

August 31, 2007

Board of Directors  
Federation of Schools of Accountancy  
Palladian I  
220 Leigh Farm Road  
Durham, NC 27707

Dear Board Members:

With generous financial assistance provided by the Federation of Schools of Accountancy (FSA), members of the former FSA Database Committee recently measured accounting student characteristics via a survey study at FSA member schools. Some historical background on this project follows. In 1989, concerned over anecdotal reports of a decline in the quality of students in undergraduate and graduate accounting programs, the FSA formed a committee. Its charge was to measure and track accounting student provenance ("Where do our accounting majors come from?") and scholastic rankings. In 1990, the committee designed, tested, and administered a survey instrument to students at FSA schools on a preliminary basis. Initially, to establish a base line measure, the FSA administered the survey annually from 1991 to 1995. Subsequently, to monitor trends, it conducted the survey less frequently in 2000 and, most recently, in 2006.

In spring 2000 and 2006, the FSA administered the survey instrument to both senior accounting majors and graduate students in professional accounting Master's degree programs. Although FSA member school participation was voluntary, twenty schools participated in both the 2000 and 2006 surveys (see Appendix A in enclosed working paper). At those schools, 1,384 students responded in 2000 and 1,612 in 2006. Within the enclosed working paper, we controlled for differences in school characteristics by limiting the study's results to students enrolled in these 20 institutions.

While this working paper represents an analysis and discussion of the 2000 and 2006 surveys from a longitudinal perspective, additional questions beyond those asked in 2000 were added to the 2006 instrument. These questions pertain to student perceptions of faculty and programs and are consistent with AACSB-related initiatives. The authors are in the process of composing an additional working paper covering this battery of questions. When the paper is in circulation format, we will forward a copy to the Board.

In closing, the authors of the current study, Irvin Nelson, Jeffrey Quirin, Valaria Vendrzyk, and Stacy Kovar, thank the Board for their continued commitment to this initiative. Any questions pertaining to the study can be sent to me directly.

Warm Regards,

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