The major: Accounting majors prepare for careers in business and accounting and increasingly for graduate education in accounting. Since Spring 2003, students have been required to apply for admission to the Terry College and to the accounting major. Under the Terry College of Business Enrollment Management Plan, the School of Accounting admits approximately 160 students per academic year. As shown in the diagram below, these students take one of four paths.

- After at least two semesters in the accounting major, some apply for admission to the five-year program. These students earn a BBA and MAcc at the end of five years.
- After at least three semesters in the accounting major, some apply for admission to the MAcc program. These students earn a BBA degree and then enter the MAcc program, which requires 30 hours beyond the undergraduate degree in accounting.
- Some students complete their BBA and seek employment or continue their education in programs other than the UGA MAcc.
- Some students change majors before completion of the BBA.

The School of Accounting is tracking the progress of the students admitted during the 2003-04 academic year, and we will continue to do so for each subsequent year. In the past, we have estimated the numbers of students in each category. Based on data accumulated prior to the current admission policy, we estimate that about 42 percent enter the five-year program, about 8 percent enter the MAcc program after earning a BBA, 8 percent continue their education elsewhere, and 42 percent either complete their BBA in accounting and seek employment or change majors. Until now, we have had no data on the number of students who change majors. By the end of academic 2004-05, we will know how many admitted students change their major.

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**Diagram:**

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Accounting Majors*

- Enter five-year Program (earn BBA and UGA MAcc degrees at same time)
- Complete BBA first then UGA MAcc
- Complete BBA, then seek employment or continue education
- Choose another major before completion of the BBA in accounting

*These are students admitted to the accounting major, typically as juniors.
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**Program mission, objectives and strategy:**

The J. M. Tull School of Accounting [School] seeks to deliver outstanding education that challenges undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students to build on technical competence to achieve leadership roles in accounting and business. The objective of our undergraduate program is to provide students a broad education that prepares them for careers in business and accounting and for graduate education. [Mission Statement, 2001] To attain this objective, the faculty adopted the strategies of (A) attracting outstanding students to the program, (B) continuously improving the curriculum [most closely related to educational outcomes], (C) continuously improving the recognition of our academic programs.

**Learning outcomes [Most closely related to strategy B above]:**

Upon or soon after graduation, majors should be able to:

1. Demonstrate broad educational preparation for careers in business.
2. Demonstrate technical competence in:
   b. Managerial accounting.
   c. Accounting systems and auditing.
   d. Income taxation.
3. Demonstrate competence in:
   a. Written communication.
   b. Oral communication.

**Assessment methods:**

Students completing the five-year program are the product of a joint process consisting of the undergraduate program, including the accounting major, and the MAcc program. They complete the requirements of these two programs at the same time. Assessing the undergraduate major for five-year students cannot be done without assessing the MAcc as well. Effects of the two programs are inseparable. For these students, 90% of whom take the CPA examination, we use the CPA examination results as the primary, direct measure of program effectiveness.

Students completing the UGA accounting major before beginning the MAcc program take virtually identical courses to those who enter the five-year program. The major difference between these two paths is less flexibility for the former group in that they must complete the BBA requirements before their fifth year. Therefore, for these students, CPA examination results are also a direct measure of program effectiveness.

For both groups of students who earn MAcc degrees, additional measures are feasible and, we believe, appropriate. The program/course related assessment methods are listed below.
1. **Direct measures of learning outcomes:**

   a. **The Certified Public Accounting [CPA] Examination.** This is a uniform, recognized, national, and, we believe, generally valid instrument for measuring the major subset our students’ educational achievements, including the first two learning outcomes listed above. The CPA Examination is an important measure of learning outcomes for purposes of assessment. While not all majors eventually take it, approximately 45% have done so in recent years.

   b. **Program/course-related assessments.** Much undergraduate accounting program content is standard across institutions and related to topical coverage of the CPA Examination. In order to assess performance in a sample of specific, required content areas of the major, faculty will include appropriate items in (1) graded examinations and (2) requirements in graded course activities or projects. Student performance on these items, requirements and activities will be collected and reported.

