

CBE AOL Closing the Loop Form

Program: MS in Accountancy Date: 11/25/2020

Learning Goal: 3: Students who graduate will be able to assume professional responsibilities and be ethical.

Learning Objective: 3A: Students graduating with a Master of Science in Accountancy will be able to illustrate the knowledge of accountants' professional ethics standards and assess them in business situations.

Program Director: Nancy Mangold

Faculty Members: Nancy Mangold ,Ying Guo, Pei-Hui Hsu, Ching-Lih Jan, Kim Shima, John Tan, Jing-Wen Yang

Closing-the-Loop

1. Review Learning Objective (LO) assessment data in the current Assessment Report.
2. Review previous LO assessment data and improvement actions taken since then in the AOL Summary Report.
3. Document below the effectiveness of past improvement actions in improving student learning or the AOL process (this is what is known as "closing-the-loop").

The assessment results for MSA LO3A in Summer 2016 indicate that 93% of students' overall rubric score met expectations. The results for three traits are: 100% for Trait 1 (Identifies Ethical Violations), 100% for Trait 2 (Analyses of Consequence of Ethical Violations), and 80% for Trait 3 (Impact of Ethical Violations).

The improvements actions proposed for 2018/2019 assessment include designing a project that will capture professional ethics requirements and CPA exam requirements on ethics. Faculty teaching ethics and auditing should also work together to revise the SLOs and rubrics on ethics to assess this PLO better.

After careful consideration of the proposed improvement actions, faculty for the MSA program decided to revise the rubrics to use three new traits that can better measure students' knowledge of accountants' professional ethics standards and how to apply them in business situations, instead of designing a project. Rubrics for assessments will use a designated examination for each trait. For Trait 1 and Trait 3, final exam questions for ACCT 621 were separately selected to measure students' performance for these traits. For Trait 2, a question set was selected from the midterm exam questions pool of ACCT 622 to measure students' performance for this trait.

Because this Fall 2019/Spring 2020 assessment used rubrics with different traits, the comparison of assessment results to the Summer 2016 assessment should take this revision of rubrics into account.

The results from Fall 2019/Spring 2020 assessment on LO3A indicate that only 73% of MSA students met or exceeded expectation on overall rubric score for LO3A: 100% for Trait 1 (Knowledge of Accountants' Ethics Standards from AICPA and PCAOB covered in ACCT 621), 25% for Trait 2 (Knowledge of Accountants' Ethics Standards from AICPA and PCAOB for Auditors covered in ACCT 622), and 95% for Trait 3 (Applications of Accountants' Professional Ethics Standards in Business Situations covered in ACCT 621). In addition, 75% of MSA students scored "0-2" (below expectation) on Trait 2, while 0% and only 5% of MSA students were below expectations for Trait 1 and Trait 3, respectively.

Note: ACCT 621 was used for this assessment for Traits 1 and 3. Starting in the 2020 cohort, students are now required to take ACCT325 as a foundation course and the ACCT 621 course has been dropped from the MSA core curriculum.

4. Document below your evaluation of current LO assessment data compared to the benchmark and the need for new improvement actions. Consider not just the overall average LO score but also score on individual traits shown in the Assessment Report and derived from the LO rubric.

The performance targets for LO3A are: at least 80% of student overall scores will meet or exceed expectation on overall rubric score and less than 10% of students will score "0-2" (below expectation) on any trait in the rubric.

The Fall 2019/Spring 2020 assessment results show that overall only 73% of students met or exceeded expectation on overall rubric score and this result is due to the low rubric scores on Trait 2. In addition, less than 10% of students scored "0-2" (below expectation) for Traits 1 and 3, but a high percentage, 75%, of students scored below expectation for Trait 2.

As shown in the rubrics for ethics, to meet the performance expectation for Trait 2, students must score at least 80% of the questions correct from the designated question set. One reason for the students' not meeting performance target for Trait 2 could be that students did not have solid foundation knowledge about accountants' professional ethics standards, and another reason could be due to the limited number of questions included in the Fall 2019/Spring 2020 assessment. The selected set of questions from one midterm examination might have overemphasized certain challenging topics (such as auditor independence) and therefore did not assess students' overall knowledge level in auditors' ethics standards well.

5. Record below a list of recommended course-level or programmatic actions to improve student learning or the AOL process.
- Sort the list from most recommended to least.
 - Given our mature AOL system, ideas should not be limited to just AOL system improvements.
 - For each improvement action proposal, list the project leader, timeline to completion, required resources, expected ease of implementation (hard, medium, easy), and expected impact on student learning (low, medium, high).
 - You may use ease of implementation and impact on student learning to rank improvements.
 - There is no guarantee that improvement ideas will be approved. They need to be reviewed by the program director, curriculum committee and dean.

We revised rubrics for LO3A with new traits based on the improvement actions proposed in Summer 2016 assessment report. This revision is to better measure students' knowledge of accountants' professional ethics standards and how to apply them in business situations. Using the revised rubrics, 73% of student performance met or exceeded the performance target.

The following actions are recommended for the next assessment:

We recommend that students should take ACCT 325 before taking ACCT 622 so that students have a solid foundation knowledge on accountants' professional ethics standards. The newly revised MSA curriculum includes ACCT 325 as a foundation course. We expect that, with this foundation knowledge, students should perform better for Trait 2. However, students who have previously taken ACCT 325 (or the equivalent) may opt out of retaking this course. The next assessment on ethics should evaluate the impacts from this curriculum revision on students' knowledge on ethics.

Also, we recommend that the format for the ethics tests in ACCT 325 be more consistent with the AICPA ethics exam and the format for the ethics tests in ACCT 622 be more consistent with the CPA exam on ethics. ACCT 325 covers broadly the accounting professional ethic rules and principles, including those for the auditors, but not as exclusively as in ACCT 622. Therefore, we recommend that the format for ethics tests in ACCT622 be consistent with Ethics exam for California CPA.

In addition, we recommend that, for Trait 2, the questions should be carefully selected to better assess students' overall knowledge on auditors' ethics standards. Instructors for ACCT622 need to redesign the assessment test with more questions so that they can better assess students' knowledge of accountants' professional ethics standards from AICPA and PCAOB for auditors.

We will monitor the results at our next assessment and plan additional improvement actions when needed.