

Assessment Report Template Accounting Program

Part I-Assessment SUMMARY (04-05)

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	Method #1 Project Or Portfolio	Method #2 Graduate 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

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 (Outcomes 1, 2, 4 & 5)
2. 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on Oral and Written Projects (Outcome #6)
3. 90% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Payroll Project (Outcome #3)
4. 90% of the students will rate the program acceptable (4) or better on the Graduate Student (Outcomes #1-7)

D. Assessment Results

1. Historical Context

The first year (01-02) 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, but weak on the concept of subsidiary ledgers.

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 within the program.

As a result of the 03-04 assessment, we identified several areas of student learning needing improvement. In 04-05, we revised course curriculum to address these areas as follows: In Principles of Accounting and Cost Accounting more emphasis was placed on teaching subsidiary ledgers, adjusting entries, and financial ratios; students were instructed in the use of the online textbook support materials which offered students more practice with exercises, quizzes, flashcards, etc. In Payroll Accounting, students were given more instruction on preparation of tax forms and asked to complete more forms in homework assignments. Guidelines for oral and written communication were also distributed to students in Payroll Accounting to improve communication skills.

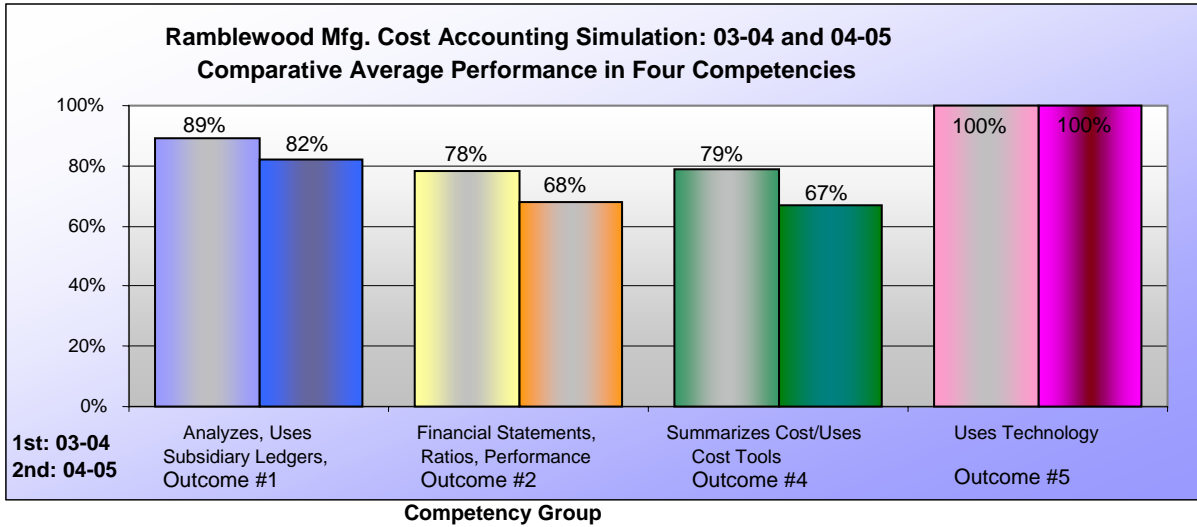
In academic year 04-05, we continued assessing in the same manner as 03-04 to determine if our efforts were successful. We improved the rubrics for scoring students' oral and written communication requirements, and because of this scoring change, it was not possible to complete a detailed comparative analysis to 03-04 oral and written communication skills. We are, however, able to review and compare student performance to the benchmarks set for 04-05.

We also added an Accounting Graduate Student Survey as a second measure of assessing student learning.

First Method of Assessing Outcomes

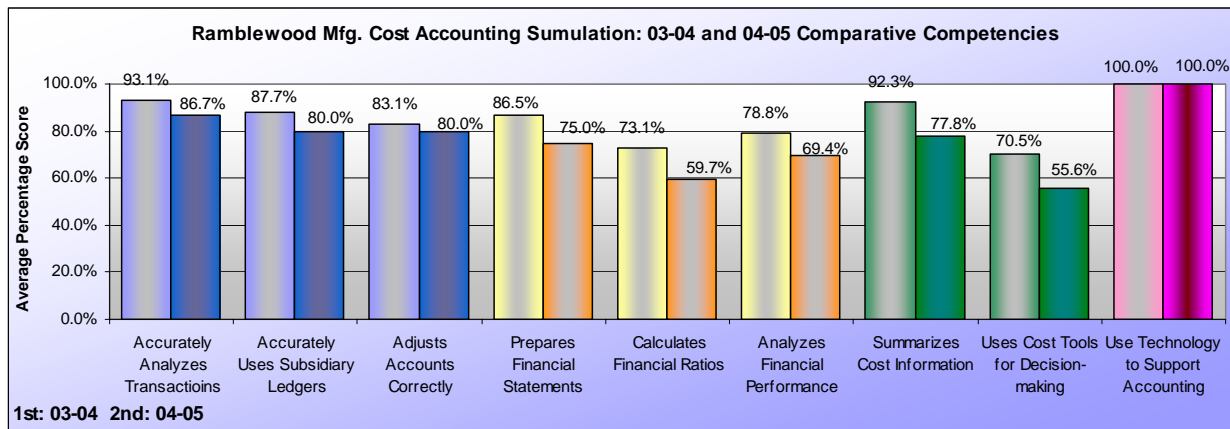
2. Current Year Data Results (Outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5):

Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 4, & 5 were assessed using "Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc.", a computerized project required in Cost Accounting (**sample size - 9**). An analysis of student performance follows the series of graphs presenting the results.



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. 2003-2004 results are in the first column of each competency group and 2004-2005 results are in the second column of each competency group. For example the average scores for the ten *Analyzes, Uses... Adjusts* questions was 89% in 03-04 and 82% in 04-05, the students did better with this group of questions than with the *Financial Statements, etc.* group or the *Summarizes, etc.* group.

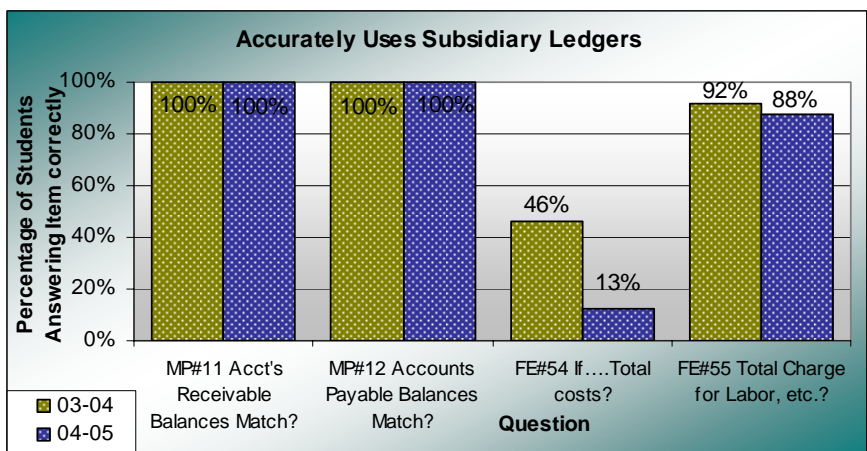
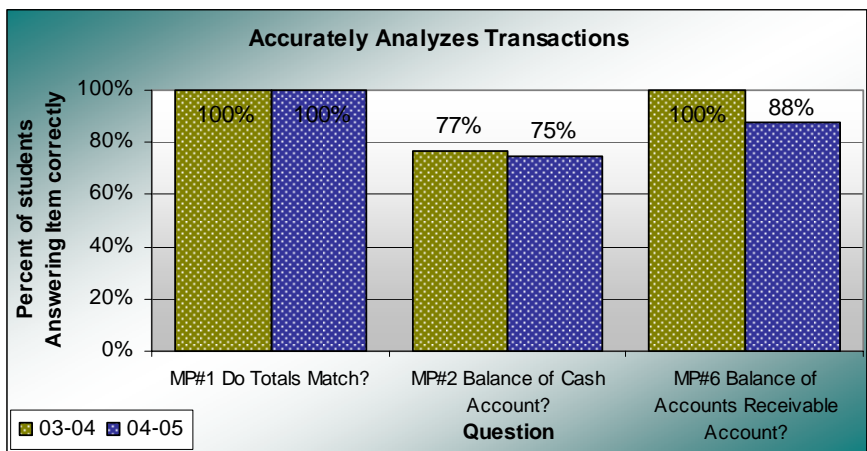
Also, as depicted in the graphs, the benchmark of 80% was attained for Outcome #1 and Outcome #5; however, the benchmark of 80% was not met for Outcomes #2 and #4.



