

Institutional Effectiveness

2020-2021

Program: Accounting MAcc

College and Department: College of Business – Department of Accounting

Contact: Richard Rand

Mission:

The mission of the Department of Accounting is to graduate students characterized by a commitment to professional competence, ethical conduct, excellent communication skills, and critical thinking.

To facilitate our mission, we

- Provide an undergraduate and a graduate educational foundation that enables students to become successful business professionals,
- Engage with professional stakeholders both in the classroom and in an advisory capacity.
- Integration of technology, critical thinking, and communication skills throughout the curriculum.
- Engage in scholarly activity that makes meaningful contributions to the understanding and practice of accounting and to accounting education, and that contributes to the currency of our faculty.

Our Vision: The Department of Accounting at Tennessee Tech University will be recognized regionally in the field of accounting through its engaged students, qualified and committed faculty, and career-ready graduates known for their professional and technical competence, ethical conduct, and strong work ethic.

Our Character & Values: The core values that distinguish the Department of Accounting are:

- Integrity
 - We believe that personal integrity, measured in part by adherence to the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct *and the College of Business Code of Conduct*, should guide us in all decisions and activities.
- Professionalism
 - As professionals, we will conduct ourselves at all times in a manner of respectfulness to each other and to our students and will maintain a high level of intellectual preparedness, technical skill, and intellectual contribution to practice and the academy.
- Diversity of Thought
 - *We advocate respect for a diversity of backgrounds and thought by creating an environment of support for all of age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, national*

origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

- Excellence
 - We will strive to be the best we can be in the performance of our assigned responsibilities and will instill in our students the importance of a strong, *disciplined*, and reliable work ethic.

- Teamwork *Collaborative*
 - We believe that we are better and stronger as a team than we are as individuals. We will work together to support the best outcome possible for our students.

Program Goals:

- PG 1: The Department will maintain a sufficient enrollment in the MAcc to provide sustainability for the program.
- PG 2: Expand the size and role of 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: The Department will maintain a sufficient enrollment in the MAcc to provide sustainability for the program.*
- # 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: Expand the size and role of the Accounting Advisory Board

- *Identify changes to the By-Laws*
- *Identify specific ways the Accounting Advisory Board has implemented changes to its role.*

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.
- Identify specific technologies that are missing from the MAcc curriculum. This process will take place in Fall 2021, in preparation for curriculum changes to be implemented in Fall 2022 to align the MAcc program with the Model Curriculum published by the AICPA in Summer 2021.

