

Institutional Effectiveness

2021-2022

Program: BSBA, Accounting Major

College and Department: College of Business – Department of Accounting

Contact: Richard Rand

Mission:

The mission of the Department of Accounting is to graduate students characterized by a commitment to professional competence, ethical conduct, excellent communication skills, and critical thinking.

To facilitate our mission, we

- Provide an undergraduate and a graduate educational foundation that enables students to become successful business professionals,
- Engage with professional stakeholders both in the classroom and in an advisory capacity.
- Integration of technology, critical thinking, and communication skills throughout the curriculum.
- Engage in scholarly activity that makes meaningful contributions to the understanding and practice of accounting and to accounting education, and that contributes to the currency of our faculty.

Our Vision: The Department of Accounting at Tennessee Tech University will be recognized regionally in the field of accounting through its engaged students, qualified and committed faculty, and career-ready graduates known for their professional and technical competence, ethical conduct, and strong work ethic.

Our Character & Values: The core values that distinguish the Department of Accounting are:

- Integrity
 - We believe that personal integrity, measured in part by adherence to the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct *and the College of Business Code of Conduct*, should guide us in all decisions and activities.
- Professionalism
 - As professionals, we will conduct ourselves at all times in a manner of respectfulness to each other and to our students and will maintain a high level of intellectual preparedness, technical skill, and intellectual contribution to practice and the academy.
- Diversity of Thought
 - We advocate respect for a diversity of backgrounds and thought by creating an environment of support for all of age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, national

origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

- Excellence
 - We will strive to be the best we can be in the performance of our assigned responsibilities and will instill in our students the importance of a strong, disciplined, and reliable work ethic.

- Teamwork Collaborative
 - We believe that we are better and stronger as a team than we are as individuals. We will work together to support the best outcome possible for our students.

Program Goals:

PG 1: The Department will maintain and grow the number of undergraduate students registered as Accounting majors.

PG 2: As the accounting profession changes, the Department will successfully integrate relevant technology skill sets at appropriate places in the undergraduate program to insure students graduate with digital acumen.

PG 3: The Department will insure that students demonstrate appropriate knowledge in the core areas of accounting study.

PG 4: The Department will work to improve student written communication skills by integrating more writing assignments into the curriculum and leveraging appropriate AI software.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1a: Accounting students will demonstrate overall competency in the business core areas.

SLO 1b: Business students will demonstrate competency in the area of basic financial and managerial accounting.

SLO 1c: Accounting major students will demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions: Remembering, Understanding, and Applying.

SLO 2: Accounting major students will demonstrate the ability to apply problem-solving skills.

SLO 3: Accounting students will demonstrate that they are aware of the professional expectations with respect to ethical conduct.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

Assessment Methods:

PG 1: Maintain and grow the number of undergraduate students

- # of Accounting Majors - This metric is provided from Institutional Research data. There was a change in 2019 with respect to how undergraduate students are categorized. Prior to Fall 2019, the # of Accounting majors reported only included Junior and Senior accounting majors who has been formally advised by the Department following their first 60 hours as Basic Business students. Accordingly, there were many Freshmen and Sophomore Basic Business students who maintained the intent to be classified as Accounting Majors, but who were forced to remain classified as Basic Business students. Starting in Fall 2019, incoming Freshmen who intended to be Accounting majors were allowed to be classified as such.
- # of Degrees Conferred - This metric is provided from Institutional Research data.
- # of Undergraduate SCH Generated - This metric is tracked internally by the Department and is viewed as measure of efficiency and appropriate deployment of resources.

PG 2: Integrate relevant technology skill sets

- Technology: Each Spring term, the Department distributes a survey to faculty to conduct an inventory of technology topics and skillsets included in their courses at both the undergraduate and Master of Accountancy levels.

PG 3: The Department will insure that students demonstrate appropriate knowledge in the core areas of accounting study.

- On average, students will perform at the 75% level on selected topics in financial accounting, cost accounting, taxation, and auditing.