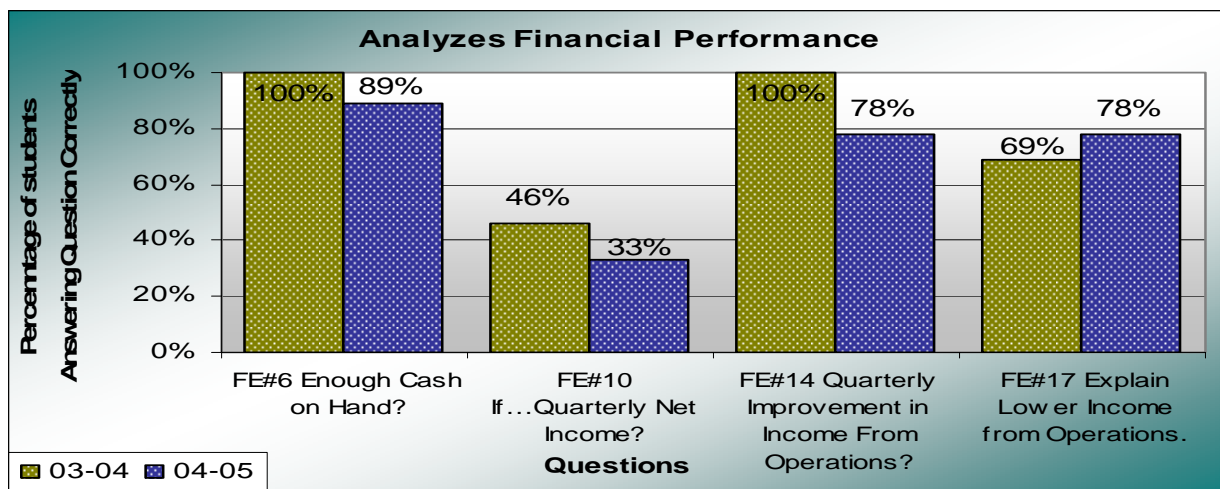
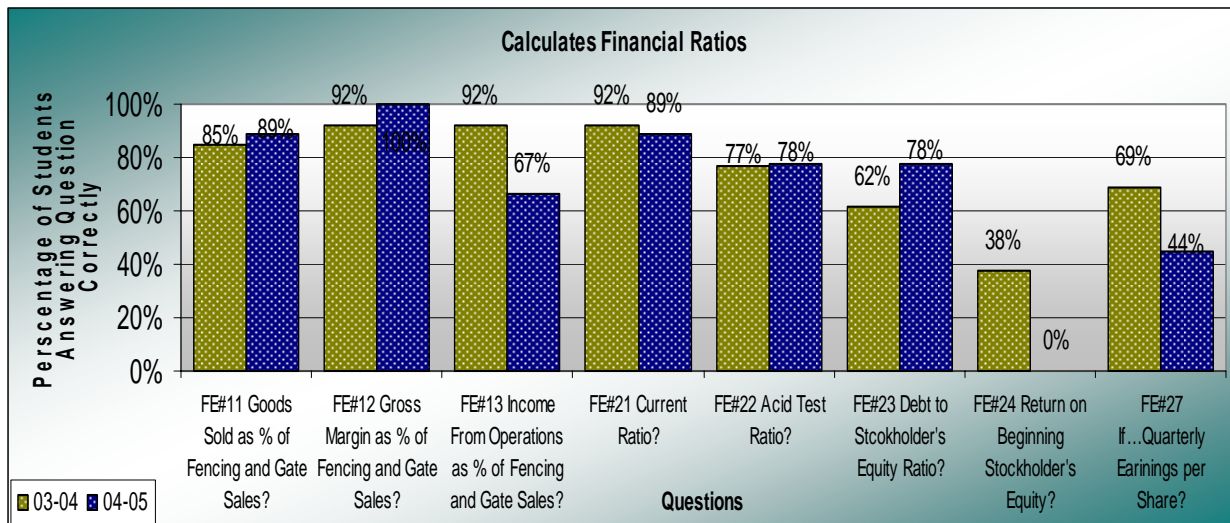
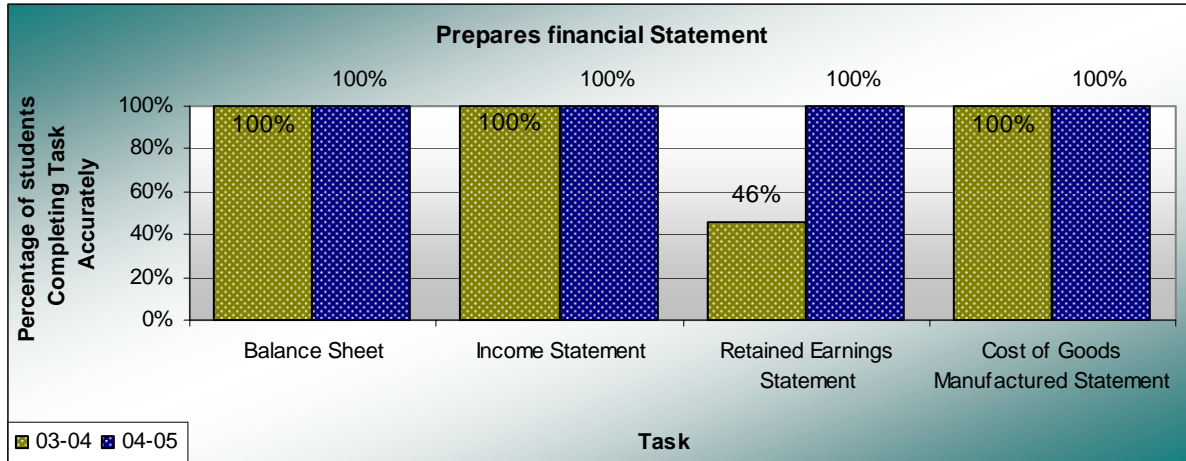
The above chart breaks down the competency groups into question sub-sets. For example, students did better with the set of *Accurately Analyzes Transactions* questions than almost any other sub-set of questions. Students' performance in all categories was lower in 2004-2005 than in 2003-2004. 100% of the students received full points for *Use Technology to Support Accounting* in both 2003-2004 and 2004-2005.