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

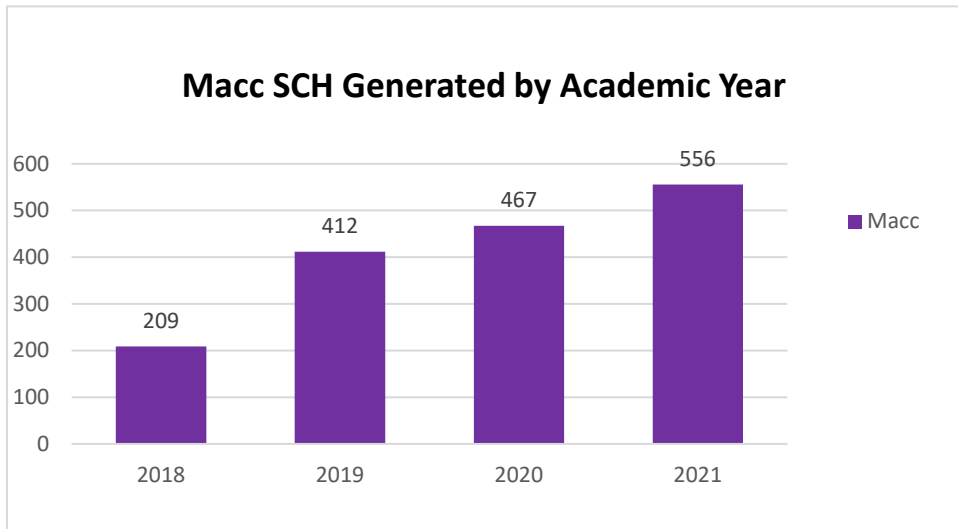
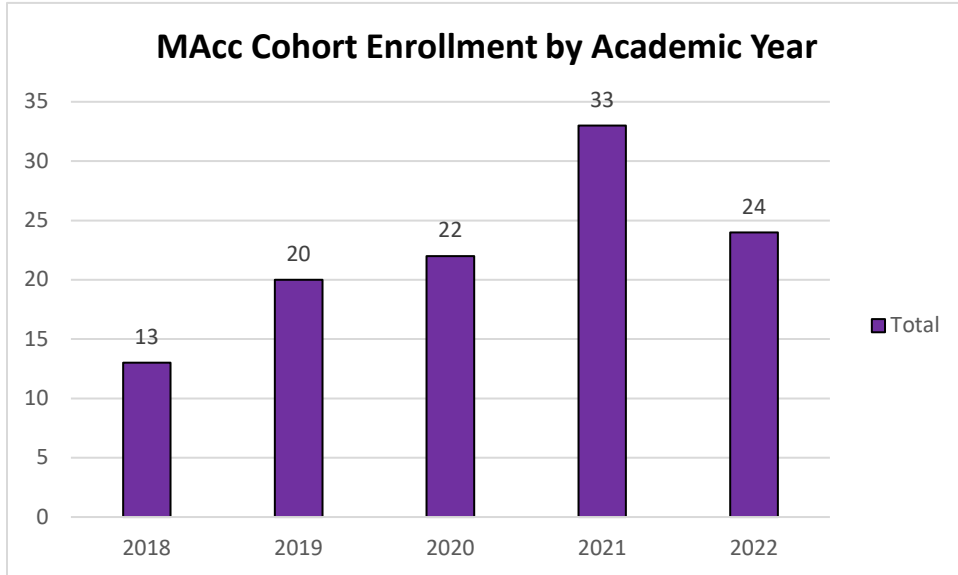
In each of those courses, students are assigned various assignments covering a wide range of topics that are appropriate to those courses. The Department expects students to be able to apply the knowledge that they learn and to demonstrate their ability to apply critical thinking skills. We have chosen 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. In addition, we use an AICPA Critical Thinking measure that can be derived from the same data base. The Department analyzes student performance to determine if the students are performing at the 75% goal on these three dimensions of critical thinking.

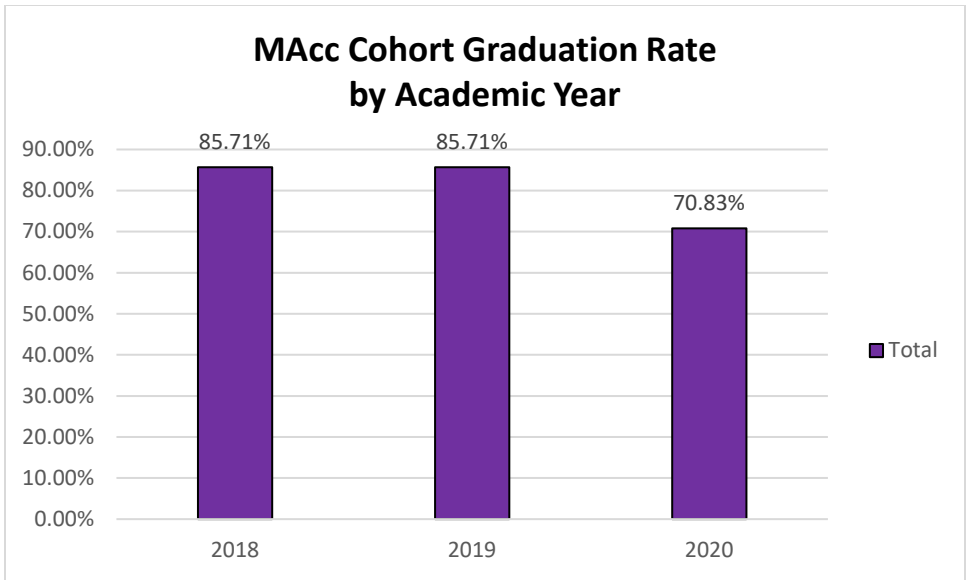
SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations

- 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 derived from in-class quizzes.