PG 4: The Department will work to improve student written communication skills by integrating more writing assignments into the curriculum and leveraging appropriate AI software.

- Student writing proficiency will be evaluated annually using rubrics designed by the College of Business and administered through the BGMT 3720 Professional Communications course.

SLO 1a: Demonstrate overall competency in the business core areas.

- ETS Exam: Assessed by ETS Exit Exam (Major Field Test in Business) taken by graduating seniors in Spring semesters. The results for Accounting majors on the ETS exit exam are analyzed and discussed by the Department faculty.

SLO 1b: Demonstrate competency in financial accounting.

- ACCT 2110 and ACCT 2120 Avg Final Exam Scores: To measure COB student progress in the first accounting course, we will use the Final Examination scores as a proxy, as well as annual average performance of College of Business students on the Accounting section of the ETS Exam.

SLO 1c: Demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions

- Accounting majors will achieve 75% on the selected dimensions of Bloom's Taxonomy of Remembering, Understanding, and Applying in the core areas of accounting at the undergraduate level (Financial Accounting, Cost Accounting, Taxation, and Audit)

SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills.

- California Critical Thinking Skills Test: The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) taken in Fall and Spring semesters by graduating seniors. The CCTST provides a direct measure of the various dimensions of critical thinking.

SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations

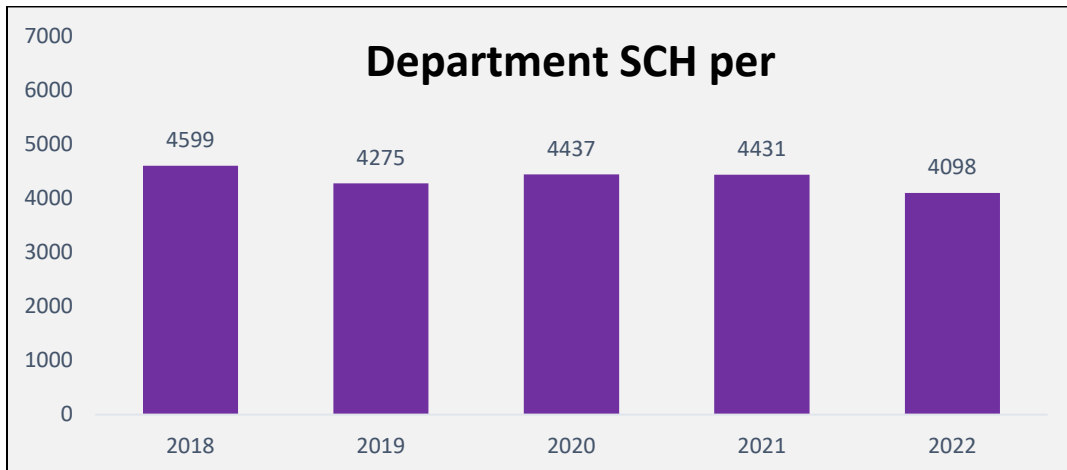
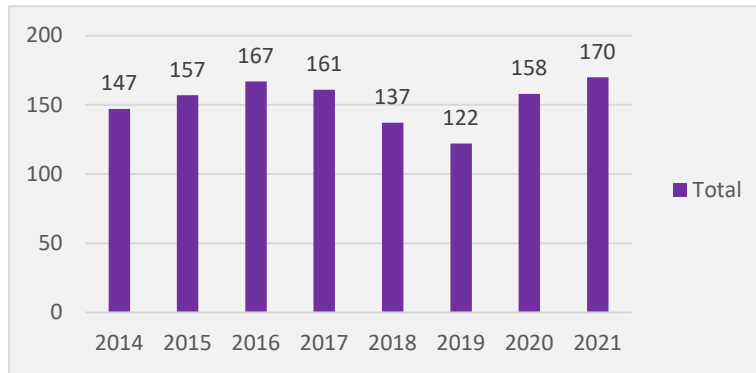
- Ethics: At the undergraduate levels, students' ethical awareness is measured in ACCT 3330 (Federal Taxation) and ACCT 3620 (Auditing). Students are presented with a video on a framework for ethical decision-making. Students are also taught about the online AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and the IRS's Circular 230 ethical requirements for tax preparers. Then embedded course assessments are used to determine the degree to which students have internalized the concepts to which they have been exposed.

