

Assessment Report Template Accounting Program

Part I-Assessment SUMMARY (03-04)

A. Program/Discipline Mission Statement

The Accounting Program’s mission is to provide a quality education in accounting within the learning-centered environment of our institution. The Program will strive to help each individual student achieve success in reaching their academic goals by offering a variety of learning opportunities and incorporating current technology. The Program will respond to the community and students’ changing needs for information and facilitate life-long learning by continued assessment of student academic achievement.

B. Intended Outcomes

NO.	OUTCOME	Project Or Portfolio	Employer Survey	Student Survey
1	Analyze the affects of business transactions on the accounting equation using the system of debits and credits, journalize and post transactions to general and subsidiary ledgers, and make adjusting entries.	X		
2	Prepare financial statements and utilize and calculate financial ratios to analyze financial performance.	X		
3	Identify and apply major provisions of payroll and income tax laws and demonstrate the ability to prepare individual income tax returns and payroll reports.	X		
4	Summarize cost information for both internal and external reporting and utilize costing tools to support management decision-making.	X		
5	Use current technology to implement appropriate accounting systems that will support different uses of accounting information.	X		
6	Demonstrate written and oral communication skills as related to accounting.	X		
7	Demonstrate an understanding of diversity issues and ethics in accounting.			

C. Benchmarks

The accounting department expected students assessed to achieve 90% or better rating performance on outcomes assessed.

D. Assessment Results

1. Historical Context

The first year assessment was conducted, program outcome #1 was assessed and areas were identified for increased classroom focus. The same assessment tool was used the second year to allow for comparison results. It indicated our students were highly successful in understanding the fundamental concepts of financial accounting.

During the academic year 03-04, we expanded our assessment using more challenging projects that could assess additional Accounting Program Outcomes and measure learning at a higher level in the program.

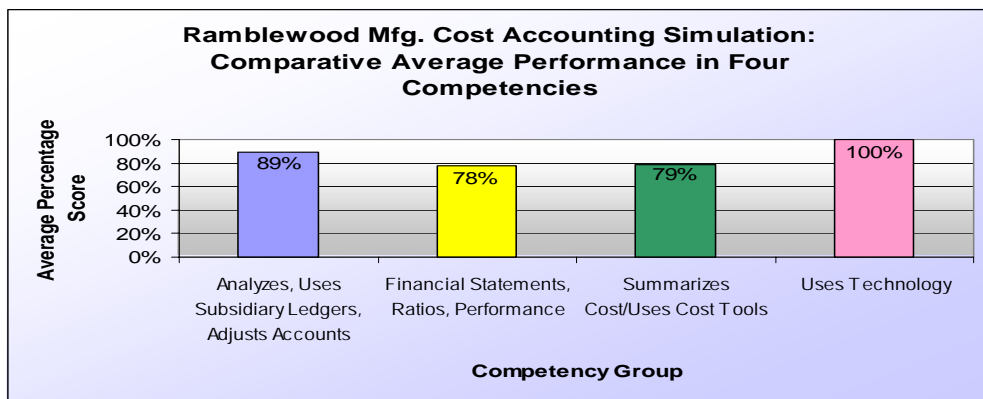
We expanded the assessment of the Accounting Program to include assessing all outcomes with the exception of outcome #7 and the income tax portion of outcome #3.

