

## **Institutional Effectiveness**

**2019-2020**

**Program:** Accounting MAcc

**College and Department:** College of Business – Department of Accounting

**Contact:** Richard Rand

**Mission:**

- Provide an educational foundation that enables its students to become successful accounting professionals,
- Engage in scholarly activity that makes meaningful contributions to the understanding and practice of accounting and to accounting education, and
- Serve the region, state, community, university, and the profession through outreach activities

We believe teaching, scholarly activities, and service are interdependent and synergistic, and that the spirit of discovery and pursuit of knowledge underlie our educational focus and guide our service activities.

**Our Vision:** The Department of Accounting will be a recognized leader in undergraduate and graduate accounting education with a focus on technology, and will be the destination of choice for those seeking rich and diverse learning experiences that inspire innovation, leadership, and value creation.

**Our Character & Values:** The Department of Accounting maintains the highest level of dedication to its academic program, exemplified by a focus on excellence in instruction, commitment to scholarly activity, and engagement in professional and community service by the faculty.

The Department of Accounting is distinguished by...

- A high-touch, personal learning environment fostered by a caring faculty,
- A commitment to experiential learning that produces practical knowledge and professional development in students,
- A strong collegial environment characterized by robust collaboration and high levels of engagement among faculty, staff, and students,
- A technology-driven, interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning that produces team-oriented, competitive, ready-to-work graduates,
- A competent online learning environment distinguished by maintaining the integrity of online testing coupled with the historical strengths in online lectures and extensive examples provided through various online platforms, and
- An organizational culture that encourages ethical and responsible behavior in all stakeholders while embracing the diversity of individuals and ideas.

**Program Goals:**

PG 1: The Department will maintain and grow the number of Masters of Accountancy students.

PG 2: Re-organize the Accounting Advisory Board to allow the group to more efficiently and effectively assist the Department of Accounting.

PG 3: The department will successfully integrate relevant technology skill sets in the undergraduate program.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

SLO 1: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions: Application and Analysis.

SLO 2: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate the ability to apply problem-solving skills.

SLO 3: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate that they are aware of the professional expectations with respect to ethical conduct.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

**Assessment Methods:**

*PG 1: Maintain and grow the number of Masters of Accountancy students*

- # of Master of Accountancy Students Enrolled per Cohort - This metric is tracked internally and is viewed as a measure of progress toward an enrollment level that allows the program to be sustainable.
- # of Master of Graduate SCH Generated - This metric is tracked internally and is viewed as a measure of contribution to the College's overall graduate enrollment health. With the addition of the MAcc in Fall 2017, it was viewed as important that total Accounting SCH in the graduate programs at TTU (MBA and MAcc) increase over time compared to SCH prior to the launching of the MAcc.
- Degrees and Enrollment - Tracking number of majors and degrees conferred allows us to measure whether our efforts to engage students and provide to them a meaningful choice are effective.

*PG 2: Re-organize the Accounting Advisory Board*

- *Accounting Advisory Board:* Historically, the Accounting Advisory Board at TTU was comprised of anywhere between 25-50 alumni. They attended an annual meeting where they were provided a "State of the Department" report. They had no governance structure and were not asked to participate in direct efforts to assist the Department in their other Program or Student Learning Goals.

In January 2015, the Accounting Advisory Board was re-organized into a smaller, self-governing body with a specific and direct purpose. The group now has its own Constitution

and Bylaws. The new AAB will have 12 members, serving rotating 3-year terms. This group will also meet at least twice annually.

*PG 3: Integrate relevant technology skill sets*

- **Technology:** Each Spring term, the Department will distribute a survey to faculty to conduct an inventory of technology topics and skillsets included in their courses at both the undergraduate and Master of Accountancy levels. This survey was initially conducted in Spring 2020.

