



Problem

Since accounting is the language of the business world, it is imperative that accounting and business students are able to accurately prepare and read financial statements, allowing them to communicate in the workplace regardless of the industry they join. Even if the individual's job is not directly related to accounting or finance, stakeholders are increasingly demanding that all individuals in the organization "understand how the bottom line is calculated, and their role in improving it" while also noting that too many

students lack the skill to prepare or analyze basic financial data, or to understand how they contributed to it.

After reviewing feedback and 2015 assessment results on this course- and program-level requirement for Business Management and Accounting, we found that we did not reach our goal; students improved marginally (4%) at preparing financial statements but very little in the overall understanding of what affects the results. The lower scores largely related to lack of proficiency with Excel or software and interpretation of the complete financial picture presented in financial statements.



Plan

We developed a multi-pronged approach to improving both the production of accurate financial statements and fluency in accounting language:

- 1** Added an assignment on the preparation of financial statements to ACC 121 and added a section on journal entries and cash flow to review financial statements in Managerial Finance.
- 2** Adopted a new accounting publisher, textbook, and online platform, and the encouraging results of the Fall 2016 beta test led to full implementation for all students in Spring 2017. The new text is more spreadsheet-based, focusing on not only preparing but also understanding and interpreting the makeup of financial statements and their impact.
- 3** Administered a new comprehensive end-of-cycle problem assignment in which all students complete the steps of producing the entire cycle and interpreting results.
- 4** Changed AAS curriculum to include CIS 155 on Excel spreadsheets, the industry standard, in place of CIS 218, which covers the full Microsoft Office Suite.



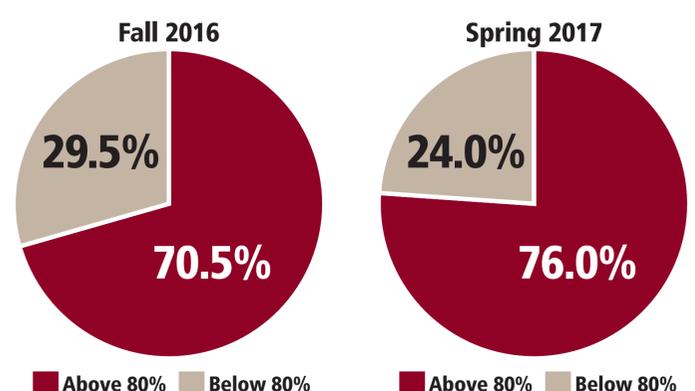
Assessment Activity

Each student's cumulative average scores on all of the quiz and test questions that relate to preparing and analyzing financial statements were exported from MH Campus for 2016.

These results were compared to the same data in spring 2017 after implementing the new format and textbook to establish a baseline and show if changes to instruction improved performance on these learning outcomes prior to the implementation of curriculum changes next fall.

We were very careful to maintain the integrity of the assessment and evaluation tools applied.

Students Achieving 80% Benchmark Goal



Results and Data

After comparing data from 2016 to Spring 2017, we saw 7% improvement in preparation of statements and 9% improvement in interpretation. The sample size (2 classes during 1 semester) was small, but results indicated that the changes made a significant impact.



Closing the Loop & Next Steps

We will continue to utilize the same assignments and methodologies in Fall 2017 to ensure results from spring of 2017 were not anomalous. We will also establish a baseline to help us determine if requiring the CIS 155 Excel class improves performance even more over the 2017 calendar year.