2. Current Year Data Results

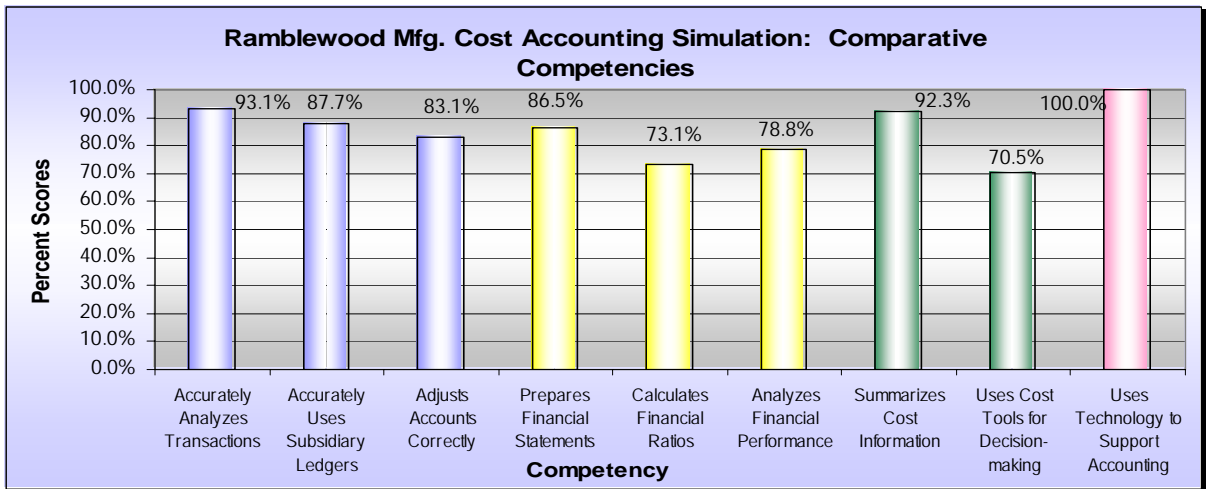
Outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5:

The Accounting program increased its focus in several areas: 1) expanding the assessment utilizing a more comprehensive project and 2) covering more competencies. Analysis of results from the Spring 2004 student assessment showed accomplishment of both of these goals. Students were assessed on a greater number of competencies, and a more complex new simulation “Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc.” was used to assess student learning. This computerized accounting project was completed by students in the Cost Accounting course (sample size 14).

The first chart provides a quick look at comparative competency groups. The percentage shown is the average score for all students for the questions asked in that competency group.



The following chart breaks down the competency groups into question sub-sets



3. Analysis of Results:

Outcome #1 - Analyze the affects of business transactions on the accounting equation using the system of debits and credits, journalize and post transactions to general and subsidiary ledgers, and make adjusting entries. (blue columns)

The student performance of 89% is close to the expected 90% performance benchmark. Detailed review shows a student weakness specifically within the use of subsidiary ledgers and adjusting the accounts. However, the 87.7% accuracy in use of subsidiary ledgers shows improvement over 2003 (81%) and 2002 (73%). As mentioned earlier, the student project changed so results may not be comparable.

Outcome #2 - Prepare financial statements and utilize and calculate financial ratios to analyze financial performance. (yellow columns)

Student performance in preparing financial statements also falls short of the 90% benchmark. Further review shows a weakness in preparing the Retained Earnings Statement. The Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Cost of Goods Manufactured Statement were prepared without problems for students.

Financial ratio analysis results indicate students need more instruction in the computation of the following ratios: Acid Test Ratio, Debt to Stockholders' Equity Ratio, Return on Beginning Stockholder's Equity, and Quarterly Earnings per share.

Students also seem to struggle with questions requiring analysis of income.

Outcome #4 - Summarize cost information for both internal and external reporting and utilize costing tools to support management decision-making. (green columns)

Although students performed above the benchmark of 90% in their ability to summarize cost information, a closer look at performance shows a weakness in understanding how to compute the

percentage of Manufacturing Charges Attributed to Indirect Labor. This may indicate the students did not understand the question or need more explanation of the components of the calculation.

“Uses cost information for decision-making” also seemed to be a weakness. A closer look at the project questions again indicates students are having trouble understanding how to analyze the relationships (percentages) between reported cost information.

Outcome #5 - Use current technology to implement appropriate accounting systems that will support the different uses of accounting information. (pink column)

Students did not have a problem using current technology. All projects assigned to evaluate outcomes have technology based application. Students are well equipped to handle the technology required to complete project tasks.

Correlations (table not presented but available upon request):

Age and Gender A correlation table shows that none of the sub-sections were significantly associated with student age or gender; nor was the *Total* score.