2. **Other measures:**

   a. **Related to the strategy of attracting outstanding students to our programs:**
      i. Students’ entering GPAs.
      ii. Performance on an accounting proficiency examination, administered to students applying for the accounting major after they have taken the first accounting course (ACCT2101 or equivalent).
      iii. Number and percentage of graduating BBA accounting majors entering the UGA Master of Accounting program.
      iv. Number and dollar value of scholarships and awards.

   b. **Related to strategy of improving curriculum:**
      i. Survey of accounting seniors (annual).
      ii. Survey of employers (every three years).
      iii. Survey of alumni (every three years).
      iv. Teaching evaluations (annual).

   c. **Related to strategy of improving external recognition of our academic programs:**
      i. Survey of employers (every three years).
      ii. External rankings of programs (annual).
      iii. Placement of students seeking employment upon graduation with BBA degrees (annual).
      iv. Salaries of students seeking employment upon graduation with BBA degrees (annual).
      v. Number of undergraduate students with internships before graduation (annual).
The following table shows the plan for reporting assessment measures in each year of the three-year assessment program cycle. Other columns show the strategy being evaluated, the related learning outcome for the curriculum strategy only, the assessment method(s) to which the outcomes are related and, for curriculum strategy only, the course in which the assessment will occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Of Cycle</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes - Curriculum Only</th>
<th>Assessment Method(s)</th>
<th>Course(s) (if appropriate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(A) Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>2a(i, ii, iii, iv)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B) Curriculum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>ACCT5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2a, b, c, d</td>
<td>2a(ii)</td>
<td>ACCT5100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3a, b</td>
<td>2b(i, iv)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(C) Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td>2c(ii, iii, iv, v)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(A) Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>ACCT5010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B) Curriculum</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>ACCT5200, ACCT5310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2c</td>
<td>2ci, 2biii</td>
<td>ACCT5400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(C) Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(A) Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>ACCT5010, ACCT5020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B) Curriculum</td>
<td>3a, b</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>ACCT5710, ACCT5720 and other courses to be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2b(iii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(C) Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faculty Involvement:

The accounting faculty jointly developed the School’s mission statement, objectives, strategy, and assessment measures. A standing faculty curriculum committee monitors curricula in each of these major areas: financial accounting, managerial accounting, auditing and systems, and income taxation. A faculty member developed this revised assessment plan in cooperation with the Director of the School. This plan will be monitored by the faculty curriculum committee, which is composed of one member from each of the four primary accounting fields. The Director and faculty of the School will continue to consider the data developed through the assessment methods listed above in their decisions about faculty resource allocation, curriculum revision, student admission and placement, and outcomes assessment.

Analysis of Data: This section explains, for each measure above, what data will be collected and discusses how data will be interpreted.

1. Direct measures of learning outcomes:
   a. CPA examination: Each year, the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy makes available a summary of performance on the CPA examination by state and college or university. For the most recent year for which we have data (2002), graduates of the UGA MAcc program ranked in the top 5 universities in the nation for first time pass rates. Success for our five-year program students and other MAcc students is defined as 50% pass rate or better for first-time exam takers.

