

Assessment Report Template Accounting Program

Part I-Assessment SUMMARY (05-06)

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	X

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. (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 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 (02-03) to allow for comparative 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 added an Accounting Graduate Student Survey as a second measure of assessing student learning. Students' results continued to fall short of expectations in the area of financial ratio analysis and payroll reporting requirements. The entire 04-05 Accounting Department Assessment report can be reviewed on the ACC website for Assessment. The 04-05 assessment results lead to the following strategies/improvements incorporated into the 05-06 academic year:

- 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 a Cost Accounting project is used to assess financial ratio calculation and analysis (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.

The following summary analyzes the current year’s results after implementing the improvements outlined above.

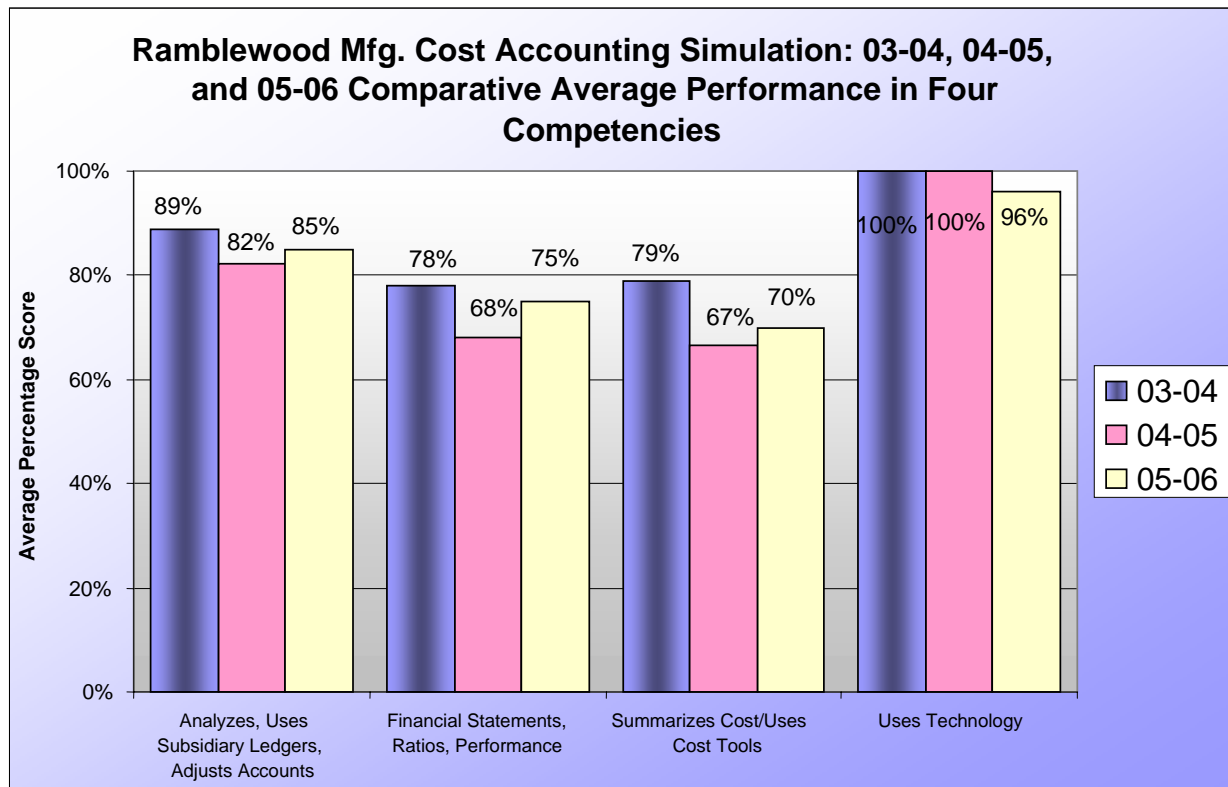
First Method of Assessing Outcomes

Note: Data gathered to support assessment of outcomes for the 05-06 academic year was submitted to the Institutional Research department for summarization. Several of the detailed charts completed by Institutional Research and shared with the Accounting Department contained inconsistencies when compared with data from previous years. Therefore, it is the decision of the Accounting Faculty to omit these charts due to the numerous discrepancies discovered. The following summarization is based on an overview of data, along with, insights gained from faculty participation in scoring assessment projects.