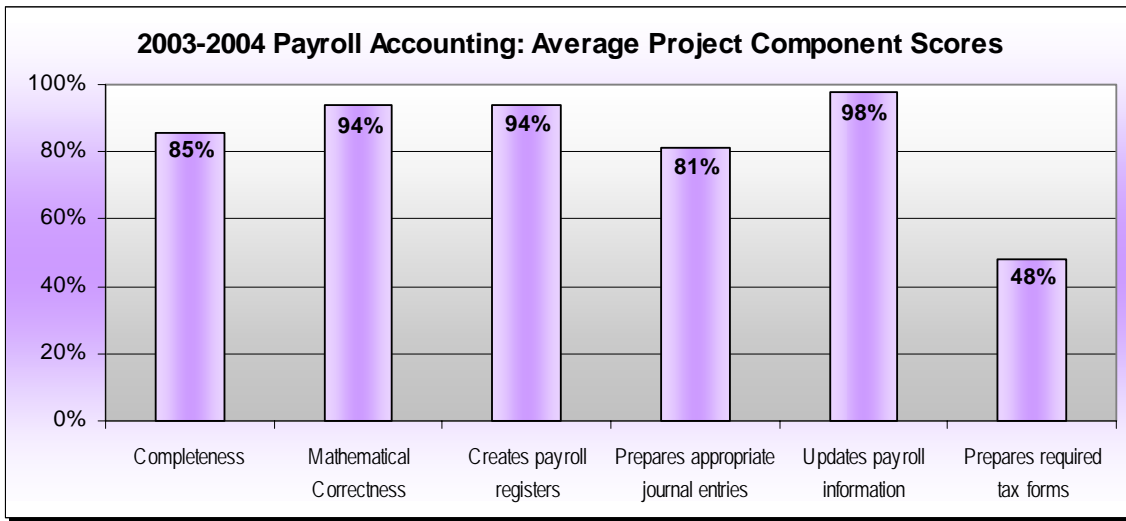
Sub-set Associations with Total Score A correlation table indicates the relationship between doing well (or poorly) on the sub-sets and the *Total* simulation score. Doing well at *Accurately Analyzes Transactions*, *Accurately Uses Subsidiary Ledgers*, and *Summarizes Cost Information* does not necessarily lead to a high Total score. But high scores in *Adjusts Accounts Correctly*, *Prepares Financial Statements*, *Calculates Financial Ratios*, *Analyzes Financial Performance* and *Uses Cost Tools* were associated with a good Total score. Of these, *Calculates Financial Ratios*, *Analyzes Financial Performance*, and *Uses Cost Tools* were more difficult for the students, on average. Mastery of these more difficult sub-set skills accounts for a proportionally greater amount of the variance in *Total* scores.

2a. Current Year Data Results:

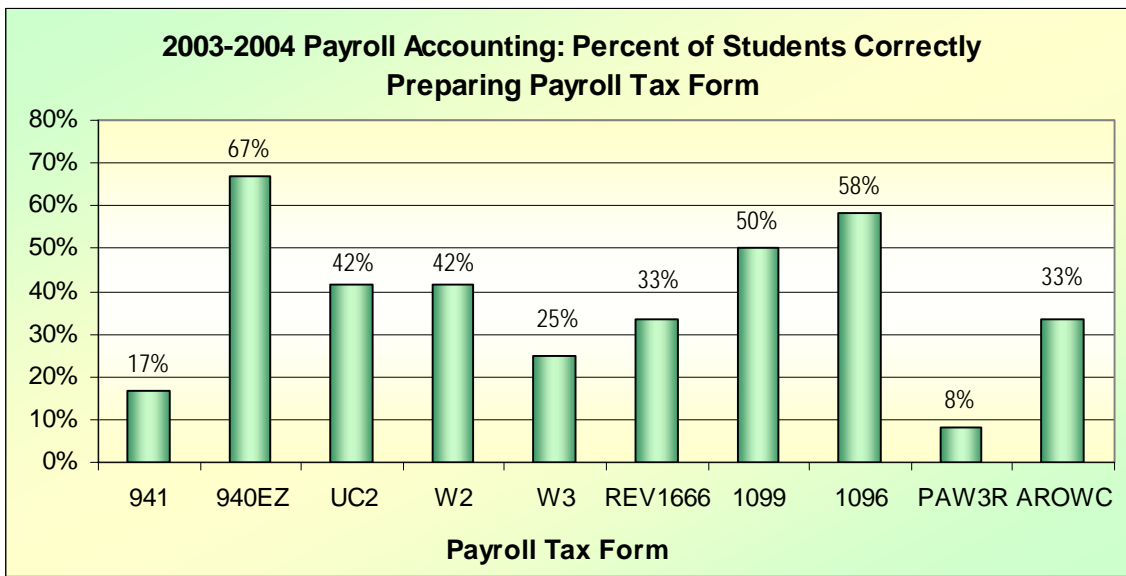
Outcomes #3 and #6:

Students in the Payroll Accounting course (15 students) were assigned a comprehensive Computerized Payroll Tax Project after completing chapters studying the laws governing payroll. Specifically, the course looks in detail at the Fair Labor Standards Act, Social Security Tax Law, Federal Withholding Tax Law, Unemployment Tax Law and the accounting process for recognizing payroll transactions.

The Average Project Component Scores chart shows the average percentage scores for 15 students on the Payroll Accounting project.

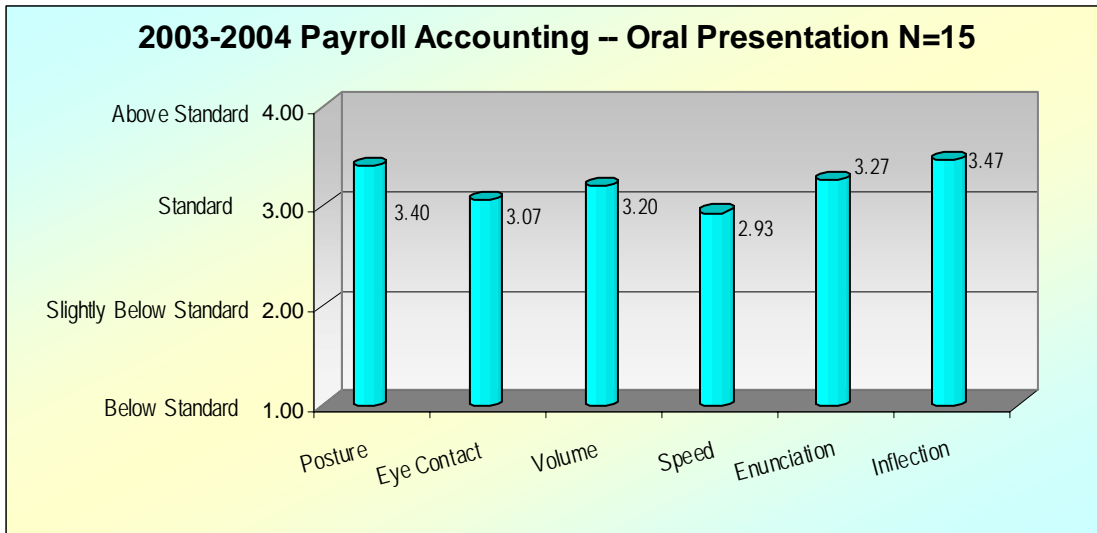


The chart below illustrates the percentage of students correctly preparing each of ten *Tax forms*.

