UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

AACSB

Accounting Continuous Improvement Review

2013-2018
GENERAL INFORMATION

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G. Included in Degree Program:
   • BS in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting
   • Master of Science in Accounting.
2018 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REPORT -
ACCOUNTING
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Comparison Groups

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the rapid evolution of international finance and commerce has drastically altered the objectives and strategies of accounting education. Most notably, the precipitous development of big data technology/analytical techniques (e.g. Visualization) has compelled accounting faculties to incorporate “big data” techniques into their courses, especially Accounting Information Systems and Auditing. Correspondingly, the internationalization of capital markets, global financial crises, and the acceptance of “principles-based” accounting (most notably International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)) has increased the need to teach and research on how accounting and auditing impact the international economy. Concurrently, the internet and social networks have increased the importance of teaching how nations’ differences (e.g. cultural, social, political-economic) impact financial statement preparation and analysis. Finally, changing demographics have compelled businesses to place more emphasis on the diversity of their personnel. As a consequence, business and accounting faculties have recognized that their students’ prospects improve when institutions enhance the diversity of their faculty and student bodies.

Given these rapid changes, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), universities, and collegiate schools of business have adopted two philosophies regarding their Mission Statements and Strategic Plans. First, business accreditors and educators have recognized that every institution has a unique set of stakeholders which defines and drives each school’s mission and strategic plan (i.e. no two institutions are alike). Accordingly, each institution’s and College’s Mission and Strategic Plan must serve as the basis for (i.e. align with) those of the accounting faculty. Second, business accreditors and educators have recognized that, through active engagement, every institution’s mission statement and strategic plan have the potential to positively impact the institution’s stakeholders. Correspondingly, in a rapidly changing world, the engagement and impact of business schools’ activities are enhanced when the school’s teaching, research, and service are innovative.

This report documents that the mission statement and strategic plan of the University of Rhode Island Accounting Faculty (URIAF) embody both characteristics. First, as emphasized in section IV of this report, the URIAF mission and plan align with those of the University and the URI College of Business (COB). In general, the three mission statements and plans promote: student success based on a relevant, quality education; research which impacts society; diversity, inclusion, and global awareness; and, communication and engagement with stakeholders.

Also, over the last five years, the URIAF has promoted engagement, innovation, and impactful activities. Most notably, we have begun considering (on an unofficial basis) engagement, innovation, and impact, to be part of faculty members’ qualifications. Many of these activities align with the basic goals in our Strategic Plan. Examples include:
Goal 1: Enhance and Maintain Academic Relevance, Innovation, Quality, and Value

Engagement:

- Approximately 85%-90% of accounting students receive internships.
- A group of URI students earned a national “semi-finalist” finish in the Institute of Management Accountants’ (IMA) 2018 national case competition.
- A very active Beta Alpha Psi chapter.

Innovation:

- The area initiated a relationship with the Institute of Management Accountants and a CMA Track for Accounting and Finance undergraduates.
- A faculty member developed an (“officially approved”) course on Advanced Programming in Excel.
- The area’s Accounting Information Systems course was completely redesigned to include the latest methods in data analytics (which is now included in our Assurance of Learning Program).
- An accounting professor who teaches tax accounting and tax research took a sabbatical to participate in a 4-month internship during tax season. Lessons learned were incorporated in her course redesign to bridge theory and practice.
- A faculty member has cooperated with the Wall Street Journal to use current business events for developing accounting teaching cases since 2000.
- Faculty members use journal articles (including their own) to form rubrics for our new Assurance of Learning (AOL) program.
- The area is cooperating with the URI language department in promoting a dual Accounting-Foreign Language track.

Impact:

- An Accounting Tax Professor was awarded the 2015 URI Teaching Excellence Award, the highest teaching award at the University level.
- An accounting professor was awarded the Northeast American Accounting Association research award on education.
- Several Accounting faculty have received the COB teaching award.

Goal 2: Conduct Impactful Research on the Relation Between Accounting and Business and Society

Engagement:

- A faculty member was a two-time (2014-2016) SEC Fellow and is now a Vice President at Large for the International Association of Accounting Education and (IAAER).
- A faculty member serves as President of the Government and Nonprofit Section of the American Accounting Association (2017-2018).
- A faculty member will serve as President of the Northeast region (2018-2019) of the American Accounting Association.
- Seven journal editorial boards.
Innovation:

- Publications on unique topics, including “management tone” and “Machiavellianism” in auditing.
- Sponsorship of three international speakers on the economic prospects of other nations.
- Journal “guest editorships” for special editions on auditing, international financial reporting standards, and textual analysis.

Impact:

- Eight “impactful” articles (published in journals classified as “A” or higher on the 2016 Australian Deans Business Council journal list).
- One article which received a research award in the Northeast regional meeting of the American Accounting Association.
- One very recently published article which was listed as “impactful” on the Wharton Impact Data Base.

Goal 3: Prepare Students for a Changing World (Diversity and Globalization)

Engagement:

- The Accounting area initiated a chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) in 2013.
- The area cooperates with a partner from Price Waterhouse Coopers, who teaches in the URI Summer Talent Development program, to attract students from underrepresented groups to the accounting profession.
- Accounting faculty (especially Professor Kathy Jervis) and students who have strongly supported Women in Business (a College-Wide organization).

Innovation:

- Sponsorship of three international speakers on the economic prospects of other nations.
- Faculty members have been invited to teach classes or seminars in China (2017), Mexico (2018), and Hungary (2017, 2018).
- Promotion of the concept of “diverse interaction” in which diverse student organizations (such as the Financial Management Association and NABA) cooperate with stakeholders to hold events which emphasize issues from different points of view.

Impact:

- Invitation of a faculty member to lecture (in a Conferencia Magistral) on accounting and financial crisis at Spain’s Ministry of Commerce.
- Invitation of a faculty member to cooperate with one of Mexico’s most prestigious universities to train faculty in bank research.
- A NABA chapter which has “placed” for five consecutive years in the organization’s regional case competition.
- The area has attracted a record number of undergraduate students from underrepresented groups.
Goal 4: Enhance and Maintain Engagement with Stakeholders

Engagement:

- A faculty member who is a member of the AICPA *Audit Data Analytic Guide Task Force*.
- Speeches by Seth Magaziner (Treasurer of the State of Rhode Island) and other notable individuals at the 2018 AAA Government and Nonprofit mid-year meeting of the American Accounting Association.
- Speeches by notable technology experts (e.g., Ann C. Dzuranin, Eric Cohen) at the 2017 Northeast meeting of the American Accounting Association.

Innovation:

- Founding of the Ali Fund, a charitable organization which supports Children’s Hospital, Boston.
- Service by a faculty member to the Securities and Exchange Commission on Accounting Standards.
- Adaptation of a regional CPA firm’s tax techniques to the area’s tax courses.

Impact:

- The SEC Fellowship, and AAA offices noted above.
- Consulting activities with *Hasbro Children’s Hospital* and *Becker CPA Review*
- An Accounting Professor was awarded the American Council on Education Fellowship for 2018.

Goal 5: Enhance and Maintain our Communications and Outreach

Engagement:

- Members of the area’s advisory board consistently sponsor networking events.
- Cooperation with Textron, Inc. in founding a Special Textron Career night.
- Forming a relation with the Rhode Island Auditor General to recruit URI students.

Innovation:

- The area is initiating a newsletter to highlight faculty/student accomplishments.
- Accounting Advisory Board members have consistently held unique presentations, such as a Marsh & McLennan March 2016 presentation to Women and Business and NABA on Diversity and Inclusion, with an emphasis on gender.

Impact:

- In 2013, the previous area coordinator initiated a scholarship program in which two of the “Big 4” firms provide scholarship funds for deserving URI Talent Development students to study in the area’s Master of Science in Accounting program.
- In 2018, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) awarded a major scholarship to a deserving student to study in the area’s Master of Science in Accounting program.
- The area’s advisory board maintains a scholarship fund of over $100,000.
The remainder of this report is organized into five sections. Section II uses a “S.O.A.R.” (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results)-style framework to provide our “Situational Analysis” and discuss the factors which shape the URIAF’s mission and strategic plan.\(^1\) Use of such a framework enables both the mission and strategic plan to be viewed from a dynamic (versus static) basis. Section III describes the progress that we have made toward meeting the concerns expressed in the 2013 AACSB PRT letter. Section IV describes how the missions of the University of Rhode Island and the URI COB align with the URIAF’s mission. The section also provides a formal statement of our Mission and Strategic Plan. Section V describes the outcomes and progress we have made toward achieving the objectives described in our strategic plan and in meeting specific AACSB standards. Section VI outlines conclusions and our future expectations.

II. SITUATIONAL (S.O.A.R.) ANALYSIS (Factors which Shape the URIAF Mission and Strategic Plan)

The state of Rhode Island and the University of Rhode Island are strategically located, “on the train line,” between New Jersey and Boston. Consequently, URI has the “locational” advantage of having a close proximity to many quality students in the mid-Atlantic and New England states. However, URI is also Rhode Island’s only public research institution. Thus, the University (and the URIAF) are charged with educating the state’s increasingly diverse student population, while also producing world-class research. Although seemingly contradictory, with careful mission development and strategic planning, this unique setting provides the URIAF with opportunities to create both an innovative curriculum and robust research portfolio. In order to describe the basis of such a strategic plan, Exhibit 1 presents the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) style view of the factors which shape the URIAF Mission and strategic plan.

A. The URIAF’s Strengths (and some challenges)

1. Strong Tradition. The University of Rhode Island began offering undergraduate business administration courses in 1923. Both the undergraduate program in accounting as well as the Master of Science in Accounting program have produced prominent alumni. The Master of Science in Accounting program graduated its first student in 1955 and its first multiple class of students in 1960. The URI accounting program remains the only accounting program in the state of Rhode Island separately accredited by the AACSB. In the last twenty years, however, other institutions have begun offering quality accounting programs. Thus, the higher education market has become more competitive in terms of attracting quality students. Also, as noted in the COB report, the State recently began offering tuition-free classes at the Community College of Rhode Island. This strategy reduced state support to URI and has placed pressure on the COB’s and URIAF’s resources.

\(^1\) The SOAR style of strategic framework was designed as a more positive and stronger “opportunity-identifying” style of planning than the traditional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) style of planning.
Exhibit 1: URIAF SOAR Analysis Table

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<th>A. Strengths (we will build upon)</th>
<th>B. Opportunities (that we would like to take advantage of)</th>
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<td>1. A Strong Tradition</td>
<td>1. An Increasingly Dynamic/Changing Profession</td>
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<td>2. Strong Support from Stakeholders</td>
<td>A changing accounting profession which provides graduates with opportunities in a variety of fields (e.g. forensics, industrial accounting, international accounting).</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. A High Quality Teaching Faculty</td>
<td>2. Technological Opportunities. Rapidly evolving technologies which provide:</td>
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<td>4. A Strong Masters’ Program</td>
<td>a) new opportunities for using technology to enhance student learning.</td>
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<td>5. Faculty with a Broad Research Portfolio</td>
<td>b) evolving technological areas of accounting for which students can be trained and employed (e.g. data analytics)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Strong Student Demand for Major</td>
<td>3. An Increasing Trend Toward Experiential Learning: An increasing preference by companies for internships as well as student consulting projects which provide students with “hands on experience” and companies’ with additional value.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Good Student Placement</td>
<td>4. Enhance the Quantity and Quality of our Research.</td>
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<td>8. Successful Diversity Efforts (in multiple Forms)</td>
<td>5. Reinvigorate our fundraising efforts</td>
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C. Aspirations (Where we are going, and want to go)

*We are a faculty which aspires to:*

1. deliver a relevant curriculum and courses; maintain course quality; maintain a well-designed and applied assurance of learning program; effectively use technology in teaching.

2. conduct impactful research on Business and Society.

3. prepare students for a changing world by enhancing diversity, inclusion, and students’ global awareness.

4. consistently engage with all stakeholders in a way which positively impacts stakeholders and which enhances stakeholder support for our students’ education and faculty (and student) research.

5. consistently communicates important events and achievements to its stakeholders.

D. General Results (What we would like to Happen)

1. A curriculum which provides students with knowledge, skills, and values (e.g. ethics) which enhance their employment prospects; courses which meet defined learning objectives; and, an assurance of learning program which measures basic core skills (e.g. critical thinking, writing).

2. An increasing portfolio of faculty research which impacts both business and society (e.g. regulation, healthcare, tax policy). Enhancement of the area’s academic reputation.

3. An education which exposes students to individuals with experiences, backgrounds, and views different from their own. An education which provides students with an appreciation for the global role of accounting and its impact on nations’ economies, commerce, and business cultures.

4. An increasing array of activities (e.g. presentations), and projects (e.g. consulting) in which students and faculty engage with external stakeholders in a manner which enhances students’ learning, networking, and projects deserving of stakeholder support.

5. Increased stakeholder awareness of faculty/student achievements which enhance students’ educational value, the area’s reputation, and activities and projects deserving of support.
2. **Strong Support from Stakeholders, including the Accounting Advisory Board.** The area’s strong tradition is reflected in its large and active advisory board (see Appendix IV.B for a listing of Board Members). Board members include high level officials from important public accounting firms, private industry, government, and not-for-profit organizations. Since the last accreditation, two board members retired; however, they have been replaced by three new members. Board members consistently engage with our students through presentations and events (e.g. networking events) sponsored by the area’s student organizations (Beta Alpha Psi (BAP), National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), and Women in Business (WIB) (a College-wide organization)) (See Appendix IV.C). The board also maintains a student scholarship fund.

3. **A Strong Teaching Faculty.** One of the area’s strongest traditions has been its high-quality teaching faculty. Over many years, our professors and instructors have created a strong goodwill between the URIAF and our alumni. However, in recent years, in conjunction with a generational transition at all levels of the COB, three doctoral-level colleagues retired. Fortunately, we conducted successful searches for all three positions. Our new colleagues hold doctorates from AACSB accredited universities, have published articles in high quality journals, and have enhanced the diversity and global awareness of our faculty. With the addition of these professors, we have nine doctoral qualified faculty. Also, the area has three full-time lecturers. Most of the faculty have professional certifications, substantial business experience, and actively engage with the College’s student organizations and external stakeholders. As a whole, the accounting faculty has received well-deserved teaching awards. One faculty member received the University’s highest teaching award. Numerous others have received the College’s best teacher award.

4. **A Strong Masters’ Program.** URI’s Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) Program is one of the oldest in the New England region, having graduated its first degree-holder, George Gilardi, in 1955 and its first class of multiple students in 1960. In a sign of the program’s continuing prestige, in 2018, Mr. Charlie Saur, an incoming MSA student, received a prestigious PCAOB scholarship.

