

USI SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
ACCOUNTING CIRCLE  
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 1999

**Members Present:** Stephen Byelick, Steven Farrell, Dan Hermann, Sharon Kennedy, Brad Platts, Ken Sendelweck, Bob Smith, Darryl Spurlock, Roy Templin, Nancy Bizal, Dan Wade

**Guests Present:** Jaime Gayheart, Casey Kostrzebski, Jill Welden

**Faculty Present:** Craig Ehlen, Eva Jermakowicz, Kwang Kim, Tim Koski, Brett Long, Brian McGuire, Jeanette Maier-Lytle, Les Nunn

**Welcome and Administrative Topics** – Dan Hermann, Chair

- Welcomed everyone to the Fall 1999 Accounting Circle meeting at 7:30 a.m. at Black Beauty Coal.
- Presented agenda and folders for the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

- Approved as distributed.

**Chair Report** – Dan Hermann

- Reflected upon the Circle's activities—a very active year.
- Introduced the Circle's report card which was designed to help the Circle stay on track.
- Read Purposes of the Accounting Circle.
- Allowed a couple of minutes for everyone to grade the Circle.
- Reported each member or respective company donated \$100 last year and expressed appreciation for generosity.
- Asked each member/organization to contribute \$100 this year. (Funds are used to fund Speaking Eagles Toastmasters and to pay for the costs associated with meetings.)

**Practice/Education Interaction Committee Report** – Darryl Spurlock

- Distributed a packet of information pertaining to the committee's activities.
- Discussion followed the report: Roy Templin inquired about the number of student internships currently available. (A report from Career Services which contains more information than was available at the meeting is attached.)

**Faculty Internship Report** – Brett Long

- Taught a 6-hour class load in Spring 99.
- Worked 12 to 15 hours per week during tax season at Harding, Shymanski & Co.
- Commended Harding for allowing faculty internship during their busiest time of the year.
- Had three objectives—1) develop relationship with practitioners, 2) gain technical experience, 3) see first hand what changes have occurred since last practiced.
- Successfully developed relationships with practitioners, gained valuable experience in trust accounting, and saw first hand many of the changes in accounting—such as downloading client financials and using e-mail as a tool of communication between partners and staff.
- Found that analytical skills are more important than before in the workplace, especially in compliance—as a result changed the approach to problem solving in the classroom.

- Discussion followed the report: Due to accreditation standards, one faculty internship a year instead of three in one year and then zero the next year is more desirable.

### Curriculum Committee – Roy Templin

- Committee taking two aspects into consideration: the relevance of USI's program to other accredited accounting programs and trends in teaching structure.
- Goal is continuous improvement—want to be more in line with profession and benchmark against such programs as Indiana University, Purdue University, University of Illinois (which has a very non-traditional program).
- First meeting—Dan Wade gave a high-level overview of current program. Brian McGuire gave a summary of the current teaching profession trends using AICPA and IMA information. Also looked at and discussed the Notre Dame curriculum assessment.
- Found out there needs to be a balance between hard skills and soft skills—more and more soft skills are what employers are looking for.
- Need to understand current program to find out what needs to be done differently—for example, how is auditing being taught today—need to benchmark against other universities and professional literature.
- Accounting program is very traditional—have appropriate balance—what employers are looking for.
- Discussion after report: How the MSA program was looked at last year in this manner and how much it has improved. Tim Koski's graduate class was used as an example; the teaching approach was changed dramatically. The class is now case-presentation based and is working well. Demonstrates that the same should be done for the undergraduate program where an incremental change will occur.

### Speaking Eagles Toastmasters

- Dan Wade stated that Toastmasters helps students to development communication skills and motivates them at the same time. The group of students has surpassed what he had anticipated and the membership has grown this year. Each student has the goal of completing ten speeches—each designed to develop their speaking skills in different areas.
- Two students presented examples of speeches that they have given. Jill Welden, a senior accounting student, gave the ice breaker speech which is the first one of the ten. Casey Kostrzebski, a senior accounting, gave the third speech, speaking with organization.
- Dan Wade commented that the Toastmasters meeting is the highlight of his week and how much he appreciates the Circle's involvement in strengthening the accounting students who are involved. Ken Sendelweck thanked the faculty for their involvement. Dan Hermann explained how he did not have the communication skills of today's graduates when he graduated. He also talked about two factors that Toastmasters helps students with: gaining those communications skills and taking the time to get involved. Brett Long noticed he has seen improvements in the confidence of students who have been in Toastmasters.

### Accounting Program Chair Report – Dan Wade

- Summary of the accounting program in terms of numbers of accounting majors—statistics were distributed.
- Steady decline in number of accounting majors since 1996.
- Post-baccalaureate numbers are low as well.
- Total and percentage freshman choosing accounting as a major is declining.
- Peak of accounting graduates in 1999—due to grandfathering for CPA—number will drop again.

- Enrollment in Accounting 201 and 202 and 303—a smaller percentage of students continuing from 201 to 303—201 and 202 are requirements for all School of Business students and 303 is a requirement for accounting majors.
- Number of freshman—need to start contacting while still in high school. The AICPA and Indiana CPA Society market to students in high schools. The University invites students with the highest SAT scores from Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky to the university and gives the departments the opportunity to speak to them to try to get them in their respective programs. In the past the AICPA along with the accounting department held a dinner for high school students to encourage those interested in accounting to further pursue that interest and the southern chapter of the AICPA held a firm night for juniors and seniors, but these ended when the chapter ended.
- Idea for Spring 2000—contact all students who made A's and B's in Accounting 201 and 202 to invite them to a dinner with professionals that is sponsored by the accounting club and paid for by the AICPA. Craig Ehlen and Jeanette Maier-Lytle are working on this. This would also include other universities such as University of Evansville, Oakland City, and Ivy Tech. Jeannette and Craig will probably be contacting some members.
- Interaction Committee-recruitment-number tells us this is an issue.
- Asked for ideas from other members and discussion followed about the four-plus-one-year program and how students don't really know what they want to do when they are starting. Discussion also included what employers are willing to do to help accounting majors to graduate in four years and get assistance from employer on fifth year.
- Accreditation—candidacy status is for five years but can become accredited any time during those five years. Only one-third of accredited School of Business have separately accredited accounting programs.
- Faculty is fully engaged in accreditation process. Developed two committees—Strategic Planning Committee and Curriculum Resource and Instruction Committee. Strategic Committee purpose is to carry out assessment of department—looked at mission to see whether measurable or not and decided to revise the mission. A packet containing the goals and revised mission of the department will be provided at the Spring 2000 Circle meeting. The faculty spent a day at Kimball to brainstorm and look at their strategic planning model. The Curriculum committee is looking at the future in instruction, revising the post-baccalaureate degree, reviewing accounting electives, reviewing integration of courses—critical factors with School of Business classes, monitoring process for curriculum delivery, and looking at adjuncts to see what they are teaching.

#### Report Card Results – Nancy Bizal

- See attached report card results.

#### Closing Remarks – Dan Hermann

- Accounting Circle is key to the accounting department's accreditation.
- Satisfied with what the Circle has done up to now.
- Thanks to faculty because they help to keep everyone involved.
- Look forward to the next meeting.

#### Closing Remarks – Dan Wade

- Gratified with the level of interest, interaction, and activity of Circle.
- Report card grades will help assess where to move next.
- Yearly goal approach seems to work.

Adjourned – Dan Hermann, 9:00 a.m.