*SLO 1: Demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions*

- **Bloom's Levels of Learning for Masters of Accountancy Accounting Majors:** In the core areas for the Master of Accountancy, students are assessed annually with respect to the Application and Analysis dimensions of Bloom's Taxonomy. The goal is for the students to perform at the 75% level overall. Within the assignment management platform that the Department uses, questions can be assigned by Bloom's Taxonomy dimensions. Reports can be easily generated showing performance on each dimension.

Note: The MAcc is a new degree, just launched in Fall 2017. As such, metrics for measuring learning in the MAcc are still tentative. Not all courses use the same assignment management platform. For purposes of this assessment, we only use assessments that are derived from the assignment management platform. Learning measurements for courses that do not use the assignment management platform (for example, ACCT 6290 Essential Technology for Accountants) are not included in the assessment.

*SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills*

- **Course-embedded assessments -** There are five core courses in the Master of Accountancy (MAcc) program. Those courses are:
  - i. ACCT 6210 Tax Management for Entities
  - ii. ACCT 6220 Auditing and Attestation
  - iii. ACCT 6260 Tax Research and Strategy
  - iv. ACCT 6270 Advanced Financial Accounting
  - v. ACCT 6250 Governmental Accounting

In each of those courses, students are assigned various assignments covering a wide range of topics that are appropriate to those courses. The Department expects students to be able to apply the knowledge that they learn and to demonstrate their ability to apply critical thinking skills. We have chosen to measure two dimensions of critical thinking; Analytical Thinking and Reflective Thinking. Many of the assignments that students complete include questions and problems that are pre-categorized as requiring Analytical Thinking or Reflective Thinking. The Department analyzes student performance to determine if the students are performing at the 75% goal on these two dimensions of critical thinking.

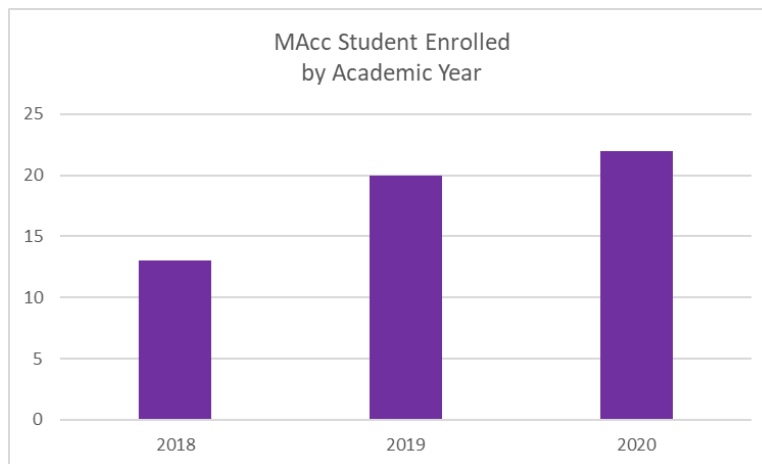
*SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations*

- Ethics - In the MAcc, ethical awareness measures are collected in ACCT 6240 (Ethics and the Professional Code of Conduct.) The metrics used are (1) a simple tracking of whether students complete the required NASBA Ethical Leadership Certification and (2) quiz questions indicating student's knowledge of general concepts of ethical conduct, the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct, and Circular 230. The embedded course measures are presented in quiz format.

