BIS) has completed training through CTLT and is certified under the "Quality Matters" designation. Her certificates are attached with her CV. Carolyn also serves as a model instructor for CTLT for other online professors.

The benefit of completing the DART course for almost all of our faculty, whether online or not, is that resources can be put online to assist with the face-to-face instruction. Students are very pleased and do well when material is available to them online for additional review. Therefore, any faculty who are even somewhat interested in having online resources for the DART classes that are taught in the Spring, Summer, and Fall by the CTLT staff are encouraged to take these classes.

Carolyn Broadbent teachings the following classes online: PowerPoint presentation skills, COBOL programming (due to necessity and a shortage of COBOL instructors), and E-Business. E-Business is a good fit for online teaching since it is a course about developing online e-businesses.

Additionally, the introductory information systems course is taught in a hybrid fashion during the regular school year and totally online in the Summer. This course is a service course for the entire College and due to a shortage of BIS professors and the need for the course, it is offered in this manner. The BIS faculty are very skilled, as would be expected, at online teaching. Most of them have also completed the DART course.

Evaluations are done for the online courses through Qualtrics so that faculty can make appropriate changes to better their course delivery online.

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F. Assurance of Learning Goals:

We have separate learning goals for each of our four programs (undergraduate accounting, undergraduate BIS, B.S./M.P.A. graduate, and M.S. graduate).

We provide Assurance of Learning flowcharts and matrices in **Appendix H**. We also have exemplars of work that is Exemplary, Acceptable, and Unacceptable available. We will list our learning goals below and then provide a summary of whether our learning goals have been achieved.

In general, a student is rated as an unacceptable if s/he scores less than 70% correct on an assessment.

Acceptable performance is if a student scores between 70% and 89% on an assessment.

Exemplary performance is if a student scores between 90% and 100% on an assessment.

The learning objectives outcomes are based on an overall global assessment.

Learning Objectives of the BS in Accountancy

1. Students will demonstrate foundation knowledge in the business environment including accounting, finance, marketing, management, international issues, information systems, and legal and social environment.

2. Students recognize ethical dilemmas in professional situations and are able to apply personal and professional standards to resolve these dilemmas.

3. Students can communicate effectively through written forms.

4. Students will be able to use research skills to form problem representations, critically evaluate alternatives, and reach solutions to solve accounting problems.

5. Students will demonstrate a level of knowledge (above core accounting knowledge) in financial and managerial accounting, taxation, accounting information systems, and auditing appropriate for measurement, analysis, validation, and communication of financial and other information.

Learning Objective Measurement

Learning Objective	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary
1. Students will demonstrate foundation knowledge in business…(accounting & finance - average)			Average of 98% for Accounting Knowledge

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communication of financial and other information.			

Learning Objective Outcomes and Actions

1. Ethics is very strong. The only change is that now audit opinions are talked about in more detail as they relate to ethics. Otherwise, no changes made. Individual students can always be worked with one on one to move from acceptable to exemplary.

2. Students are strong in oral communication. No changes made. For writing, 83% are acceptable or exemplary. A rubric of what is expected for writing is now given to the students in advance of the writing essays. That way, they will know better what to check for as they are writing and how the assignment will be graded. The book, Effective Writing: A Handbook for Accountants, by May and May is always recommended to accounting students. Also, unacceptable writing is anything below 70% on the writing assignment. This is a fairly high bar but Master's students should be help to a higher standard.

3. Research skills are strong. The individual student can be worked with one on one to improve but overall no significant changes were made.

