Program: MSA Program

1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed? What are they? (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect its majors to have acquired before they graduate?)
   a. Students will understand the audit process.
   b. Students will have proficiency with respect to the firm’s strategic cost management and management control decisions.
   c. Students will be proficient with respect to financial statement analysis.
   d. Students will gain an understanding of the role that taxes play in decision making

2) Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific. (Where are the department’s learning expectations accessible to potential majors: on the web or in the catalog or in your department’s major handouts?)

Program website.

3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes are being achieved more or less well?)
   a. Students will analyze comprehensive and integrative cases such as “The Apollo Show Company and Crazy Eddie in the “Assurance and Consulting Services” course.
   b. Students are required to complete a semester long portfolio of cases and a cumulative project in the “Strategic Cost and Management Control” course.
   c. Students complete in-class exams or written cases as well as a comprehensive project in the ‘Financial Statement Analysis’ course.
   d. Strategic Cost and Profitability Analysis was dropped from the required core courses, and a requirement that students take three Accounting elective instead of two was added.
   e. Students complete in-class exams or written cases as well as a comprehensive paper in the “Taxes and Management Decisions” course.
   f. Student pass rates for the CPA exam are collected.

4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

The MSA Faculty Director and the Accounting Department Chairperson collect all of the data/evidence. The data/evidence is reported by faculty members teaching the relevant courses and/or the Department Chairperson. The collected data/evidence is reported back to the faculty, the Associate Dean in writing
and by email when appropriate. The collective group interprets and discusses the evidence and recommends action where appropriate.

5) **What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? Why were they made?)**

   a. We revised our Financial Accounting Standards 3 course to enhance learning of consolidations.
   b. We have added a new course on IFRS that deals with international accounting issues both from a reporting and strategic perspective.
   c. We have added an audit simulation as a required component of our required audit class that both mimics practice as well as enhances coverage of material on the CPA exam.
   d. We have formally added an assessment of our graduating MSA students to allow them to reflect on both their positive and negative experiences during their time completing the MSA.
   e. We have mandated that all required courses in the MSA have a written and oral communication component.

6) **What evidence do you have that the changes have resulted in improved learning outcomes?**

   We have seen increased test scores on the CPA exam when it comes to the Financial Accounting Reporting Section. We have seen increased demand of our graduating students in part due to their enhanced knowledge of IFRS as well as enhanced communication skills. From outside objective sources, the MSA program has won widespread acclaim, ranking 19th among graduate accounting programs in the 2014 US News and World Report, and number one for accountancy in the 2013 Financial Times’ Global MSA rankings. Boston College has consistently placed among the top fifteen large-program institutions for CPA exam pass rates.

7) **Date of the most recent program review. (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)**

   Fall 2015.