Results:

PG 1: Maintain and grow the number of undergraduate students

Head count in the Department continues an upward trend as demonstrated in the table presented below. We believe this is a result of a change in 2019 that allowed us to begin to identify “accounting” students as early as their first freshman semester. Overall student credit hours declined slightly in academic year 2022. The drop was primarily in the upper division accounting courses, corresponding to a lower number of majors in the 2022 academic year. Early indications are that Fall 2022 upper division enrollment is up, while Fall 2022 lower division enrollment is down. However, the Fall 2022 freshman class is up 35% over Fall 2021, indicating that Fall 2023 sophomore demand for lower division courses will be up over 30%.

**Total Juniors/Seniors
Per Fall Census 2014-2021**



PG 2: Integrate relevant technology skill sets

As the table below indicates, the Department has made progress in deploying appropriate technology skillsets across the undergraduate accounting curriculum. Some of the skillsets not covered in the undergraduate accounting curriculum are covered in the other undergraduate business core courses. In addition, additional technology skillsets are deployed in the Master of Accountancy curriculum, as appropriate. In addition, in Fall 2022, the Department launched a new required course in the accounting major focused on accounting analytics (ACCT 3150).

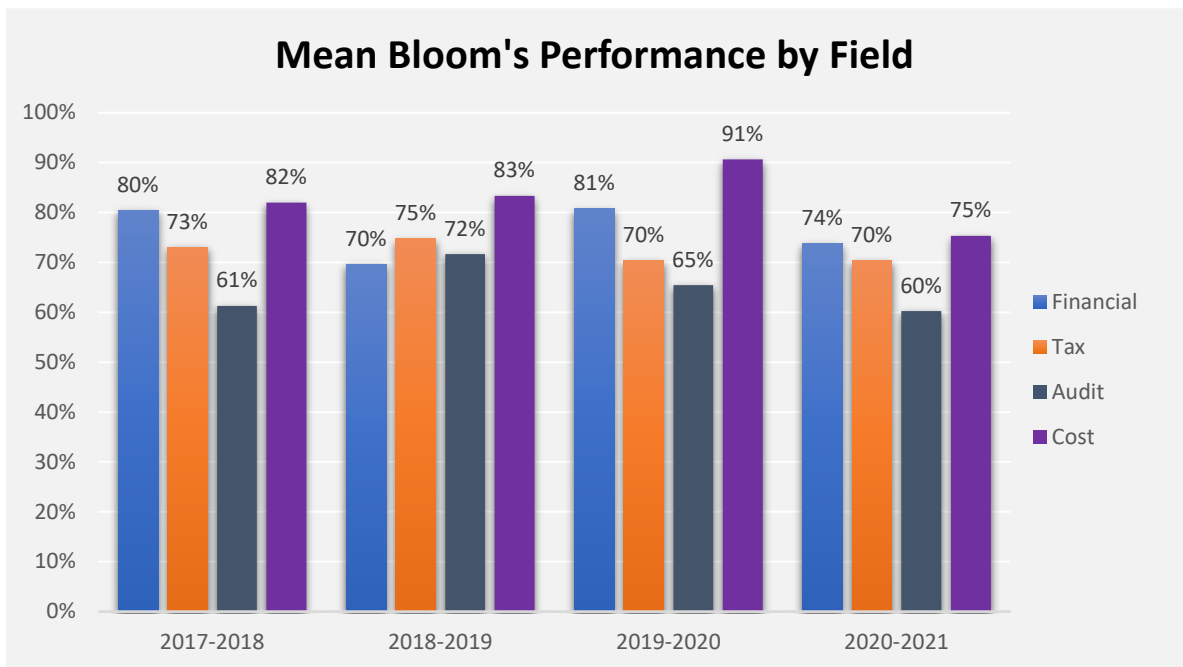
As the Department begins to evaluate the requirements of the American Institutes of Certified Public Accountants' (AICPA) new CPA Evolution, additional technology integration solutions will be considered. In addition, the AICPA Model Curriculum identifies additional technology skillsets that will be integrated between 20221 and the new Model Curriculum implementation date of January 2024. These changes will include the addition of more data analytics and visualization skills into the curriculum.