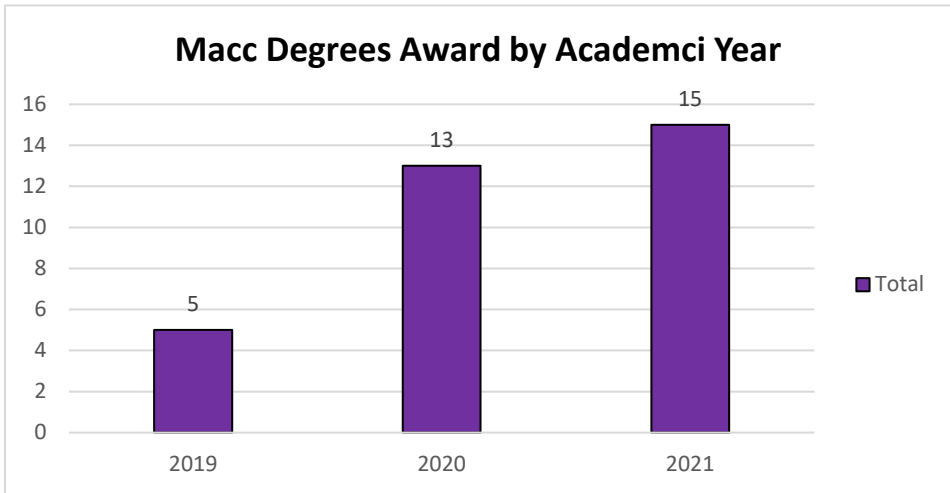
Results:

PG 1: The Department will maintain a sufficient enrollment in the MAcc to provide sustainability for the program.





Note: The numbers in the above table include students who started in the MAcc, but transferred to the MBA and received their MBAs during the period.



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

In April 2021, the AAB voted to expand its membership:

“Section 2: The number of Board members shall be set at ~~thirteen~~ sixteen, consisting of the Chair of the Accounting Department and ~~twelve~~ fifteen additional members appointed in accordance with the By-Laws of the Board. All members of the Board shall be voting members.”

In April 2021, the AAB voted to add additional meetings:

“Section 4: The Board normally shall hold ~~a regular meeting in the fall and spring semester of each year~~ four regular meetings per year, usually two in the Fall term and two in the Spring term, on dates selected and announced at least thirty days in advance by the Board Chairperson. Special meetings may be called, if deemed necessary, by the Board Chairperson or the Executive Secretary.”

In September 2021, the AAB established the following Task Forces:

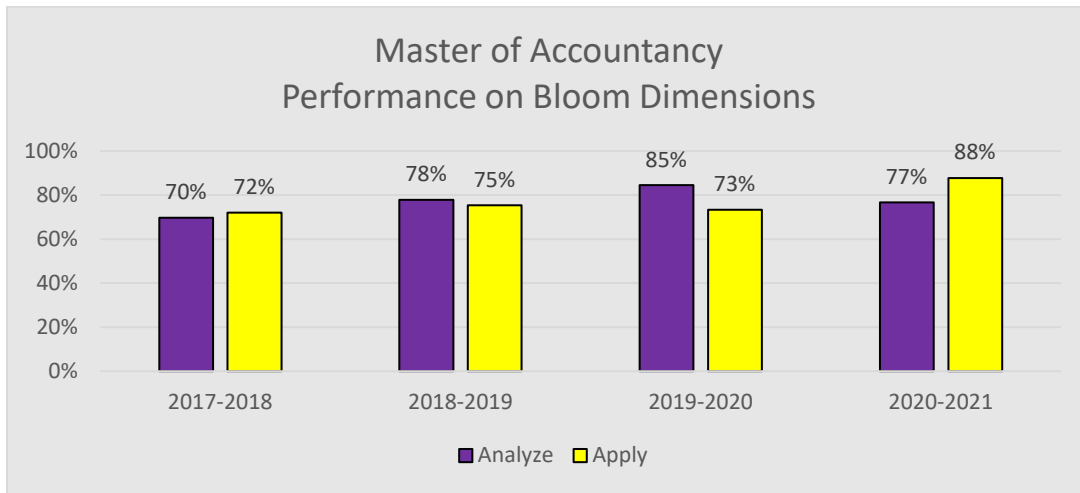
- Strategic Planning – This group will assist the Department with annual evaluation of progress made on Strategic Goals and will assist the Department with its annual update and revision of its Strategic Plan and Mission Statement.
- Nominating – This group will assist the Department Chair with identifying new members for the Board and will be responsible for submitting those names to the full Board for approval.
- Young Alumni – This group will work to identify ways to engage young alumni with the Department.
- CPA Evolution/Curriculum – This group will assist the Department with identifying needed curriculum changes to align both the undergraduate and graduate curricula with emerging priorities associated with the AICPA’s CPA Evolution.
- Faculty Relations – This group will work to develop a database of speakers on various topics related to concepts covered in undergraduate and graduate courses.
- Firm Outreach – This group will work with the Department to expand our stakeholder base and to identify more opportunities for students.

PG 3: *Integrate relevant technology skill sets*

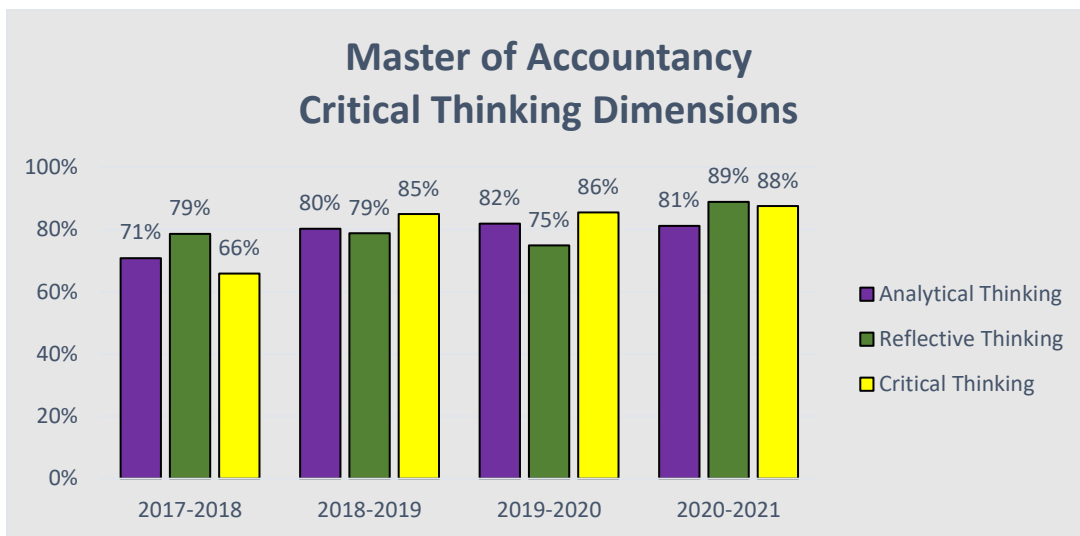
Inventory of Technology Skills in the MAcc Curriculum

