Accounting Writing Assessment
Info Session and Skills Workshop

***June 2020 Virtual/Online Assessment details forthcoming - the below information is for previous in-person versions of the writing assessment***
Introductions

Carl Follmer, Accounting Writing Program Director

Kevin Den Adel, Director of the Undergraduate Accounting Program
Agenda

Overview of writing program and assessment

Describe the assessment’s procedure

Offer resources to prepare

Answer questions

Workshop skills necessary for the assessment
Why a writing assessment?

Builds on the strength of the Department of Accounting writing program

• An integrated writing program identified as a “model for the academic community” and “significant advantage for Tippie’s accounting students” during the 2014 & 2019 AACSB re-accreditations

Writing as essential for success

• In Accounting courses
• In professional life
Who must take the assessment?

All students who plan to enroll in Accounting major courses must pass the assessment.

Students must only pass the assessment once – no need to take it again later.
Do I have to take the assessment?

If you have already completed Business Communication and Protocol (BUS:3000) and received a grade of B- or higher, **you do not have to** take the writing assessment.

If you have not completed BUS:3000 **you must** take the writing assessment in Spring 2020 for access to Accounting major courses in Fall 2020.

If you are currently taking BUS:3000 this semester, **you should still** take the writing assessment to have a passing score in time for early registration.
Who is eligible to take the assessment?

You must have previously completed or be currently enrolled in ACCT:2200 Managerial Accounting (or course equivalent) to be eligible for this assessment.

We will ask for a student ID at the assessment to make sure you meet this requirement.
Dates and locations for the Spring assessment

The assessment will be administered on the following dates:

• Thursday February 27 @ 6:30 in W107 PBB
• Friday February 28 @ 3:30 in W107 PBB

Please register for the Spring 2020 assessment
What do I bring?

Each student must bring their University of Iowa ID and a pen.

Each student must sign in with his/her student ID as verification.
Format of the assessment

75 minute assessment
  • Read a short article (WSJ or NY Times) and write a brief essay

Summarize the article and analyze the article’s content

Summary (1/4-1/3 of essay) and analysis should flow together

The essay must have a clear thesis statement that guides the analysis.
What skills will be assessed?

Five categories (4 point scale):

• **Micro Skills** (grammar and usage)

• **Thesis Statement** (thesis for the analysis part of your essay)

• **Development** of summary and analysis paragraphs

• **Clarity** and precision of word choices

• **Style** (ease of reading, limited use of passive voice, professional tone)
In order to succeed...

There MUST be an argument (not just summary)

There MUST be a clear thesis statement (1-2 sentences that detail your argument)

- Should be arguable
- “The article talks about...” is not a thesis
- “In this essay I will discuss...” is not a thesis
- “Glass bottles are better for the environment than plastic bottles because...” is the beginning of a thesis statement
Scoring the assessment

Each category scored on a scale from 1.0 – 4.0

Maximum total score is 20, minimum is 5

- Score of 15.5 or higher reflects acceptable writing performance
- Score of 12.5 reflects minimum writing proficiency

Score of 10.0 or above will be considered a passing score for this assessment

Scores between 8.5-10.5 receive a 2nd reading; 3rd reader as a tie-breaker if needed
When do I learn my results?

Students notified by e-mail starting the week of March 30

Students encouraged to claim grade sheet (upon showing proper ID) at the Dept. of Accounting office (W252 PBB), which will be available once scores are released

Essays are property of the department and are not returned
  • Can be seen in Carl Follmer’s office (C353 PBB)
What if I do not pass?

Students who do not pass will not be allowed access to Accounting courses for the Fall 2020 semester.

Students may choose to take the writing assessment again in the Summer 2020 semester for access to Accounting major courses during the Fall 2020 semester.

Meet with your advisor about other majors and course options.
Resources for preparation

Writing Assessment page on the Accounting Writing Program website

• Instruction and FAQ sheet: instructions and answers to questions many students have

• Writing Assessment Tip Sheet: advice on taking the assessment

• Sample grade sheet

Frank Center’s Preparing for the Accounting Writing Assessment

Micro skills and macro skills pages on the Accounting Writing Program website
Additional resources

Practice articles in the Frank Center
  • Create your own essay and visit Frank Center tutor

  • Available in BizHub/library

Other Frank Center [writing tip sheets](#)
Assessment date conflicts

Students currently registered and on-campus for the Spring 2020 semester are expected to attend the Spring assessment.

Only students meeting one of these conditions may contact Carl Follmer to schedule a make-up test:

- Registration in a UI class during the assessment
- Official UI absence for a UI event
- Illness (verified by a doctor’s note)
- Funeral of an immediate family member or extreme family emergency (must be verified)
Special testing conditions

Students registered with Student Disability Services may arrange for their required test modification

Requests and the Student Academic Accommodation Request form should be given to Carl Follmer (C353 PBB or carl-follmer@uiowa.edu) by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26, 2020
Contact information

kevin-denadel@uiowa.edu, 335-1412, W372 PBB
  • student eligibility
  • administration of the writing assessment

carl-follmer@uiowa.edu, 335-0913, C353 PBB
  • requests for special testing arrangements,
  • report a test date conflict
  • questions about assessment scoring
What we’re looking for...

Thesis statement practice
Identify a specific, narrow topic
Present a clear and original opinion about that topic
Appear near the beginning of the paper, ideally at the end of the 1\textsuperscript{st} paragraph
Offer some sort of “because” or explanatory element

• **Ex:** Winter is the worst season. (clear but not sufficiently narrow - needs explanation)

• **Ex:** Winter is the worst season because illness increases, the weather causes more car accidents, and people are less cheerful. (the writer could then spend 1 paragraph addressing each of these explanatory elements)
Making claims from a thesis

Claims = thesis for the paragraph
  • Necessary in all body paragraphs (not intro or conclusion)

Like a topic sentence, but with argumentation

Claims should add up to support thesis