

**Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting - Five-Year Review
2001-2005**

Name: Ron Colley, Interim Chair, Department of Accounting and Finance, Richards College of Business

Department: Richards College of Business – Department of Accounting and Finance

Degree Program: Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Accounting

I. Department Mission / Vision Statement

The B.B.A. program in accounting provides students with a high-quality liberal arts based educational foundation to either secure entry level financial management and/or public accounting positions in local, regional, or national organizations or to continue studies at the masters level.

II. Department Statement of Goals, Process to Assess These Goals, and Assessment Results

In accordance with the mission and needs of the BBA in Accounting, the following goals have been of primary concern during the period of assessment.

- 1) attract and retain quality students
- 2) recruit well-qualified faculty
- 3) maintain faculty qualifications
- 4) provide students with an up-to-date curriculum

The above goals have been met and assessed as follows:

- 1) Students are admitted in accordance with the guidelines of the University of West Georgia and the Richards College of Business. The number of students enrolled in the accounting program has been relatively steady over the last five years, with a slight increase since 2001. The number of accounting majors, pre-majors and students in total is given in the table below.

Number of Accounting Majors and Pre-Majors – Fall Semester					
	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Acct Majors	93	108	114	114	121
Acct Pre- Majors	133	127	118	139	121
Total	226	235	232	253	242

The number of accounting graduates per year has increased since the beginning of the five-year period. The number of graduates for the last five years is given in the following table.

Number of Accounting Graduates					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Graduates	26	26	36	45	35

- 2) In 2001, the accounting faculty consisted of seven tenure-track members. Three of the faculty members from 2001 have retired and one has left UWG to take a position at a different institution. The department was successful in obtaining well-qualified replacements for two tenure-track positions with the hiring of Dr. Kathy Moffeit and Dr. Bob Cluskey. Two Lecturers were hired: Ms. Sondra Smith, filling a vacant position, and Ms. Sheryl Davis, filling a new position funded for the department. Both were well qualified and welcome additions to the faculty. Ms. Sheryl Davis resigned as of the end of the fall semester 2005 and the department is looking for a replacement for the 2006-2007 academic year. Unfortunately, the position of Department Chair was not filled. Dr. Stephen Salter has recently accepted this position. He is currently working part-time and will join the faculty full-time in July 2006.

- 3) Faculty qualifications must be maintained. All of the accounting faculty members were actively involved in attendance at academic and professional workshops for the purpose of development of teaching skills as well as keeping abreast of changes in their respective disciplines and areas of specialty. The faculty members were also prolific in research and publication, with all tenure-track faculty being involved in publication of multiple refereed journal articles. This is further discussed in section VII. (Faculty/Staff Productivity).

- 4) The accounting discipline is dynamic and requires continuing professional educational development for the instructors of courses to maintain course content that is current and up to date. Each year, new and complex Statements of Financial Accounting Standards are issued which affect financial accounting; new Statements on Auditing Standards are issued which affect auditing and accounting information systems; new Governmental Auditing Standards are issued which affect not-for-profit accounting; and there are new federal income tax rulings and changes which affect the income tax area. An example of a substantial and well-publicized change in the accounting area is the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which required an immediate modification of course content.

All of the accounting professors who teach financial accounting, auditing, governmental accounting, accounting information systems, and income taxes in the BBA in Accounting program are Certified Public Accountants and are required to engage in Continuing Professional Education (CPE). The CPE requirements differ slightly from state to state but, generally, there is a requirement of 80 hours of CPE for every two year period, which must include a specified number of hours in

financial accounting and auditing. Through active CPE involvement, the professors for the program keep their knowledge current with regard to developments and changes in published standards and regulations in the accounting profession. This facilitates the updating of the course content on an ongoing basis.

III. Department Statement of Curriculum Learning Outcomes, Processes to Assess These outcomes, and Assessment Results for each Degree Program

The B.B.A. programs provide students with a high-quality business education based on a solid liberal arts foundation so they can secure entry-level positions in organizations and/or pursue graduate studies.