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 -14**). The following graph presents a summary of the three years this project was used.

Chart #1



Outcome #1

Outcome #2

Outcome #4

Outcome #5

The 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 2005-2006 students improved in outcomes 1, 2, and 4 when compared to 2004-2005; but, did not perform as well as students did in 2003-2004.

Also, as depicted in the graph, the benchmark of 80% was attained for outcomes 1 and 5; however, the benchmark of 80% was not met for outcomes 2 and 4.

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.

Student performance exceeds the expected 80% benchmark in analyzing, journalizing and posting transactions, and over the three year comparison, performance has improved.

Outcome #2 - Prepare financial statements and utilize and calculate financial ratios to analyze financial performance.

Students again are successful in preparing financial statements, exceeding the 80% benchmark. The Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Retained Earnings Statement and Cost of Goods Manufactured Statement were prepared without problems.

As a result of analyzing previous years' assessment results for calculation of financial ratios a weakness was identified. A special website was created for students to practice financial ratio calculations. Students could practice various ratios and analysis questions and immediately check correct solutions. Tracking was used on the site. All 14 students accessed the site at least once. There were 140 hits to the site overall. Students who scored above 90% on the practice set (the top 5 students) averaged more than twice as many hits to the site as the 9 students who scored below 90%. This may be an indication that the additional website materials improved student performance or it may be an indication that higher performing students tend to use available resources more often. In either case, it appears that students received learning support from the site.

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

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.

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.

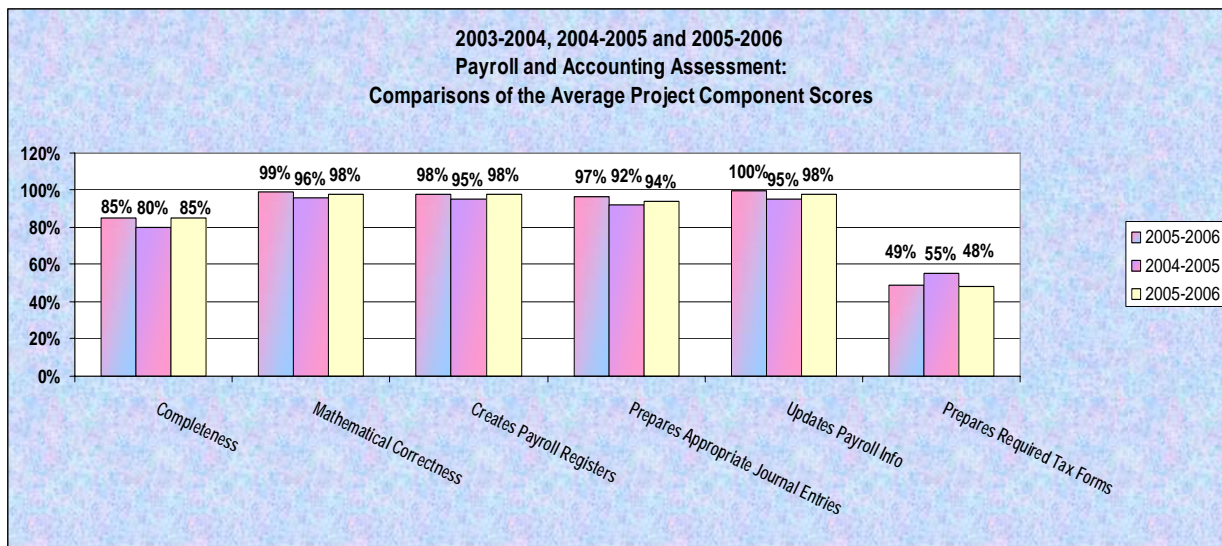
2a. Current Year Data Results (Outcomes 3 and 6):

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. (04-05 sample size -19 students; 05-06 samples size-23 students.)

