The Department of Accountancy's internship program ensures a strong academic experience by requiring students to complete written reports and to deliver professional presentations. Further, the students' supervisor(s) complete an evaluation of each student intern at the end of the internship using direct assessment rubrics and open-ended questions. These evaluations help the Department of Accountancy:

- Understand how our students are performing on the job compared to students at other schools
- Collect direct assessment of the Accountancy Learning Goals and Objectives
- Strengthen the program based on feedback from potential employers.

**Letter to Employers**

**The NIU Accountancy Academic Internship Program**

**Greetings from the Accountancy Department!**

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the NIU Accountancy Department by employing and mentoring an accountancy student (or students) this spring. With your help, students gain real world experiences that provide challenges and individual growth outside of the classroom. Upon graduation, students overwhelmingly cite their internship experience as one of the most valued and influential experiences in their academic career.

The attached Word file contains the Intern Performance Evaluation(s). Please complete and return the evaluation(s) by Thursday, April 28, 2011.

Once again, thank you for your help and continued support of the Accountancy Department at Northern Illinois University.

Sincerely,

Undergraduate Accountancy Advisor
Northern Illinois University

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**Sample of Firms Providing Internships**

Abbott Laboratories  
Accenture  
BDO Seidman  
Caterpillar  
Deloitte  
Ernst & Young  
Grant Thornton  
Illinois Tool Works  
KPMG

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**Closing the Loop:**

Using Feedback from Direct Assessment Results

The direct assessment feedback indicates that the Accountancy interns are meeting expectations. However, based on the feedback from the internship employers, indirect assessment, and discussions with our Advisory Board, the Department of Accountancy made the following changes to the program:

1. Added an additional professional skills development course during the senior year, ACCY 470 (Accounting Career Skills Seminar), to enhance students’ professional development. Accountancy majors entering the workforce are facing increased expectations to use their understanding of accounting information to assist organizations in complying with various reporting requirements and to facilitate users’ understanding of that accounting information. This one-hour seminar will allow students to develop skills to this end including:
   - (1) leading a meeting (including preparing an agenda);
   - (2) understanding team dynamics and how to lead a team;
   - (3) listening skills; (4) impression management;
   - (5) business etiquette; and (6) resume maintenance.

2. Made significant revisions to our Master of Accounting Science (MAS) program – incorporating leadership development into the program. The Leadership MAS program helps develop our students’ soft skills including team work skills, the ability to think outside the box, improved self-awareness, negotiation skills, and other professional aspects.

3. We launched a Professional Development Center in January to enhance the development of our students’ written and oral communication skills. The Center will help students review and edit professional memoranda, enhance their oral presentations, understand proper electronic communications, and interviewing.

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**Direct Assessment Results**

**Direct Assessment Criteria**

- **Theoretical knowledge of the subject:**
  - (1) understanding the basic concepts and skills
  - (2) understanding the application of these concepts and skills

- **Careers perspectives:**
  - (1) understanding the basic concepts and skills
  - (2) understanding the application of these concepts and skills

- **Professional skills development:**
  - (1) understanding the basic concepts and skills
  - (2) understanding the application of these concepts and skills

**Rated scale:**

- 3 – Exceeds Expectations
- 2 – Meets Expectations
- 1 – Does Not Meet Expectations

**Examples of Positive Written Feedback**

- Hardworking, enthusiastic, dependable, detail-oriented, eager to learn, self-starter
- Good analytical & problem solving skills, learned assignments and new tasks quickly
- Responsiveness, ability to ask questions & challenge the process
- Ability to work independently

**Examples of Constructive Feedback**

- Improves understanding of complex concepts and strengthens client relationships
- Brings thorough in reviewing work, more detail-oriented
- Improve written communication skills
- Improve professionalism

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**NIU Outstanding Assessment Practice 2010-2011**

**A Direct Assessment Measure**

**Direct Assessment Results**

**direct assessment results**

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