The MSA program was originally developed to confer a research degree for graduates to pursue careers as educators and CPAs. The program retains its research focus through core course requirements that develop students’ abilities to research professional and academic literature; construct a research proposal; and analyze both types of literature to solve business issues such as answering financial reporting questions or developing tax strategies. Detailed program requirements and sample programs of study are available on the MSA web page available through the COB web page links at [https://web.uri.edu/business/m-s-in-accounting-courses/](https://web.uri.edu/business/m-s-in-accounting-courses/)

The program allows flexibility for students to concentrate electives or take a breadth of offerings, particularly for those who hold the undergraduate degree in accounting. Accounting electives in the MSA Program include Tax Research and Advanced Auditing to align with career preparation for students planning to enter public accounting. General business electives may include courses offered by the College of Business or from other URI academic units. One current student interested in later pursuing a Ph.D. has chosen as electives two statistics courses, Research Design and Structural Modeling, offered on a cross-listed basis through URI’s Department of Psychology and Statistics Departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. Most students select electives offered in the College of Business on management-related topics such as organizational change,
human resource management, entrepreneurship and consulting courses. A new offering that will help students develop programming skills has been developed by Professor Stu Westin, BUS 405, *End User Development for Business Analysis*, that will be available for graduate credit. The course may be offered for the first time in Spring 2019.\(^2\)

5. **A Broad Research Portfolio.** Our faculty have a broad set of research interests. As a whole, this research portfolio examines how accounting impacts business and society. This research has resulted in articles and presentations on how accounting and auditing impact: healthcare policy, tax policy, accounting regulation, auditor behavior, investor behavior, and international financial crisis (See Appendix II.A). Our faculty have received well-deserved research recognition. One colleague received a “best paper” award at the 2017 Northeast regional meeting of the American Accounting Association. Also, a very recent paper published by one of our new colleagues was recognized by Wharton Research Data Services as an “impactful article.”\(^3\) (link: http://www.whartonwrds.com/about/our-impact/)

6. **A Strong Student Demand for Accounting Major.** Our strong tradition, high quality faculty, and broad research expertise have enhanced the demand for the accounting major. At the end of the 2017-18 academic year, accounting was the 10th most popular undergraduate major in the University. In the 2016-2017 academic year, 324 students were enrolled in the undergraduate program and 35 students were enrolled in the MSA program. The area’s degree programs meet the requirements for students to sit for the Uniform CPA exam (in general terms, 150 credit hours are a requirement for sitting for the CPA exam in Rhode Island and the other five New England states). Many of our students (especially undergraduate students who have transitioned to the MSA program) sit for the CPA exam before graduation.

7. **Strong Placement.** The COB conducts surveys of all bachelors’ degree graduates once per year (See Appendix III.B). The 2017 survey elicited 257 responses overall, a 53% response rate. Sixty-five of the responses came from graduates of the accounting major. Eighty three percent of accounting undergraduates were employed, had internships, or were matriculating into graduate school. The average starting salary for full-time employed accounting undergraduates was $52,987. Approximately 90% of MSA graduates reported being employed with an average starting salary of $59,133.

In support of this placement, three of the “Big Four” accounting firms (the three with a presence in Providence) recruit on campus and interview our students as soon as they begin the program in the Fall. The fourth hires via online applications and actively recruits through “Rhody Net” (our electronic career system), and potentially on-campus. Many regional and local firms also hire our graduates.

8. **Successful Diversity Efforts.** Through two avenues, the area has successfully enhanced its efforts to recruit and retain minority students. First, with the cooperation of two of the Big Four accounting firms, the area has teamed up with URI’s Talent Development (TD) program to recruit

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\(^2\) Dr. Westin is an Information Systems professor, but cooperates closely with the accounting faculty.

\(^3\) *Hear Me Write: Does CEO Narcissism Affect Disclosure?,* Gilberto Marquez-Illescas (University of Rhode Island), Allan A. Zebedee (Clarkson University; Hunan University), Linying Zhou (California State University, San Marcos). *Journal of Business Ethics.* February, 2018.
promising minority students to public accounting. A “Big Four” Partner runs the Summer Accounting Talent Development program. As of October, 2017, 46 Talent Development students were declared/enrolled as accounting majors (at different stages of their academic careers).

In addition to the TD program, in 2013, accounting students founded what has become a very successful affiliation with the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA). Since its inception, the NABA club has competed in the Northeast Regional Case competition every year. The club has “placed” [first place (twice), second place (twice), third place (twice)] in every year that it has competed. The club also holds frequent and extensive networking events with CPA firms. (See Appendix IV.E for an example listing of accounting student club events during the 2017-2018 academic year).

B. Opportunities

The URIAF is aware that the traditional accounting profession is changing rapidly. As outlined in Exhibit 1, this evolution provides us with the following opportunities:

1. Develop New Curriculum Tracks. Driven by rapidly advancing technology and increasing globalization in both financial markets and supply chains, the accounting profession is offering new opportunities to graduating students. Some of these are extensions of the traditional audit function (e.g. forensic accounting and international accounting opportunities). Others are opportunities in industry and government. In response, we are in the process of augmenting the traditional public accounting curriculum with three specialized tracks.

First, in consultation with the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA), we are forming a curriculum track oriented toward the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) exam. Second, in coordination with the URI department of Foreign Languages, we are formalizing a curriculum track which enables motivated students to complete, in 4 or 5 years, a double major in languages and accounting. The plan will not only allow students to sit for the CPA exam, but also serve to connect our students’ diverse backgrounds with global business. Finally, we are in the initial stages of forming a curriculum track in Forensic Accounting.

2. Utilize New Technologies to Enhance Student Learning. Consistent with 2013 AACSB Accounting standard A7, we consider the evolution of audit/accounting technology to be a major opportunity for improving curriculum design and course delivery. Advances in technology also constitute new course subject matter. A more detailed discussion of our steps for taking advantage of technological opportunities is provided in the “Strategic Measures” section (Section V) of this document. In general, they include:

1) Advocating for technology support funds in the upcoming URI capital campaign. We are advocating for funds for: an endowed chair in Forensic Accounting; a COB College-wide technology lab with accounting technology, and; an Accounting Student Success Tutoring Lab.
2) Hiring new technologically proficient faculty.
3) Redesigning the Accounting Information Systems course (BUS 401) to include data analytics topics and incorporating data analytics into our AOL program.

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4 The URI Talent Development program identifies promising high school students from underrepresented groups and requires them to pass a rigorous precollege course during the Summer. Those that pass are given scholarships to attend URI.
4) Increasing Technology-Based Assessment activities and measures (e.g. Assessing Data Analytics skills).

5) Proposing a technologically up-to-date tutoring center in which students can directly experience the technology used in today’s professional exam environment.

6) Initiating steps to ensuring that the use of technology in teaching becomes embodied throughout the curriculum.

3. Expand Faculty/Student Engagement with External Stakeholders. Both public accounting firms and private industry are increasingly engaging with business schools to identify promising recruits. In order to leverage this trend, the area provides students with extensive networking opportunities. These include: presentations and events by members of the Accounting Advisory Board; presentations sponsored by student clubs (BAP, NABA, Women in Business (a College-Wide Organization)); Public Accounting Night; Career Day; the PWC Challenge; and, individual faculty. Additionally, the area cooperates with the URI COB’s career services and CPA firms to provide students with extensive public accounting internship opportunities. As part of our NABA activities and emerging CMA track, we have greatly expanded our students’ participation in case competitions. We hope to expand these activities into experiential learning opportunities for students.

4. Enhance the Quantity and Quality of the Area’s Research. The hiring of three new recently graduated doctoral-qualified colleagues presents us with a “two-way” opportunity. On one hand, we have formed a faculty development plan to help our new colleagues succeed at URI. On the other, our new colleagues provide us with new research areas and methods which will enhance the scope and quality of the area’s research portfolio.

5. Reinvigorate our Communications and Fundraising efforts. We are improving our communications channels to new and potential stakeholders. We are especially focusing on providing them with information concerning faculty/student projects which will add value to students’ learning experiences and be worthy of stakeholder support.

C/D. Our Aspirations and Results
As shown in Exhibit 1, the area has five aspirations. Each has a result which has been achieved, is partially completed, or in development. As shown in Exhibit 1, we are a faculty which aspires to:

1. Deliver a relevant curriculum and courses; maintain course quality; maintain a well-designed and applied assurance of learning program; and, effectively use technology in teaching. Achieving these objectives should result in:
   • a curriculum which provides students with knowledge, skills, and values (e.g. ethics) which enhance their employment prospects;
   • courses which meet defined learning objectives; and,
   • an assurance of learning program which measures core business and accounting skills (e.g. critical thinking, writing; internal control assessment, data analytics capabilities).
These results increase the likelihood that students will graduate with both the technical accounting and “broader” skills (e.g. critical thinking) needed to thrive in today’s changing business environment.

2. **Conduct impactful research on business and society.** Achieving this objective should result in:
   - an increasing portfolio of faculty research which impacts both business and society (e.g. regulation, healthcare, tax policy); and,
   - enhancement of the area’s academic reputation.

3. **Prepare students for a changing world by enhancing diversity, inclusion, and students’ global awareness.** Achieving these objectives should result in an education which:
   - exposes students to individuals with experiences, backgrounds, and views different from their own; and,
   - provides students with an appreciation for the global role of accounting, its impact on nations’ economies and commerce, and its relation to nations’ business cultures.

These results are complementary: exposure to individuals from different backgrounds enhances students’ appreciation of how nations’ business cultures may impact accounting.

4. **Maintain and expand engagement with all stakeholders in a way which positively impacts stakeholders’ achievements and which enhances stakeholder support for our students’ education and our faculty’s (and students’) research.** Achieving this objective will result in:
   - an increasing array of activities (e.g. presentations) and projects (e.g. consulting) in which students and faculty engage with external stakeholders and which enhance students’ learning, networking, and employment prospects; and,
   - an increasing number of activities and projects (e.g. experiential learning) deserving of stakeholder support.

5. **Consistently communicate with our stakeholders regarding important events and achievements.** Achievement of this objective should result in:
   - stakeholder awareness of the area’s student and faculty achievements and increased stakeholder support for deserving projects.

**III. Progress on Addressing Concerns in the 2013 Continuing Improvement Letter**

The previous (2013) Peer Review Team continuous improvement letter emphasized two areas of concern that needed to be addressed. First, the letter stated that the URIAF needed to formulate a **Faculty Development Plan** (**AACSB Standards A2 and A9**) to ensure that all faculty, especially new hires, maintained their qualifications. Special emphasis was placed on the need to formulate a research policy and journal list. Second, in conjunction with the COB, the report stated that the URIAF needed to develop a **program level Assurance of Learning Plan** (**AACSB standard A5**). Our efforts to address these concerns are summarized below.
A) Faculty Development Plan (*Standards A2, A9*)

The 2013 PRT continuous improvement letter stated that:

“The last Business report expressed concern over the continued ability to meet and maintain faculty qualification standards. However, as last time, the faculty qualification standards continue to be met. Although there continues to be concern in regards to future sustainability, two faculty members are in the second year of a three year phase retirement, the school is anticipating hiring one or two faculty for the fall, 2014. For example, the department has identified a list of targeted journals that faculty should strive to publish in, however, there has been very limited success in that endeavor. With more students and fewer faculty members, faculty resources are being stressed. The program needs to continue to develop a plan to increase the quantity and the quality of their publications. This is especially important as the department hires new faculty.”

As noted above, since the 2013 report we have hired three new faculty members. In recruiting our new colleagues, we undertook the strategy of identifying candidates who: had recently finished their doctorates (within the last 3 to 4 years); possessed proven research records (or potential) and teaching experience; and, desired to be at the University of Rhode Island. Our new colleagues are:

- **Dr. Anis Triki**- hired September, 2015-Ph.D. University of Central Florida (2015)-specialist in behavioral accounting.
- **Dr. Qi Liu**- hired September, 2017-Ph.D. Rutgers University (2014)-specialist in data analytics.
- **Dr. Gilberto Marquez Illescas**-hired January, 2018-Ph.D. Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (2014, AACSB accredited)-hired both for data analytics expertise and for business analysis.

These new individuals have added considerable research capabilities to our faculty. They have published a total of 13 (Triki 5, Liu, 6, Marquez, 2) articles. While many of these articles were published at their former institutions, they have already begun to publish quality articles since arriving at URI. For example, Professors Triki and Marquez have recently published articles in the *Journal of Business Ethics*.

These colleagues represent the future of the URIAF. Thus, corresponding with the 2013 PRT’s concern, one of our main objectives has been to develop a plan to maximize the ability of the accounting faculty, especially our new colleagues, to obtain success at URI. Accordingly, we have taken the following steps to enhance both our new colleagues’ chances for success at URI as well as the quality of the area’s research:

- **Development of a Journal List and Research Policy.** In the Spring of 2017, the URIAF voted unanimously to adopt the Australian Deans Business Council (ADBC) journal list as its basic journal rankings. Based on this suggestion, in the Spring of 2018 the COB adopted that list as the basic journal rankings list for the entire College. Thus, both the COB and URIAF classify journals according to those rankings. Additionally, as an area, we modified the policy to consider American Accounting Association section journals to be “A” articles. (Many of these journals are already categorized as such on the ADBC list). Faculty who publish in these journals will obtain preferences in scheduling, class choice, and extra recognition (area
research award). We anticipate that these measures will incentivize faculty to publish in journals listed in the Brigham Young University rankings, which frequently consider AAA section journals. In this manner, we hope to raise our research profile in those ratings. A copy of the journal policy list is provided in Appendix II.B.

- **Research Series and Closer Coordination with COB Ph.D., program.** All new accounting area faculty are required to present research working papers in the College Research Presentation series. During the 2017-2018 academic year each of our new colleagues presented in this series. In the near future, we will encourage more senior faculty to also get involved in these presentations. Additionally, the area has started its own series and invited speakers over the last two years.

  - **Mentors for Junior Faculty.** All new faculty are assigned senior faculty mentors. While the mentors provide guidance regarding general institutional and college policies, their most important task is to help guide junior faculty through the annual review process and provide feedback on the faculty member’s progress toward ultimately receiving promotion and tenure. At present, the faculty mentors are: Dr. Anis Triki; Dr. Stuart Westin; Dr. Qi Liu; Dr. Alejandro Hazera; Dr. Gilberto Marquez Illescas; Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne.