Inventory of Technology Skillsets Deployed in the Undergraduate Accounting Curriculum

Undergraduate Technology Skills	2020	2021
Basic Excel Spreadsheet Skills	5	6
Excel Visualization Skills (Charts and diagrams)	3	0
Excel Pivot Tables	0	1
Use of Online Auditing Standards	1	1
Use of Online Tax Resources	1	1
Use of Online Accounting Standards Codification	1	2
Use of Online AICPA Code of Professional Conduct	1	1
Computer-based Preparation of Tax Returns	0	1
Computer-based Audit Tools	0	0
Computer-based Audit Workpapers	1	1
Data-base Manipulation	0	0
Visualization Software Skills (such as Tableau or Power BI)	0	0
Data Encryption	0	0
Electronic Retention of Data	0	0
Cybersecurity	0	0
SOC Reporting	1	1
Use of online writing assessment tools, such as Grademark and Grammarly.	4	2
Use of online plagiarism tool TurnItIn.	4	4
Use of Pitchvantage		0

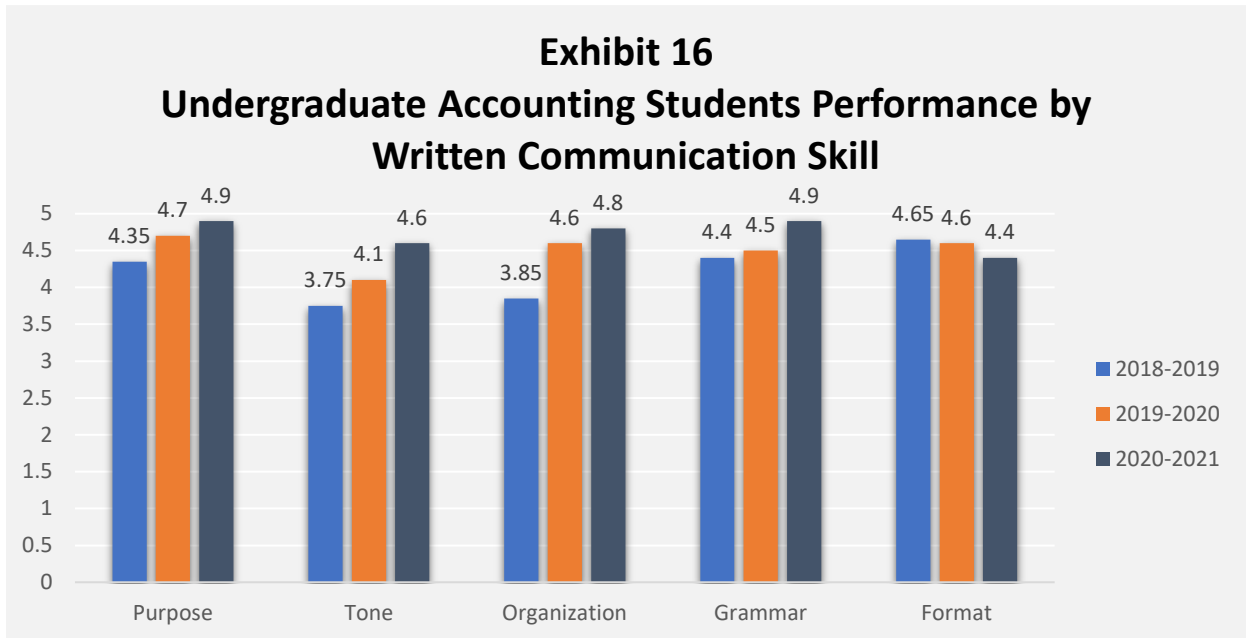
PG 3: *The Department will insure that students demonstrate appropriate knowledge in the core areas of accounting study.*