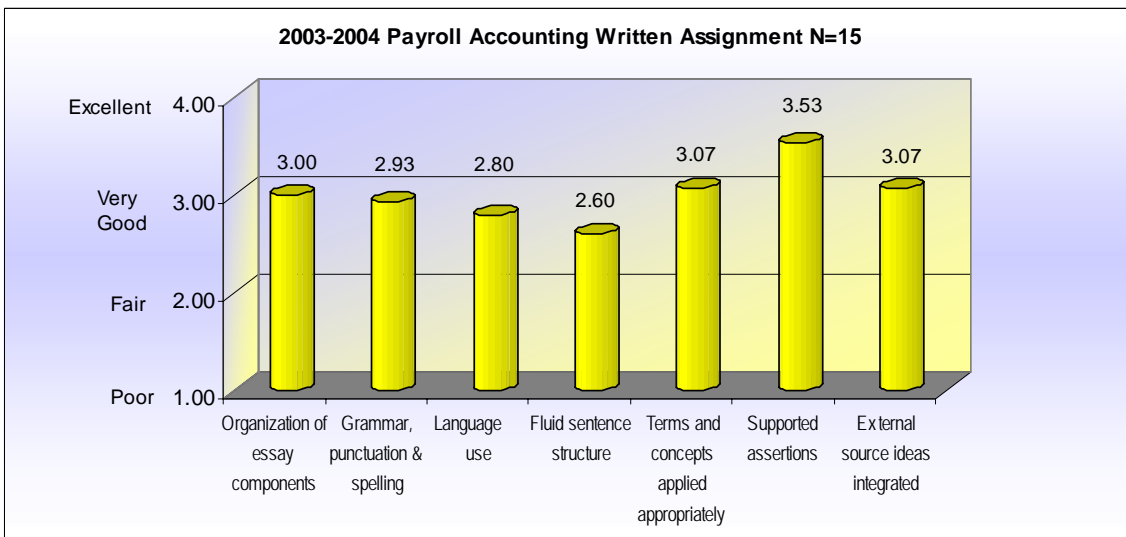


Students in Payroll Accounting were also required to research a current issue related to the study of Payroll Taxes and prepare an oral and written presentation on their chosen topic.

The Oral Presentation chart shows the average scores for 15 students on six skills.



The Written Assignment chart shows the average scores for 15 students on the written assignment.



3a. Analysis of Results

Outcome #3 - Identify and apply major provisions of payroll and income tax laws and demonstrate the ability to prepare individual income tax returns and payroll reports.

Assessing student knowledge of payroll tax law and the preparation of payroll tax returns shows a major weakness in the preparation of the payroll tax forms required by law. All the tax forms required in the project fell short of the 90% program benchmark. Although the textbook gives the students examples of each of the forms listed above and students were assigned homework problems requiring many of these forms to be completed, the students did not seem to have a good understanding of how the information for the forms were determined from the payroll records.

Correlations (table not presented but available upon request):

Correlations between the Project components and the overall Project score shows the relationships between the components and the overall score were high and positive with the exception of *Prepares appropriate journal entries* criterion. These correlations indicate that nearly all project components were important in determining the total score, and that high scores on the components generally led to high total Project scores. The *Prepares appropriate journal entries* criterion was less important in determining the Total score; students who did well on this criterion were not necessarily able to obtain a high Total score, and, conversely, those who performed poorly at preparing journal entries did not necessarily do poorly overall. Preparing journal entries is important, but the project had many more requirements. The entries alone were not assigned a large portion of the points; therefore, preparing journal entries correctly was not enough to ensure a high Total score if the other project components were weak.

Outcome #6 - Demonstrate written and oral communication skills as related to accounting.

The assessment of written and oral communication skills resulted in an overall acceptable performance in these areas. With oral presentations, students did have a little more difficulty with speed and eye contact. The written assignment showed students need more work in the mechanics of writing (i.e., organization, grammar, language use, and sentence structure).

Correlations (table not presented but available upon request):

Correlations between the Oral Presentation components and the overall Oral Presentation Total Score are generally high and the positive correlations indicate that all presentation components were important in determining the final score, and that high scores on the components were related to high total Oral Presentation scores.

Correlations between the Written Assignment components and the overall Written Total Score shows the relationships between the components and the Total score were generally high and statistically significant (at the 0.01 level), with the exception of *Terms and Concepts Applied* criterion. The high

correlations indicate that the components were important in determining the final score, and that high scores on the components generally led to high total Written Assignment scores. Although weakly related, the *Terms and Concepts Applied* criterion was comparatively less important in determining the Total score; students who did well on this criterion were not necessarily able to obtain a high Total score. It indicates that explaining terms and concepts is helpful, but not sufficient to ensure a high Total score if the writing mechanics and the other technical components of the assignment were weak.

Also correlations show a positive relationship between Oral Presentation Total scores and Written Total scores. Students who did well in the Oral Presentation also tended to do well in their Written work. This relationship makes sense as both are communication skills; students who can communicate verbally often have good writing skills; students who struggle to express themselves in writing also have difficulty speaking well.

However, there was a negative relationship between communication skills and the Project Total scores. That is, students who performed well in the Oral and Written assignments did not necessarily score well on their Project work. That is, those students who most successfully completed the Project are least able to communicate what they know to others.