- **Support from the COB.** By hiring contract and COB policy, new faculty are guaranteed:
  - financial support for research conference travel;
  - technology support (e.g. computer software);
  - a “2-2” teaching load as long as they stay “research active” under COB policy.
  - a research assistant.
  - Summer research support for their first two years.

- **Support from the Area.** By area preference, we attempt to accommodate junior faculty with respect to:
  - scheduling (from a day and time perspective);
  - course selection (in terms of the number of class preparations and choice of subject matter).

**B) Development of a Program-Level Assurance of Learning Program (Standard A5)**

The last accreditation report noted that the URI COB and, by extension, the URIAF, needed to develop a Program level Assurance of Learning Program. Specifically, the letter stated that:

> As noted in the School report, while a system of assurance of learning is in place, improvements should be considered including better methods to assess program (not just course) goals and documentation of the closing of the loop in regards to curriculum changes based on program assessment.

As a basis for Assurance of Learning, the accounting area ensures that the curriculum covers learning objectives at three levels:

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5 Dr. Westin is a Business Analytics Professor who work very closely with the accounting faculty.
**General Business Skills program:** Learning objectives at this level pertain to skills needed by all business students. As stated and defined in the URI COB report, College-level AOL measures 6 of these learning objectives. The five which any area can support are: Critical Thinking; Written Communication; Oral Communication; Global Awareness, and; Teamwork. The accounting area has principally administered and assessed COB-wide Critical Thinking.

**General Accounting Skills:** Through both curriculum review and consultation with our Advisory Board, we ensure that the curriculum covers the basic skills needed by all accountants, as defined in 2013 AASCB standard A6.

**Critical Accounting Thinking and Accounting Communication.** In consultation with our Accounting Advisory Board, we have reviewed our curriculum and have identified learning objectives (including some in standard A6) which reflect the critical thinking skills needed for accounting graduates to be able to identify and solve problems (i.e. engage in “critical accounting thinking”) in the modern accounting cycle. Also, there is agreement that accountants should be able to communicate their solutions to issues, including their underlying rationale, to important stakeholders (i.e. engage in effective written and oral “accounting communication”).

With respect to “Critical Accounting Thinking,” we have utilized a paradigm which adapts the COB critical thinking rubric to three phases of the accounting cycle, including:

1) **Transaction Analysis (FASB Codification)** - as represented by students’ ability to **apply the FASB Codification** to complex accounting transactions.
2) **Accounting System Integrity (Internal Control Evaluation)**-as represented by students’ ability to identify, evaluate, and suggest improvements to **internal control systems**.
3) **System Output Analysis**- (Data Analytics) as represented by students’ abilities to **analyze** patterns in large **data samples** to detect fraud and improve controls.

We have defined the following learning dimensions, developed rubrics, and performed additional assessment on these three areas. The learning dimensions (and rubrics) are:

1) **FASB Codification:** Students must be able to: access the FASB Codification; appropriately cite the Codification; apply the Codification guidance to the transaction.
2) **Internal Control:** Given a (possible fraud) case involving Internal Control system weaknesses, students should be able to: describe the fraud process; assess fraud risk from the view of the fraud triangle; evaluate aspects of the internal control system, based on the COSO-ERM framework; and, design appropriate controls to improve the internal control system in a manner which may lower the risk of fraud.
3) **Data Analytics:** given a fraud case involving financial and non-financial data indicators, a student should be able to: explore the data using appropriate techniques; interpret the data exploration results and develop hypotheses; apply appropriate procedures to test the hypotheses; record the procedures and explain their reasoning clearly and completely.

In recent years, we have made substantial progress in implementing this paradigm (see the AOL section of this report and Appendices V and VI). Finally, as noted above, stakeholders have also emphasized the importance of written and oral communication. We currently perform additional assessment on both topics. In the near future, we anticipate adapting writing and oral assessment rubrics to accounting ethics and global accounting.
IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2018-2023 URIAF MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

With the SOAR view discussed above, this section shows the alignment between the URI, COB, and URIAF Missions and Strategic Plans. The section also provides formal statements of the URI Mission and Strategic Plan. This Mission and Plan have evolved through faculty meetings, Accounting Advisory Board meetings, and information and discussions with the area’s main stakeholders, including faculty, students, advisory board members, and alumni. The current plan, which has evolved from the 2013 plan, places more emphasis on mission alignment, program-level assurance of learning, and technology.

A. Aligning the URI and URI COB and URIAF Mission and Strategic Plans

In 2016, the University of Rhode Island released its latest 5-year Academic Vision and Academic Strategic Plan (for the period 2016-2021). The central theme of the Academic Vision, entitled “Innovation with Impact,” closely aligns with the AACS B’s emphasis on “Innovation, Impact, Engagement.” Exhibit 2 “maps” this plan with the URI COB strategic plan and the URIAF’s Mission Objectives. URI’s Academic Strategic Plan encompasses four overriding objectives including:

- Creating a 21st Century 24/7 Learning Environment by enhancing student success through such means as: experiential learning; engagement with external stakeholders; and, the innovative use and development of classroom technology.
- Increasing the Magnitude, Prominence, and Impact of URI’s Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work by recruiting research-capable faculty and providing them with the opportunities and means to perform impactful research. This goal also emphasizes enhancing faculty/student research.
- Internationalizing and Globalizing the University of Rhode Island by engaging in research with scholars from other nations and by providing students with opportunities to learn, experience, and conduct research on the global economy and society (through international partnerships and exchange programs).
- Building a Community at the University of Rhode Island that Values Equity and Diversity by promoting organizations which embrace diversity, and which recognize that students’ educational experience is enhanced when people with diverse backgrounds interact.

More recently, the URI College of Business updated its Strategic Mission and Plan to align with the University’s Mission and Strategic Plan. This Mission and Plan are discussed in the COB report. Exhibit 2 shows that the URI, COB, and Accounting Area mission objectives align. Similar to the URI and COB missions, the accounting area’s mission objectives emphasize: student success, based on high quality, innovative curriculum and class delivery; impactful research on business and society; support for diversity, inclusion, and global awareness, and; impactful engagement with stakeholders, especially with respect to objectives, programs, and projects worthy of stakeholder support.
Exhibit 2: Mapping of URI, URI COB, and URIAF Mission and Strategic Goals

University Mission

**Twenty First Century Learning Environment**—Enhance Student success through experiential learning, and effective utilization of technology.

**Research**
Increase prominence and impact of research, including student research.

**Globalization:**
Increase international teaching and research collaboration, including student research.

**Diversity:**
Build a community which promotes diversity and recognizes that educational effectiveness increases when individuals from different backgrounds interact.

College Mission

**Enhance Student learning and Career Outcomes** (#1) through innovative curriculum and programs.

**Grow the COB's Research** (#3), scholarship and creative endeavors.

**Educate Students** to be **Global Citizens** (#4) and **Embrace Diversity and Social Justice** (#5).

**Create Opportunities** for students and alumni to be life-long learners (#6).

**Establish effective internal and external communication strategies** (#2) and develop **Strategic Funding**.

Accounting Area Mission Objectives

**Mission Objective 1: Enhance and Maintain Academic Relevance and Quality**
Our undergraduate and graduate programs produce well-educated graduates with the necessary skills to meet the professional requirements of chosen career paths, particularly competencies desired by the public and private sectors of the accounting profession.

**Mission Objective 2: Impactful Research**
We conduct high quality, impactful research which contributes new knowledge to the field of accounting and accounting education. Our research focuses on how accounting affects business and society, at all levels.

**Mission Objective 3: Diversity and Globalization**:
We promote faculty/student diversity, inclusiveness, and diverse interaction. We engage in teaching, research, and service which examine the relation between accounting and global commerce.

**Mission Objective 4: Engage with Stakeholders at all levels**.
We promote impactful faculty and student leadership and engagement with all stakeholders, both through formal organizations/networks and informal contacts.

**Mission Objective 5: Communication and Outreach**
We communicate with our stakeholders regarding faculty/student activities, projects and achievements, especially those deserving of stakeholder support.
B. Formal Statement of the Accounting Area’s Mission Statement and Strategic Plan

In the context of the alignment described above, the formal URIAF Mission Statement and Strategic Plan are stated below.

**Preamble**

The strategic plan of the URI Accounting Faculty is based on the premise that it will create an environment conducive to learning for all constituencies of the Accounting Area. We strive to be a community of innovative life-long learners that are engaged with and positively impact RI citizens, the region, and the world.

To achieve our goals, we have created a vision that serves as a general roadmap. Our strategic plan incorporates actionable items based on our vision and mission that will help us to achieve our goals. The area’s strategic plan is based on the core values of Integrity, Excellence, and Inclusiveness and Respect for others. The work of this plan will inspire the area to move forward in new ways, always with the focus on our students first; preparing each of our graduates for a life of impact, success, and lifelong learning.

In order for this strategic plan to come to fruition, we must attract the very best students and faculty to the Accounting Area. As part of Rhode Island’s only public research university, we also seek to attract the best Rhode Island students who represent the first generation in their families to attend college. In seeking our goals, we look to achieve a high-quality curriculum and obtain the facilities and technological capacity to implement the Accounting Area’s programs at the highest level.

**Vision:**

We aspire to be nationally and internationally recognized as a premier accounting program, especially with respect to education and research on the impact of accounting on business and society. To achieve this vision, we identify the following mission and strategic plan.

**Mission:**

As the only separately accredited accounting program within Rhode Island’s premier flagship public university, the accounting faculty discovers and disseminates knowledge to prepare the next generation of the profession’s leaders, professionals, and scholars to positively impact society. By achieving this objective, we promote sound and ethical accounting, tax, and auditing for businesses, governmental agencies (at all levels) and not-for-profit agencies. We educate, transform and inspire our students to think critically and independently, conduct innovative research, develop a global perspective, and function as informed, responsible, ethical, and socially conscious citizens and professionals.

**Mission Objectives and Plans**

Our mission objectives and corresponding strategic goals are outlined below. Appendix I outlines the strategic plan in terms of goals, metrics, and progress.
Mission Objective 1: Enhance and Maintain Academic Relevance, Innovation, Quality, and Value
Our undergraduate and graduate programs produce well-educated graduates with the necessary skills to meet the professional requirements of chosen career paths, particularly competencies desired by the public and private sectors of the accounting profession.

- **Strategic Goal 1:** We strive to ensure that students’ learning experience, both at the curricular and class levels, is relevant, and embodies quality, innovation, and addresses the latest technological trends.

Mission Objective 2: Impactful Research on the Relation Between Accounting and Business and Society
We conduct high quality, impactful research which contributes new knowledge to the field of accounting and accounting education. Our research focuses on how accounting affects business and society, at all levels.

- **Strategic Goal 2:** We strive to conduct high quality impactful research on the relation between accounting and business and society. We examine a broad array of issues regarding how accounting affects (and is affected by) political, social, economic, and regulatory fields and policies.

Mission Objective 3: Prepare Students for a Changing World
We promote faculty/student diversity, inclusiveness, and diverse interaction. We engage in teaching, research, and service which examine the relation between accounting and global commerce.

- **Strategic Goal 3:** We promote diversity and inclusion and strive to enhance students’ understanding of accounting’s role in the global economy.

Mission Objective 4: Engage with Stakeholders at all levels.
We promote impactful faculty and student leadership and engagement with all stakeholders, both through formal organizations/networks and informal contacts.

- **Strategic Goal 4:** We strive to take leadership positions and engage with academic and professional organizations which support the faculty’s and students’ research, professional development, and provide students with opportunities for experiential learning, internships, and job placement.

Mission Objective 5: Communication and Outreach
We communicate with our stakeholders regarding faculty/student activities, projects and achievements, especially those deserving of stakeholder support.

- **Strategic Goal 5:** We strive to maintain and enhance our communication with stakeholders, especially regarding activities and projects which enhance our research, students’ educational experience, and are worthy of stakeholder support.
V. SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRESS.

Following from the Mission Statement above, this section details the goals, underlying actions/events, key players, metrics, and progress. These details of the strategic plan are summarized in Appendix I.B.

A. Strategic Goal 1: Enhance and Maintain Academic, Relevance, Innovation, Quality and Value

*We strive to ensure that students’ learning experience, both at the curricular and class levels, is relevant, embodies quality, innovation, and addresses the latest technological trends.*

This goal is achieved by: recruiting and deploying a participating and qualified faculty who are innovative, engage with stakeholders, and conduct impactful activities (1.1); recruiting and maintaining a quality student body (1.2); maintaining a relevant curriculum, in terms of both the core business and accounting basic learning objectives and learning objectives relevant to stakeholders (1.3); maintaining instructional quality through a robust and evolving Assurance of Learning Program (1.4); and, pursuing the development of curriculum initiatives which reflect the latest technology and/or are uniquely important to our stakeholders (1.5).

1.1 Recruit and Deploy a Sufficient Number of Participating and Qualified Faculty *(AACSB Standards A4, A8, A9)*

1.1.1 Recruit Qualified Faculty

Since the 2013 accreditation visit, three full-time accounting (tenured) faculty members retired and we conducted three successful searches. As noted above, we desired not only to replace valued colleagues, but to also find scholars who could enhance the area’s research, diversity, technology capabilities, and global focus. As previously noted, our three new colleagues are Dr. Anis Triki (hired September 2015), Dr. Qi Liu (hired September 2017), Dr. Gilberto Marquez Illescas (hired January, 2018).

In spite of their short time at URI, these new faculty members have made significant contributions. Dr. Triki has added considerable expertise in behavioral/experimental research. He also sponsored a well-known speaker from Tunisia (i.e. the MENA region (a banking expert)). Dr. Liu has published in the best Accounting Information Systems journals. Also, she serves on the AICPA Audit Data Analytic Guide Task Force. This group is charged with writing the audit guide on how data analytics will impact Analytical Review Procedures. Dr. Marquez brings an expertise and research experience on the intersection between managerial economics (especially incentives) and behavioral accounting. Dr. Marquez also adds to the area’s (rapidly developing) ability to interact with institutions in Spain and Latin America.

1.1.2 Deploy Sufficient Participating and Qualified Faculty *(AACSB Standards A4, A8, A9)*

From a teaching perspective, a faculty is only effective if individual faculty members are matched with classes which correspond with each professor’s talents, teaching interests, and professional backgrounds. We attempt to enhance this “match” when scheduling is performed. Effective faculty deployment also requires that a significant number of classes be taught by participating and
qualified faculty. Exhibit 3 (AASCB Table A9-1) lists faculty according to participation and support status (The formal definitions are provided in the COB Continuous Improvement Report). As shown therein, all full-time faculty members are participating and 91.00% of accounting classes are taught by participating faculty (exceeding the AASCB Standard Sufficiency 60% minimum).