The Department gathers data annually to assess the progress of students toward the content learning goals. Data for Spring 2022 has not yet been entered, but progress over the previous four-year period indicates that students have met the 75% threshold in Cost Accounting in each year measured. Students met the threshold for Financial accounting in two of the four years, and fell just short in 2020-2021. Students met the threshold for Tax only in year 2, but almost met the threshold in year 1 and demonstrated strong performance in years 3 and 4. Audit students failed to meet the threshold in any of the four years measured, but showed strong performance in each year. In Fall 2021, the instructor altered the course to be more practice oriented, in an effort to improve performance. Results of that change are not yet reflected in the data presented below.



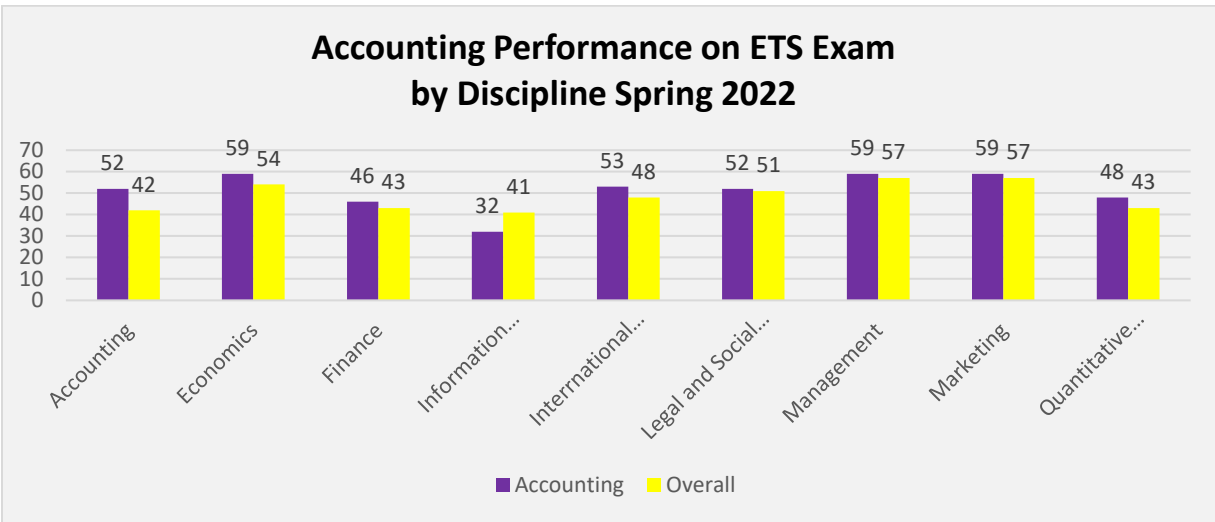
PG4: The Department will work to improve student written communication skills by integrating more writing assignments into the curriculum and leveraging appropriate AI software. In the Spring of 2021, the College assessed four dimensions of written communication skills; Purpose, Tone, Organization, and Grammar. Forty-five accounting students completed the assessment.

In the 2020-2021 academic year, Accounting students improved their written communications skills in the areas of Purpose, Tone, Organization, and Grammar. Only in the area of Format did student performance fall, though the decline was not significant.