E. Use of Results

- 1) It is the intention of the Accounting Department to share the results with all faculty within the department and with the Accounting Advisory Committee.
- 2) The following changes and improvements in curriculum, instruction, and learning are planned:
 - a. Weaknesses, as identified earlier, in the areas of preparing financial statements, using subsidiary ledgers, adjusting entries, and financial ratios will be addressed in the Principles of Accounting Sequence where they are introduced.

Specifically, more questions covering the areas of subsidiary ledgers, adjusting entries and financial ratios will be assigned. Also, faculty will require students to participate in questions emphasizing analysis as opposed to simply calculating numbers.

With the selection of a new textbook for Principles of Accounting, students will have more supplemental instructional materials supporting the textbook and thus allow the students to practice with exercises, quizzes, flashcards, and on the spot tutoring to reinforce these topics.

Since the Ramblewood Project is required in Cost Accounting (prerequisites are the Principles of Accounting), this course will incorporate more review of financial ratios and add more instruction in how to work with cost information and analysis.

- b. Weakness in the area of preparing payroll tax forms will be addressed in the Payroll Accounting course. Students will be given more detailed instruction and demonstrations in the preparation of payroll tax forms and will be asked to complete more forms within the homework assignments.

c. Oral and written communication skills are at an acceptable level. The Accounting program requires courses in English, Speech, and Business Communication, however, it may aid students if a handout is given to review proper guidelines for written and oral communication.

Part II – Assessment PLAN (04-05)

A. Intended Outcomes (revisions made to Part I-B)

NO.	OUTCOME	Project Or Portfolio	Employer Survey	Student Survey
1	Analyze the affects of business transactions on the accounting equation using the system of debits and credits, journalize and post transactions to general and subsidiary ledgers, and make adjusting entries.	X		X
2	Prepare financial statements and utilize and calculate financial ratios to analyze financial performance.	X		X
3	Identify and apply major provisions of payroll and income tax laws and demonstrate the ability to prepare individual income tax returns and payroll reports.	X		X
4	Summarize cost information for both internal and external reporting and utilize costing tools to support management decision-making.	X		X
5	Use current technology to implement appropriate accounting systems that will support different uses of accounting information.	X		X
6	Demonstrate written and oral communication skills as related to accounting.	X	X	
7	Demonstrate an understanding of diversity issues and ethics in accounting.	X		X

B. Identify Assessment Procedures/Methods

Based on the results of the 03-04 Assessment, the department has decided to continue using the Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc. project for the assessment of outcomes #1, 2, 4, & 5 and the payroll projects to assess outcomes #3 & 6. This will allow for comparative results after implementing changes as suggested by the analysis in 03-04. The department will also include an income tax project for assessment of outcome #3.

To assess outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5 the following procedures will be followed:

- Collect the projects from all Cost Accounting students in the Fall 2004 Semester.
- Use a rubric that will measure student performance with the outcomes listed.
- Assign a faculty member or accounting professionals to assess the projects.
- Submit results to Institutional Research to summarize and identify strengths and weaknesses of students learning.

To assess outcome 3 the following procedures will be followed:

- Collect Payroll Computerized Projects and Income Tax Projects from students in the Spring 2005 Semester.
- Use a rubric to measure student performance in identifying and applying major provisions of income tax and payroll tax laws and the ability to prepare income tax and payroll tax reports
- Assign a faculty member or accounting professionals to assess the projects.
- Submit results to Institutional Research to summarize and identify strengths and weaknesses of students learning.

To assess outcome 6 the following procedures will be followed:

- Collect the papers from Payroll Accounting students in the Spring 2005 Semester.
- Use a rubric to measure student performance in both oral and written communication.
- Assign a faculty member or accounting professional to assess the projects
- Submit results to Institutional Research to summarize and identify strengths and weaknesses of student learning.

The department is extending assessing outcomes to include assessment in more than one way. During the 04-05 academic year, it is the plan of the Accounting Department to develop a student survey that will also assess outcomes #1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7; and an employer survey to assess outcome 6.

C. Benchmarks

The Accounting Department is expecting :

- 1) 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc. project
- 2) 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on Oral and Written Projects
- 3) 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Payroll Project
- 4) 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Income Tax Project
- 5) 90% of the students will score an average of acceptable or better from Employer and Student Surveys

(ATTACHED SPREADSHEET)