**Shidler College of Business  
School of Accountancy**

**Advisory Board meeting of 8/21/2024**

**7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.**

**Room: G201 (Accounting Research Center)**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Terri Fujii (Chair), Vance Roley, Dean of Shidler College, Hamid Pourjalali, Director of the School of Accountancy, Jennifer Lieu, UH Foundation

**Other Advisory Board members**: Catherine Awakuni Colón, Keric Chang, Kyle Chang, Charles Goodin, Rodney Harano, Shawn Hasegawa, Ryan Howard, Denis Isono, Kent Kasaoka, Kurt Kawafuchi, Andy Kawano, Cindy Lam, Addie Lui, Sean Mochizuki, Gary Nishikawa, Lucas Sayin, Donny Shimamoto, Howard Todo, Gordon Tom, Edwin Young, Pamela Young, Danny Wong

**SOA Faculty**: Chris Park, Thomas Pearson, Kristine Santaniello, Jenny Teruya, Mary Woollen,

**Accounting students**: Kara Archer and Dylan Magbaleta (A/C), Grace Toyama and Kaedin Okimoto (BAP), Navech Bradshaw (SOA Research Assistant, MAcc student), Aalia Meer (SOA student help, Undergraduate accounting student)

Chair of the Advisory Board Fujii opened the meeting and invited Dean Roley to provide his comments.

**Dean Roley discussed key dates for the new Fall semester and provided updates on various programs. He highlighted a significant increase in student enrollment, with Travel Industry Management (TIM) and the School of Accountancy (SOA) seeing enrollment rises of approximately 9% and 20%, respectively. This increase is particularly notable given the general decline in student numbers at other U.S. institutions. Additionally, the number of exploratory Business students (first- and second-year students intending to join Shidler) has grown by 5.5%. There are 263 Marketing majors, 202 Finance majors, and approximately 200 Accounting majors.**

Shidler is working to expand its international partnerships, with plans to resume the Vietnam Executive MBA program after a year’s interruption.   The program will relaunch in collaboration with Van Lang University in Ho Chi Minh City.  The TIM School is also looking into partnerships with Van Lang University, including a dual-degree MS degree and a 2+2 undergraduate program.

**Shidler has also contracted with Miles Education, an Indian company that recruits students for the STEM Master of Accounting (MAcc) program. While the contract is still being finalized by the General Counsel, student recruitment from India is expected to begin in Spring.**

**In November 2025, AACSB statistics will be collected during the Fall and Spring semesters. These will consist of 60% participative faculty and 40% academic-active researchers.**

**Regarding the SOA, it performed well last year, but there are concerns about maintaining adequate class coverage by qualified faculty members. The college has requested three new faculty positions, one of which is designated for SOA. A decision from the provost is expected soon, potentially within the next week.**

Lieu reported that Tom Wellman supported a scholarship with a $100,000 donation, and AGA contributed an additional $50,000 towards scholarships. She expressed her gratitude to both Wellman and Young for their generous support. Lieu also mentioned that the Hall of Honor has featured accounting alums, with the following recognition slated for Jay Ana. She highlighted the scholarship luncheon scheduled for Monday, November 4, 2024, and requested that SOA advisory board members consider donating $500 to join the Director Circle.

Pourjalali praised the outstanding work of the faculty in response to the growing demand for accounting courses. For the first time this Fall, a third section of Intermediate Accounting was offered due to increased enrollment. He recognized Woollen and Santaniello for their significant contributions to expanding student numbers. Santaniello has been instrumental in guiding public and non-public accounting career paths, while Woollen emphasized engaging students through activities like puzzles and projects. She noted that many of her former introductory accounting students, who had shown enthusiasm in her class, were now enrolled in ACC 323.

Santaniello reported that membership in the Accounting Club (A.C.) had doubled from 50 to 100 members in the Fall and Spring semesters. This growth reflects a rising interest in accounting among students. However, this surge has raised concerns about the School's capacity to provide enough full-time faculty to meet the growing demand. Pourjalali emphasized that the need for faculty will extend across multiple courses, from Intermediate Accounting to Auditing.

Dean Roley and Pourjalali pointed out that AACSB accreditation requires faculty members to hold graduate degrees. To meet the growing demand while adhering to this requirement, we can offer joint accounting courses taught by SOA full-time faculty in collaboration with professionals with undergraduate degrees and relevant experience. This approach could help cover all necessary classes as student numbers continue to rise.