The following seven charts show simple analyses at the item level and give more specific details of the strengths and weaknesses related to our outcomes. For example, the “Accurately Analyzes Transactions” question group included questions #1, #2, and #6 from the Mid-Project (MP) Evaluation. Students struggled more with MP #2 than the other two questions in this set for the second year.

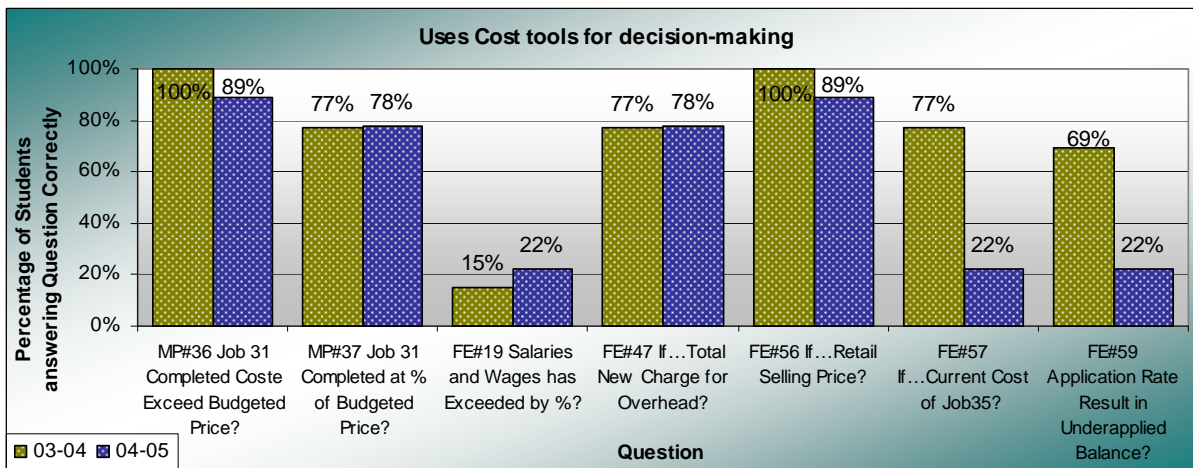
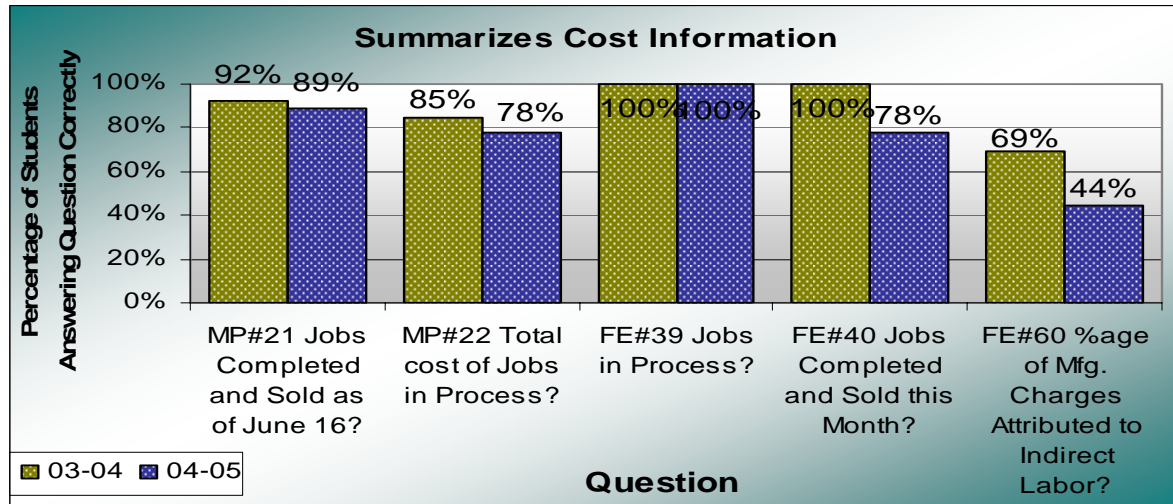
Graphs representing Outcome #1: Analyze the affects of business transactions on the accounting equation using the system of debits and credits, journalize and post transactions to general and subsidiary ledgers and make adjusting entries.