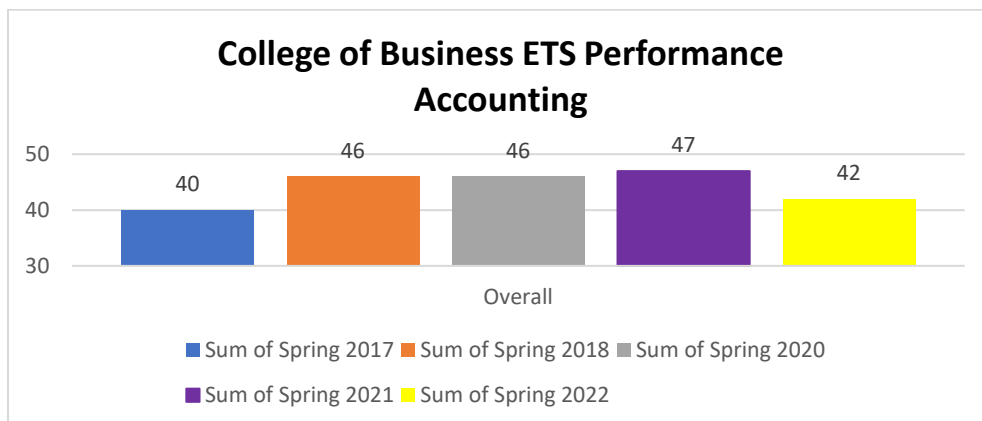
SLO 1a: Accounting students will demonstrate overall competency in the business core areas.

ETS Score Summaries for Spring 2022 indicate that Accounting students performed above the College of Business average in all areas except in the area of information systems (though it should be noted that performance overall in the area of Information Systems fell significantly across the College of Business for Spring 2022). In Fall 2022, the Department introduced a new required course in Accounting Analytics, ACCT 3150. It is expected that, with the addition of this new course, which includes a focus on information systems, Accounting student performance will eventually improve in the area of Information Systems. In the areas of Economics, International, Legal and Social Environment, Marketing, and Quantitative Analysis, Accounting student performance increased in Spring 2022, compared to Spring 2021. In the areas of Finance and Management, performance fell slightly from Spring 2021.



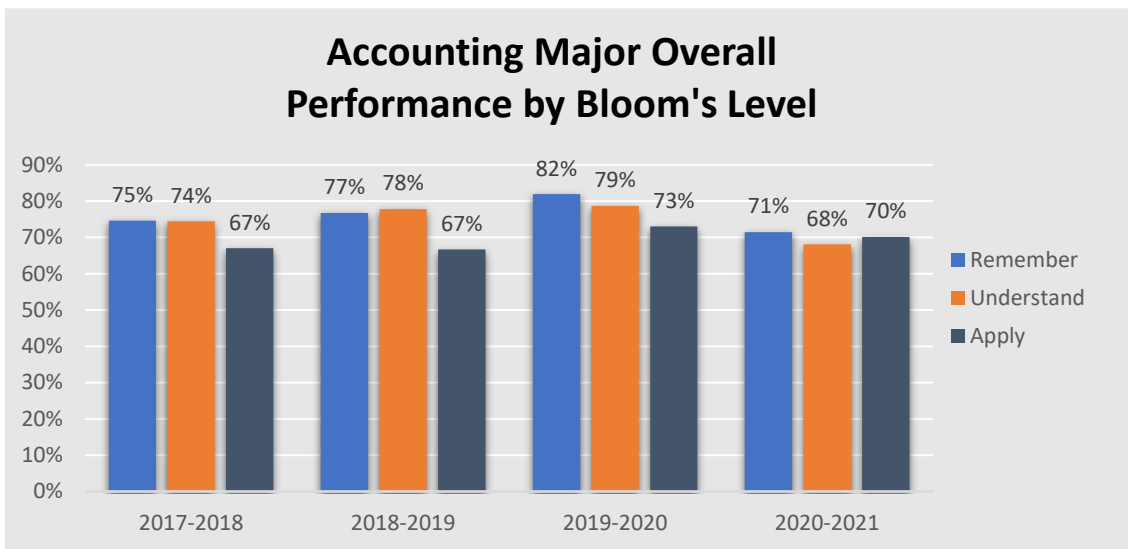
SLO 1b: Business students will demonstrate competency in the area of basic financial and managerial accounting.