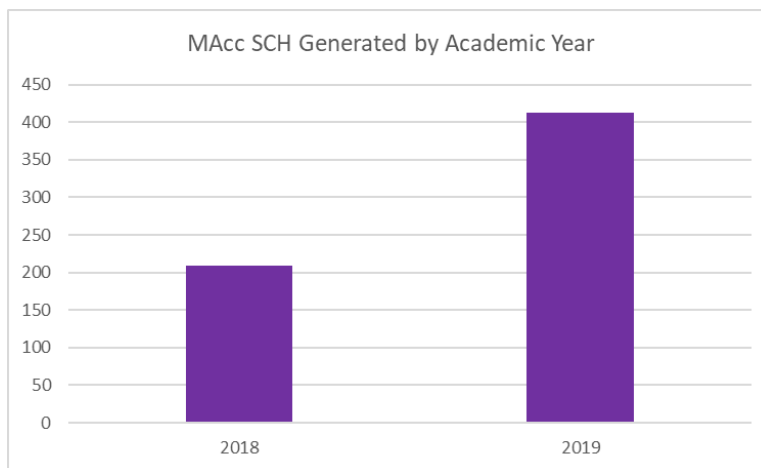
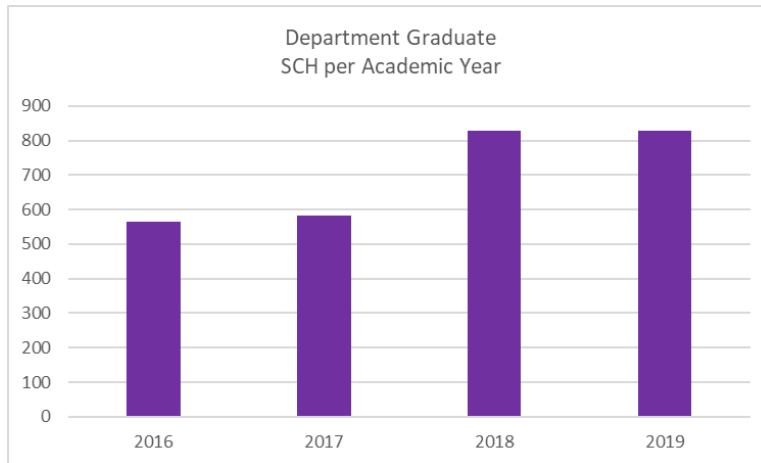
**Results:**

*PG 1: Maintain and grow the number of Masters of Accountancy students*

# of New MAcc Students admitted each academic year – The number of MAcc students enrolled has increased every year. We only track the number of students who enroll. The number of students who apply to the program has also grown, but tends to include students who are not qualified for a variety of reason. Of the students who we admit, not all actually enroll. Finally, the numbers presented are net of any withdrawals from the program or transfers to the MBA program.



# of Graduate SCH Generated – When the Master of Accountancy was launched in Fall 2017, there were two concerns regarding enrollment. First, would the MAcc “cannibalize” MBA enrollment to the point where overall Graduate SCH in Accounting would either not change or decline. Second, would the MAcc be able to generate sufficient enrollment to remain sustainable over time. The first graphic below indicates that overall Accounting Graduate SCH has increased significantly since the introduction of the MAcc. The second graphic indicates that MAcc SCH has grown steadily and is sufficient to provide sustainability for the program.



*PG 2: Re-organize the Accounting Advisory Board*

A working group met in January 2015 to work out the details of a Constitution and Bylaws for a re-organized, self-governing Accounting Advisory Board for TTU. The result was a new framework for an Accounting Advisory Board that will prove useful to the Department.

A group of 12 alumni and stakeholders was selected for the first Accounting Advisory Board. They are organized into three groups with staggered terms. The initial terms were for two years, three years, and four years, respectively. Subsequent Board members have been brought onto the Board to serve three-year terms, with a couple of exceptions to fill terms that were vacated. To date, 27 different individuals have served on the Accounting Advisory Board.

The AAB has met twice per year since its inception in 2015. Outcomes had included:

- Raising \$5,000 to scholarship students for the 2016 London Experience.
- Providing valuable feedback on the development and implementation of the Master of Accountancy Program, launched in Fall 2017.
- Providing ongoing input with respect to the integration of technology with the undergraduate accounting major curriculum and the MAcc curriculum.

- Providing valuable input in the development of the Department's Strategic Plan and with respect to AACSB accreditation.

*PG 3: Integrate relevant technology skill sets*

For the Masters of Accountancy (MAcc) program, charged all core instructors to include technology topics in their courses. In addition, when the program was launched in Fall 2017, it included a dedicated technology course into the curriculum in the form of ACCT 6290 Critical Technology Skills for Accountants. The inventory conducted in Spring 2020 indicates strong coverage of technology skillsets in the MAcc program.