Graphs representing Outcome #2: Prepare financial statements and utilize and calculate financial ratios to analyze financial performance.



Graphs representing Outcome #4: Summarize cost information for both internal and external reporting and utilize costing tools to support management decision-making.



No additional graphs for Outcome #5

3. Analysis of Results (Outcomes 1, 2, 4, 5):

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)

Overall student performance of 82% exceeds the expected 80% benchmark; however, compared to 03-04, students' level of performance is lower. A detailed review of the graphs for outcome #1 shows weaknesses in the use of subsidiary records to manage unit costs and a drop in adjusting accounts correctly.

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

Student performance in preparing financial statements exceeded the 80% benchmark and shows improvement in preparing the Retained Earnings Statement. The Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Cost of Goods Manufactured Statement were prepared without problems.

In reviewing student performance of Financial Ratio Analysis, results indicate students **increased** performance in Goods Sold as a percent of Sales, Gross Margin as a percent of Sales, Acid Test Ratio, Debt to Stockholders' Equity Ratio. More instruction appears necessary in the computation of the following ratios: Income from Operations as a percent of Sales, Current Ratio, Return on Beginning Stockholder's Equity, and Quarterly Earnings per share.

Students also seem to struggle with questions requiring analysis of financial performance. There was some improvement in explaining Income from Operations, but students scored lower in three other areas of analysis of financial performance.

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

Students performed below the benchmark of 80% in their ability to summarize cost information, a closer look at performance shows a weakness in understanding how to interpret cost information as it relates to specific jobs in process and jobs sold, and in computing 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.

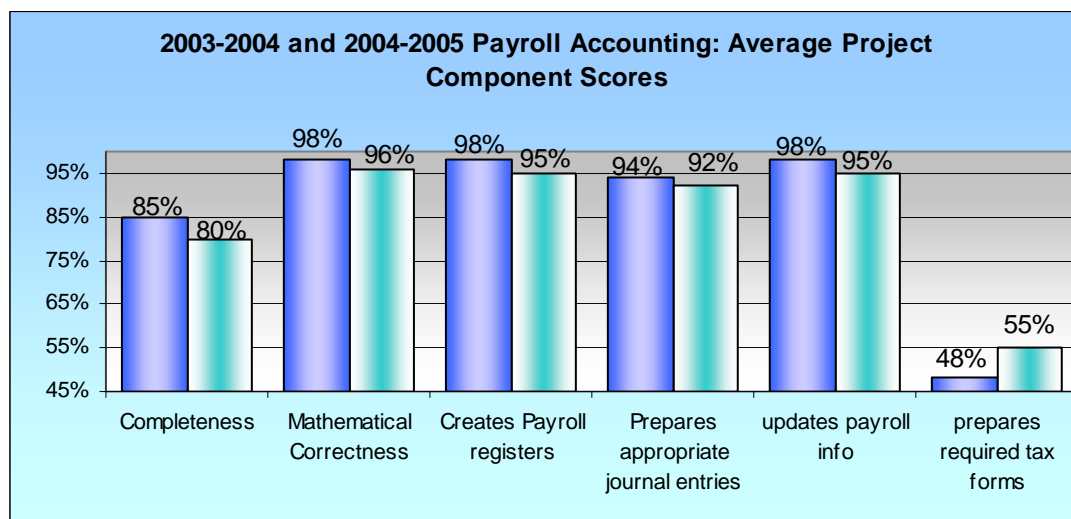
Outcome #5 - Use current technology to implement appropriate accounting systems that will support the different uses of accounting information. (pink column)

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.

