

Student Learning Assurance Report
AY 2011-2012

Report Date: September 30, 2012

School/College: School of Management

Department/Program: Accounting

Person completing the Report: Diane Roberts and Carol Graham

1. Overview Statement:

Learning outcomes assessed this year were:

- a. Use the terminology of accounting.
- b. Apply generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) to business transactions.

Collection of data and initial evaluation was performed by Diane Roberts for learning outcome a and by Carol Graham for learning outcome b. Diane and Carol reviewed each other's results and the overall report will be discussed by the Accounting Department Faculty at a Department meeting in October 2012.

2. Results for each learning outcome assessed:

Learning Outcome a: Use the terminology of accounting.

a. What did we do?

- Data was an exam essay question from the exam itself in the required senior capstone course, Contemporary Accounting Topics (BUS 429).
- Essay question required writing the required first footnote to the financial statements, the Summary of Significant Accounting Policies. Students had to select relevant data for the footnote and communicate the company's accounting policies using correct accounting terminology in an appropriate manner.
- The rubric in the Assessment Plan was used to evaluate the data.

b. What did the faculty in the department learn?

Current Year Data Evaluation per Rubric	Scores achieved. Discussion of performance in terms of rubric.
<u>Very Good Achievement:</u> Know the correct definition of basic and intermediate accounting terminology and use it appropriately in written and oral communication.	Scored 7.5 to 9 out of 9 possible. Correctly selected the data to include in the footnote and excluded extraneous data. All required components of the footnote were present. Correctly used appropriate accounting terminology to communicate the company's accounting policies in a professional manner. Total 25 Students (72%)

<p><u>Average Achievement:</u></p> <p>Know the correct definition of both basic and intermediate accounting terminology.</p>	<p>Scored 5.5 to 7 out of 9 possible. Not all required components of the footnote were present. Correctly used appropriate accounting terminology to communicate the company's accounting policies in a professional manner Total 4 Students (11%)</p>
<p><u>Poor Achievement:</u></p> <p>Some knowledge of basic accounting terminology.</p>	<p>Scored 2 to 5 out of 9 possible. Only one student in this category misused accounting terminology. One student got confused about what footnote to write and used good accounting terminology to write a footnote for the distracter problem information. The other four students had very incomplete footnotes and this inadequate response gave insufficient data to evaluate use of both basic and intermediate accounting terminology.</p> <p>Total 6 Students (17%)</p>

There has been a significant improvement on this LO over time. This LO involves writing instead of quantitative calculations and writing is generally the lowest preference learning activity for accounting students. Native versus non-native English speaker status did not drive the performance on this LO. Only one of six students in the poor achievement category was a non-native English speaker. Prior year issues with senioritis have been resolved.

c. What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?

- There was considerable Very Good achievement that reflected really excellent achievement on the question. These students are learning as desired and communicating technical accounting terminology knowledge in an appropriate manner.
- Students in the Average Achievement category used accounting terminology appropriately but had difficulties with the footnote itself. Most were really close to the Very Good category with only one solidly in the Average Achievement category.
- Some students in the Poor Achievement category were generally lower performers in accounting while others were due to the chronic issue of negative attitudes towards writing. This was a 9 point question on a 100 point midterm. Students could do well on the midterm while not making much effort on this question and some students may have adopted that strategy. Additional attention will be paid to low performers to give them extra encouragement and tutoring.
- Large class sizes in what was designed as a seminar-style course make motivation difficult. Department will investigate offering three sections a year of this course instead of two sections a year. Three sections a year are offered of the other required accounting major courses.

Learning Outcome b: Apply generally accepted accounting principles to business transactions.

a. What did we do?

- Data was an exam question completed by individual students on a specific technical financial accounting topic administered in a required accounting major class, Intermediate Accounting II (BUS 321).
- Exam question required accounting for investments/securities. Students were required to record the acquisition and sale of securities, the receipt of dividends and the adjusting entry required at the year-end (over two successive periods) to report the securities in accordance with GAAP.
- The rubric in the Assessment Plan was used to evaluate the data.

b. What did the faculty in the department learn?

Accounting students performed very well on b, apply GAAP to business transactions, in 08-09, 10-11 and 11-12. Application of the relevant technical accounting standard that results in a quantitative or journal entry answer was at the Very Good Achievement level for the majority of students 08-09, 10-11 and 11-12 (BUS 321 Intermediate Accounting II).

b. Apply generally accepted accounting principles to business transactions.

Current Year Data Evaluation per Rubric	Scores achieved. Discussion of performance in terms of rubric.
<u>Very Good Achievement:</u> Know the methodology to apply a principle, select relevant data, correctly perform calculations, and present results in appropriate format.	Score 15 – 12 points out of 15 Correctly recorded the acquisition of securities, any dividends received and updated the securities to their fair value at the end of period 1. Were able to record the subsequent sale of a security including any gain/loss correctly, were able to treat brokerage fees correctly and to update the securities to their fair value at the end of period 2. Indicated appropriate treatment and made correct journal entries. Errors were minor and related to whether or not the securities sold were removed at cost (rather than FV) and whether the correct entry was made to the securities fair value adjustment account. Total 21 Students (78%)
<u>Average Achievement:</u> Know the methodology to apply an accounting principle and correctly perform relevant calculations.	Score 11.5 – 9 out of 15. 2 students neglected to include brokerage fees in their computations. 1 student made entries to the common stock account rather than to the investment account and 1 neglected to show a gain on the sale of a security. In addition, all 4 students incorrectly computed the required entry to the securities fair value adjustment account when a previous adjustment had been made to this account in a previous period.

	They were all however able to correctly record the initial entries for acquisition of the securities, the receipt of dividend revenue and the initial updating to fair value. Total 4 Students (15%)
<u>Poor Achievement:</u> Some knowledge of accounting principles with some correct computations.	Score 0 -7 out of 15. Incorrect accounting for securities on many counts. No particular error pattern. Total 2 Students (7%)

c. What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?

- For LO b the vast majority of the students attained Very Good and Average achievement. These students are learning as desired and applying the technical accounting knowledge in an appropriate manner.
- The coverage of investments will emphasize the purpose that the securities fair value adjustment account serves so that students will better understand how it works in conjunction with the securities account itself. This improvement will aid student learning in the course.
- For LO b the students in the Poor Achievement category are two students that are generally lower performers in accounting who perhaps should not have chosen accounting as a major. Neither student is pursuing a career in public accounting. Regardless of career goals however, the department will continue to work with such low performers by providing them with extra encouragement and tutoring.

3. Attach a copy of the components of the department/program student learning assurance plan that have been modified since its initial submission:

- a. Program Mission
- b. Program Learning Goals
- c. Program Learning Outcomes
- d. Program Learning Rubrics aligned with outcomes
- e. Curriculum map that shows the courses that pertain to the outcome

There were no modifications of our student learning assurance plan since last year.

Please return to: Robert Schlick reschlick@usfca.edu by September 30.