Agenda and Evaluation Report for
Audit & Review Face-to-Face Meeting
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Accounting Majors and Minors, 2023-2024

Date: 2/14/2024

Invited: Provost John Chenoweth; Dean Paul Ambrose (Business & Economics); Department Chair/Program Coordinator Abbie Daly; faculty and staff in the program; Audit & Review team member and College Expert, Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Assessment Representative Katy Casey

1) Call to order at 10:35

2) Introductions

3) Overview of review team evaluation and summary of program comments:

   - The review teams' summary of program strengths and weaknesses was shared.
   - The Accounting team appreciated review team's comments and found the feedback helpful.
   - The significant administrative lift related to Accreditation, online programming, and extensive outreach to stakeholders; the Department Chair expressed appreciation for the amount of engagement and support from faculty and staff in preparing required reports.
   - College leadership recognizes the lift and is supporting the program to streamline efforts to avoid burnout.
   - Provost recommended looking at evaluation, hiring, and tenure and promotion standards in terms of commitment to these administrative priorities. He also suggested communicating the "why" of accreditation regularly to program faculty and staff. which is important for buy-in and engagement.
       - Context was provided as to why the program sought accreditation- the program recalled a need to keep up with other programs that were accredited, and believe it will increase enrollment.
       - Provost added to the discussion asking the program to monitor the "return" on the accreditation investment to make sure the commitment to accreditation is as beneficial to the program as assumed.

4) Discussion of Review Team's evaluation:

   a) What are some ways the program is currently engaging online students in HIPs?

      The program surveyed online students to determine what their needs/interests are, and those needs are different from the needs/interests of student taking courses on-campus. The program was encouraged to identify what out of classroom experiences are needed to improve online student outcomes and determine if those already exist or need to be created.

   b) What has been the impact of accreditation on program enrollment, marketing, resources?

      It is too soon to determine the impact of accreditation.

   c) What type of resources will you need from the College and/or University to continue to support program enrollment in two modalities?

      This was covered in the discussion above. The program is concerned about the amount of work that needs to be completed with current staffing and resources. The chair suggested a co-chair model to alleviate some of the administrative load associated with accreditation. The Provost and Dean encouraged the program to figure out where the staff/resource need is, is it support for the chair or teaching or the need for support during accreditation years? There needs to be more explicit direction from the program on resource needs.

5) **<u>Recommended Actions</u>**: The evaluation report lists two recommended action (see page ten, point 4) related to growing enrollment and engaging online learners.

6) **<u>Recommended Result</u>**: *Continuation without qualification*
   - **Please select all applicable boxes and fill in the appropriate year:**
     - ☒ **Next SHORT self-study will be due to the Dean on October 1, 2028 and to the Assessment Office on November 1, 2028.**

7) Adjourn 11:45.

Review team report is attached below, including Recommended Actions and instructions for Progress Reports (if required).

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Review of Audit & Review Self-Studies
Undergraduate Programs, 2023-2024

Date of Evaluation _____11/27/2023_____Short Self Study (SS*)_____
Program: **Accounting**   Major ☒   Minor ☐

Evaluations submitted by: Jonathan Ivry; Jolly Emrey; Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Corey Davis; Katy Casey
Review meeting attended by: Jonathan Ivry; Jolly Emrey; Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Corey Davis; Katy Casey

I. General Program Information

1. The program's mission statement reflects its nature and scope.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. The program is aware and reflective of changes affecting improvement since the last review.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
First self-study for the program	0

3. The program has maintained program-level accreditation in good standing.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section I

Good use of strategic planning to guide curricular changes.
The self-study and the appended report are very easy to follow, and the evidence /data are clear and easy to read (especially in the Assurance of Learning report).
I. 2. There has been near complete turnover in faculty since the last full self-study. In that time, the program has kept the curriculum current and relevant, integrating elements such as analytics.
The changes since the last self-study are remarkable: almost complete turnover and replacement of instructional staff, completion of initial accreditation through AACSB, revision of curriculum, and launch of a fully online program.

II. Alignment within the University

1. The program contributes to the fulfillment of UW-Whitewater's Mission.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. The program contributes to goals related to the UWW strategic priorities.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

3. [Undergraduate Programs] The program supports general education and/or proficiency programs at the University.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section II

Thoughtful responses to how this program support the broader university mission.
The program has a clear and focused mission. Congratulations on attaining accreditation. It is obvious that a significant amount of time and energy has been put into aligning curriculum to current trends in the accounting field, as well as to align with accreditation standards.
The department has a strategic planning process that far exceeds that of other programs in the college. Part of this is due to its accreditation status within AACSB.
II.3. Accounting doesn't support any Gen Ed programs, but 244 and 249 are required of all CoBE majors, and 249 is required for several majors outside the College as well.