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.

Chart #2



In the Average Project Component Score (Chart #4) for the Academic school year 2005-2006, students scored higher this year in the following categories: *Completeness*, *Mathematical Correctness*, *Creates Payroll Registers*, *Prepares Appropriate Journal Entries*, and *Updates Payroll Info*. The only component

that is below the previous year's percentage score is the *Prepares Required Tax Forms* component. This component has resulted in below average scores for the past three academic years. (04-05 samples size – 19 students; 05-06 sample size – 23 students)

Analysis of Results

The benchmark of all students performing at 80% or greater on the payroll project was exceeded in all categories except Prepares Required Tax Forms. Steps taken during 05-06 to strength students' abilities to prepare payroll tax forms were not successful. Special sessions set up to assist students in completing these forms were poorly attended. Although the textbook gives examples of each of the forms listed above and students were assigned homework problems requiring many of these forms to be completed, several projects were submitted with incomplete or missing forms. Students do not have to complete all forms to earn a passing score on the project. Changes to the scoring process are being considered for the following academic year (see "Use of Results").

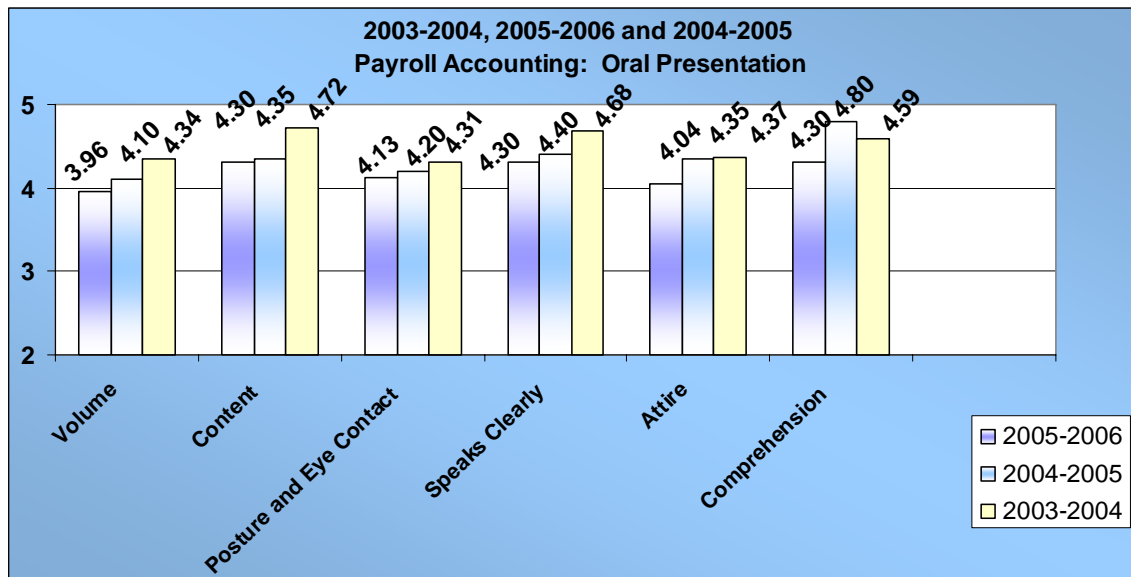
Outcome #6: Demonstrate written and oral communication skills as related to accounting.

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.

Following is the Oral Presentation chart showing the average scores for 23 students. They were scored based on their level of skill in six different categories: *Volume, Content, Posture Eye Contact, Speaks Clearly, Attire, and Comprehension*.