Exhibit 3 (AASCB Table A9-1) also summarizes faculty qualifications. Seven continuing tenured (or tenure track) faculty are Scholarly Academics (SA) and two are Practicing Academics (PA). One full-time instructor is a Scholarly Practitioner (SP) and two are Instructional Practitioners (IP). Six of the nine continuing full-time, participating faculty hold the CPA certification. The table shows that SA faculty teach approximately (rounded) 51% (6.5/12.75) of courses; PA faculty teach 20% (2.5/12.75), SP faculty teach 8% (1/12.75) of courses; and, IP faculty teach 22% (2.75/12.75) of courses (all numbers rounded). As shown in Exhibit 3, all of these percentages exceed AASCB (40%, 60%, 90%) minimum standards.

Exhibit 4 (AASCB Table A9-2) summarizes faculty deployment by program for the 2018-2019 academic year. Doctoral qualified faculty (SA and PA) taught approximately 53% of Bachelor’s level courses. Scholarly (15%) and Instructional (32%) practitioners, consisting mostly of our full-time instructors, taught the remaining undergraduate courses. All regular M.B.A. program courses are taught by SA (20%) or PA (80%) faculty. SA faculty teach 87.5% of courses in Specialized Masters programs (most notably the MSA). The other courses were taught by a highly-qualified instructional practitioner (LLM Boston University).

1.1.3. The Area Should Provide a High Level of Engagement, Innovation, and Impact
Recent AASCB accreditation standards require that accounting faculties be engaged with stakeholders and innovative, and impactful activities. Exhibit 5 summarizes Engagement Innovation, Impact by faculty member. Activities have been defined as Academic (ACAD), Pedagogical (PED), or Professional (PROF). All participating members of the faculty contributed some degree of Engagement, Innovation, and Impact. Examples include:

- **Dr. Judy Beckman (Accounting Regulation)**- Dr. Judy Beckman was named an SEC fellow in the Office of the Chief Accountant (Engagement, Impact) for two consecutive years. Upon returning to URI, she arranged for a member of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) to discuss current auditing issues with both students and representatives of audit firms (Engagement, Impact). She cooperates with the Wall Street Journal (Innovation, Engagement, Impact) to write accounting cases based on current business issues.

- **Dr. Kathryn Jervis (Accounting and Healthcare).** Dr. Kathryn Jervis has an expertise in healthcare accounting (research, teaching, and service). She is President (2017-2018 year) of the Government and Nonprofit section of the American Accounting Association (Innovation, Engagement, Impact). She coordinated the section’s annual meeting (March 2018) in Providence, RI.

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6 Academic (ACAD) activities are related to research and organizations dedicated to research (e.g. the American Accounting Association). Pedagogical (PED) activities are related to all aspects of curriculum, all aspects of teaching, and organizations dedicated to teaching. Professional (PROF) activities are related to services performed for professional organizations (e.g. the AICPA), the public accounting profession, private industry, and governmental/nonprofit organizations.
## Exhibit 3 AACSB Table A9-1: Faculty Sufficiency and Qualifications for the 2017-2018 Academic Year

### Area: Accounting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Name</th>
<th>Appt</th>
<th>Degree, Year</th>
<th>Prof. Cert.</th>
<th>Participating</th>
<th>Supporting</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>Oth</th>
<th>% of Time Devoted to Mission for Each Qualification Group *</th>
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<td>Beckman, Judy</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Ph.D., 1991</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td>100.00%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Ph.D., 2000</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td>100.00%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyle, Edmund</td>
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<td>Ph.D., 1990</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazera, Alejandro</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Ph.D., 1989</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td>Jelinek, Kate</td>
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<td>Ph.D., 2005</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td>Jervis, Kathryn</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Ph.D., 1997</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liu, Qi</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Ph.D., 2014</td>
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<td>Marquez, Gilberto</td>
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<td>Ph.D., 2014</td>
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<td>Triki, Anis</td>
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<td>Ph.D., 2015</td>
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<td>100.00%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newell, Roberta</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>M.Acc., 1996</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td>100.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clements, Alexis</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>M.S.A., 2016</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>D'Adamo, Joseph</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>M.B.A., 1979</td>
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<td>Jones, Tanya</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>M.S.A., 2014</td>
<td>C.P.A.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryle, Patrick</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>M.B.A., 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacco, Ann-Marie</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>M.B.A., 1983</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

### Faculty Sufficiency Indicators *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participating</th>
<th>Supporting</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Taught by Participating</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>Oth</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>Oth</th>
<th>SA+PA</th>
<th>SA+SP+IP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>2.75</td>
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<td>12.75</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

### Faculty Qualifications Indicators
### Exhibit 4 (AACSB Table A9-2) Deployment of Participating and Supporting Faculty during the 2017-2018 Academic Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>IP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>45.28%</td>
<td>7.55%</td>
<td>15.09%</td>
<td>32.08%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.B.A.</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Masters</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Program</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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</table>

### Exhibit 5: Summary of Engagement, Innovation, Impact from an Area Wide View

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Member</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Innovation</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judy Beckman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Blanthorne</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Jervis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Hazera</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Schwarzbach</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Boyle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Jelinek</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anis Triki</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qi Liu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilberto Marquez</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph D'adamo</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann-Marie Sacco</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberta Newell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Dr. Cindy Blanthorne (Tax Policy).** Dr. Cindy Blanthorne, our senior tax professor, is the incoming President of the Northeast Region of the American Accounting Association (Engagement, Impact). In 2015, she published an article in the *Journal of the American Taxation Association* entitled, “Cognitive Responses to the Partitioned Pricing of Consumption Taxes: Consequences for State and Local Revenues.” The article was cited on the AAA website and *Accounting Today* (Innovation and Impact). She presented the results of the article to our advisory board (Engagement) and has used the results in her tax classes (Impact).

- **Dr. Alejandro Hazera (International Accounting).** Dr. Alejandro Hazera dedicates research to the relations between bank loan overstatement, financial crisis, and systemic risk. In May of 2017, he was invited by Spain’s Commerce Ministry to give a lecture on bank accounting and financial crisis to 315 up and coming diplomats (Spain sends diplomats to many nations that experience crisis) (Engagement, Impact). In November 2017, he was invited to teach international accounting to 130 students at the Chinese University of Mining and Technology (Engagement, Impact). The articles from his research are used in his (online) International Accounting class (Innovation).
- **Dr. Kate Jelinek** has published research on auditor behavior, ethics, and accounting education. Her teaching paper on ethics, “Will and Caroline: Accounting, Professional Integrity and Lobbying,” (forthcoming *Journal of Accounting Education*) won a research award at the 2017 Northeast Region meeting of the American Accounting Association (Engagement, Innovation, Impact).

- **Dr. Edmund Boyle** has renewed his research in emotional intelligence and published articles on how it relates to the teaching of auditing. He has incorporated the findings into his audit classes (Innovation). He uses his articles to develop tools for assessing his students’ auditing skills (Innovation, Impact).

- **Dr. Anis Triki** was hired in 2015 as our behavioral accounting specialist. He has recently published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Innovation, Impact) and other outlets. Based on his research, he was interviewed (invited) online in *Investor Relations Magazine* (Engagement, Impact).

- **Dr. Qi Liu**, our new data analytics professor (started Sept. 2017), is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants’ *Audit Data Analytic Guide Task Force* (Engagement, Innovation, Impact). This group has been charged with writing the Audit Guide to Replace the Guide on Analytical Review. She has published in “A” journals (Impact) in Accounting Information Systems and has designed rubrics to measure her students’ data analytics skills (Innovation). (See Appendices V, VI, and the section on AOL for the initial results of the assessment).

- **Dr. Gilberto Marquez** was hired only as of January 2018. Shortly thereafter we received word that his article, “Hear Me Write: Does CEO Narcissism Affect Disclosure?” had been accepted in the *Journal of Business Ethics.* (Innovation, Impact). The article has been cited in the Wharton Impact Data Base (Impact).

- **Professor Joseph D’adamo**, one of the best instructors in the University, is an instructor for Becker CPA review throughout the New England Area (Impact, Engagement). He is directing the effort to structure our proposed accounting tutoring center (Innovation).

- **Professor Ann-Marie Sacco** is a consultant to many businesses, including Hasbro Children’s Hospital, Boston. She is founder of the Ali Fund, a nonprofit organization which undertakes activities for that hospital (Engagement, Innovation, Impact). Professor Sacco coached and led a group of students to the 2018 IMA national case competition semifinals (Engagement, Impact).

- **Professor Roberta Newell** is an instructor in financial accounting and taxes. She is currently integrating data analytics into her tax classes (Innovation). Professor Newell is also an advisor to our PWC Challenge (Engagement). Also, she has developed a rubric to test students’ abilities to use the FASB Accounting Codification (Innovation).

1.2. **Recruit and Maintain a Qualified Student Body (AACSB Standard A4)**

The area identifies and recruits qualified students through four means. First, business students take the introductory accounting courses in their sophomore year. We have excellent tenured faculty and excellent long-term, full time instructors who teach those classes. The quality of these professors’ instruction allows us to attract many of the best students as majors. Second, the area’s Beta Alpha Psi chapter sends representatives to classes (BUS 201 Principles of Accounting, BUS 301-Intermediate I) and holds events to recruit high quality students to the accounting major. Also, our NABA chapter holds events to recruit high quality members of underrepresented groups. Third, in conjunction with two of the “Big 4,” the area works with the URI Talent Development
program to recruit students from underrepresented groups. Finally, the area maintains a policy that only students who have earned a “C” in BUS 301 (Intermediate I) may take BUS 302 (Intermediate II).

Regarding enrollment (Appendix III.A), the number of undergraduate accounting majors decreased from 341 in 2013 to 324 in 2017. Based on data from the College, this decrease corresponded with an increase in finance majors. Thus, the decline in accounting majors may partially be explained by the movement of accounting majors to the finance major during “good” economic times (and back to accounting during “rougher” times); however, it may also reflect changes in the accounting profession which may need to be addressed, such as the need for more graduates with decision making skills or graduates with more global experience. This possibility serves as our incentive to form the three curriculum tracks noted previously.

A notable trend is the change in the number of students from underrepresented groups, which increased from 2013 to 2017 in terms of both the total number of students (from 100 to 110) and the percentage (29% to 34%) of total accounting students. This change may result from the efforts by both the faculty and our stakeholder public accounting firms to recruit more minority students to the accounting profession.

Admission to the MS-Accounting program is based on a combination of the applicant’s undergraduate grade point average (GPA) and the applicant’s score on either the graduate management admission test or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Students with a 3.5 (or higher) undergraduate grade point average from an AACSB accredited school are exempt from the exams. Assuming the GMAT is required, the minimum admission criteria include an overall GPA of 3.0 and a GMAT score of approximately 540 (the 50th percentile). Higher GMAT scores can somewhat offset the GPA and vice versa. The 2017 average GMAT scores for 9 entrants was over 500.

Appendix III.C provides CPA exam results from 2013-2016. For the three years shown, our 4-year undergraduates generally scored lower than the undergraduates of peer and competitor schools. Our MSA graduates scored higher in some areas (e.g. business) while their overall results were “even” or slightly higher than those of the other schools. These results are one of our principal incentives to establish the tutoring center noted above.

The College employs a full-time career advisor and a full-time internship coordinator. The accounting faculty work closely with both individuals during Public Accounting night. In the Fall of 2017, seventeen Public Accounting firms attended Public Accounting Night. Our electronic student ID scanning system tracked 163 students who participated in that event. Other networking events are sponsored by Beta Alpha Psi, Women in Business, and the National Association of Black Accountants (See Appendix IV.E). Our Career and Internship advisors have improved our ability to consistently track students working on internships for credit. The Spring term usually attracts more students because of tax season in public accounting firms. Accounting internship data for credit are as follows:

---

7 The number of freshman who declare an accounting major does not provide an accurate forecast of future accounting majors since students do not enter the College of Business until their junior year (see the COB report).
The data show a general increase in internships taken for credit. However, non-credit internship data are not included. Thus, the data only provide a partial view.

In addition to internships, Professor Cynthia Blanthorne and our internship coordinator place accounting students in the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for internship credit. In the Spring of 2018, thirty students completed the entrance test and worked in the program around Rhode Island. Of those students, six completed 100 hours and received internship credit. In recent years, Dr. Blanthorne and Professor Roberta Newell (a full-time lecturer) have selected teams for the PWC Case Challenge. In the Spring of 2018, 29 students competed in the challenge.

1.3 Maintain a Relevant Curriculum in Terms of Core Business and Accounting Learning Objectives (AACSB Standard A6)

As noted above, the accounting area’s undergraduate curriculum includes learning objectives at three levels. General Business Learning Objectives (GBLO) are essential to all business students; General Accounting Learning Objectives (GALO) are fundamental skills required of accountants; and, Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objectives (CATLO) are skills regarded as particularly important for effective problem solving in the modern accounting cycle. Exhibit 6 shows the principal courses in the undergraduate curriculum where each of these skills is covered and assessed. The MSA program learning goals and AOL are discussed in Section 1.4.2.

1.3.1 General Business Learning Objectives (GBLO)

GBLOs are essential to all business majors and are covered by the College of Business Assurance of Learning (COB AOL) program. They include:

- **GBLO #1-Critical Thinking**: Students will demonstrate sufficient critical thinking skills to identify business/accounting issues, develop solutions, and select the optimal solution.
- **GBLO #2-Written Communication**: Students will demonstrate a sufficient level of writing skills needed to describe business/accounting issues, communicate alternative solutions, and describe the rationale underlying their choice of solution.
### Exhibit 6: Overview of Undergraduate Learning Objectives by Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Wide Skills (GBLO)</th>
<th>BUS 201</th>
<th>BUS 202</th>
<th>BUS 301</th>
<th>BUS 302</th>
<th>BUS 303</th>
<th>BUS 401</th>
<th>BUS 402</th>
<th>BUS 403</th>
<th>BUS 404</th>
<th>BUS 341</th>
<th>BUS 345</th>
<th>Various BUS</th>
<th>BUS 365</th>
<th>BUS 445</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Critical Thinking</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>#3 Writing Skills</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 Team Work</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>#5 Globalization</td>
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### Accounting Specific Skills (GALO)

#### Grade Based Assessment

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<th>#1 Accounting and Capital Markets</th>
<th>BUS 201</th>
<th>BUS 202</th>
<th>BUS 301</th>
<th>BUS 302</th>
<th>BUS 303</th>
<th>BUS 401</th>
<th>BUS 402</th>
<th>BUS 403</th>
<th>BUS 404</th>
<th>BUS 341</th>
<th>BUS 345</th>
<th>Various BUS</th>
<th>BUS 365</th>
<th>BUS 445</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2 Ethical/Regulatory</td>
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<td><strong>X</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Special AOL Assessment (CATLO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1 Recording Historical Trans. (Acc. Cod)</th>
<th>BUS 201</th>
<th>BUS 202</th>
<th>BUS 301</th>
<th>BUS 302</th>
<th>BUS 303</th>
<th>BUS 401</th>
<th>BUS 402</th>
<th>BUS 403</th>
<th>BUS 404</th>
<th>BUS 341</th>
<th>BUS 345</th>
<th>Various BUS</th>
<th>BUS 365</th>
<th>BUS 445</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2 Internal Control (Eval. And Des.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Design/Apply Technology (Data Anal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>X</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Assessed through College-Wide AOL Program (COB AOL)

** Assessed through Accounting area AOL Program (AAOL)
• **GBLO #3-Oral Communication:** Students will demonstrate a sufficient level of oral skills needed to describe business/accounting issues, communicate alternative solutions, and describe the rationale underlying their choice of solution.