<b>Master of Accountancy Coverage of Technology Skills</b>	<b>Total</b>
Basic Excel Spreadsheet Creation Skills	6
Excel Visualization Skills (making charts and diagrams)	4
Excel Pivot Table Skills	3
Use of Online Auditing Standards	1
Use of Online Tax Resources	2
Use of Online Accounting Standards Codification	2
Use of Online AICPA Code of Professional Conduct	2
Computer-based Preparation of Tax Returns	2
Computer-based Audit Tools	2
Computer-based Audit Workpaper tools	1
Data-base manipulation Skills	1
Visualization Software Skills (such as Tableau or Power BI)	3
Data Encryption	1
Electronic Retention of Data	0
Cybersecurity	1
SOC Reporting	2
Use of online writing assessment tools, such as Grademark or Grammarly	5
Use of online plagiarism tool TurnItIn.	5

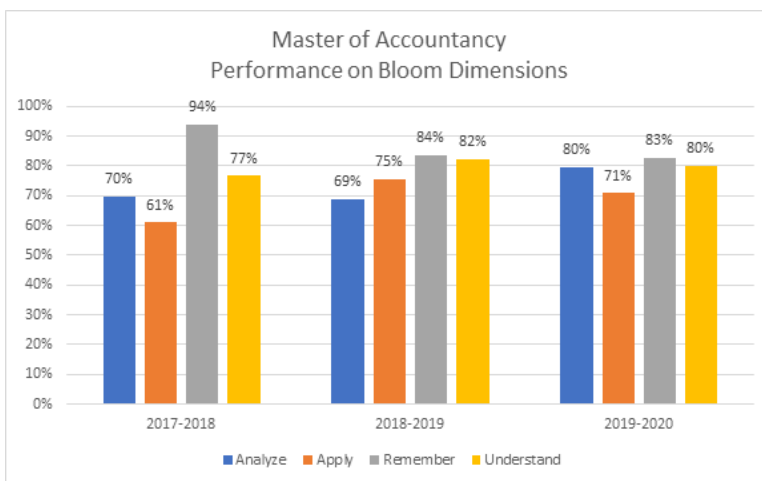
*SLO 1: Demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions*

There are five core courses in the Master of Accountancy (MAcc) program. Those courses are:

- ACCT 6210 Tax Management for Entities
- ACCT 6220 Auditing and Attestation
- ACCT 6260 Tax Research and Strategy
- ACCT 6270 Advanced Financial Accounting
- ACCT 6250 Governmental Accounting

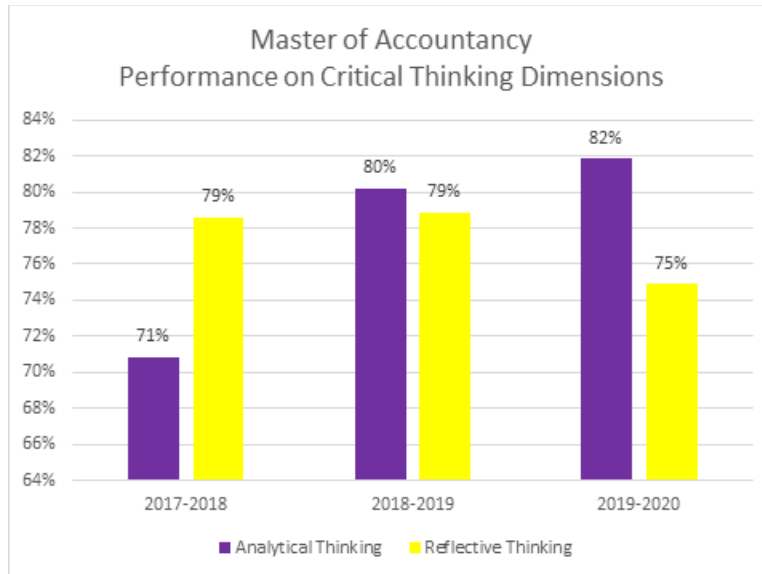
In each of those courses, students are assigned various assignments covering a wide range of topics that are appropriate to those courses. The Department expects students to be able to apply the knowledge that they learn and to demonstrate their ability to analyze information provided to them. These expectations correspond to the Bloom’s Taxonomy dimensions of Applying and Analyzing. Many of the assignments that students complete include questions and problems that are pre-categorized using Bloom’s Taxonomy as being either Applying questions or Analyzing questions. The Department analyzes student performance to determine if the students are performing at the 75% goal. Table 6 indicates that, in most cases, students have not consistently performed at the 75% goal on the dimensions of Analyzing and Applying. In the most recent period measured (2019-2020) students performed at the 80% level for Analyzing and the 71% level for Applying. Measures for Remembering and Understanding are provided for comparison purposes. Being lower level dimensions of Bloom’s Taxonomy, it should be expected that MAcc students would perform well on those dimensions and the data indicates that the expectations are supported.