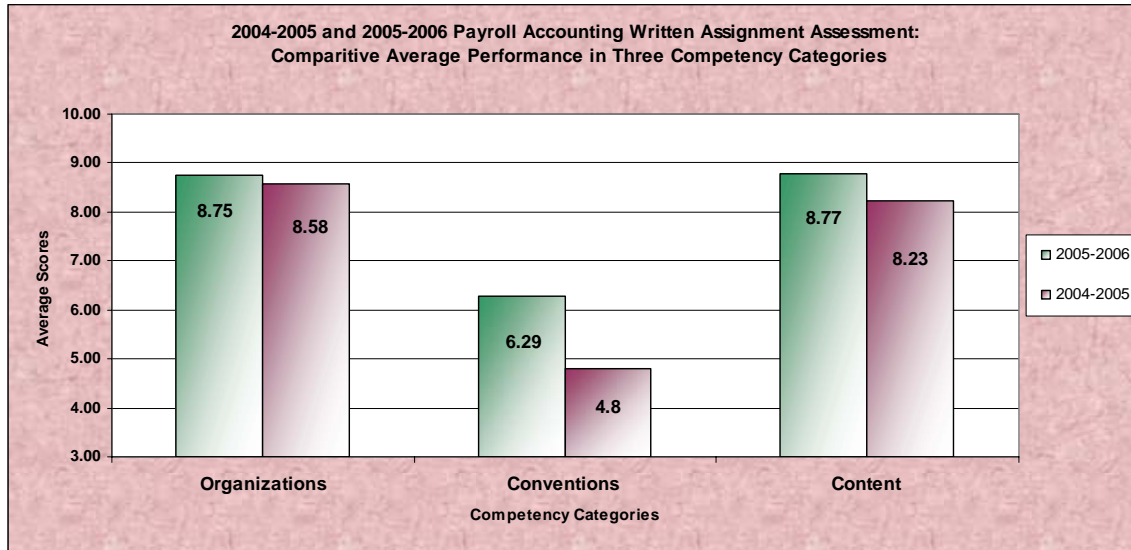
The results shown in Chart #3 for 2005-2006 show students performed slightly lower than the previous years.

Chart #3



The Written Assignment chart #4 below shows the average scores for 23 students on the written assignment. Overall, for the 2005-2006 academic year, students scored higher than 2004-2005.

Chart #4



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. Students' oral presentations met this benchmark in all areas except volume.

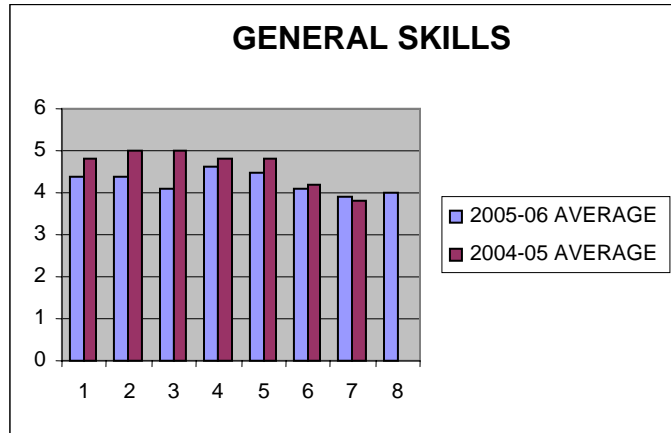
For the written requirement a score of 8 (out of 10) or better meets the 80% benchmark. Students written assignments met the benchmark in all areas except grammar and spelling.

Outcome #7: Demonstrate an understanding of diversity issues and ethics in accounting.

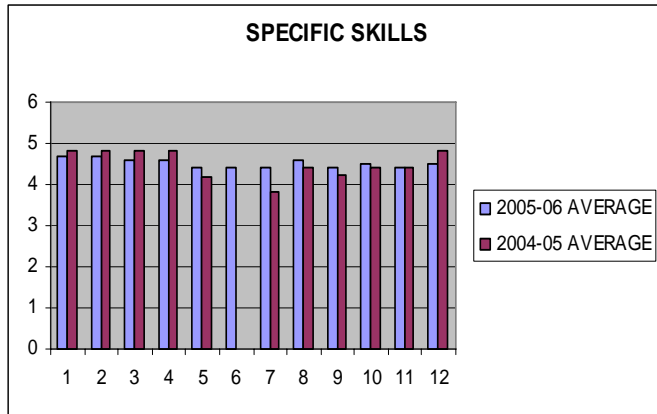
Within Principles of Accounting I and II, students are assigned homework cases addressing diversity and ethical behavior. These cases are discussed within the classroom. Cost Accounting students explore and discuss the International Management Accountant's website regarding ethical behavior during the 1st class meeting. Students in Payroll Accounting are encouraged to explore issues in diversity and ethical behavior when completing the course written report requirement. In 05-06, several student reports (approximately 80%) dealt with questionable employment practices.