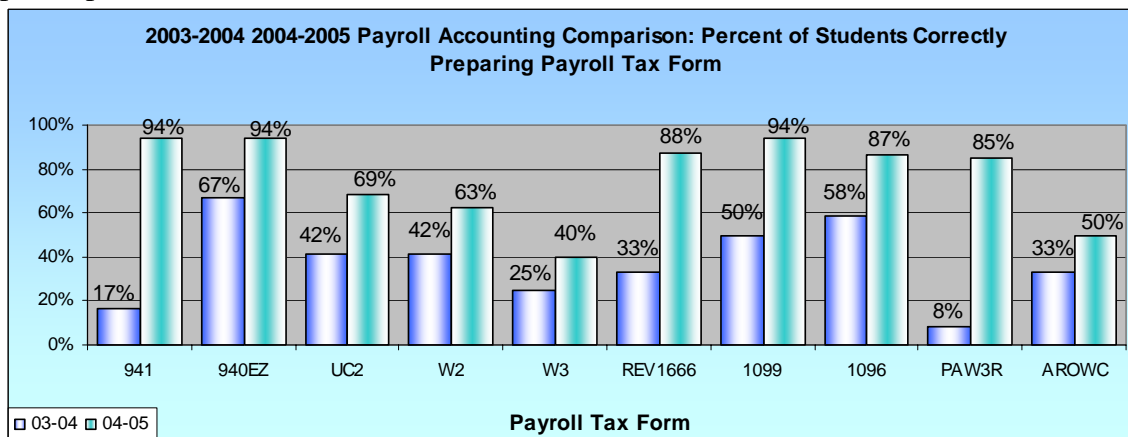
2a. Current Year Data Results (Outcomes 3 and 6):

Outcomes #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.

Learning Outcomes #3 was assessed using a comprehensive Computerized Payroll Tax Project assigned to students in Payroll Accounting 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. **(Sample size – 19 students; one incomplete of 20 enrolled)**



The Average Project Component Scores chart (above) shows the average percentage scores for 19 students on the Payroll Accounting project. As these components were weighted differently, the average percentage within each component was calculated, so the components could be compared. For example, 20 points were possible for the *Completeness* component. On average, the students achieved about 16 points, or about 80% of the available *Completeness* points. Forty points were possible for the *Prepares tax forms* component; on average students scored about 22 points, or 55% of the total *Tax forms* points possible.



The chart above shows the percentage of students correctly preparing each of the ten *Tax forms*.

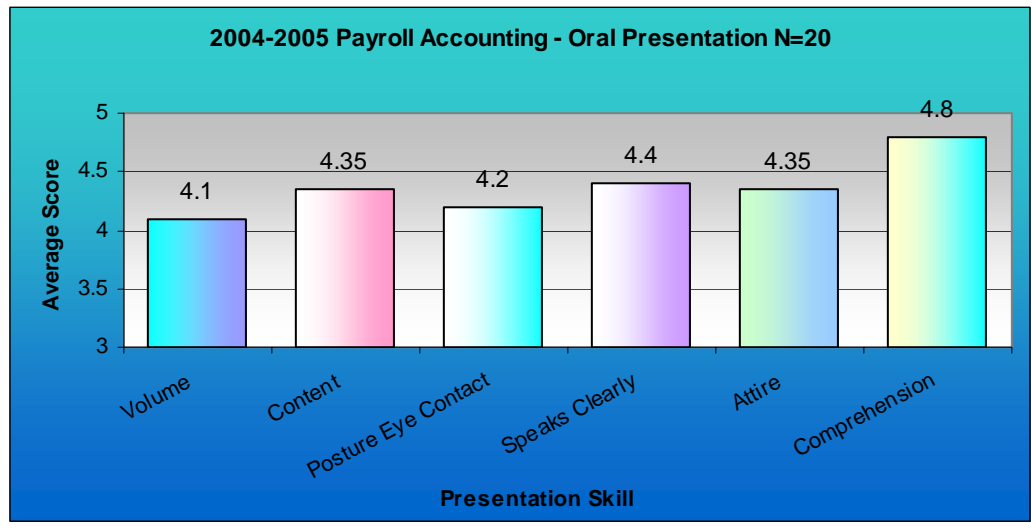
Analysis of Results

Although student performance on the payroll project exceeds the benchmark of 80%, performance in several areas actually decreased between 03-04 and 04-05. On a positive note, student scores increased in 04-05 on the 03-04 area of weakness in preparing payroll tax forms required by law. Steps taken during 04-05 to strength students' abilities to prepare payroll tax forms had some success. 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

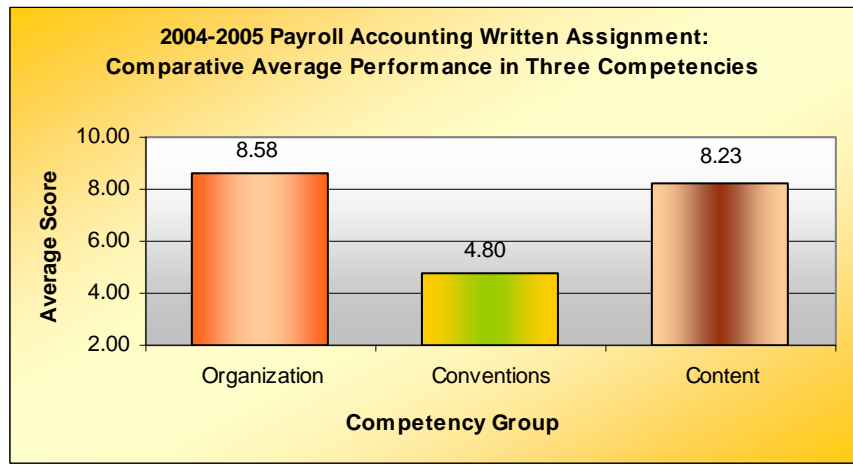
understanding of how the information for the forms were determined from the payroll records, during 04-05 more instruction was delivered in this area.