III. Program Goals & Accomplishments

1. Goals and objectives were identified and undertaken to improve/advance the program.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section III

Impressive strategic plan. Well thought-out and intentional.
The self-study notes curricular changes based on the audit and review from ten years ago and other programmatic reviews (e.g., accreditation). The department is actively engaged in assessment of their students' learning and uses their findings to make modifications/improvements. The one area where they note a persistent challenge is hiring qualified faculty. The department has experienced a significant turnover and has challenges replacing staff that are due to the market and the college budget. This is a goal that, under these conditions, is difficult to meet.
Goals are aligned with strategic initiatives, suggesting good planning.
The program recently completed a 5-year strategic plan including goals and action items.
The department has done an incredible job of identifying and tracking its goals and objectives. However, there are simply too many goals and action items. I have strong concerns that the members of the department will burn out with all of this work. I realize that a lot of this process is linked to its first re-accreditation process this year, but I suspect that there has been too much work done even for the external continuous improvement review (CIR).

IV. Curriculum

1. The program has a clearly articulated, efficient, and purposeful curriculum.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. The program promotes, and/or embeds, High Impact Practices in the program.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section IV

Excellent service to the community through the VITA program.
There were HIPs identified, but I was left wondering if the department may also engage in other HIPs listed in the self-study, but chose not to include them? This section was not as clear to me.
Collaborative projects and learning are required, and four other HIPs are available and/or encouraged.
The program offers five different High Impact Practices. It also benefits from the overall UWW First-Year Program and the return of Learning Communities within CoBE.

V. Assessment of Student Learning

1. The program submitted a completed assessment plan.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. [Undergraduate] Student learning outcomes are aligned with the Essential Learning Outcomes in a way that is reasonable and meaningful.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

3. [Graduate] Student Learning Outcomes are aligned with the Master's Level Essential Learning Outcomes from the Graduate School.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

4. The program's assessment plan includes data collection methods and results.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

5. The program's assessment plan includes a description of how the data is used to improve student learning.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section V

Very robust assessment plan. The department clearly takes assessment seriously and uses the data to make informed changes to their curriculum.

1. See attachment," Accounting Program Assurance of Learning Report 2022-2023." V.2. All SLOs align with Intellectual and practical skills ELO (inquiry and analysis; critical and creative thinking; written and oral communication; quantitative literacy; information literacy; and teamwork and problem-solving). V.4. Excellent detail. Nicely illustrated with infographics. V.5. Great job detailing how you use data to "close the loop."

The program provided a detailed assessment plan prepared for accreditation. The plan includes detail on how data is used for curricular and program improvements- justifying many of the changes made over the past few years.

The organization of AoL is amazing. Individual instructors, two department-level committees, the entire department, and an advisory board are all asked to weigh in on the outcomes and plans for change. However, I have serious concerns about the extensiveness of the assurance of learning program and the work requirements placed on the instructors. In the long-term, people cannot balance teaching and research with this level of department-only service.

VI. Student Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation

1. The program's enrollment is consistent/stable and at a level appropriate to meeting student learning needs.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. The program regularly evaluates student progress toward successfully completing the program, including a review of student retention.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to Section VI

Program is addressing recent declines in enrollment in constructive ways. A change to the curriculum also demonstrates a thoughtful response to retention challenges.

The enrollment has seen some decline, like many other programs on our campus, but it is still a large program comparatively.

VI.1. Enrollment in the major is trending down, but the minor is trending up. They are maintaining commitments to online majors as well as still offering (fewer) in-person sections. They are partnering with U-Rock also. VI.2. They are committed to keeping class sizes manageable at 30-35 as one way to improve and maintain retention.

The department participated in a college-level directive to analyze DFW rates and revised requirements and processes accordingly. It offers tutoring to students completing the accounting program (and required degree courses), scholarships, etc. The reduction in course enrollments was designed to offer better instruction and student outcomes.

VII. Demand for Graduates

1. Placement information indicates that program graduates find employment after graduation.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. Data suggests that employment opportunities for graduates of this program will remain strong.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

3. The program described unique features that set it apart from competing programs in the UW System or other comparable colleges and universities.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments for VII

VII.1. Nearly 100% placement rate. VII.2. 6% job growth projected and median annual pay of over $77K. VII.3. Best ROI on tuition in System.
The department provided excellent examples of factors that set it apart from other programs. Wonderful job with the placement rates.