• **GBLO #4-Teamwork:** Students will demonstrate they can work effectively in a team to identify and solve issues in a business/accounting/audit setting.

• **GBLO #5-Global Awareness:** Students will demonstrate an awareness of how differences in nations’ cultures and economic systems impact business and accounting.

As shown in Exhibit 6, various functional areas in the COB contribute to the teaching and assessment of these objectives. In 2017-2018, the accounting area mainly helped design and administer the COB “Critical Thinking” learning objective (GBLO#1). The accounting area also conducted additional writing assessment in BUS 302 (Inter. Acc. II) and additional Oral Communications assessment in BUS 402 (Advanced Accounting).

### 1.3.2. General Accounting Learning Objectives (GALO)

These are essential skills which are identified in AACSB standard A6. They include:

• **GAULO #1-Accounting and Capital Markets:** Accounting students will understand the role of accounting in enhancing the transparency of capital markets and facilitating investor decisions. Also, students should be able to use the tools provided by private (FASB Codification) and public (SEC Edgar database) accounting oversight institutions.

  o As shown in Exhibit 6, this learning objective is covered in BUS 301, 302 (Intermediate Accounting), which require students to study the accounting institutions (FASB, SEC) which promote quality financial information. The objective is also covered in BUS 404 (Auditing), which emphasizes the institutions which support the attest function (e.g., PCAOB).

• **GAULO #2-Ethical Reasoning:** Students will be familiar with the ethical and regulatory environment and ethics of accounting and the reasoning involved in making ethical accounting/auditing decisions.

  As shown in Exhibit 6, ethical reasoning is covered in BUS 345 (Business in Society), which requires students to solve cases on the ethical implications of businesses’ actions on external stakeholders. Ethical reasoning is also covered in BUS 404 (Auditing), which incorporates the AICPA Code of Ethics.

• **GAULO #3-Business Processes:** Students will be able to use accounting information to analyze and evaluate business processes that are internal and external to business organizations.

  o As shown in Exhibit 6, this learning objective is covered in financial accounting courses (BUS 302-Intermediate II; BUS 402-Advanced Accounting) which require students to assess how U.S. GAAP may impact stock prices; Cost Accounting (BUS 303), where students are taught methods such as balanced score card; and, BUS
401 (Accounting Information Systems), where students are required to design basic accounting information systems.

- **GALO #4- Risk assessment and assurance of financial and non-financial information:** Students will understand how to evaluate the risk and assurance of financial and non-financial information.
  
  - As shown in Exhibit 6, this learning objective is covered in both BUS 401 (Accounting Information Systems) and BUS 404. In BUS 401 students are required to analyze a true bank fraud and assess the factors indicative of malfeasance. In BUS 404 (Auditing) an entire test and several class sections cover internal control.

- **GALO #5- Project and engagement design:** students will understand engagement design, particularly with respect to technology and audit.
  
  - As shown in Exhibit 6, this learning objective is covered in BUS 401 (Accounting Information Systems), where students must design basic accounting information systems. This learning objective is also covered in Auditing (BUS 404), where students are introduced to the entire audit engagement process.

- **GALO #6- Tax Policy and Strategy:** Students will understand the institutions which affect tax policy and how tax law is applied and strategized for tax clients.
  
  - As shown in Exhibit 6, this learning objective is covered in BUS 403 (Federal Income Tax Accounting), which considers both the overall regulatory environment of U.S. taxes as well as their technical aspects.

- **GALO #7- Global Accounting:** Students will understand the role of accounting in the international financial system and how nations’ characteristics impact financial statements.
  
  - As shown in Exhibit 6, international accounting and the roles and responsibilities of accountants in a global economy are covered in BUS 301 and 302 (Intermediate Accounting), where some IFRS are covered. Currency topics are covered in BUS 402 (Advanced Accounting). Also, accounting undergraduates are required to take BUS 345, Multinational Finance (not shown in Table 6).

1.3.3 Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objectives (CATLO).
As previously noted, these topics have been identified as especially important for graduating accounting majors. They are intended as an integrated effort to assess, throughout the curriculum, students’ understanding of the inputs, processing, and outputs of accounting information systems. These include:

- **CATLO #1- Recording and analyzing complex transactions:** Students will be able to apply the FASB Codification to complex transactions.
As shown in Exhibit 6, these skills are assessed in a special BUS 301 (possibly 302) assignment (Inter. Acc. I) on the **FASB codification**. The learning dimensions of this assignment are that students must be able to:

- Access the FASB codification;
- Appropriately cite the codification; and,
- Apply the codification guidance to the transaction.

**CATLO #2- Internal Control Evaluation and Design:** Students will be able to evaluate, critique, and design basic internal controls which may prevent a fraud. As shown in Exhibit 6, internal control evaluation and design skills are assessed in BUS 401 (AIS) and BUS 404 (Auditing). In the former, the learning dimensions are that students should be able to:

- Describe a fraud process;
- Assess fraud risk from the view of the fraud triangle;
- Evaluate aspects of the internal control system, based on the COSO-ERM framework; and,
- Design appropriate control activities to improve the internal control system in a manner which may lower the risk of fraud.

**CATLO #3- Data Analytics Evaluation and Design:** Students will understand the role of basic data analytics techniques in identifying fraud. This is a special case in BUS 401 in which the learning objectives require that students:

- Explore data using appropriate techniques;
- Interpret data exploration results and develop hypotheses;
- Apply appropriate procedures to test the hypotheses; and,
- Record their procedures and explain their reasoning clearly and completely.

### 1.4 Maintain Instructional Quality Through a Robust and Evolving Assurance of Learning Program (AASCB Standard A5)

#### 1.4.1 Maintain a Robust Undergraduate Assurance of Learning Program

In recent years we have worked closely with our Advisory Board to identify important program-level learning goals. A general consensus has emerged that students need to better understand the inputs, processes, and outputs of accounting systems (the Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objectives (CATLO) discussed above). The importance of oral and written communication skills has also been noted. Since both the College and accounting AOL programs have traditionally assessed written and oral communication, we began the transition to program-level AOL by focusing on the critical thinking skills especially important to accounting. The objective of the URI undergraduate AOL program’s focus on Critical Accounting Thinking is to:

measure, through a series of assessments embedded in the curriculum, students’ abilities to critically identify and solve accounting issues at three key points in Accounting Information Systems. These points include:
transaction analysis, as assessed on the basis of students’ abilities to search, cite, and apply the FASB codification (CATLO #1);
accounting system processing, as assessed on students’ abilities to identify and evaluate internal control weaknesses (CATLO #2) (that may have facilitated a fraud); and,
system outputs, as assessed by students’ abilities to explore and evaluate large data samples (Data Analytics, CATLO #3).

Process for Identifying and Administering Accounting Area AOL.
We consider the discussions with our Advisory Board to be an integral part of the AOL process. From this view, curricular changes can be the result of feedback from assessment or even from an initial discussion with the Advisory Board. The development of BUS 405 (noted above) was encouraged through such discussion. The evolving process for identifying learning objectives and managing assessment is diagramed in Appendix V. The steps include:

- Learning objectives are discussed at the semiannual advisory board meetings, where external stakeholders and faculty can consider accounting issues and trends.
- The area coordinator selects the classes in which the assessment will be conducted.
- The instructor(s) develops the rubric and selects the class sections in which the assessment will be conducted.
- The rubric is provided to the class at least one week prior to the assessment.
- After the assessment has been conducted and graded (ideally by two independent graders), the instructor summarizes the results and provides the area coordinator with a comprehensive assessment package (e.g. description of assessment, materials, rubric (see Appendix V)).
- The results are presented at subsequent advisory board meetings for discussion of possible courses of action, and for new areas of assessment.

Summary of Undergraduate Assessment, Results, and Closing the Loop Actions
Exhibit 7 provides an overview of the accounting area’s undergraduate assessment activities and results for the 2013-2018 cycle. Observations and Closing the Loop are discussed under each learning objective. Curriculum modifications are summarized at the end. More detailed descriptions and “Closing the Loop” actions are provided in Appendix V. Appendix VI provides a worksheet summary of both the assessment and resultant actions taken.

- Critical Thinking

College-Wide Critical Thinking (GBLO#1)
As shown in Exhibit 1 (App. VI) the COB assessed Senior-level critical thinking from 2013 through 2015. However, there were questions concerning the rubric and method. In 2017-2018, the accounting area designed and conducted much of the critical thinking assessment for the COB. In Fall 2017, an initial pilot was done on 28 students on a Harvard Business School Case (HBSC). The case was used to develop the COB Critical Thinking Rubric and examine the feasibility of using Harvard Business School cases for Critical Thinking assessment. Both the rubric and method were deemed as generally effective.

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8 The assessment process is mostly evolving with respect to evaluation. As learning objectives are developed, two independent graders are used (when feasible).
### Exhibit 7: Overview of 2013-2018 Accounting Assurance of Learning and Results (Reproduced in App. VI)

#### During Undergraduate (Pre-senior) or Introductory Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Senior Year or Reinforcement Class</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Critical Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“General” Critical Thinking (GBLO#1)</td>
<td>Randomly selected students from all majors. See CoB report</td>
<td>2013-2014&lt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>2017-2018&gt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>In first two years, College reconsidered rubric. Students now seem to be meeting expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Pre-Senior Critical Thinking was Conducted at College Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We will continue with cases, which will be applied in BUS 302 starting in 2018-2019.</td>
<td>In the future we will apply a case and rubric (similar to BUS 301) in BUS 302. This will require that the current 302 writing rubric be modified for critical thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Codification (CATLO #1)</td>
<td>BUS 301-Inter. Acc.</td>
<td>Fall, 2016-6/50/44*</td>
<td>BUS 404 Auditing</td>
<td>Spring, 2016-27/52/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUS 301-Intermediate Accounting</td>
<td>Spring, 2017-5/71/24</td>
<td>(Traditional Exam Assessment)</td>
<td>Spring, 2017-2/22/76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUS 301-Intermediate Accounting</td>
<td>Fall, 2017-3/75/22</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>Spring, 2018 12/14/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring 2018-5/80/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Control (CATLO #2)</td>
<td>BUS 401- Accounting Information Systems</td>
<td>Spring, 2018-21/40/39</td>
<td></td>
<td>In the future we will apply a case and rubric (similar to BUS 401) in BUS 404. Traditional Assessment will also be continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analytics--Fraud Detection (CATLO #3)</td>
<td>BUS 401- Accounting Information Systems</td>
<td>Fall, 2017-15/50/34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring, 2018-16/37/46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Case (GBLO #2)</td>
<td>BUS 302 Inter. Acc.</td>
<td>Spring, 2014-4/73/27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUS 302 Intermediate Accounting</td>
<td>Spring, 2015-13/82/5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUS 302 Intermediate Accounting</td>
<td>Spring 2018-29/50/21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communications (GBLO #3)</td>
<td>Randomly selected Students from all majors, see CoB report</td>
<td>2013-2014&lt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>2017-2018&gt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>In the first three years, team conflict resolution was weak. In last year assessed, groups dealt better with conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Randomly selected Students from all majors, see CoB report</td>
<td>2014-2015&gt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>2017-2018&lt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>We will continue College-level Assessment; we may consider using software used by College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork (GBLO #4)</td>
<td>Randomly selected Juniors from all majors, see CoB report</td>
<td>2015-2016&lt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>2018-2019&lt;85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>We will continue College-level Assessment, but may introduce Global Awareness Assessment in BUS 402.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Awareness (GBLO #5)</td>
<td>Randomly selected Students from all majors, see CoB report</td>
<td>2016-2017, 85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>2017-2018, 85% Met Exp.</td>
<td>We will continue College-level Assessment; we may consider using software used by College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The results are ordered: Did not Meet Expectations; Met Expections; Exceeded Expectations.*
In Spring, 2018 another Harvard case was used by the COB to assess randomly chosen seniors. Per Exhibit 7 (App. VI), approximately 84% of students met or exceeded expectations.

**Observations/Closing the Loop.** Overall, the students performed well on these challenging Harvard mini-cases. The URIAF will continue to cooperate with the COB in assessing critical thinking. However, as emphasized above, the area feels that, for our students, AOL for critical thinking needs to be conducted in an accounting context. With this motive, we designed and initiated assessment on the three Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objectives (CATLO) described below.

- **Accounting Area Critical Thinking-FASB Codification (CATLO #1)**

**Pre-Senior Level.** Since Fall 2016, for four semesters, in BUS 301 (302 in one semester) we have used cases to assess students’ skills in applying the FASB codification from a critical thinking view (i.e. based on an adapted COB critical thinking rubric). As noted in Exhibit 7 (App. VI), for all four semesters that the exercise was applied, over 85% of the students met or exceeded expectations on applying the FASB codification. Also, as noted in the table below, for all four semesters, an average of over 85% of the students met or exceeded expectations on all three dimensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objective (CATLO #1)- FASB Cod.</th>
<th>BUS 301 Intermediate Accounting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average by Dimension Four Semesters (Fall, 2016-Spring, 2018)</td>
<td>Identify Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>10/39/51*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The results represent the percentages that: did not meet expectations, met expectations, exceeded expectations

**Observations/Closing the Loop.** Most of the students gained a basic introduction of how to apply and interpret the FASB codification to accounting issues. However, the instructor noted that some students applied the codification in a manner which did not directly address the issue. She changed the rubric (to include two “Meets Expectations” categories) to more accurately identify this tendency. Starting in the Fall of 2018, we will use the modified rubric to systematically assess students’ FASB codification skills in both BUS 301 and BUS 302 (to introduce and reinforce the FASB codification).