Pourjalali expressed concerns about the lack of accounting knowledge among students transferring from other University of Hawai'i (U.H.) system schools. He noted that many U.H. programs, aside from those at UHM, are offered primarily Asynchronous. As a result, students may pass introductory accounting classes without adequately learning the material. Although more significant interaction between Shidler faculty and community college students could improve outcomes, Pourjalali pointed out that community colleges and other U.H. program faculty often opt for online courses due to the ease of instruction. He suggested that political influence might be necessary to push for more rigorous, in-person accounting courses to prepare students better.

**Santaniello and Pourjalali mentioned that tracking students' success in Acc 321 and Acc 323 is hard. There are varying skill levels—some know Excel, while others struggle to keep up. Some students take ACC 321 multiple times to pass, and that may also add to the overall enrollment numbers, further contributing to the need for additional sections.**

**Park** provided an update on the HARDI program that was offered for the fourth time in June 2024. The program featured excellent instructors from top schools. Park indicated that he attended all 48 hours of classes with PhD participants. He acknowledged the contributions of all four instructors. This year, the program hosted 22 PhD students, including two from Shidler. Students were taken on a one-day tour of Oahu as part of the program. On another day, Manu Ka'iama provided insights into Hawaiian cultural and historical issues while Christine discussed current developments in FASB.

HARDI 2025, the program will feature participation from 28 schools (post meeting report, 25 were accepted), with several recurring nominations and increased student nominations from new institutions. To further improve the program, a survey is being conducted among over 80 past HARDI participants, seeking their feedback on improving the experience.

Pearson highlighted the program's unique ability to bridge the gap between academic and practical issues, contributing to its success.

Park and Pourjalali expressed their gratitude to Dean Roley for his continued support and contributions to the program.

Pearson reported the benefit of the codified STEM MAcc as an alternative to meet the 150 hours. Students who begin the program this semester are now classified as STEM students. Half of those enrolled in the MAcc program already meet this classification. A Business Intelligence and Data Analytics course, part of ITM, has been added to enhance the curriculum. Additionally, ACC 619 (Information Assurance and Analytics) is now a required course, further emphasizing the program's focus on data analytics. Two critical courses for the CPA exam, ACC 407 and ACC 415, have been shifted to elective status. These six credits, part of the 30-credit MAcc program, are no longer mandatory. However, students aiming to take the CPA exam are encouraged to take these electives, as the material covered in these courses is essential for CPA preparation.

Meer and Bradshaw, SOA students assisting with the mentorship program, provided an update. Last year, the program had fewer than 50 mentors. This Fall, however, there has been an increase, with 49 mentors already confirmed. Requests for student mentees were sent earlier this year—last week to MAcc students and this week to undergraduate students. If any mentors remain unassigned, outreach will be made to faculty teaching introductory accounting courses (ACC 200 and ACC 210), opening the opportunity to students in these courses within the next week.

Pourjalali expressed his gratitude to the professionals who have supported the program, acknowledging the fluctuations in mentorship participation. He noted that mentorship was particularly important during COVID-19, but as student numbers dropped, so did the need for mentors. With the current rise in enrollment, however, the demand for mentors is increasing again. He called for more mentor participation, emphasizing that mentorship requires little time but is highly appreciated by students.

Teruya suggested that student leaders could be mentors for ACC 200 and ACC 210 students, as their experiences and age are more relatable. Peer mentors could help students make decisions about their major and course selection. Teruya highlighted that student mentors are particularly effective in supporting first- and second-year students, while professional mentors could focus on providing career advice for those in upper-level courses like ACC 321 and ACC 323.

Chair Fujii endorsed the peer mentoring approach, noting that experienced students could help guide others through the program and their coursework, especially in intermediate classes. She also emphasized professional mentors' value in offering career guidance as students advance in the accounting program.

Woollen and Santaniello both expressed strong support for the mentorship program. Santaniello noted that many students in her ACC 321 class were not fully aware of the workload involved and suggested that guidance from older students could help better prepare them. Young proposed adopting a "Big Brother, Big Sister" approach, where older mentees meet new ones, as students seem to value advice from peers who have been through similar experiences.

Wong mentioned that much of the mentorship happens within accounting clubs and proposed using events like "Pizza Days" to encourage student connections. Group mentorship could be an effective alternative to one-on-one mentorships, which can be time-consuming. This process could help minimize the additional obligations on current students while providing meaningful support.

Teruya shared that Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) students worked hard over the summer, and the chapter is optimistic about recruiting. Grace Toyama and Kaedin Okimoto (BAP President and Vice President) mentioned that recruiting accounting majors remains challenging. BAP membership decreased to 17 this Fall, down from 30 last semester. Meanwhile, A/C has seen significant growth, with membership now at 100. A/C has prioritized keeping membership and event costs low and affordable to maintain this momentum.