To accomplish this mission, the faculty members are committed to educate students, who, upon graduation, will

1. communicate effectively in oral presentations and in writing.
2. apply basic quantitative skills to business problems.
3. acquire basic skills in information and business technology.
4. possess a basic knowledge of accounting, economics, finance, the legal environment of business, management, and marketing.
5. recognize how ethical decision making and globalization affect organizations.
6. utilize general and management-specific knowledge and skills in the analysis of business and economic problems.

Accounting-Specific B.B.A. Learning Goals

7. understand in detail the principles and practices common to the major forms of professional accounting.
8. be able to apply these principles and practices to typical accounting problems.
9. be able to conduct descriptive research pertinent to accounting and business issues and problems.
10. have a sense of teamwork and professionalism, along with better developed interpersonal and leadership skills.
11. have an appreciation of the critical importance to the financial management process of lifelong learning as it relates to technology, business processes and systems, and understanding a firm's customers and competition.

All accounting students are given an entrance examination in ACCT 3212 (Financial Accounting I). The source of the test is the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the test is referred to as the AICPA Level I Examination. ACCT 3212 is one of the first upper-level accounting courses taken by accounting majors. The AICPA Level I Examination provides an entrance score for accounting students.

The AICPA Level II Examination is administered in ACCT 4261 (Auditing). The Auditing course is the last in the sequence of courses taken by accounting students. The Level II Examination results are used to assess the effectiveness of learning of subject matter in the

courses in the major. Results of the test are discussed in a departmental meeting and changes in course content or methodology are undertaken when deemed appropriate.

A portfolio is also maintained for each student. Professors collect written and computer assignments to be placed in the portfolio. A Portfolio Review Committee assesses the portfolios and prepares a report stating whether the attainment of goals regarding writing and technology are supported by documentation in the portfolios.

In addition, exit interviews with each graduating accounting student are conducted by the department chair. This gives students the opportunity to comment about whether they think the program is attaining its goals and objectives and it gives the department chair an opportunity to get input regarding general student satisfaction with the program.

IV. General Statement of Department Condition

The BBA program in Accounting is in excellent condition. The curriculum content is up to date; the faculty members are well qualified; the students express satisfaction with the program; and graduates of the program are successful in finding employment.

The strengths of the accounting program are:

- The program has a well-structured and up-to-date curriculum.
- The program offers a personalized environment with relatively small class sizes.
- The faculty members are well qualified. All upper-level accounting courses are taught by full-time faculty with terminal degrees.
- There is separate AACSB accreditation in accounting.
- All accounting classes are offered in the evening at least one time per year. This allows students who have full-time employment to complete the program on a part-time basis.
- The program is relatively affordable.
- The geographic location allows for the program to serve the west Georgia and east Alabama areas while also drawing students from the Atlanta area.
- There is a strong job market in accounting. The job market in accounting remained strong even during the economic down cycle. With economic recovery, the market is even stronger. In November of 2004, Money Magazine stated that accounting was the number one sought after major by hiring firms. Demand continues to be strong. In November of 2005, Robert Half International Inc. stated that heightened competition for accounting professionals will lead to increases in salaries for 2006.

Weaknesses of the program are:

- The small size of the faculty does not allow for the offering of multiple sections of the same upper-level course in a given semester as is the case at large universities. Thus, students have less choice when scheduling classes and careful planning and advisement is required for students to stay on schedule for graduation. Filling the department chair position in Fall 2006 will allow the current Interim Chair to return to full-time faculty status and will help expand course offerings.

- When a faculty member becomes ill or is otherwise unexpectedly unavailable, coverage of classes is difficult because expertise in a given area is often confined to a single faculty member. Schedule conflicts may also prevent coverage of courses by remaining faculty members.

Opportunities available to the program are:

- The geographic location allows for the program to serve the west Georgia and east Alabama areas while also drawing students from the Atlanta area. This provides opportunity for future growth in the program.
- The accounting profession is a growth area which can also provide for growth in the program.
- Development of an area of specialization such as forensic accounting would enhance the attractiveness of the program from the viewpoints of both students and hiring firms.