It should be noted that the MAcc was launched in Fall 2017 with 13 students in the first cohort. The cohort has continued to grow each year (see Program Goal 1). In addition, our assessment process with respect to the MAcc program has evolved and is nearing a more mature state. During the first two years of the Program, our understanding of what we wanted to measure changed several times. Also, after the results from the first year of the Program (2017-2018), we made several modifications to courses in the program to accommodate a more clear understanding of our goals and objectives.



*SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills*

The table below indicates that, in most cases, students have consistently performed at the 75% goal on the two dimensions of critical thinking that we measured (with the exception of Analytical Thinking in the first year of the Program).



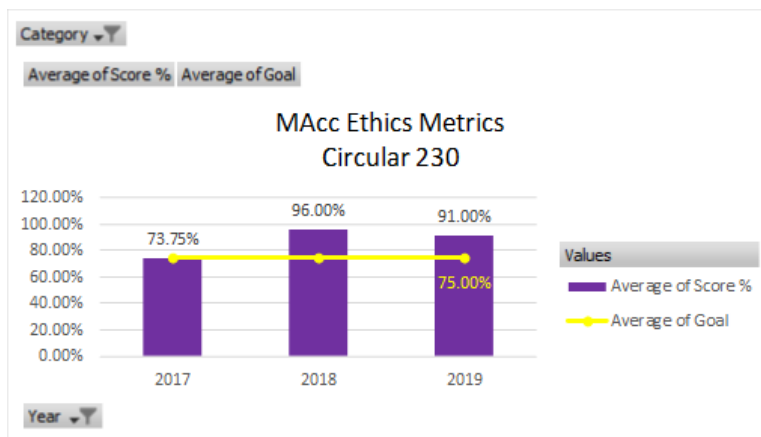
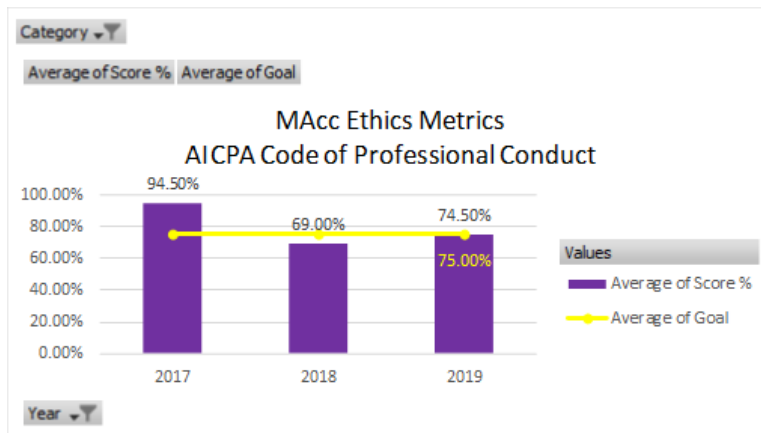
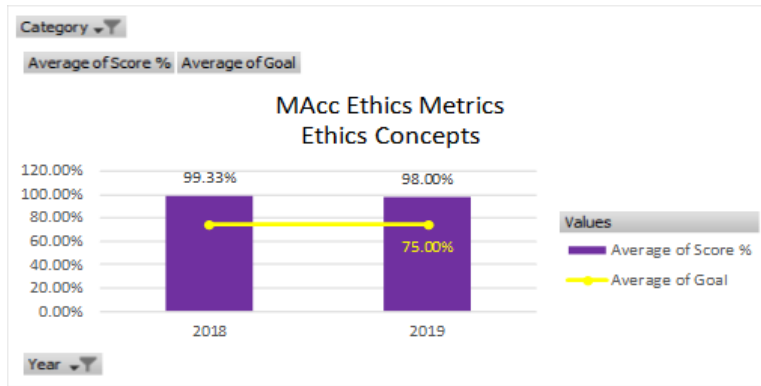
*SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations*

