

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo
Accountancy, MS
Taxation, MS

The 2018-2019 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for Accountancy, MS and Taxation, MS programs concluded with a culmination meeting on March 20, 2020. Please note that the programs are accredited by AACSB, and thus submitted AACSB accreditation documents in lieu of PPR documents.

The following people attended the meeting: Pamella Oliver (Provost), Mark Filowitz (AVP of Academic Programs, AVPAP), Morteza Rahmatian (Dean, MCBE), Vivek Mande (Chair), and Su Swarat (Assistant VP for Institutional Effectiveness).

The Provost started the meeting by providing a general overview of the PPR process. She commended the programs for their wonderful accomplishments, which include:

- An ongoing, strategic planning process that is thoughtful and inclusive of all major stakeholders.
- Good progress in integrating information technology (IT) and data analytics across the accounting curriculum.
- Curriculum content is current and relevant; innovations are apparent regarding elective offerings and incorporation of technology relevant to students' preparation.
- Quality teaching offered in the Accounting program, as evidenced by the large number of graduates sought by local public accounting firms across and beyond Orange County.
- Faculty publications in quality academic journals, practitioner publications, and professional portfolios such as Bloomberg's Tax Financial Accounting Resource.
- Development of several strategies to increase discretionary funding resulting in an increase in private funding in the last year.
- Faculty support through funding conference trips, journal submission fees, memberships to the professional organizations, access to various databases, and professional development.
- Scholarship and innovation in curricular and instructional activity amounting annually to over \$100,000 beyond the university level.
- Mature systematic processes to assess student learning.
- Student mentoring program that provides excellent connections between faculty and students.
- Numerous and well-attended student opportunities for engagement with practice.
- Department sponsored conferences showcasing excellent connections with the profession and regional academic community.
- The Center for Corporate Reporting and Governance offers unique opportunities to engage with the profession, and distinguishes the programs among other competing accounting programs.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

1. School of Accountancy:
 - The external reviewers recommended the creation of a "School of Accountancy" to enhance the competitive edge of the department, and to increase discretionary funding for the department.

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo
Accountancy, MS
Taxation, MS

- The AVPAP stated that there have been precedents on campus, so the creation of a school is possible. The creation may also help attract faculty.
 - The Chair reported that approximately \$1.7 million has been raised toward the creation of the school.
 - The Provost advised the department to follow the appropriate UPS on school creation.
2. Endowed professorships:
- The external reviewers recommended the department to investigate the availability of endowed professorships to ensure the sustainability of supplementing faculty base salary.
 - The AVPAP stated that the high salary for MCBE faculty is a challenge, and suggested the department to explore such possibilities.
3. Curriculum update:
- The external reviewers recommended the programs to continue incorporating IT and data analytics into the undergraduate and graduate curriculum.
 - The Chair reported that a new MS program will start in 2020 with focus on data analytics and technology. The department has been intentional in updating the curriculum to meet market needs by infusing analytics and technology.
4. Faculty qualifications:
- The external reviewers recommended the programs to monitor quality instruction by distinguishing between faculty with initial scholarly qualifications (SA and PA), and those with initial professional qualifications (SP and IP), particularly for courses that are taught primarily by IP faculty.
 - The Chair stated that the use of instructors with professional (as opposed to scholarly) qualifications is because Taxation is a very specialized field, and requires experts with up-to-date hands-on expertise. Non-practicing faculty do not have such expertise.
5. Student learning assessment:
- The external reviewers asked the programs to improve their student learning assessment processes, including 1) showing clear examples of how assessment informs changes in curriculum, 2) “closing the loop” by making changes in the required elements of the program as opposed to creating new elective courses, 3) analyzing assessment results using percentage of students “meeting” or “exceeding” expectations on a rubric (rather than raw scores), 4) assessing all SLOs.
 - The AVPAP recommended the program to improve upon these assessment issues. The Chair agreed that the feedback is constructive, and reported that the department assessment coordinator is making changes accordingly.
6. Staff hiring:
- The Chair requested an additional department-level staff for tracking career placements, developing new employment opportunities for graduates, and creating an alumni network. The current staff are underpaid and overworked.

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo

Accountancy, MS

Taxation, MS

- The Provost acknowledged the need, but stated that the university will look into reorganizing offices and redistributing jobs given the potential financial losses due to COVID-19. The Dean agreed that creative ways to seek funding may be necessary.

The Provost and the Dean concluded the meeting by thanking the programs for all the wonderful work the faculty and staff have done. They especially expressed appreciation for the Chair's excellent leadership.