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:
- I experienced a continuum of learning throughout the program.
 - The program met my expectations
 - The knowledge acquired is applicable to my profession.
 - My analytical abilities were enhanced.
 - I sharpened my computer application skills (word, spreadsheets, etc.) **Outcome #7**
 - My oral and written communication skills have improved. **Outcome #6**
 - I increased my understanding of Diversity. **Outcome #7**
 - I increased my awareness of Ethics in the workplace. **Outcome #7**



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

In 05-06, the questionnaire was sent to 17 graduates from 2004 and 2005 academic years with 10 students responding; one survey was returned marked undeliverable. This compares to the previous year's survey sent to 52 students graduating from the program from 1999-2003 academic years with 5 students responding.

It should be noted, the survey tool was modified for the 05-06 assessment period.

- Question #7, General Skills (old survey), “I increased my understanding of Diversity” was split into two questions, #7 and #8, on the current survey.
 - Question #6, Specific Skills (old survey), “I can calculate financial ratios and use the results to analyze financial data,” was split into two questions, #6 and #7, on the current survey.
- Thus, no comparison for question #8, General Skills, and question #6, Specific Skills, can be made.

The highest response was 5-Strongly Agree; the lowest response was 1-Strongly Disagree. Survey results met or exceeded the benchmark of 4, with the exception of question #7 (awareness of Diversity) within the General Skills. This will be addressed in the “Use of Results” section. Overall, the data shows that 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. The Accounting Department has decided to discontinue use of the Ramblewood Manufacturing, Inc. project in Cost Accounting because the project requires the use of data discs in the A drive of students’ computers. Several students in 2005-2006 had computers and laptops that did not have A drives. In addition, several students complained about the program crashing. Dynamic Designs will replace Ramblewood. Dynamic Designs requires students to do most of the project on the computer while keeping the job cards (a subsidiary ledger) manually. This may give the students a better understanding of cost flows in a job order system and of subsidiary ledgers than solely using a computerized system. Office hours will be scheduled on Saturday after Cost Accounting class for the convenience of students seeking assistance.
 - b. In the area of Payroll Accounting, additional in-class exercises will be designed to cover preparation of payroll tax forms. Also, the project’s total points will be reallocated to put more weight on the preparation of payroll tax forms as an incentive to complete the forms in order to earn a passing grade. Students will also be instructed in the use of government sites designed to assist in the preparation of payroll tax reports.
 - c. Students will be given the rubrics used for scoring oral and written communication to assist in understanding the criteria for successful communication. Accounting Faculty will continue to encourage students to use the English Department’s “Writing Center” for additional support in strengthening these skills.

Part II – Assessment PLAN (06-07)

A. Intended Outcomes

same as Part I

B. Identify Assessment Procedures/Methods

First Method of Assessment:

Based on the results of the 05-06 Assessment, the department has decided to use a new project, Dynamic Designs for the assessment of outcomes #1, 4, and 5 and the preparation of financial statements part of outcome 2. The Payroll Accounting projects will assess outcomes #3 & 6. An additional project will be used in Accounting Principles II to assess financial ratio calculation and analysis.

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 2006 Semester and from Principle of Accounting II students in the Spring 2007 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 Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Semesters.
- 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 Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Semesters.
- 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 the following procedures will be followed:

-Students will be assigned case studies in Principles of Accounting I and II and Cost Accounting that address diversity and ethical behavior.

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 Dynamic Designs 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)
- 5) 100% of the students will rate the program acceptable (4) or better on the Graduate Student Surveys.