While ethical awareness is reinforced throughout the curriculum in the Master of Accountancy (MAcc), ethical awareness is primarily measured in ACCT 6240 Ethics and the Professional Code of Conduct. In this course, students are exposed to various aspects of professional ethics including, a framework for ethical decision making, professional ethical leadership, the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and Circular 230 (published by the Internal Revenue Service). We use four specific measurements, as indicated:

- Ethics Concepts – Goal is 75% on an embedded quiz.
- AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – Goal is 75% on an embedded quiz.
- Circular 230 – Goal is 75% on an embedded quiz.
- Ethical Leadership – Goal is 100% of students passing the NASBA Ethical Leadership Certification course administered by the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy. 100% of all students successful completed the NASBA Ethical Leadership Certification for the period evaluated.

Results indicate that students are achieving at the levels desired, overall. However, we also have additional data which suggests that students are having difficulty with the concept of professional independence as articulated in the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct.





**Modifications for Improvement:**

*SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills*

The results of critical thinking measures would appear to indicate that, overall, MAcc students are performing well in the areas of critical thinking that are being measured. At the MAcc level, measures indicate high levels of critical thinking. Outside of continuing to focus on analytics skills and visualization skills, we feel that we are where we want to be with respect to the dimensions of critical thinking that we are measuring.

*SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations*

Overall, the data appears to indicate that students are performing at our desired levels of achievement. We also have more granular data (not reported here) that seems to indicate that, at the topic level, students are experiencing difficulty with the concept of professional independence as articulated in the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct. To address this situation, we will do the following, beginning in Spring 2021:

- We will re-emphasize the concept across the curriculum through integration of independence in our core upper division accounting courses (not just in Auditing).
- We will sponsor at least one virtual seminar early in each semester focused on the importance of professional independence.
- We will encourage Beta Alpha Psi to schedule professional speakers who will focus specifically on the topic of independence and the Code of Professional Conduct.

We will re-assess students at the end of the Spring 2021 term to determine if our interventions make a difference.

**Appendices**

1. Curriculum Map

**Appendix 1: Curriculum Map**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>SLO 1: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions: Application and Analysis.</b>	<b>SLO 2: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate the ability to apply problem-solving skills.</b>	<b>SLO 3: Masters of Accountancy students will demonstrate that they are aware of the professional expectations with respect to ethical conduct.</b>
ACCT 6231	X	X	
ACCT 6232	X	X	
ACCT 6233	X	X	
ACCT 6234	X	X	
ACCT 6210	X	X	
ACCT 6220	X	X	X
ACCT 6240			X
ACCT 6250	X	X	X
ACCT 6260	X	X	
ACCT 6270	X	X	
ACCT 6281			X
ACCT 6282			
ACCT 6290	X	X	