- **Accounting Area Critical Thinking-Internal Control (CATLO #2)**

**Pre-Senior Year.** In order to begin teaching internal control and assessing students’ understanding of internal control prior to the Senior year, in the Spring of 2018, based on a real bank fraud case, we introduced and assessed internal control in BUS 401 (AIS), a class mostly taken by juniors. As shown in Exhibit 7 (App. VI), 79% of the students met or exceeded expectations on the general evaluation. Also, as shown below, fewer than 80% of students met or exceeded expectations on describing the fraud or improving the internal control system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objective (CATLO #2)- Internal Control</th>
<th>BUS 401 Accounting Information Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average by Dimension for One Semester (Spring, 2018)</td>
<td>Describe Fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/12/60</td>
<td>13/29/58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Senior-Level. The Auditing (BUS 404) course devotes approximately one month to all aspects of internal control theory and application. One test is devoted entirely to internal control. Using the COB’s traditional method, the instructor measured the results on a 5-point scale. For purposes of comparison (for the moment), these were converted to a 3-point scale (5-exceeds expectations, 2-4-meets expectations, 1-does not meet expectations). As shown in Exhibit 7 (App. VI), 85% of students met expectations in Spring, 2017, 2018, but not Spring 2016.

Observations/Closing the Loop. Given that most students in BUS 401 are juniors, the results provide initial positive support for students’ ability to assess internal controls. However, considering the low results for the first dimension (describing the fraud process), the instructor will redo the case to ensure that students understand the important details. Also, the instructor will spend more time on COSO requirements in the coming year. Finally, in order to increase consistency and reinforcement, we will incorporate a “rubric-style” assessment in the Audit course (BUS 404) each spring semester. As a general standard, we believe that introducing students to internal control concepts prior to their Senior year is a great improvement over the traditional method of discussing these concepts just prior to students’ graduation.

- Accounting Area Critical Thinking-Data Analytics (CATLO #3):

In recognition of the increasing importance of Big Data, this year we initiated an area of Critical Thinking Assessment of our students’ Data Analysis skills. The assessment was based on a case, “What’s happening to profits at Cazenovia Creations?,” published in AIS Educator Journal. Students were required to analyze anomalies between revenue, net income, and transaction level data, and check for fraud. Per Exhibit 7 (App. VI), approximately 84% of students met expectations in the Fall of 2017 and 83% met expectations in the Spring of 2018. Also, as shown below, at least 80% of students met or exceeded expectations in all four dimensions.

| Critical Accounting Thinking Learning Objective (CATLO #3)- Data Analytics | BUS 401 Accounting Information Systems |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Explore Data | Develop Hypothesis | Test Hypothesis | Document Procedures |
| 12/41/47 | 19/45/36 | 17/38/45 | 18/50/32 |

Observations/Closing the Loop: While the results provide initial evidence of students’ ability to address the issues in the case, we will conduct the assessment every fall semester to continue to verify the results. Also, in order to reinforce data analytics, we will begin incorporating a case into the Senior year (BUS 404) Auditing course during the 2018-2019 year (in Spring, 2019).

- Written Communication (GBLO#3)

All Levels. Written communication is heavily assessed at the COB level. Additionally, the accounting faculty has assessed written communication in BUS 302. From 2013-2015 these assignments (including for BUS 302) were submitted to the Dean’s office and assessed at that level. Until 2016, (see COB report) 80-85% of pre-Seniors were judged as meeting expectations. However, Senior-level assessment consistently showed results lower than the 85% benchmark.

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Starting in 2016, the College began using an external writing expert to conduct writing assessment. As shown in Exhibit 7 (App. VI), in 2017 the percentage of pre-Seniors (in all majors) meeting or exceeding expectations dropped below 85%.

**Observations/Closing the Loop.** The post 2016 external writing assessor found consistent deficiencies in the writing of many students. Thus, the COB is undertaking measures to improve students’ writing. These include changes in the curriculum and classes, workshops, and greater utilization of the university’s writing center. We will support and incorporate these efforts. As an area, for BUS 302, we will consider hiring a writing expert not only to perform an “ex-post” assessment of writing, but to also guide students through their writing projects during the semester (i.e. provide at least one round of feedback).

- **Oral Communication (GBLO #3)**

Oral communication was assessed at the pre-senior level at the College-level (Spring, 2017). More than 85% met expectations. The accounting area also assessed accounting seniors’ oral presentation skills in Advanced Accounting (BUS 402) in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. In Fall, 2017, groups of students were required to describe and evaluate Amazon’s purchase of Whole Foods. In Spring, 2018 students were required to evaluate the North American Free Trade Agreement from cultural, social, and economic perspectives. In all of these presentations greater than 85% of students met or exceeded expectations. They also tended to work well in groups.

**Observations/Closing the Loop.**

The students presenting in Spring, 2018 (on NAFTA) demonstrated a surprising understanding of how differences in U.S. and Mexican culture might affect the on-going NAFTA negotiations. These positive characteristics may be partially due to the very social nature of today’s college-level generation. In the future, we may ask that some presentations be done individually. Also, we will develop a written project which combines writing skills, with ethics and global awareness.

- **Teamwork (GBLO#4)**

**All Levels.** All teamwork assessment is done at the College-level. As shown in Exhibit 7 (App. VI), from 2013 to 2015, students exceeded the 85% benchmark, but faculty were concerned about team conflict resolution. Using a new method, in Spring 2017, at least 85% of students met or exceeded expectations with respect to teamwork. Conflict resolution has improved.

**Observations/Closing the Loop:**

For the moment, we have decided to continue assessing teamwork through the College-level AOL program. We feel that teamwork is best assessed in courses which are cross-disciplinary. Also, the areas conducting these assessments use a software package to assess teamwork. Next year, we will consult with these areas and consider applying the software if it proves effective.

- **Global Awareness (GBLO#5)**

**All levels.** Global awareness was assessed at the College level. As shown in Exhibit 7 (and App. VI), more than 85% of students met or exceeded expectations.
**Observations/Closing the Loop:**
We plan to modify the graduate level international accounting course so that it may be offered as an undergraduate elective. This change, in conjunction with an increased number of international accounting faculty and activities (see sections below), should facilitate the area’s ability to teach and assess global accounting awareness.

**Summary of Undergraduate Curriculum-Level Closing the Loop and AOL Program Modifications.**
Based on the above assessments, we have completed the following steps, and will continue to modify the curriculum and AOL program as follows. The Closing the Loop progress includes:

- We have developed a “curricular infrastructure” to assess students’ critical thinking skills at different points in the accounting cycle.
- **FASB Codification:** Intensive use of the FASB codification has become an integral part of BUS 301.
- **Earlier Introduction of Internal Control:** Internal control is now being introduced at the junior level.
- **Data Analytics:** The AIS course has been strongly updated to include data analytics teaching and assessment. Other technologies have also been introduced.
- **Advanced Excel:** An advanced course in Excel (BUS 405) has been approved and will be offered. (This change was encouraged by discussion with our Advisory Board on the importance of Excel).

The follow-up steps that will be initiated include:

- Develop an undergraduate International Accounting course that can be used to measure undergraduate and graduate students’ global awareness. As noted below, this will be accomplished by changing the current graduate level international accounting course (MAC 507) to an undergraduate elective.
- Work with the College to develop a program to improve students’ writing skills.
- Continue as the COB Area which administers Critical Thinking.
- Extend the FASB Codification to BUS 302 (for reinforcement).
- Extend Internal Control assessments to BUS 404 (for reinforcement).
- Extend Data Analytics to BUS 404 (for reinforcement).

**1.4.2 Maintain a Robust Master of Science in Accounting Assurance of Learning Program**

**Overview and Learning Objectives**
After returning from a two-year fellowship at the Securities and Exchange Commission (2014-2016), Dr. Judy Beckman took over the Directorship of the MSA program from Dr. Henry Schwarzbach (phased retirement). Dr. Beckman has refocused on maintaining and enhancing all aspects of the program’s academic quality. Concurrently, Dr. Anis Triki replaced Dr. Schwarzbach as the principal instructor for MAC 502 (Accounting Theory II), a core course. Dr. Triki has emphasized written communication and research skills.
The program’s current learning objectives and assessment plan were developed by Dr. Schwarzbach, and the previous Area of Accounting Coordinator, Dr. Kathryn Jervis, working with, and approved by, the entire Area of Accounting. Assessment cycles from 2014-2016 and 2016-2018 fall within the time period covered by this continuous improvement report for AACSB accreditation. The assessment plan lists program goals and embeds assessment in courses. The actual schedule of assessment deviated from the plan for various reasons as described in the assessment reflection materials (See App. V). The Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) program assessment plan for the period 2013 to 2018 is shown on our web site at https://web.uri.edu/business/files/MAC-Assessment-Plan-Template_2014.pdf and is included in Appendix VI. The five primary learning objectives are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1 Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Students will demonstrate effective critical thinking skills using accounting knowledge to develop business solutions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2 Written and Oral Communication</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills needed in the accounting profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Teamwork</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate that they can work effectively in a team in a business setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 Global Accounting</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate an understanding of global accounting issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Business Analysis</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate they can effectively utilize the theoretical foundation of accounting to solve problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning Objective 1: Critical Thinking (Goal 1.1- Application of Accounting Literature; Goal 1.2-Accounting Problem Solving).**

Goals 1.1 and 1.2 require students to read applied accounting professional and academic literature, determine or evaluate research questions, and synthesize to reach cogent conclusions. The learning plan shows these goals are introduced and reinforced in MAC 502, Current Accounting Theory II, a core accounting required course, and are reinforced and emphasized in MAC 506, Advanced Auditing. Goal 1.1 was assessed in Spring 2017 and 2018 in MAC 502 on the basis of a 7-point Likert scale. The results (App. VI) show that 85% of students met expectations in the spring of 2017 and 77% met expectations in spring 2018. Focusing on the practice of auditing course outcomes in MAC 508, Advanced Auditing Students were assessed on these abilities in Spring 2015 on a 5-point Likert scale. All students either met or exceeded expectations.

**Observations/Modifications:**
Regarding MAC 502 results (see Appendix VI), given the MSA’s traditional research focus and the broad coverage of researching practice literature covered in many MSA courses, the instructor, Professor Triki has emphasized the study of academic literature and the development of skills necessary to write a research proposal. Support for this approach was expressed by some students. However, given student interest in professional skills, assessment of more practice-oriented research skills will be made in future assessment cycles. Dr. Triki plans to integrate additional practice oriented literature to ground students’ learning from academic articles.
Learning Objective 2: Oral and Written Communication (Goal 2.1- Oral Communication; Goal 2.2-Written Communication).
Goals 2.1 and 2.2 concern students’ oral and written communication skills. Oral communication skills are introduced and reinforced in MAC 501, Current Accounting Theory I, and reinforced and emphasized in MAC 504, Financial Statement Analysis—both are core required accounting courses. Written communication skills as well are introduced, reinforced, and emphasized in MAC 501, Current Accounting Theory I. They are further reinforced and emphasized in MAC 508, Advanced Auditing. During the 2014-2016 cycle, oral communication skills were conducted in MAC 504, Financial Statement Analysis, Spring 2016 and Spring 2018 concurrently with assessment of learning goal 3.1, group presentation and coordination skills. Using the College’s 3-point rubric, all students met or exceeded expectations.

In addition, Dr. Judy Beckman evaluates students’ oral presentations of their MAC 501 course research paper, done individually, on all components of the College of Business 3-point oral communications rubric during Fall 2016 and Fall 2017. All students met or exceeded expectations when averaged across all nine dimensions of oral presentation skills.

Assessment of written communication skills was conducted in MAC 508, Advanced Auditing. A baseline assessment by an outside writing consultant was conducted in 2015. The assessment (App. VI) found that the students demonstrate a firm grasp of the technical material but that about 40% of students struggle to offer clear conclusions; students’ writing is wordy and often misuses common words and phrases. Due to a maternity leave, the next assessment was conducted in Spring 2018. As previously concluded in 2015, students demonstrate a strong grasp of the auditing materials but face difficulty at times with organization and with professional tone and word choice.

**Observations/Modifications.**
As noted previously (also see Appendices V and VI), in coordination with the COB, the MSA program will engage a writing tutor to provide students with consistent feedback on writing assignments during the semester.

Learning Objective 3.0 Teamwork (Goal 3.1 Team Cooperation)
Learning goal 3.1, coordinated team presentation, is introduced in MAC 504, Financial Statement Analysis. Assessment of this learning goal is discussed along with assessment learning goal 2.1, above.

Learning Objective 4.0: Global Awareness (Goal 4.1- Foreign Currency Accounting Proficiency; Goal 4.2-Accounting Cultural Awareness).
Learning goals 4.1 and 4.2 relate to international issues in foreign currency and culture. According to the plan structured in 2013, these learning goals were expected to be introduced, reinforced, and emphasized in MAC 507, International Accounting, an elective course. Since 2013, the course has been offered only in 2016 to a group of seven students, as a directed study in Fall 2017 with 5 students, and in Summer 2018 with 10 students enrolled. All twelve students who took the course during 2016 and 2017 offerings have been assessed for their ability to conduct remeasurement and translation procedures on foreign currency financial statements (goal 4.1) and to assess the impact of culture on financial statement analysis (goal 4.2). Based on the assessment of the 2016 and 2017 results, over 85% of students exceeded expectations for both goals.
**Observations/Modifications:**
To continue strengthening students’ understanding of these concepts (see Appendix VI), during the summer 2018 the course is being augmented with videos to clarify some concepts. Also, as noted above, the graduate level International Accounting course will be converted to an advanced undergraduate elective (available for graduate credit).

**Learning Objective 5.0 Business Analysis (Goal 5.1-Business Analysis Skills; Goal 5.2-Accounting Case Research Skills; Goal 5.3-Accounting for Non-Business Entities)**
Learning goals 5.1 through 5.3 concern students’ ability to evaluate cases in accounting, auditing, taxation, and non-profit entities based on relevant professional pronouncements and practice, then develop and communicate appropriate problem solutions. Learning goal 5.1 requires students to evaluate the consequences of business formation, operation, and dispositions to the entity and owners. This goal was assessed in both MAC 503, Taxation of Corporations and Shareholders, a core required course, and MAC 506, Tax Research, an elective course, in 2012, 2014, and 2017. Professor Cindy Blanthorne teaches both courses and conducted the assessment using the College of Business’s undergraduate rubric for critical thinking skills. She found that students met expectations overall. Though this assessment was not expected to identify writing issues, Professor Blanthorne noted that the lowest assessment score had consistently related to the written communication of tax research/critical thinking results.