Undergraduate Technology Skills	2020	2021
Basic Excel Spreadsheet Skills	6	7
Excel Visualization Skills (Charts and diagrams)	4	4
Excel Pivot Tables	3	4
Use of Online Auditing Standards	1	2
Use of Online Tax Resources	2	3
Use of Online Accounting Standards Codification	2	2
Use of Online AICPA Code of Professional Conduct	2	2
Computer-based Preparation of Tax Returns	2	2
Computer-based Audit Tools	2	2
Computer-based Audit Workpapers	1	1
Data-base Manipulation	1	2
Visualization Software Skills (such as Tableau or Power BI)	3	5
Data Encryption	1	0
Electronic Retention of Data	0	0
Cybersecurity	1	2
SOC Reporting	2	3
Use of online writing assessment tools, such as Grademark and Grammarly.	5	6
Use of online plagiarism tool TurnItIn.	5	5
Use of Pitchvantage		2
Audit Analytics		2
Bloomberg Terminals		0
Microsoft Teams		6
Zoom		8
iLearn		9

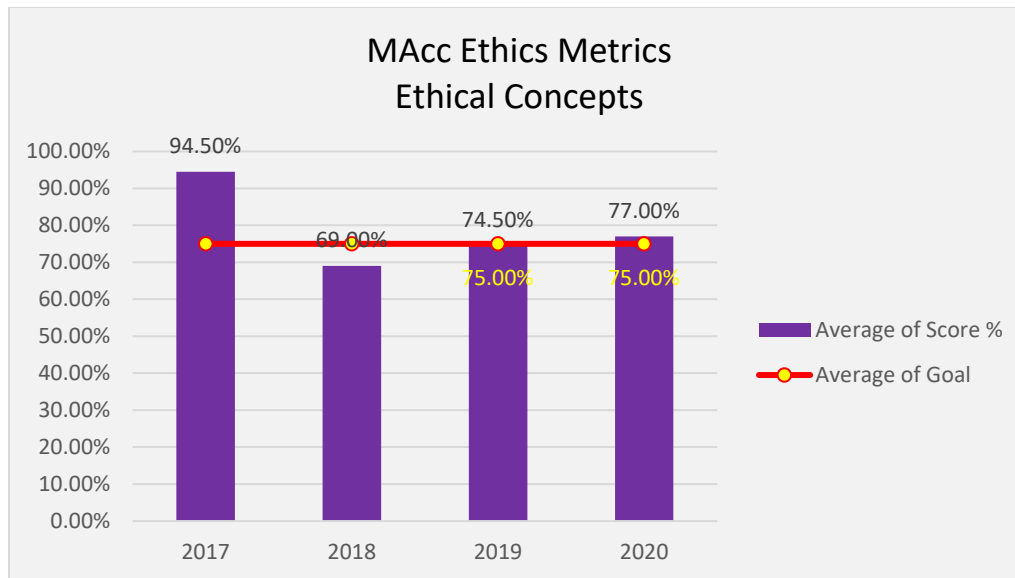
SLO 1: Demonstrate competency on the Bloom's dimensions



SLO 2: Demonstrate problem-solving skills



SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations



Modifications for Improvement:

During the 2021/2022 academic year, the Department plans to undertake a major revision of its curriculum to bring both the undergraduate and graduate curricula in line with the AICPA's Model Curriculum in preparation for the January 2024 launch of the new CPA Exam. Much of the change will be focused on targeted integration of emerging technologies in the area of IT, Data Analytics, Visualization, and Cybersecurity into the curricula.

SLO 3: Demonstrate awareness of the professional expectations

To address potential difficulty students were experiencing with the concept of professional independence as articulated in the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct, we initiated the following actions in Spring 2021:

- Re-emphasized the concept in core upper division accounting courses (not just in Auditing).
- Focused on ethics during the MAcc Weekend.
- Beta Alpha Psi invited professional speakers who focused specifically on the topic of independence and the Code of Professional Conduct.

Student progress on MAcc Ethics Assessments improved slightly. For Spring 2022:

- We will continue to re-emphasize the concept in other core upper division accounting courses.
- We will sponsor at least one virtual seminar early in each semester focused on the importance of professional independence. (This was planned for last Spring 2021 but did not occur.)

Appendices

1. Curriculum Map

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map

COURSE	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.
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	