

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
PROGRAM REVIEW: DEAN'S SUMMARY  
DEPT. OF ACCOUNTING

September 2003

Source Documents: Dept. of Accounting Program Review Self-Study (June 2003)  
External Review, Prepared by Rodney Rogers (July 2003)

Mission and Goals:

The Department of Accounting delivers two programs, a Bachelor of Science degree at the undergraduate level since 1978 and a Master of Professional Accountancy (MPA) since 2001. Both programs are designed to prepare students for the accounting profession in the public and private sectors. The department also provides a service function to departments outside the College of Business through ACCT 301 (Financial Accounting Analysis) for non-accounting/business majors, e.g., students in construction management students; in flight tech; in I&ET; and, in ITAM. The MPA was developed and implemented to meet the state requirement (effective: June 2001) of 150 credit hours, or 225 quarter hour credits, to sit for the CPA exam.

The department chair is Professor Jay Forsyth who, in the 2002-03 academic year, completed his third year of a four-year term as chair. Dr. Ron Tidd is the director of the MPA program. The Dept. of Accounting supports five of the six university strategic goals (excluding Goal V). For the past three decades, the department faculty has been noted for its preparation of students for a variety of professional certifications and their respective licensure such as: CPA (Certified Public Accountant), CMA (Certified Management Accountant), CIA (Certified Internal Auditor) and others. Results from team competitions (e.g., the annual Tax Competition sponsored by the UW Master of Tax program) as well as passage rates and rankings by CWU accounting students on these professional certificates are noteworthy and reflect strong evidence of program effectiveness, student success and end-of-program assessment.

The External Reviewer concludes, quite accurately, that "... a student could graduate with a B.S. in accounting without taking an accounting information course." The department should give some consideration "... to ensure that every graduate has an understanding of key issues regarding systems as they relate to accounting. This is especially true in light of the increased expectations of the accounting profession as they relate to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act."

This issue related to accounting information systems is particularly critical for the MPA program. The content of the core curriculum should be in alignment with the program goal to help students "understand the ethical, legal and economic implications of a technology-mediated global economy." This alignment extends beyond technology to the global dimension as well. The External Reviewer

concludes that changing the “stated goals of the program or focusing the curriculum might be necessary.”

In addition, the External Reviewer notes that: “Beginning April of 2004 the CPA examination will change its format to include questions that require the candidate to research various accounting problems.” It is suggested, quite appropriately, “[t]he faculty should give some consideration to deal with this change in the curriculum of the program.” Under AACSB accreditation, two processes are needed to: (1) monitor and evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum; and, (2) articulate and measure key discipline-specific knowledge and skills that students have learned.

#### Faculty

During the 2002-03 academic year, thirteen fulltime faculty (T/TT and FTNTT) delivered the BS degree program in Ellensburg and at the Lynnwood and SeaTac centers.

<u>FACULTY</u>	<u>T/TT</u>	<u>FTNTT</u>	<u>ADJSearch</u>	
Ellensburg	6	1	0	0
Lynnwood	3	0	1	1
SeaTac	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
	11	2	2	1

Four faculty members (2 at Ellensburg; 2 at Lynnwood) teach in the MPA program (<50% of assigned load); all others teach in the undergraduate program only.

The department is noted for its demanding curriculum and student-oriented faculty. Student Evaluation of Instruction, question #29, measures teaching effectiveness. The department mean is at or near the College mean (*see Attachment A*). Faculty profiles provide a record of faculty professional development activities during the past 5 years and are based on annual submission of the Faculty Activities Report (for the past year). The COB faculty research standards (adopted by the faculty in April 2001) apply to all T/TT and FTNTT faculty.

It is important to note that critical information was not reported in the Program Review Self-Study. The information pertains to the academic or professional qualifications of the accounting faculty as related to the AACSB accreditation standards. Only three (3) of 14 full-time accounting faculty are deemed academically qualified and 2 of 14, professionally qualified under the AACSB accreditation standard for faculty research output. The External Reviewer concludes that the scholarly activity of the faculty will need to increase as the COB pursues AACSB accreditation. “[I]t is especially important for the faculty teaching at the graduate level to have an active research agenda.”

The External Reviewer determined that this research expectation requires appropriate levels to support faculty professional development. Appropriate levels of support do, in fact, exist and are readily available.

### Students

For 2000-01, the department recorded 220.8 FTES and graduated 106 accounting majors (*see Attachment B*). Seven (7) students graduated from the MPA program, with 18 students enrolled. Accounting majors declined during 1998-99 through 2000-01, which is consistent with national trends. More students selected MIS as a major nationally and the impact of the 150-hour requirement diminished interest in accounting as a major. At CWU, approximately ½ of the majors are interested in public accounting and sitting for the CPA exam.

Job placement is strong in the private sector (manufacturing and service companies; public accounting firms) and the public sector (WA State Auditors Office, Dept. of Revenue, State Gambling Commission). Internships are readily available in accounting. Placement records are fairly comprehensive, but lack systematic data collection, about recruiters and student interviewees (i.e., accounting candidates registered with CWU Career Development Services) and informal faculty networking with alumni. Top employers are Moss-Adams, Boeing and the Washington State Auditor's Office.

The External Reviewer observed that the "... types of placements appear to support the claim that the Department of Accounting is graduating students who are prepared for a career in the accounting profession." Furthermore, key learning goals for students "... should be developed and a process implemented that assesses the students' development on each of these goals."

### Reflections and Commendations

The Dept. of Accounting continues to serve students effectively at all sites. Many of the faculty serves as mentors, advisors and career counselors. They network well with accounting alumni, practitioners and professional associations. The department faces a key staffing challenge, namely, the recruitment, hiring and retention of terminally qualified faculty in the face of below-market salaries. The next 5 years will likely see 3-4 faculty retirements.

### Future Directions and Recommendations

Two major challenges exist: (1) rebuilding course enrollments at all sites, particularly at Lynnwood and SeaTac centers, for the undergraduate program; and, (2) marketing and promotion of the MPA program. Each challenge requires resources to hire a fulltime recruiter for the undergraduate program and to support the marketing and promotion of the MPA program.

Finally, a review and revision of undergraduate and graduate curricula and programs is needed to integrate computer technologies, where appropriate. Accounting professionals and practitioners can be consulted to provide feedback and input about this integration while resources are needed for hardware and software acquisition in order to provide for a dedicated computer lab.

Submitted by: Roy Savoian, Dean

September 15, 2003