   As of 2004, CPA exam candidates are no longer required to have 150 hours of education for the state of Georgia (although they must have 150 hours to be certified). In addition, candidates are no longer required to sit for the entire examination at one time. We do not know what impact this change in the law will have on when students will choose to take the examination. In Spring 2004, a number of MAcc students took all or part of the examination before graduation. Also, we do not know how NASBA will report results in the future given that “first time pass rates” may be less meaningful than they were when students were required to take the entire examination at one time. Presumably, a first time pass rate could be reported for individuals who passed all parts the first time within a certain time period.

   b. Program/course related assessments: Items on graded examinations and requirements in graded course activities and projects will yield student scores. Success for a curriculum area is defined as maintenance of or improvement in the level of average scores year to year.
2. **Other measures:**
   a. **Students:**
      i. Entering GPAs and standardized test scores, including Accounting Proficiency Examination: These data provide quantitative measures of the quality of student input to the major, including the five-year program. Success is defined as maintaining or improving average performance over time.
      ii. Number and percentage of entering BBA accounting majors who enter the UGA five-year or MAcc program: These data must be interpreted in light of the capacity of the School of Accounting to accommodate MAcc students. At the present time we estimate our capacity at 85 new students each year, based on faculty size and access to classrooms. We have not yet agreed upon a simple criterion of success.
      iii. Number and dollar value of scholarships and awards: Since these attract good students with other academic and professional opportunities, success is defined as increasing both the number and dollar value of scholarships and awards.
   
   b. **Curriculum:**
      i. Survey of accounting seniors: This survey collects data on demographics, reason for choosing UGA, position accepted after graduation, and satisfaction with Terry College, the UGA Accounting Program, and placement services. Accounting Program items include self ratings of personal development in professional areas, teaching effectiveness, overall program effectiveness, and suggestions for improvement. Success is defined as maintaining current levels or increasing (decreasing) average ratings on desirable (undesirable) attributes.
      ii. Survey of accounting alumni: This is very similar to the survey of accounting seniors, as is the interpretation of results.
      iii. Survey of employers: This survey focuses on MAcc graduates and measures the effectiveness of the undergraduate major and MAcc program jointly. It asks how UGA graduates compare to graduates of other programs on four attributes for (1) tax graduates and (2) audit/systems graduates. Maintenance of current average ratings or improved ratings indicates success.
      iv. Teaching evaluations: This survey collects student reported data on course design and instructor behavior and effectiveness. Comparisons can be made between an instructor and a cross section of instructors with similar teaching assignments. An instructor’s performance may also be examined over time. For less experienced faculty in a given course, rising scores indicate success. In general, high and consistent scores indicate success.
c. External recognition
   i. Survey of employers: This survey focuses on MAcc graduates and, so, measures the effectiveness of the undergraduate major and MAcc program jointly. It asks how UGA graduates compare to graduates of other programs for (1) tax graduates and (2) audit/systems graduates.
   ii. External rankings: Despite their flaws, these ratings provide widely circulated summary evaluations of program quality. Changes in ranking must be interpreted with care, though a rise in the ratings is expected to attract more applications to the program and, so, indicates success.
   iii. Placement of students seeking employment upon graduation with BBA degrees: This measure of market acceptance is confounded by economic conditions. Market conditions held constant, success is defined as maintenance of current rate or a rising percentage of graduates hired. But salary should be considered as well.
   iv. Salaries of students seeking employment upon graduation with BBA degrees: This is an indicator of the desirability of jobs taken by the graduates. That measure is confounded by geographic region and working conditions, among other things. In general, success is defined as maintaining current or increasing compensation.
   v. Number of undergraduate students with internships before graduation is a measure of market acceptance of program students as part-time employees and as potential employees upon graduation. A steady state or rising proportion of students with internships indicates success.

Use of Results: Assessment results will be summarized and presented to the accounting faculty by the faculty curriculum committee each year and discussed at a faculty meeting. The results will be used as appropriate to modify the curriculum, degree requirements, and entry requirements, better to meet program objectives and expected educational outcomes. In some cases, expectations about these outcomes may be expanded or reduced to reflect, among other things, competitive pressures, availability of resources, and changing institutional priorities. The School jointly produces service courses for undergraduates and MBA students and educational programs for undergraduate majors, Master of Accounting students, and doctoral students. It does so with severely constrained resources. Institutional requirements to enhance other programs potentially could draw resources away from the undergraduate major.