Learning Goal 5.2, regarding students’ research skills using professional accounting literature in a case study learning format, and 5.3, regarding knowledge of accounting standards applicable to nonbusiness entities, were assessed in Fall 2014 in MAC 505, Advanced Problems in Accounting. Based on issues in government and nonprofit accounting, Professor Kathryn Jervis, assessed these learning goals via examination and case study grades. Students met expectations with mean grades of 85, 90, and 92 on three assignments. Student performance improved based on Professor Jervis devoting additional class time on the cases and reinforcing with feedback after the first case.

Professional examination, such as the CPA exam, questions were used to assess outcomes from Learning Goal 5.3, accounting standards for nonbusiness entities. Given the source for these materials, a mean performance of approximately 75 was expected. The averages on two examinations were 72 and 71. Professor Jervis then conducted practice quizzes in class rather than online to ensure students prepare to perform successfully without referring to textbooks or notes. This performance is consistent with MSA program graduates’ CPA exam average performance.

**Observations/Modifications:**
In order to address writing issues (see Appendix VI), in the tax classes (MAC 503/506) students now rate their own work in relation to their peers’ in addition to conducting peer reviews of written assignments. Also, as previously noted, the area has defined a strategy to improve our students’ CPA performance.

**Planned Program, Course and Assessment Procedure Changes**
Several changes are planned based on the above program assessment.

1. Course changes:
a. As noted above, we plan to eliminate the elective MAC 507, International Accounting, and instead offer an undergraduate international accounting course (which may be taken for graduate credit). This will increase our ability to teach and assess international accounting concepts to greater numbers of students.

b. CPA exam preparation: though not the focus of a specific course, assessment of MAC 505 showed weakness in student performance on professional examination questions used for course examinations. We encourage students to take the CPA exam during their MSA program year. We have a plan to structure assistance for students (see Appendix IV.A) to both prepare and plan best timing for taking the CPA exam.

c. We will re-consider the focus on academic literature in MAC 502; this course should incorporate some professional literature related to management and behavioral topics as well as academic literature.

2. Writing skills development: We plan to include a discussion of writing skills in the orientation session beginning in Fall 2018. We then will engage a writing specialist to work with students as they conduct research and write research papers in MAC 501, Current Accounting Theory.

Assessment process: we plan to conduct assessment collaboratively, rather than primarily by the teaching instructor, and using consistent evaluation metrics and adapt the COB critical thinking rubric to apply to our graduate programs.

1.5 Pursue Unique Initiatives Which Enhance Curricular Relevance and Quality

In addition to maintaining “baseline” relevance and quality measures, we must respond to a rapidly evolving market. This trend requires that we expand our curriculum to include contemporary tracks; maintain topical relevancy in courses; and, enhance student success through the establishment of a tutoring center.

1.5.1 Expand the Curriculum to Include Contemporary Topics

As noted previously, we are pursuing three tracks to enhance the relevancy of our curriculum. They include:

1) Certified Management Accounting (CMA) Track. This track was championed by Professor Ann-Marie Sacco and coordinated with the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA). It is designed for students who desire to go directly into industry. During a meeting with the IMA, students showed interest in taking the test during their academic careers, regardless of career track.

2) Forensic Accounting. This career track is being developed in conjunction with an international Anti-Corruption and Fraud Detection firm in Providence Rhode Island. The track is designed for students who wish to work directly for this type of firm after graduation.

3) Accounting and Foreign Language Double Major. Over the years, some of our best students have double majored in accounting (using the language major as the fifth year). Some of these students have gone on to work overseas in Public Accounting or private companies. This track will be designed to formalize this international style of curriculum. Formalization of this track should facilitate our ability to obtain grants for interdisciplinary, internationally-based programs.
1.5.2 Maintain Relevant Instructional Topics
Maintaining topical relevancy in specific courses means that the course topics reflect current/emerging trends and practice. We encourage faculty to maintain relevancy by attending events (e.g. seminars, webinars) which discuss current topical and pedagogical trends. These events have incorporated a number of topics, including regulation and accreditation (Dr. Judy Beckman, Dr. Alejandro Hazera), financial and tax accounting policy (Dr. Judy Beckman, Professor Roberta Newell), data analytics and audit standards (Dr. Qi Liu), accounting technology (Dr. Anis Triki).

Some of these topics are reflected in our courses. For example, Dr. Qi Liu modified the AIS course to enhance students’ Excel skills and provide students the basics of “Big Data” Visualization. Also, based on Trueblood seminar cases, Professor Roberta Newell initiated the project to BUS 301 (Intermediate Accounting) to teach and assess undergraduate students’ skills in using the FASB codification.

1.5.3 Establish a Tutoring Center.
In order to strengthen both the tutoring function and our students’ long term CPA exam results, the accounting area is proposing to establish a formal accounting tutoring Center. The Director of the Center will be Professor Joseph D’adamo. Professor D’adamo is considered one of URI’s best instructors and was recently voted the College’s Best Teacher. Also, Professor D’adamo has considerable experience teaching for the Becker CPA Review (in the Boston area). The proposal for the tutoring center is in Appendix IV.A. The Center Director’s responsibilities will be to:

1) Train graduate students in how to tutor (i.e. “tutor the tutors”).
2) Oversee the quality of the tutoring provided by graduate students to undergraduate students.
3) Provide tutoring, on a pre-assigned schedule, for currently enrolled students (generally MSA students) preparing for the CPA exam.

We anticipate that this reorganization of the area’s tutoring will both enhance undergraduate students’ understanding of accounting concepts as well as our students’ CPA exam results.

1.5.4; 1.5.5 Ensure and Maintain Quality Pedagogical Use of Technology as well as the Teaching of Accounting Technologies.
As noted above, the accounting area is placing greater emphasis on technology. Based on discussion in the faculty, with our Advisory Board, and external parties, we have undertaken the following steps to enhance our technology.

1) Financing an improved technological environment.
As part of the current capital campaign, the CBA, including the accounting area, have requested funds for a “CBA only” computer laboratory, accounting dedicated software (e.g. audit analytics, tableau).

2) Hiring Technologically Proficient Faculty
As noted above, since our last review we successfully recruited three new faculty members. All of our new colleagues have technological currency and will increase our ability to teach accounting/audit technologies and improve our ability to use technology as a teaching/pedagogical tool.
3) Curricular Modifications
We are currently pursuing the following curricular modifications to enhance the pedagogical use of technology and the teaching of technology. These include:

- **Formal Declaration of Technology Use in Classes and Listing of Classroom Technology.** The faculty will consider a requirement that all class syllabi state their classes’ technology learning objectives. The statement will define technology in broad terms. Also, in accordance with the recently approved 2016 AACSBS accounting standards, the faculty is beginning to monitor how technology is used in classes (See Appendix II.G).

- **Accounting Information Systems (BUS 401).** Under Dr. Qi Liu, the Accounting Information Systems (BUS 401) course has been modified to emphasize the use of Excel in both the Accounting Cycle as well as in Data Analytics. The course also now includes a module on the use of visualization software. Cases and Rubrics on Excel and Data Analytics visualization (e.g. Tableau) have been incorporated into the “Critical Thinking Accounting” assessments that we are conducting (See Appendix V).

- **Business 405- End-User Development and Business Analysis.** Dr. Stuart Westin has designed an elective course in advanced programming in an Excel environment. The course is designed for individuals seeking to combine their accounting and/or computer skills to use in business analysis.

B. Strategic Goal 2- Conduct Impactful Research on the Relation Between Accounting and Business and Society (AACSB Standard A2)

*We strive to conduct impactful research on the relation between accounting and business and society.*

2.1 Monitor Research Quantity, Quality, and Impact.
The URI accounting area has a long history of engaging in research which examines accounting from a historical as well as social view. To some extent, this perspective is embodied in the work of Professor Richard Vangermeersch, a renowned accounting historian who taught at URI for many years (he retired in 2005) and inspired generations of faculty and students. In the context of this tradition, we continue to view accounting not only as a source of financial information for investors, but also as a field of learned professionals which impacts, and interacts, with society at all levels. In this vein, as noted above, we recruited new young faculty whose research interests and abilities match this philosophy. Producing quality research, especially on accounting and Business and Society, is one of the “pillars” of our strategic plan. Research quality was also one of the 2013 visiting team’s principal concerns (leading to the suggestion that we develop a more formal journal list and faculty development program). Exhibit 8 shows AACSBS Table A2-1. The data and narrative shown therein provide strong evidence that the faculty’s research has “turned around” since 2013. All participating faculty produced Intellectual Contributions (Part A). With respect to “alignment” (between research and mission), Part B shows that the Area published articles in a wide array of public policy areas, ethics, and accounting education. Part C shows that the faculty authored 28 articles (measured as 25.16 publications, see Appendix II.F) over the 5-year period. In evidence of improved quality, 8 authorships were in “A” journals, as classified by the 2016 ADBC list. Finally, regarding impact, Part D evidences that our faculty have received prestigious research awards, been widely cited, and received invitations to prestigious work and engagements related to their research.
Part A

Intellectual Contributions (IC) of the Academic Accounting Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio of ICs</th>
<th>Type of IC</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Participating Faculty Producing ICs</th>
<th>% of total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) faculty producing ICs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic/Discovery Scholarship</td>
<td>Peer-Reviewed Journals</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied/Integrative Scholarship</td>
<td>Editorial Reviewed Journals and Articles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/Learning Scholarship</td>
<td>Peer Reviewed Academic/Professional Meeting Proceedings</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Academic/Professional Meeting Presentations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competitive Research Awards Received</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional, Practice Standards, or Public Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Teaching Materials</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Intellectual Contributions</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part B. Alignment of Mission, Expected Outcomes, and Strategy

As noted above, the accounting area’s research examines how accounting impacts both business and society. This orientation implies that our research examines broad aspects of social, regulatory and economic policy. As noted by AACSB standards, the research portfolio should also include Intellectual Contributions on accounting education and technology. Corresponding with our focus on Business and Society, the table below shows that our portfolio included research on the behavior of businesses and economic actors (5 articles); Accounting effectiveness in supporting capital markets, including ethics (5 articles); public/regulatory policy (such as healthcare and tax policy) (3 articles), accounting and economic development e.g. financial crisis (4 articles); accounting education (6 articles); and accounting technology (5 articles).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Area of Research</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior of Businesses, Executives, and Investors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Effectiveness in Supporting Capital Markets</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including accounting/auditing standard-setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public/Regulatory Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting and Economic Development</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology/Emerging Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Quality of the Five-Year Portfolio

Our research quality is reflected in rankings of the journals in which we have published in the last five years. As previously noted, the College adopted the Australian Deans Business Council (ADBC) journal list as its journal listing. The following table shows the distribution of authorships as classified (“A” “B” or “C”) on that list (See Appendix I.I.F). The number of hits in “A” and “B” journals has increased from the last report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification on ADBC List</th>
<th>Number of Authorships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (or higher)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other or not on list</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to this overall trend in journal quality, two of our faculty members received special recognition during the last 5-year period (See following discussion on impact). One of our major goals in the next 5 years will be to continue to develop policies which maintain this research momentum.

D. Impact of Intellectual Contributions

AACSB standards emphasize that the impact of intellectual contributions may extend to a period before the current 5-year assessment period. This view recognizes that impactful articles may be cited or have “engagement impact” beyond a 5-year period and, indeed, over an entire career. Such impact can be measured in three ways.

First, publications in high quality journals portend future impact. This “upward” trend in research quality was illustrated above. In addition, two of our faculty received special notoriety. First, Dr. Gilberto Marquez’s 2018 article in the Journal of Business Ethics (Marquez-Illanes, G., Zebedee, A. A., & Zhou, L. (2018). Hear Me Write: Does CEO Narcissism Affect Disclosure? Journal of Business Ethics, 1-17) was recognized as an emerging impactful article by the Wharton Research Data Services WRDS (website: http://www.whartonwrds.com/about/our-impact/); Also, Dr. Kate Jelinek received an external peer-reviewed research award at the Northeast Meeting of the American Accounting Association for her article, “Will and Caroline: Accounting, Professional Integrity and Lobbying.” The paper was subsequently accepted in the Journal of Accounting Education. (Jelinek, K. (in press, 2018). Will and Caroline: Accounting, Professional Integrity and Lobbying. Journal of Accounting Education).

Second, the accounting area’s faculty has been (very roughly) cited 1,229 times in their careers (Appendix II.H). Notably, in conjunction with our research mission (stated above), the citations involve a wide variety of areas regarding the impact of accounting on regulation, various areas of public policy ((e.g. healthcare, taxes), and economic policy (e.g., policies regarding financial crisis).

Finally, the faculty’s research coincides with invitations to engage in impactful service (Appendix II.E) including: 6 journal editorships, 4 leadership positions in academic organizations (most notably Dr. Kathryn Jervis, as the 2018 President of the Governmental and Non-Profit Section of the AAA and Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne, incoming President of the Northeast section of the AAA); 5 competitive grants; 3 invited fellowships (most notably Dr. Judy Beckman as a two-time SEC Academic Fellow 2014-2016); 6 invited interviews or academic engagements; and 3 invited research reports and consulting engagements.
2.2 Facilitate Faculty Research through a Formal Development Plan

2.2.1. Formalization of a Journal List
In discussion with the other COB areas, the accounting area has formalized a journal list and policy. The list/policy is designed to encourage all research faculty to publish articles in quality journals in their areas of expertise. The policy is reproduced in Appendix II.B. The policy uses the Australian Deans’ Business Council (ADBC) rankings. This rule has been modified to assign all AAA section journal an “A” rating. In this vein, the faculty will be encouraged to publish in quality outlets which reflect their expertise and which reflect the preference given by Brigham Young University Accounting research rankings to American Accounting Association Journals.

2.2.2/3 Create an Environment Conducive to Research at both the College and Area Levels.
As previously noted, in cooperation with the COB, as part of a faculty development plan:

- all new faculty are required to annually present a current research working paper in the College’s Doctoral research presentation series;
- as part of an area research presentation series, faculty (especially our new colleagues) have been encouraged to invite researchers from other institutions to present their research;
- by contract, all of our recent new hires are assigned a two course per semester teaching load;
- new faculty are given Summer “research support” during their first two full years of employment;
- for the first 2-3 years of professors’ employment, every attempt is made to assign them to a “two-day” per week teaching schedule and “one preparation” per semester;
- new faculty are assigned courses in their area of expertise; and,
- all new faculty are assigned a senior faculty mentor, typically a Full Professor. Every attempt is made to assign mentors whose research interests or methods correspond with those of their “protégé.”