On the ETS Exam, in the area of Accounting, the College of Business fell slightly from Spring 2021 (47) to Spring 2022 (42). Overall, the trend for the College of Business appear to be fairly consistent over the past five years.



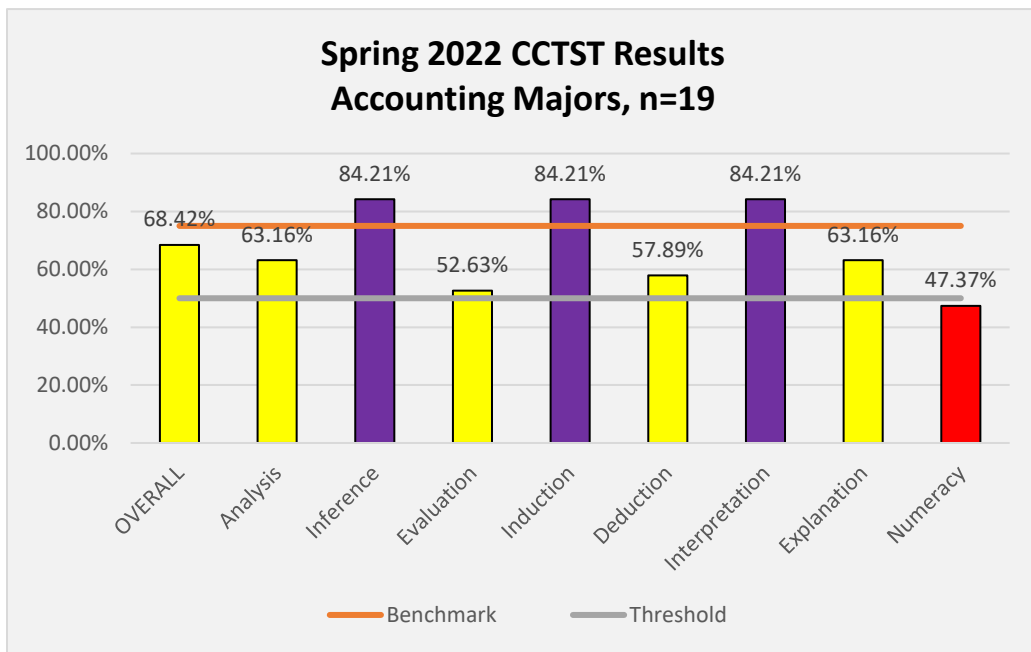
SLO 1c: Demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions

Accounting majors are expected to demonstrate competence at the 75% threshold on the following dimensions of Bloom's Taxonomy; Remembering, Understanding, and Applying. The dimensions of Applying, Analyzing, and other critical thinking dimensions are assessed in the Master of Accountancy Program. In 2020-2021, Accounting majors scored below the threshold in all three dimensions measured. The drop in student performance was significant for Remembering (-11%) and Understanding (-11%). The drop in performance for Applying was small and likely not significant. In 2021-2022, renewed emphasis will be placed on the areas of Remembering and Understanding. On the dimension of Applying, undergraduate student performance (70%) mirrored MAcc student performance (71%). While students did not meet the threshold in 2020-2021 for any of the three Bloom's dimensions measure, performance is still strong.



