



UMass Amherst's Educational Effectiveness Plan (EEP) provides departments with an ongoing structure for conducting systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of their efforts to support student success. Departments initially developed and submitted their EEP inquiry plans and evidence gathering strategies in spring 2018 and are asked to provide updates on their progress on a regular basis. EEP activity is also incorporated into the University's strategic planning process – with departments including their EEP progress and findings into their 2021 Strategic Planning Refresh. What follows is the department's most current reporting, as synthesized by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA).

Accounting EEP

Identify the evidence you currently use (beyond GPA) to determine that your undergraduates have achieved the objectives you have for them.

Currently, we look at the following: internal measures within courses and external measures of students' CPA examination performance (provided by NASBA).

Please describe the focus of your inquiry and explain why this inquiry is important to your department right now.

Line of Inquiry 2018: The AACSB has implemented a standard specifically related to technology. Its goal is to encourage member institutions to structure their degree program so that students "develop skills and knowledge related to the integration of information technology in accounting and business." Furthermore, it encourages programs to "integrate current and emerging accounting and business information technologies throughout the academic curricula," such that graduates "demonstrate the ability to effectively utilize technology; understand its capabilities, impacts, risks, and opportunities." Our intended line of inquiry is to determine with specificity how well our courses are responding to this standard.

Progress your department has made toward addressing your line of inquiry, and the types of evidence that you have collected to inform your inquiry.

We have gathered data via two means: (1) Faculty members have described steps they are taking to "integrate current and emerging accounting and business information technologies throughout the academic curricula," and (2) Professors in Accounting 441 (auditing is a key area where technology is advancing rapidly in our hiring companies) have conducted Student Learning Assessments. It is important to note that all accounting majors are required to take Accounting 311 which "examines information systems... needed to satisfy information requirements for financial statements... (and) decision makers within the firm." This inquiry focuses on what other classes in the curricula are contributing to assist graduates in

demonstrating "the ability to effectively utilize technology" and "understand its capabilities, impacts, risks, and opportunities." Survey Highlights include:

What are your department's next steps regarding your continuing and/or upcoming EEP line of inquiry?

The departmental curriculum committee wants to accomplish the following before considering a new line of inquiry: (1) review and communicate the results of our inquiry to the faculty. (2) facilitate faculty working together to reduce both inconsistency across classes that cover the same material and inefficiency of skill building throughout the curricula. (3) work with faculty and our Alumni Advisory Council to understand the nature of the gap between what data analytics students are exposed to in the curricula and what they experience during internships and initial staff positions, and resources for closing the gap.

What are the Student Learning Objectives for your department or program(s)?

Accounting, B.B.A.

- Students utilize appropriate technical skill in determining recognition, measurement, classification and disclosure of various economic events in financial statements and SEC filings.
- Students create and utilize decision-relevant information in complex managerial decision-making tasks.
- Students understand the auditing function and the professional responsibilities of independent auditors.
- Students understand and are able to apply the basic concepts of U.S. federal Taxation of individuals and corporations.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of the nature and importance of professional and ethical responsibilities inherent in the practice of accounting.
- Students utilize appropriate research databases (e.g. FASB ASC) to research a technical issue in accounting and effectively communicate both the results of the research, their opinions on viable solutions and any assumption implicitly and explicitly made.
- Students demonstrate effective critical and analytical skills in an accounting context including the ability to identify relevant issues and prepare a well-structured and supported solution.

Experiential Goals

- Qualified students spend at least a portion of a semester gaining valuable professional experience and enhancing their prospects for a career position.
- Students use their accounting knowledge to help individuals file their tax returns, answer pressing tax questions and offer tax-related guidance through VITA.

Accounting, M.S.A.

- Students understand how the financial statements can be used for purposes of valuation and credit-granting decisions, and students can conduct quality research into accounting issues of recognition and measurement using the ASC database.
- Students gain an understanding of the effective use of technology in supporting business decisions and controls.
- Students gain an advanced understand the auditing function and the professional responsibilities of independent auditors.
- Students understand and are able to apply the U.S. federal Tax Code to assess the implications of business decisions.
- Students demonstrate an advanced understanding of the nature and importance of professional and ethical responsibilities inherent in the practice of accounting.
- Students effectively communicate both the results of research and their opinions on viable solutions to complex cases and any assumptions implicitly and explicitly made.
- Students demonstrate effective graduate-level critical and analytical skills in an accounting context including the ability to identify relevant issues and prepare a well-structured and supported solution.