Threats to the program are:

- Institutions in the geographic area seek to expand and as they do there is the threat of the loss of students to these institutions.
- There is the threat of competition from universities which may offer entire undergraduate programs online.

V. Departmental Achievements

Departmental achievements are addressed indirectly in sections IV (General Statement of Department Condition), VI (Student Achievements), VII (Faculty/Staff Productivity), and VIII (Grants/Awards). A departmental achievement not mentioned in these sections is the hosting of the Pre-Test for the revised version of the national CPA Examination.

The structure of the Uniform CPA Examination was changed in 2004 when the examination was completely revamped. The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants provided selected universities with the opportunity to be test sites for the new version of the examination. UWG was selected as a beta test site for the Pre-Test, which was conducted at UWG on November 21 and 22, 2003.

Eligible participants came from current and former UWG students and from employees of CPA firms in the region. It is a credit to the University of West Georgia to have participated as a beta test site and a benefit to present and former UWG students to have the opportunity to have a trial run for the new format of the CPA examination. It also served to promote goodwill between UWG and the CPA firms of the region.

VI. Student Achievements

Graduates are employed in various local, regional and national CPA firms as well as in private industry and in education. Two graduates of note are: Sheryl Shepherd, who received national honors on the CPA Examination and is currently a manager for the Atlanta CPA firm of HLB

Gross Collins, P.C., and Christine Swanson, who recently became Controller at the First Georgia Banking Company. Both Sheryl and Christine went on to complete the MPAcc program at West Georgia after graduating with undergraduate degrees in accounting. Another graduate of the accounting program is Jeff Jackson, who became Controller for Hershey Foods Corporation in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Jeff recently made a career move to become Chief Financial Officer for PGT Industries.

VII. Faculty/Staff Productivity

During the previous five years, the accounting program has generally consisted of seven faculty lines in accounting. In Fall 2005, funding was secured for a second lecturer position.

Unfortunately, the department chair remained unfilled. Thus, the present structure consists of five full-time tenure-track faculty lines (plus the department chair position to be filled Fall 2006) and two full-time non-tenure track lecturer positions. The accounting faculty members have an impressive record of teaching, research, professional development activities, and service activities during the five year period of review.

All accounting faculty members consistently rank well on student evaluations, having an average score above four on a five point scale. Exit interviews of graduating students indicate satisfaction with the teaching and with the structure of the courses.

All tenure-track/tenured faculty members have had one or more peer-reviewed publications each year, with the exception of the 2001-2002 year, in which all but one had at least one peer-reviewed publication. The number of tenure-track/tenured faculty members on the staff was seven in 2001; six in 2002 and 2003; and five in 2004 and 2005. Including co-authored peer-reviewed publications these faculty members produced forty-nine articles over the five-year period. Three faculty members received research awards during the last five years.

All tenure-track/tenured faculty members have multiple presentations at academic and professional meetings during the past five years and have served as reviewers for periodicals or books. All faculty members obtain at least forty hours of professional development each year and in most years the average is substantially more.

All faculty members have been involved in institutional service, either serving as members or as chairs of numerous Departmental, College and University committees. All faculty members have been involved in professional organizations and most have served as officers. Accounting faculty members have also been involved in various civic organizations such as the Sertoma Club, Civic Woman's Club, American Legion, and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).

VIII. Grants / Awards

For the 2003-2004 academic year, Dr. Bird received an \$18,000 grant for operation of a Low Income Taxpayer Clinic. Drs. Bird and McCraw received a \$50,000 grant for 2004-2005 for the Low Income Taxpayer Clinic.