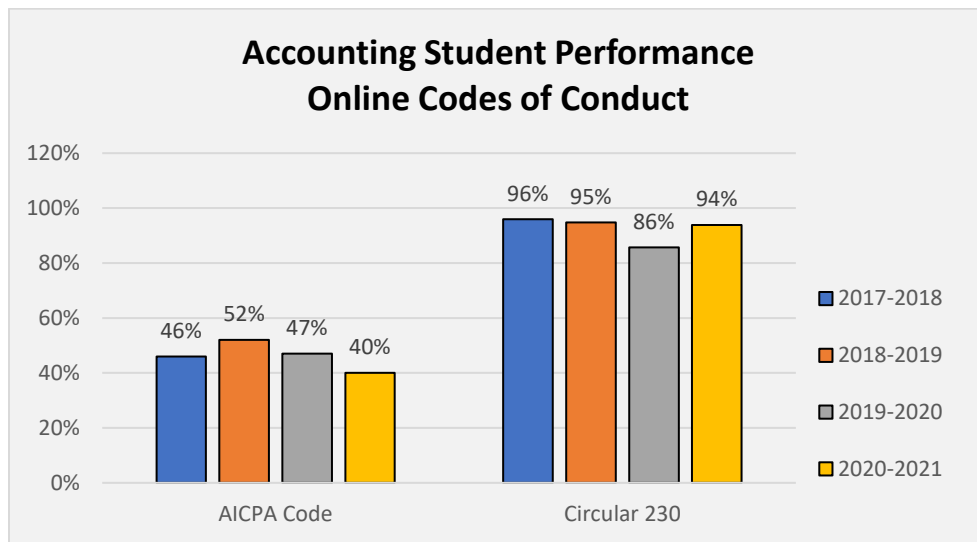
SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills.

Nineteen Accounting majors took the CCTST to obtain a measure of their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. The threshold was 50% and the benchmark goal was 75%. In all areas except for Numeracy, accounting majors exceeded the 50% threshold. In only three areas did Accounting majors exceed the 75% benchmark goal; Inference, Induction, and Interpretation. In the areas of Analysis, Evaluation, and Explanation, performance fell below the benchmark goal, compared to Spring 2021. Of major concern is the performance in the area of Numeracy, which was below the Threshold of 50%. In 2021, efforts were introduced to give students more practice in the area of understanding numerical implications of visualized data. Those efforts have not yet produced improvement in the Numeracy area.



SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations

Accounting students are assessed with respect to their understanding of the ethical expectations of the Accounting profession primarily by assessing their understanding of the two primary sources delineating those expectations; the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and the IRS Circular 230, which outlines expectations of tax preparation professionals. Overall, understanding of Circular appears to be strong, with a four-year record of strong performance. Understanding of the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct still remains weak. Historically, coverage of the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct is primarily in the Audit course (ACCT 3620), which many students do not take until their senior year. In 2022-2023, the Department will develop a program add-in that introduces the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct earlier in the curriculum and reinforces the basic tenets of expected conduct throughout the curriculum.



Modifications for Improvement

SLO 1, SLO2, & SLO 3

Results from the 2019/2020 CCTST assessment indicated that accounting students fell short of the goals in the areas of Deduction and Numeracy (SLO 2). In addition, the ETS results from Spring 2020 indicate that Accounting students are not performing at an extraordinarily high level in Quantitative Analysis (SLO 1). Finally, internal measures of program on dimensions of Blooms Taxonomy indicate that accounting students are falling short of the goal in the area of Application (SLO 3). The Accounting program will be implementing a new course in Accounting Analytics in Fall 2022. The course will be an enhanced focus both on understanding the implications of information (Deduction) and in the ability to create and interpret visualizations of data (Numeracy). The Department is scheduled to meet in October 2021 to define the new course. It will be submitted to the College Curriculum Committee and to the University Curriculum Committee in Spring 2022 with intended implementation in Fall 2022. We believe that this significant program change will result in improvement of accounting students in all the areas mentioned as shortfalls.

Appendices

1. Accounting BSBA Curriculum Map

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map

COURSE	SLO 1a*	SLO 1b	SLO 1c	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4
ACCT 2110	X	X				
ACCT 2120	X	X				
ACCT 3170			X	X		
ACCT 3180			X	X		
ACCT 3190			X	X		
ACCT 3210			X	X	X	X
ACCT 3330			X	X	X	X
ACCT 3620			X		X	X

Note: SLO 1a relates to topics covered in core Business courses outside Accounting.