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

Learning Outcome #6 was also assessed in Payroll Accounting. Students are required to research a current issue related to the study of Payroll Taxes and prepare an oral and written presentation on their chosen topic. (Sample size – 20 students)

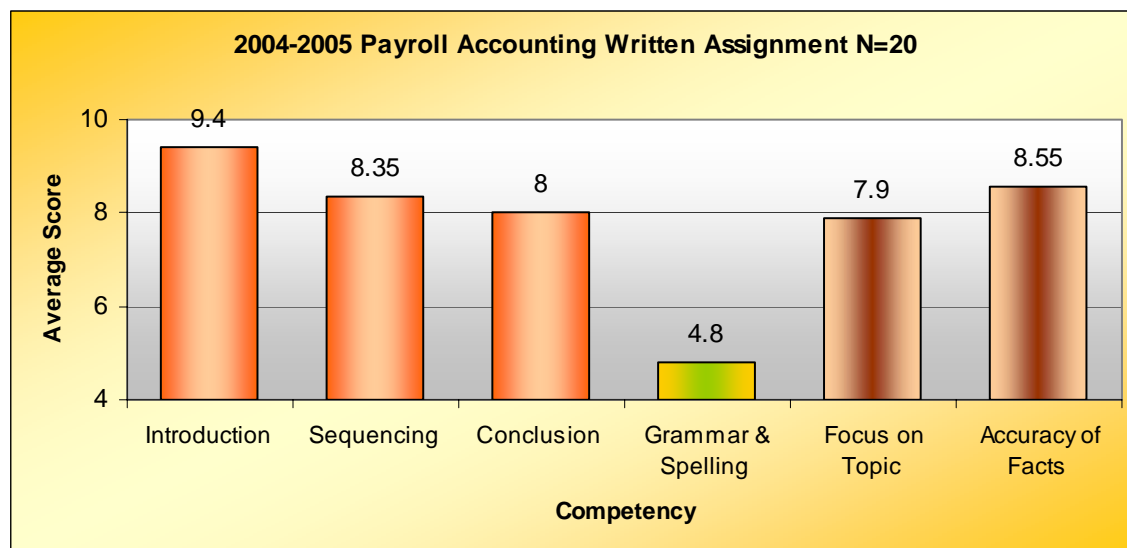


The Oral Presentation chart shows the average scores for 20 students on six skills. Oral presentation skills are not compared with 2003-2004 results because the rubric was changed.



The Written Assignment chart shows the average scores for 20 students on the written assignment. The 2004-2005 results cannot be compared to the 2003-2004 results because the rubric changed.

The following chart breaks down the competency groups into sub-sets. *Introduction, Sequencing and Conclusion* are components of *Organization*. *Focus on Topic* and *Accuracy of Facts* are components of *Content*.

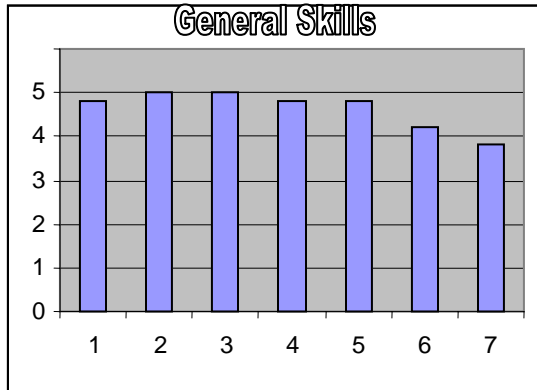


Analysis of Results

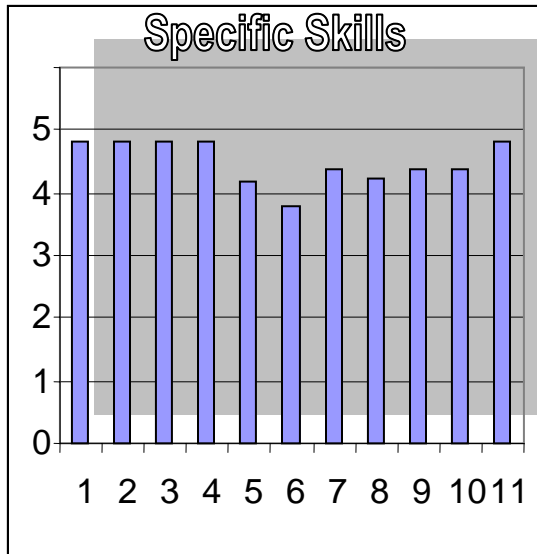
According to the rubric scoring system for the oral communication requirement, the student ratings of 4 (out of 5) or better meet the 80% benchmark set for this outcome. For the written requirement a score of 8 (out of 10) or better meets the 80% benchmark. The assessment of written and oral communication 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).