Kara Archer and Dylan Magbaleta (President and Vice President of A.C.) noted that both BAP and the Accounting Club (A.C.) have expanded their outreach through programs like A Glimpse Into the Future (AGIF), with all club meetings open to encourage broader participation.

Blane Ruschak is scheduled to speak on leadership at upcoming AGIF meetings, while Todd Nacapuy will focus on A.I. Both Teruya and Fujii noted Blane's continued strong support, noting that he has attended almost all AGIF events. Pearson added that Blane is set to retire from his firm's PhD program at the end of the year.

Students mentioned that BAP and A/C continue to play crucial roles in promoting accounting as a major, with strong backing from professors encouraging students to pursue the field. The Accounting Research Center (ARC) has been particularly valuable, providing a space for study sessions that help students succeed in their classes.

Pearson emphasized that tutoring has significantly impacted students' academic performance. Santaniello also highlighted the importance of inviting outside professionals to speak for 10-15 minutes at club events, noting that these interactions help open doors for students and offer valuable insights into the profession. However, she mentioned that budget Pourjalali noted that about five years ago, he proposed the idea of a tax center to Dean Roley. Although Dean Roley supported the idea, establishing a full-fledged center was challenging due to the limited number of tax faculty. Instead, this led to the creation of ACC 399 (a two-credit course with a credit/no credit grading option), part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. This year, 16 students are participating in the program.

Pourjalali highlighted an opportunity for Shidler students to participate in a program run by Cornell, where students volunteer for income tax preparations for Alaskan Natives. He pointed out that this program is fully funded, and the Don Corbin Professorship will cover the travel expenses for up to six students, providing them with a significant and valuable experience.

He expressed gratitude to Roy Kamida for teaching the course voluntarily, demonstrating his commitment to student success.

Pearson updated the group on the ongoing presidential search, noting that it could have implications for accounting and business programs. As a member of the General Education Senate, Pearson advocates for reducing general education requirements to emphasize skill development. He encouraged colleagues to provide feedback on this matter.

Pourjalali reported that the Humanities Integrated Program with Social Sciences (HIPSS) was on hold due to funding and implementation challenges. He also mentioned that HARC and HARDI fully consumed his time and that HIPSS would require full-time consideration. He indicated that HIPSS's first offering dealt with students who were attending their classes in person after COVID, and half of them had difficulties adjusting to in-person classes. Those who completed HIPSS 2022 were among the most successful current Shidler College students. As an example, he mentioned Aalia Meer, who is currently helping with SOA programs (mentorship, HARC, and HARDI).

Other difficulties in offering the HIPSS program are financial support and offering classes from other departments. Pourjalali mentioned that the Department of Education is supportive of the HIPSS program, and he needs to work on a solid funding application. He also mentioned that offering the program outside the current university system may become necessary.

Shimamoto indicated he was pleased with Miles's initiative, which also helped with the strategy for firms who want to start business in India. He mentioned that his company research was presented at the AAA meeting, highlighting that the biggest challenge for CPAs is the time away from work. The 150-hour requirement is becoming less critical.

#### **Nishikawa inquired about the Professional Accounting Minor. Pourjalali reported that not many students have shown interest in the Minor. Woollen** mentioned that recently, two students discussed alternative career paths and considered Minors as an option. She noted that while these paths are viable, they need more visibility and advertising.

Nishikawa questioned how students were receiving advice about their degrees. Pourjalali responded that since the college currently has only three advisors, assigning one to the accounting program was difficult, particularly since the number of students was increasing.

Emphasizing the need to advise accounting students, Shimamoto added that all accounting schools under review had their own advisors during his AACSB peer review.

Woolen and Santaniello emphasized the need for a flyer to address the advising and awareness issues. Hamid agreed that this is a feasible solution. Pourjalali agreed to produce such a flyer.

Chari Fujii emphasized the need to prepare to hire more accounting majors as current students were encouraged to pursue accounting with the expectation of finding job opportunities.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Notes on Zoom Chat:

Kasaoka, Shimamoto, and Suekawa, HSCPA Y-CPA recent outreach is via high schools.  
Harano, Shall we target younger students?

Post-meeting recommendation by Shawn (edited for this Minutes)

Acc 200 and 210 classes are where we can encourage students to pursue Accounting by making learning exciting and relevant to real-world situations.  The professor/instructor is responsible for keeping students engaged and sparking interest in the field.

Those who teach 200, 210, and 321 need to be relatable, good communicators, good listeners, organized, and adaptable.