2.3 Enhance Research Funding
We are working within the Capital Campaign to raise funds for an Accounting Faculty Support Fund (2.3.1). Also, we work through the College’s system of funding to ensure that research is adequately supported (2.3.2). By URI COB policy, all faculty are required to prepare a “budget” for their research activities (especially conferences) for the coming year. All reasonable research conference requests have been consistently funded by the College. Additionally, the College makes every attempt to provide new faculty with research assistantships as well as support for research tools, such as software. One new hire (Dr. Gilberto Marquez) has been awarded supplemental development funding from the URI Office of Diversity and Equity.

2.4 Maintain Faculty Qualifications and Research Productivity by COB Standards.
Two steps have been taken to encourage faculty research productivity. First, all faculty are encouraged to place a statement of research on their websites (2.4.1). This simple step encourages faculty to formulate research plans and communicates the broad research portfolio of the faculty to our stakeholders. Second, faculty research output is coordinated with the College’s Workload and Tenure and Promotion Policies (2.4.2). These steps, in conjunction with the others, will help ensure that our faculty maintain qualifications in accordance with AACSB standards.
C. Strategic Goal 3: Prepare Students for a Changing World

We strive to prepare students for a changing world by promoting diversity and inclusiveness in the faculty and in the student body. We strive to provide our students with an understanding of how accounting and auditing interact with the global economy as well as how nations’ cultural and commercial characteristics interact with accounting.

3.1 Diversity and Inclusion
We promote diversity through three means.

3.1.1 Diverse Interaction
As noted above, we believe students’ educational experience is enhanced when they are provided with opportunities to interact with individuals (other students, faculty, and other stakeholders, such as speakers) who possess different backgrounds than their own. We promote such interaction by holding events which are cosponsored by multiple student clubs (BAP, NABA, Women in Business (WIB), Financial Management Association) (A listing of such events in the last two years is provided in Appendix IV.E)

3.1.2 Promote Student Clubs Dedicated to Diversity

1) NABA. In 2014, URI students initiated activities toward starting a URI chapter of NABA. The formation of an official chapter takes from 4 to 5 years. However, even during this formative period, the URI chapter has enjoyed considerable success. Most notably, in its first five years, the chapter “placed” 6 times in the Boston Annual Minority Business Conference. Also, the chapter has consistently sponsored events which have exposed students to different types of organizations and networking opportunities. This trend demonstrates the organization’s ability to promote diverse interaction with students from other groups. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the chapter engaged in several activities (see Appendix IV.E).

2) Women in Business. Diversity and Inclusion is also promoted by Women in Business (WIB). Although a College-wide organization, the accounting area has played a role in its development. Dr. Katheryn Jervis, Professor of Accounting, has been the faculty advisor since its inception. Also, accounting students have consistently served as officers in WIB. Finally, WIB has collaborated with other CBA organizations and the Accounting Advisory Board to sponsor events promoting diversity. One notable example was a presentation, co-sponsored by WIB and NABA, by Mark McGivney (CFO of Marsh and McLellan (MM)) and his Associates concerning corporate diversity and inclusion (with an emphasis on Women).

3.1.3 Promote Cooperation Between CPA Firms and URI Talent Development
The career opportunities for students from underrepresented groups have been greatly enhanced by cooperation between the URI Talent Development program and large CPA firms, especially Price Waterhouse Coopers and Ernst and Young. Both of these firms have recruited, interned, and employed an increasing number of minority students through this program. Starting in the Summer
of 2017, a PWC partner began serving as the instructor for URI 101, the Summer (TD) course which is used to screen applicants from underrepresented groups for admission to URI.

3.2 Promote Global Awareness-

3.2.1 Enhancing the Global Content of the Curriculum; 3.2.2 Enhance and Adapt MAC 507 (International Accounting) to the Undergraduate Level.

We are promoting our area’s global efforts through two means.

a. Curriculum Review- We are reviewing the global content of our courses to ensure that our curriculum, as a whole, provides our students with some degree of global literacy (through projects such as cases and use of the SEC EDGAR data base).

b. Formulating an Undergraduate Version of MAC 507 (International Accounting)

As previously noted, we are adapting our graduate international accounting course, MAC 507, to the undergraduate level. With this curricular modification, accounting students will have the option of taking BUS 428 (Multinational Finance) or the undergraduate version of MAC 507 as the “global component” of their curriculum.

3.2.3. Promoting Global Literacy and Awareness

We have taken three steps to promote faculty/student global literacy and awareness.

1. On Campus Speakers.

The area has begun bringing more speakers to campus to discuss global topics. These have included:

- In March of 2016, Dr. Salvador Marin Hernandez, President of Spain’s Export Financing Bank, provided a University-wide lecture on Spain’s 2009 financial crisis.
- In October of 2018, Professor Salvador Ruiz de Chavez, former Dean of the Business School at Mexico’s National University and the 1995 American Accounting Association Distinguished International Lecturer, presented a speech entitled “Mexico-Beyond the Wall.”

2. Dual Accounting Foreign Language Major—

As discussed above, the accounting program is developing a dual Accounting Foreign Language Major.

3. Promoting Faculty Engagement with Foreign Institutions.

As previously noted, the area has recently recruited accounting faculty from nations of origin other than the United States. These faculty are increasing our ability to reach out to foreign institutions. Also, the area faculty has increasingly undertaken research and engaged in projects with foreign institutions. These included engagements in Mexico, Spain, Hungary, and China.

4. Promotion of Study Abroad Opportunities for Students.

We are forming programs to provide accounting students with formal international study in accounting, especially through Summer and J-Term courses. Negotiations are currently underway for such options with universities in Spain (Universidad de Murcia, Universidad de Almeria), Mexico (various institutions), Kuwait (University of Kuwait). Partnerships will play an important role in the dual Accounting Language program.
Strategic Goal 4: Engagement with Stakeholders (AACSB Standard A9)

We strive to take leadership positions and engage with academic and professional organizations which support the faculty’s and students’ research, professional development, and provide students with opportunities for experiential learning, internships, and job placement.

4.1 Enhance Academic Engagement

4.1.1 Engage in Academic/Professional Organizational Leadership
Area faculty have assumed leadership roles with sections/regions of the American Accounting Association, the AICPA, and SEC. These have been discussed previously and include:

1. **Dr. Kathryn Jervis** is the 2017-2018 academic year President of the Government and Nonprofit Section of the American Accounting Association.
2. **Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne** is the incoming President of the Northeast region of the American Accounting Association.
3. **Dr. Judy Beckman** is currently the Secretary of the International Section of the American Accounting Association. In two years she will be considered to be the President of the Section.
4. **Dr. Qi Liu**, our new AIS and Data Analytics Professor, is on the AICPA’s Data Analytics Task Force.
5. **Dr. Judy Beckman** served as an academic fellow (2014-2016) in the Office of the Chief Accountant of the Securities and Exchange Commission.
6. **Professor Ann-Marie Sacco**- is the Director of the Ali Fund, a charitable organization which supports Children's Hospital Boston, Cardiology Department.

4.1.2 Promote Academic Organizational Participation
The area promotes faculty engagement with academic organizations. Area faculty are consistently involved in the meeting of the AAA and other organizations in such roles as speakers, moderators, reviewers.

4.1.3 Promote Journal Editorial Board Membership
The URI faculty serve on the following journal editorial boards:

- Dr. Judy Beckman- *Journal of International Accounting Auditing and Taxation*
- Dr. Kathy Jervis- *Journal of Non-Profit and Governmental Accounting.*
- Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne-*Behavioral Research in Accounting*
- Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne-*Issues in Accounting Education*
- Dr. Cynthia Blanthorne-*Advances in Accounting Education*
- Dr. Kate Jelinek- *Business Horizons*
- Dr. Qi Liu-coeditor of the *Journal of Emerging Technologies in Accounting.*

4.2 Enhance Professional Engagement
In addition to academic engagement, we strive to engage with external stakeholders, especially alumni who will provide our students with experiential learning opportunities, internships, long-term employment, and professional certification. We are promoting this goal through three actions
4.2.1 Promote Quality Communication Regarding Student Internship and Job Opportunities
We work with the internship and placement coordinators to proactively communicate to students information concerning internship and job opportunities. The area is undertaking to update its website with information important for potential and current students (e.g. program information, placement information) and graduates (e.g. information on professional exams). The site also contains information on faculty qualifications and research. Also, the area will develop a Facebook page to proactively channel internship and career information to students.

4.2.2. Hold Periodic Networking Events
The College and area hold periodic events which provide students with information on potential careers and opportunities to network. The major College-wide event is the Fall Semester Career Day. In the Fall of 2017 the accounting area and the Accounting Advisory Board provided speakers/panels in the fields of Public Accounting, Healthcare, Graduate Programs, Forensic Accounting (Forensic Risk Alliance), and International Business (Dr. Salvador Ruiz de Chavez). Accounting Advisory Board members also helped in activities such as mock interviews. The principal accounting area event is the Fall Public Accounting Night. This event provides students with the opportunity to network with CPA firms, large and small. Many of these interactions serve as “preludes” to the students’ interviews with firms.

4.2.3 Support Student Clubs Which Hold Networking Events
As noted throughout this document, we have several student clubs which sponsor engagement and networking activities with our stakeholders. These include, Beta Alpha Psi, NABA; Women in Business (College-Wide); and, PWC Challenge Case competition. We hope to establish a student IMA chapter in the near future.

4.2.4 Hold Special Networking Events
Beyond “big” public accounting, through engagement with private industry and with nonprofit organizations, we attempt to place students in quality internship and accounting positions. In this vein, we have helped coordinate and enhance special networking events for (See Appendix IV.G): The Office of the Auditor General of Rhode Island; The Textron Corporation; and smaller CPA firms (BAP).

4.2.5 Maintain an Active Advisory Board
A description of the URI Accounting Advisory Board was provided above. Besides the regular meetings, the Board provides the accounting faculty with advice on curriculum, fundraising, and other matters. In recent years efforts have been made to increase the board’s interaction with faculty as well as with students. The former is achieved by having faculty provide short presentations on the organizations and activities in which they are involved. Additionally, efforts have been made to increase student involvement with the board through direct student presentations to the board. Recent presentations involved “The Role of NABA in Facilitating Companies Exposure to Underrepresented” groups and “My Study Abroad Experience in Costa Rica.” (The minutes of Advisory Board meetings are in Appendix IV.D).
D. Strategic Goal #5: Communications and Outreach (AACSB Standard A3)

We strive to maintain and enhance our communication with stakeholders, especially regarding activities and projects which enhance our research, students’ educational experience, and are worthy of stakeholder support.

5.1 University/College Level—The University Capital Campaign

The URIAF is an integrated unit of the COB. Thus, most of our operating funds are determined by College policy. However, as noted in the COB report, the University has commenced a capital campaign (Exhibit 8). In close cooperation with the College’s development officers, the accounting area has identified five capital funding priorities. These include: a naming gift for a School of Accountancy (amount yet to be determined); the establishment of an endowed chair ($1,000,000) for an audit professor with an established research expertise in cybersecurity or forensic accounting; funds for an independent accounting lab ($500,000-$1,000,000) with equipment and software for teaching and researching in data analytics and behavioral accounting; funding for the Accounting Tutoring Success Center ($250,000) discussed in various sections of this report; and, a faculty research and travel fund ($250,000).

5.2 Maintain and Enhance Communications with Alumni

Currently, our principal channel of communication with our graduates is our advisory board, most of whom are URI alumni. In order to build on this channel, in conjunction with the capital campaign, we will build a list of our alumni over the last 10 – 20 years. On this list we will include their current positions and employers and electronic channels of communications (email, Linkedin). This task will involve the Area Coordinator, our Advisory Board, MSA Program Coordinator, the COB URI Foundation representative, and possibly URI Alumni relations. This list will then be used to formulate methods for disseminating information concerning the area (e.g. student awards, faculty publications, etc.). The area will use multiple dissemination methods. These include an electronic newsletter and social media.

5.3 Enhance Area Level Fundraising

Once communication has been enhanced, these same channels will be used for fundraising. We will work to maintain and improve fundraising in several ways.

- We will ensure that the Accounting Advisory Board maintains a 100% level of funding for the scholarship fund.
- In coordination with the COB foundation representative (and as part of the capital campaign), we will engage in a small donor campaign to raise funds for specific faculty and student needs. We anticipate that these will involve fundraising for faculty student-research, at all levels.
- We will attempt to identify projects for student experiential learning as well as grants for specific research. Grants already obtained by Dr. Kathryn Jervis may serve as a model for these purposes.
- We will hold events which will facilitate fundraising, such as annual receptions for our MSA program graduates. In April, 2018 we held the area’s first separate annual banquet in over 5 years.
Exhibit 8: Financial Strategies; AACSB Table A3-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Operating Budget per AACSB Report</td>
<td>$1,570,499</td>
<td>$1,697,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Endowment</td>
<td>$1,315,064</td>
<td>$1,492,877</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Items Identified for Capital Campaign**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The School of Accounting</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowed Chair in Forensic Accounting/Cybersecurity</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Research/Travel Fund</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Accounting Lab</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring Center</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,350,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI. CONCLUSION**

The world of accounting has changed dramatically over the last few years. These changes have been driven by advances in technology, especially Data Analytics, and the growingly rapid transmission of information. Also, the New England higher education market has become more competitive. Along with these changes, the URI accounting faculty has evolved rapidly. In the last five years we have recruited three new faculty; increased our data analytics capabilities; improved our research environment and quality; and, improved our AOL program. As a group, the URI faculty is engaged with stakeholders, produces innovative teaching and research, and impacts stakeholders in several ways. Senior faculty are leaders in regions and sections of the American Accounting Association. Several faculty are on journal editorial boards. The faculty maintains very successful associations with BAP and NABA.

Looking forward, we must undertake initiatives, such as developing curriculum tracks (in forensic accounting, managerial accounting, and accounting/languages) and improve our ability to teach global skills. Concurrent with these new goals, we must continue the traditional objective of ensuring that our students develop sound skills to succeed on professional examinations (through the establishment of a tutoring center which partners with an external CPA review firm). By “Thinking Big” and following a strategic plan that is forward looking and flexible, the URIAF will continue to provide Rhode Island and the world with innovative, impactful work which adds great value to the ever-changing accounting profession.