



# CGA RESEARCH CENTRE

1ST ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

AS AT APRIL 30, 2013

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am very pleased to present the first report on the activities of the CGA Research Centre at the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University.

The CGA Research Centre aims to provide support and funding for research and teaching initiatives at the Department of Accountancy at JMSB. The Centre aims to encourage fundamental and applied research on topics such as organizational performance, management control, sustainability accounting, information technology and accounting education. It aims to produce articles for academic and professional journals and strengthen ties between JMSB accounting professors, professional accountants and managers.

During its first year of activities, three research projects have been funded by the Centre. The projects cover a wide range of business topics such as strategic performance measurement, the images of accountants in advertising campaigns and the representation of accounting professors as top managers in business schools. Projects funded by the Centre will aid in the training of doctoral students and assistants in research. The Centre also sponsored four research workshops and granted a scholarship of \$5,000 to a JMSB PhD student in accounting.

I want to thank the Centre's Scientific Committee for their dedicated work. I would also like to thank our financial sponsor and partner, the CPA Quebec Order, as well as all of the researchers involved with the Centre. I look forward to working closely with all of you in the future.



Emilio Boulianne, PhD, FCPA, FCGA  
Director, CGA Research Centre  
John Molson School of Business

## CENTRE OBJECTIVES

The CGA Research Centre provides support and funding for primarily research, and teaching initiatives at the department of Accountancy at JMSB. The Centre aims to encourage fundamental and applied research on topics such as organizational performance, management control, sustainability accounting, information technology, and accounting education. It aims to produce articles for academic and professional journals, and strengthen ties between JMSB accounting professor, professional accountants, and managers. Those involved in the Centre are encouraged to disseminate their work broadly through media, through participation in workshops and conferences and through the publication of research results. The Centre may also provide support for doctoral students in accounting.



## THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The Scientific Committee reviews the applications for funds to the Centre, and works on other tasks determined by the Centre's director. Individual researchers, groups of researchers, may submit research proposals to be reviewed by the Scientific Committee.

Faculty members from the Department of Accountancy at JMSB are encouraged to submit proposals. For projects submitted by a team, the main researcher must be from JMSB's Department of Accountancy.

### Criteria and guidelines

The main criteria for proposed research projects are their relevance and quality. A project's objectives must be clear and must indicate how the project can be useful to academics and/or managers. The scientific committee will evaluate the proposals to determine project relevance and feasibility. They will provide the submitter with feedback.

### Required format of proposals

**The research proposal should include the following:**

1. The objectives and the significance of the project
2. A method section
3. Deliverables and budget
4. The CV of the researcher(s) involved in the project

### Responsibilities of Funded Researchers

Researchers that have received funding are obliged to maintain regular contact with the Centre as to the progress of their project. At the conclusion of the project, they must submit a final report to the director. Researchers should clearly acknowledge the Centre's financial contributions.

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Michel Magnan, PhD, FCPA, FCA  
Lawrence Bloomberg Chair in Accountancy  
JMSB

Emilio Boulianne, PhD, FCPA, FCGA  
Director, CGA Research Centre  
JMSB

Denis Cormier, PhD, FCPA, FCGA, CA  
Director, Chaire d'Information Financière et  
Organisationnelle ESG-UQAM



## RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED

Project N° 1

### Balanced Scorecard's Dimensions for Performance Evaluation: To Weigh or Not to Weigh?

**Investigator:** Emilio Boulianne, PhD, FCPA, FCGA, Associate Professor of Accounting, JMSB

**Summary:** Does the BSC, with its four dimensions, provide an improved reliability measure compared with the sole financial dimension? Since firms have spent increasing amount of resources in performance measurement systems, is it worth the effort to collect, process, store, evaluate, and report measures on the three additional dimensions? Given that the BSC is rather costly to develop and implement, this is an important question to examine.

As the BSC consists of four dimensions, grouping performance measures, managers may assign different importance to dimensions when evaluating performance. The different weighting assigned aims to reflect specific business priorities. Competing literature exists on managers' weighting processes: some studies report benefits of subjective weighting to set specific priorities; others report drawbacks such as favoritism; some suggest that weighting has no significant effect; and still others are against an equal weighting of BSC's dimensions. Therefore, when managers weight the BSC's dimensions, does it provide an improved reliable measure compare to when the four dimensions are equally weighted?

The research objectives are to examine first whether the BSC with four dimensions, compare to the financial dimension only, provides an improved reliable measure and second, whether the BSC with the four dimensions weighted, compare to BSC with equally weighted dimensions, provides an improved reliable measure.

**Progress report:** A first draft paper has been developed including a literature review and a suggested research design. The paper has been accepted for presentation at the 2013 ISAIS, International Symposium on Accounting Information Systems, to be held in Paris in May 2013.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED

### Project N° 2

#### The Image of Accountants in the Advertising Campaigns of the Accounting Professional Orders in Canada

**Investigators:** Emilio Boulianne, PhD, FCPA, FCGA, Associate Professor of Accounting, JMSB; Zeynep Arsel, PhD, Assistant Professor of Marketing, JMSB; Sophie Audousset, PhD, CPA, CGA, Assistant Professor of Accounting, JMSB

**Summary:** The ability of the accounting profession to achieve its fundamental role has been questioned since the accounting scandals of a number of years ago, and the image of the profession has significantly deteriorated. In response, the accounting professionals have developed strategies in order to restore their trustworthiness. The first strategy has been to participate in the setup of new regulations, such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, to reinforce importance of internal controls, audit, information quality and independence rules. In parallel, the accounting profession has also worked to restore its legitimacy not only to preserve respectability but also to ensure the “survival” of the accounting profession. In this context, we wish to understand how the professionals have used this opportunity to construct a new image of the accounting profession. Our goal is to document how the three accounting professional associations in Canada – the Society of Management Accountants (CMA), the Institute of Chartered Accountants (CA), and the Certified General Accountants’ Association (CGA) - have redesign their image, specifically toward students for recruitment campaigns, presenting accounting professionals as “superheroes”. We are interested in to map this brand new and appealing image with the fundamental values and tasks performed by professional accountants. We will map notably with institutionalized types of communications such as the professional orders’ annual reports, information available in their websites, as well as other public discourses in the media.

