

# ACCOUNTING



Earn good grades. Grades are an indicator of technical competence in accounting and of a person's work ethic. Potential employers place an emphasis on interpersonal and communication skills. Demonstrate these skills by having well-rounded experiences outside of the classroom. Actively participate in student organizations to develop leadership skills. Learn to work well within in a team. Develop excellent computer skills. Learn relevant software packages.

Pursue gaining internships to learn about the field and gain experience. Consider completing internships in the spring semester, in addition to, summer term, to build more connections. Join Beta Alpha Psi, the honorary fraternity for accounting and finance information professionals, to gain knowledge about the accounting profession. Develop analytical, critical-thinking/problem solving skills, and understanding of professional ethical standards. Exhibit accuracy and attention to detail. Become bi-lingual to give yourself the versatility to work for an international corporation. Take classes outside of accounting in a related field, i.e. finance or budget analysis, to broaden your scope of knowledge.

Stand out by targeting an area of focus during your training and make yourself an expert in that area. Certifications available through the Institute of Internal Auditors or the Institute of Management Accountants may increase job marketability in some areas of accounting. Accounting is a versatile degree. Students who graduate with a major in accounting may find jobs in many areas of business including: banking, financial planning, sales, production management, client management, product development, procurement, and general management.

## AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

- Assurance services
- Business valuing
- External auditing
- Personal financial planning
- Tax
- Environmental accounting
- International accounting
- Financial management
- Financial reporting
- Internal auditing
- Cost accounting
- Tax planning
- Transaction Services
- Budget analysis
- Money handling
- Record keeping

Public accounting firms:  
Sole practitioners  
Manufacturing  
Retail  
Technology  
Financial services and insurance  
Healthcare  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Internal Revenue Service  
Department of Treasury  
General Accounting Office  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Internal Revenue Service  
Department of Treasury  
General Accounting Office  
Teaching  
Research  
Consulting

## COMMON EMPLOYERS



## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



American Institute of Certified Public Accountants  
Institute of Internal Auditors  
Institute of Management Accountants  
State Boards of Accounting



## STRATEGIES ON ENTERING THE FIELD

- Public accounting firms hire candidates who meet the educational requirements for sitting for the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam: 150 hours of education including 24 hours of accounting. This is 30 more hours than a typical bachelor's degree. Some schools offer combined five year master degree programs, but a master's is not required.
- State laws govern the practice of accountancy and specify the requirements to be eligible to sit for the CPA exam and gain licensure. In most states, the State Board of Accountancy website outlines those requirements.
- Learn about the American Institute of CPA's offers specialty certifications.
- Some entry level positions do not require a CPA although many in higher level positions have both a CPA and a master's degree.
- Many managers in corporate settings obtain an MBA degree after several years of work experience.
- The Institute of Management Accountants offers the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) to those who have worked in the field for two years, hold a bachelor's degree, and pass a two part exam.
- Management accountants may move into internal auditing, however it is less likely to move to public accounting.
- Complete an internship in a government agency.
- Become familiar with the government application process.
- Some government agencies will help pay back student loans with an employee commitment to service for three years.
- Accounting is a "hot area" in government hiring and many opportunities exist in the public sector.