Dr. Ron Colley received an RCOB Excellence in Service Award in 2002. Dr. Harrison McCraw received an RCOB Excellence in Service Award and Dr. Bob Cluskey received an RCOB Teaching Award in 2003. In 2004, Dr. Kathy Moffeit and Mr. Royce Chaffin received an RCOB Excellence in Service Award, and Dr. Bruce Bird received an RCOB Research Award. Dr. Bob Cluskey received an RCOB Research Award in 2005. In 2002, Ms. Sondra Smith was selected as the Student Government Association Instructor of the year from the Richards College of Business. In 2003, Dr. Ron Colley received a “Best Paper” Award at the International Business and Economics Research Conference.

IX. New Degree Programs or Deletions

Not Applicable

X. New Departments or other New Unit; Also any restructuring of these

Not Applicable

XI. Accreditation or Similar Distinction or Renewal

Throughout this period, the BBA in Accounting Program has been separately accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). This separate accounting accreditation is in addition to the accreditation of the Richards College of Business. A reaccreditation visit by AACSB representatives is scheduled for the fall of 2006.

XII. Other Awards, Distinctions, and Achievements

These items are listed throughout.

XIII. Cost Efficiency

Information for this area will be provided by Institutional Research and Planning.

XIV. Action Plan based on this Self-Study

The plan for the BBA in Accounting Program is based on the concept of continuous improvement. All areas in which the program operates and excels must be maintained and improved.

- 1) We must continue to maintain and develop relationships with the business community. The department has good relationships with the business community and the accounting program and the business community have mutual interests. Relationships are developed through attendance of professional meetings, the Professional Seminar course, and other activities.
- 2) We must continue to maintain an up-to-date curriculum. With the frequency of changes in accounting standards and regulations, it is imperative that faculty members maintain the currency of their credentials through completion of Continuing Professional

Education (CPE) on an ongoing basis. Faculty members must also keep current through attending academic and professional conventions and workshops, as well as through research and publication. The next step is to translate the up-to-date knowledge of the faculty members to the curriculum. This is something in which the department excels and the expectation is for this to continue.

- 3) We must continue to develop and improve assessment procedures. The department has long had a system of well-defined and developed assessment procedures. Recently, the AACSB has redefined the requirements for assessment and new procedures need to be implemented and refined over a period of years through a process of continuous improvement. Thus, this will be an ongoing process over the next several years.
- 4) We must maintain and/or increase enrollments. Threats to enrollments were addressed in item IV. The department must be vigilant with regard to maintaining and increasing enrollments.

XV. Critique by the Dean of College

The BBA in Accounting is a strong and vital program within the RCOB. A number of factors indicate the program has the potential for continued growth within the next five years. Dr. Stephen Salter has accepted the position of Chair for the Department of Accounting and Finance. He is working part-time until July 2006, when he will join the faculty full-time. In addition to the advantages of adding to the size of the accounting faculty, Dr. Salter's expertise in working with accounting programs and international initiatives should prove particularly useful in growth of the BBA in accounting.

A key strength of the program is the dedicated faculty and staff. Department faculty have a reputation as strong researchers and excellent teachers. The fact that the accounting programs have separate accreditation from AACSB International provides evidence of the quality faculty and programs. Reputation is essential in recruiting new students, and we continue to build this strength.

The Accounting Advisory Board is currently being restructured. The AAB originally met in conjunction with the RCOB Board of Visitors. In Spring 2005, the AAB met as a group and revised the set of expectations of Board members and goals of the Board. One outcome of this session was a decision to meet separately from the BOV. This will allow for more flexibility in scheduling meetings and will provide more time at each meeting devoted exclusively to the accounting programs. Dr. Salter has already begun meeting with AAB members and planning for expansion of the Board.

Projected growth in the Atlanta region will provide opportunity for growth in all BBA programs, but will have particular significance for attracting accounting majors. The University System of Georgia's Intellectual Capital Partnership Program has identified accounting as among the fastest growing occupations in the state of Georgia. Thus, as the demand for accountants grows, the number of accounting majors should increase.

A final factor in future growth of the BBA in accounting is the ability to promote the program. The program has not been heavily promoted during the last three years; however, the new

department chair should be able to devote more time to marketing the program and building relationships with businesses.

XVI. Critique By Program Review Advisory Committee

XVII. Critique by VPAA