Second method of Assessing Outcomes ACC Accounting Program Graduate Survey

The charts below summarize the results of the graduate student survey sent to Accounting Program graduates.



- QUESTIONS CONCERNING GENERAL SKILLS:
1. I experienced a continuum of learning throughout the program.
 2. The program met my expectations
 3. The knowledge acquired is applicable to my profession.
 4. My analytical abilities were enhanced.
 5. I sharpened my computer application skills (word, spreadsheets, etc.) **Outcome #7**
 6. My oral and written communication skills have improved. **Outcome #6**
 7. I increased my understanding of Diversity. **Outcome #7**



- QUESTIONS RELATED TO SPECIFIC SKILLS:
- I have a fundamental knowledge of the following accounting principles:
1. Debits/Credits - **Outcome #1**
 2. Journal Entries - **Outcome #1**
 3. Adjusting Entries - **Outcome #1**
 4. Subsidiary Ledgers - **Outcome #1**
 5. I have the skills to prepare financial statements. **Outcome #2**
 6. I can calculate financial ratios and use the results to analyze financial data. **Outcome #2**
 7. I gained a better understanding of Payroll Accounting. **Outcome #3**
 8. I gained a better understanding of Income Tax Accounting. **Outcome #3**
 9. I gained a better understanding of Cost accounting principles. **Outcome #4**
 10. I can apply Managerial accounting concepts to decision-making. **Outcome #4**
 11. I was adequately trained in the use of a general ledger software package. **Outcome #5**

The questionnaire was sent to 52 students graduating from the program from 1999-2003. Of the 52 students who were sent surveys, five students responded to the survey; eleven surveys were return marked “undeliverable” and the remaining 36 are not traceable. Due to the low response, a simple analysis was done.

The highest response was 5-Strongly Agree; the lowest response was 1-Strongly Disagree. In reviewing the surveys returned, the average score for each question listed was at least a 3 or better. We fell short of our benchmark with question #7 (Understanding of diversity) within the General Skills, and question #6 (Financial

Ratios) within the Specific Skills. Student performance using financial ratios continues to show as a weakness and will be addressed within the “Use of Results” section. The data does show students responding were generally pleased with the Accounting Program and believed they acquired knowledge applicable to the profession.

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 subsidiary ledgers, adjusting entries, and financial ratios will be addressed in the Principles of Accounting Sequence where they are introduced. Specifically, more assignments 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.

Since the Ramblewood Project is required in Cost Accounting (prerequisites are the Principles of Accounting courses), this course will incorporate more review of financial ratios and add more instruction in how to work with cost information and analysis. In conjunction with this course, a special website will be designed to give students practice in calculating financial ratios with immediate feedback as to the correctness of the calculations.

- b. In the area of Payroll Accounting, students will be offered a special session specifically designed to help with the instructions and requirements of this project. Completeness was a problem with this project, so the additional time spent outside of normal lecture is intended to assist students in the completion of all requirements.
 - c. Oral and written communication skills are at an acceptable level, students are given handouts of proper guidelines for oral and written communication. Also, the Accounting program requires courses in English, Speech, and Business Communication. In the next assessment cycle, students will be encouraged to use the English Department’s “Writing Center” for additional support in strengthening these skills.

Part II – Assessment PLAN (05-06)

A. Intended Outcomes

Same as Part I

B. Identify Assessment Procedures/Methods

First Method of Assessment:

Based on the results of the 04-05 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 Accounting projects to assess outcomes #3 & 6.

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 2005 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 2006 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.

To assess outcome 7 – graduate surveys

Second Method of Assessment: The Accounting Program will assess outcomes #1-7 by distributing a graduate student survey.

C. Benchmarks

The Accounting Department is expecting :

- 1) 100% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc. project (Outcomes 1, 2, 4 & 5)
- 2) 100% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on Oral and Written Projects (Outcome #6)
- 3) 100% of the students will score an average of 80 or better on the Payroll Tax or Income Tax Project (Outcome #3)
- 4) 100% of the students will rate the program acceptable (4) or better on the Graduate Student Surveys.