4. Information Systems Concept understanding is strong. Changes made to improve understanding are as follows:

   a. Upgraded to new version of course textbook focuses on MIS Strategy & Decision Making (Summer 2016)
   b. Added required course assignment covering 3D Printing Technologies (Spring 2015 and moving forward.)
   c. Added IT Portfolio Strategy Case in the course that examines emerging IT Infrastructure Decisions, Timing, Investments, etc. (Summer 2015 and forward)
   d. Added course coverage and Business Analytics Case in the course that uses IBM's Digital Analytics Platform. (This is one of the most widely used Web Analytics technology platforms in used.) (Fall 2015 and forward)
   e. Added the option for students to earn a joint Level 1 Certification from IBM & ISU in their use of IBM Digital Analytics. (Fall 2015 and forward)

5. An advanced level of knowledge is 59% acceptable or exemplary and 41% unacceptable. The number unacceptable students is higher than expected, but not surprising. Each topic is a complex topic and students typically do not master the topic until they have practical experience in the work force.

Learning Objectives of the M.S. in Accountancy

1. Students recognize ethical dilemmas in professional situations and are able to apply personal judgment and professional standards to respond thoughtfully to such dilemmas.

2. Students can communicate accounting and business-related information effectively through written and oral forms.

3. Students will have the ability to analyze and understand the outcomes of implications of accounting research, and will develop skills at identifying and summarizing the results.

4. Students will demonstrate a broad awareness and an appreciation of the enabling technologies and management issues surrounding the development, implementation, and use of information technology (IT) in organizations.

5. Students will demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge in financial accounting theory, accounting research, and management information systems through the measurement, analysis, and communication of financial and other information.

Learning Objective Measurement

Learning Objective	Unacceptable %	Acceptable %	Exemplary %
1. Students recognize ethical dilemmas…	2%	35%	63%
2. Students can communicate effectively…	11%-Oral 6%-Written	67%-Oral 31%-Written	22%-Oral 63%-Written
3. Students will be able to use research skills…	0%	93%	7%
4. Students will demonstrate a broad awareness and an appreciation of…information technology…	10%	45%	45%
5. Students will demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge…	40%	27%	33%

Learning Objective Outcomes and Actions

1. Ethics is very strong to exemplary. The only change is that now audit opinions are talked about in more detail as they relate to ethics. Otherwise, no changes made.

2. Students are stronger in written communication than in oral communication. The oral communication rubric will be shared with students before their presentations so they know what is being graded and they have a checklist for what a good oral presentation would entail.

3. Research skills are strong. The individual student can be worked with one on one to improve but overall no significant changes were made.

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4. Information Systems Concept understanding is strong. Changes made to better understanding are as follows.

   a. Upgraded textbook to 4th Edition, "Information Technology Auditing" by James Hall, 2015 (Spring 2016)
   b. Added a SOX Compliance (IT Security) Case in the course to better focus on the intersection of Accounting & BIS (Spring 2015)
   c. Became a Faculty member of the ISACA University Alliance program and added two members from ISACA Organization on BIA
   d. Added the new COBIT 5 Framework content & coverage in the course directly from ISACA Organization.
   e. Added two members from ISACA Organization on the ISU BIS Advisory Board
   f. Established student scholarships from the ISACA Organization to offer ISU Accounting / BIS Students.
   g. Better focused the entire course design to Information Technology Auditing (and less on IS consulting.)

5. An advanced level of knowledge is 60% acceptable or exemplary and 40% unacceptable. The number unacceptable students is higher than expected, but not surprising. Each topic is a complex topic and students typically do not master the topic until they have practical experience in the work force. In an effort to reduce the amount of unacceptable responses, additional class time has been dedicated to each topic. Ungraded practice assignments (with answer key) have been developed and given to students to help master the topics.

G. Continuous Improvement and Support of High Quality Teaching

The Assurance of Learning Process supports continuous improvement and high quality teaching by requiring a faculty member to look at the learning objectives, whether the learning objectives are being achieved, and what remediation might be needed to assure that the learning objectives are met. The assessments are also reviewed as part of the AOL process because changes may be needed to better capture types of data that can inform progress toward reaching the learning goals.

Continuous improvement is also achieved through use of complementary suggestions for continuous improvement such as the input of professional bodies (e.g., NASBA for CPA exam coverage and heat map assessment tools), input from student placements, input from alumni, input from recruiters, and benchmarking against other AACSB accredited accounting programs, especially aspirant accounting programs.