VIII. Faculty and Staff Characteristics

1. Information is provided about anticipated staffing changes and areas of need (since last Audit and Review).

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. The program identified factors impacting their ability to recruit and retain outstanding faculty.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments related to section VIII

The department is thinking about staffing needs to meet the demands of the online major. I appreciate the comments about salary inversion and compression, which is a campus-wide problem that, as you point out, affects faculty morale and retention, exacerbated this year by the blocking of state legislature-approved base pay raises. The university needs to address this issue before we see increased numbers of faculty leaving to seek other employment opportunities.
The staffing challenges appear to be significant and two-fold: the market and the budget. The program needs support in this area to maintain its quality and to support student success at all levels.
VIII.1. High turnover was a big issue in the years since last self-study due to numerous retirements. However, turnover has since dropped off, and many faculty have earned tenure and promotion. The program anticipates additional staffing needs as the online programs continue to grow. VIII.2. Salary inversion is an issue in retaining more senior faculty, as newer recruits require higher salaries due to 1) a shortage of PhD qualified accounting faculty and 2) industry offers higher salaries than UW-W pay (or university pay generally).
How has the number of faculty/instructional staff changed over the past three years? The program had 625 students enrolled in 20-21; were there more faculty teaching in the program at that time?

IX. Student Resources

1. The program has adequate facilities, equipment, technological, and library resources to effectively serve its students and provide high-quality programming.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments for IX

Is relying on departmental fundraising a sustainable model if there is a need for increased resources?
1. Program fundraises among external stakeholders to provide scholarships and other supplemental opportunities to students.
Impressive outreach to external stakeholders to support program initiatives.
The department has turned to external sources to secure additional funding to support students (organizations, tutoring, scholarships) and faculty (various funding needs). The department also points to a need for the entire campus: supporting fully online students. One of the Strategic Planning Action groups is addressing this and should be encouraged to do so based on comments like those in this report.

X. Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Areas of strength are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. Areas of improvement and continued progress are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

3. Recommendations and resources are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

General Comments for X

Again, staffing is a critical concern.
X.1. Faculty, leadership, external network (alumni, etc.). X.2. Enrollment is down in the accounting field, in general, across the country. X.3. Continue to focus on online growth, general enrollment, keep technology current, and maintain accreditation.

XI. Reviewer Conclusions

1. Strengths of the Program

Online major option. Supplemental AACSB accreditation. Strong, committed faculty and academic staff. This was an outstanding self-study. Very clear and informative.

This is a high-quality program. It has a robust curriculum and sets appropriately high standards for its undergraduates. It clearly seeks to set majors and minors up for success and it has a very clear path for future employment (particularly with respect to majors).

1. Excellent graduate placement rate. 2. Great network of alumni and other professionals and employers in the field. 3. Service to CoBE through the provided foundational courses. 4. Potential for continued online growth. 5. Excellent assessment work. Clearly articulated methods and excellent use of assessment data to close the loop.

There is a tremendous work ethic from instructional staff and administrators in this program. Much of the work is completed through direct efforts by those in the program to fundraise, market, and engage alumni. Accounting Accreditation was a significant accomplishment, kudos to the program on this achievement! Impressive list of student accomplishments, this is a true reflection of the program's encouragement of student involvement and creating opportunities for student to engage in experiential learning.

-Amazing AOL process -Flexibility and currency of curriculum -Strong connection to external stakeholders - Separate accreditation

2. Areas for Work or Improvement

Ensuring that the department has adequate staffing and other resources to support their program, especially the online version. Stemming the enrollment decline.

I noticed that there are some HIPs identified, but I wonder if there are not more HIPs that are being used in the program that have not been identified in this report? Given that this is a pre-professional program, I would think there would be more. Staffing is a serious concern for this program, and they are doing what they can as a department/program but need more support (perhaps from the college).

1. Concerning the downward trend in major enrollment, especially in-person. 2. Continue efforts to support online students. 3. Continue efforts to create an inclusive environment for students and faculty/staff.

It seems the accounting field changes with new technological advancements. The program is aware of the need to stay on top of these advancements and will need to monitor and address these advances in the curriculum.

Find balance in the amount of work done for A&R/accreditation and other duties of department members. Many processes seem to involve more work than is ideal for faculty balancing teaching, research, and other service requirements.

3. Other comments/questions

Does the advent of AI require further pivots in terms of curriculum and teaching? Does COBE provide support to allow faculty the time to do course development and respond to major changes in the field? The decline in student enrollment is surprising to me. Is this just in accounting or consistent across COBE majors? I wonder if this decline warrants further study to see if there is some other reason students may be opting out of this major.

4. Recommended Actions (please specify):

1) Continue to be innovative to remain competitive in online education to maintain or grow online enrollment, especially to offset reduced in-person enrollment.
2) Continue the work to engage online students during the next review cycle. For the next self-study, describe the strategies used to engage online students and provide them with extracurricular opportunities, such as work-based experiential learning.

5. Recommended Result

Insufficient Information in the self-study to decide; revise self-study & resubmit. Select if report is not submitted in time for the review team meeting.	0
Continuation without qualification. Next self-study will be a shortened one focusing on the Recommended Actions from the current report.	5
Continuation with minor concerns. Progress report may be required, at the discretion of the review team.	0
Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas; submit annual progress report to the College Dean & Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on progress addressing the major concerns	0
Report not submitted; refer to Provost for action.	0