**Progress report:** We downloaded, examined, and coded all videos available from the CA, CGA, and CMA websites before the Quebec unification of the three accounting associations. We are now developing a profile of each designation for comparison.



## RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED

Project N° 3

### Underrepresentation of Accounting Professors as Business Schools' Deans; Myth or Reality?

**Investigator:** Emilio Boulianne, PhD, FCPA, FCGA, Associate Professor of Accounting, JMSB

**Summary:** The objective of this research project is to investigate if and why accounting professors are underrepresented as business schools' deans. Based on observations, and conversations with a number of academics, we may note that the positions of business school dean are held mainly by professors coming from the Management/Human Resource/Strategy area, and just a few seem to come from other areas, such as accounting. To examine if that perception is valid, initial data were collected to know the background of business school deans in Canada.

Preliminary results report that of 60 Canadian business schools examined, 55% of their deans come from the management field, 11% from marketing, 10% from accounting, 10% from finance, 6% from economics, 4% from MIS, and 4% from operations management. Clearly, accounting is an important discipline at business schools in terms of history, maturity, reputation, number of professors and student enrollment – one would expect to find that more than 10% of business schools have accounting professors as deans. Accordingly, a main research question is why accounting professors only occupy 10% of business school dean positions?

Accounting departments play an important role at business schools for a variety of reasons: the accounting path leads to prestigious flagship professional designations, such as Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA), accounting departments contribute favourably to business schools' bottom lines due to the high number of students who take the accounting option. But based on discussions with professors from other areas/departments, some see the intellectual/scholarly contribution of accounting professors as relatively weak, and view accounting departments as playing more of a "trade school" role within the faculty. Accordingly, we may also observe the stereotype effect among colleagues, where accounting professors may be perceived as not having the ability to run an entire business school.

**Progress report:** This project has just been funded. The project will be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.



## CGA RESEARCH CENTRE VISIBILITY

### CGA Research Centre Scholarship of \$5,000 to a JMSB PhD student in Accounting

A call for scholarship application was sent to all PhD accounting students at JMSB. Students were asked to send:

- A letter (one page) of intent
- A description of their research program
- Information about the financial support they currently receive or expect to receive
- Their CV and transcript, with the list of courses they are currently taking

Three applications were received. The CGA Research Centre's Scientific Committee examined the dossiers. A holistic approach was used and took into account:

- Academic achievement
- Financial need
- Quality of intended research program

The recipient for 2012-2013 was Leanne Keddie



## RESEARCH WORKSHOPS SPONSORED BY THE CGA RESEARCH CENTRE

The CGA Research Centre, jointly with the Lawrence Bloomberg Chair in Accountancy at JMSB, supported four research workshops:

- On April 2, 2012, Professor Paul André, KPMG Co-Chair at ESSEC Business School, France, presented “Mandatory Adoption of IFRS by EU Listed Firms and Comparability: Determinants and Analysts’ Forecasts.”
- On October 31, 2012 Professor Anne Cazavan-Jeny from ESSEC Business School, France, presented “A Re-Examination of the Industry Specialist Audit Fee Premium.”
- On November 16, 2012, Professor Natalia Kotchetova from the Sobey School of Business at St.Mary’s University, Nova Scotia presented “Are Fraud Specialists Relatively More Effective than Auditors at Modifying Audit Programs in the Presence of Fraud Risk?”
- On December 3, 2012, Professor Francesco Bova from the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto presented “Non-Executive Employee Ownership and Corporate Risk-Taking.”

### Travel allowance funding for research papers presentations:

Funds were granted to Professor Ibrahim Aly and to Professor Carmen Kuczweski.

### Publications of refereed research articles by the director, where the CGA Research Centre is acknowledged:

Boulianne, E., 2013. Impact of Software Utilization on Students’ Knowledge Acquisition; An Important Change in Accounting Education, accepted for publication in Journal of Accounting and Organizational Changes.

Boulianne, E., 2012. Examining the Role of Information Technology in Support of Business Students’ Knowledge, Journal of Integrated Enterprise Systems, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 16-24.

### Presentations of papers at conferences by the director, where the CGA Research Centre is mentioned:

Boulianne, E., 2012. Impact of Accounting Software Utilization on Students' Knowledge Acquisition of the Accounting Cycle, Canadian Academic Accounting Association Annual Conference (CAAA), Charlottetown, PEI, Canada, May 31-June 2.

### Discussant at conferences by the director, where the CGA Research Centre is mentioned:

Discussant at the 1st Workshop on Management Control (Atelier de l'ACG) held at HEC-Montreal on March 31 2012.

Discussant at the Canadian Academic Accounting Association Annual Conference (CAAA), Charlottetown, PEI, Canada, May 31-June 2, 2012.

Discussant at the 2nd Workshop on Management Control (Atelier de l'ACG) held at FSA- Université Laval, Quebec city, March 22, 2013.

### Other research activities

Founding member of the Annual Workshop on Management Control (ACG) with Sophie Tessier, HEC-MTL, and Jean-François Henri, FSA-Laval. The next workshop will be held at the John Molson School of Business on Friday, March 21, 2014. The CGA Research Centre will be the main sponsor.

View the website: [associationcontroledigestion.org](http://associationcontroledigestion.org)



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