

# Majoring in. . . .

## Accounting

### Description of the Accounting Major

#### What is accounting?

Accounting involves the design, management, and examination of financial recording and reporting procedures in businesses and government agencies.

#### What do accounting majors study?

Accounting students learn how individuals, businesses, governments, charitable organizations, and other groups interact and relate to the problem of the efficient allocation of scarce resources in a free market economy.

#### What skills are important for an accounting major?

Accounting majors are analytical thinkers who enjoy problem solving and detail-oriented work.

Accounting majors should have:

- effective written and oral communication skills
- familiarity with computer concepts and applications
- above average quantitative skills
- fundamental knowledge of economics and social sciences

### **What else do accounting majors study?**

Accounting students take a variety of liberal arts and professionally-oriented courses to develop knowledge and skills that can be applied in both personal and professional settings.

Liberal arts courses provide a background to strengthen: problem solving; written, oral, and interpersonal communication; quantitative, analytical, and reasoning skills. These skills are also considered very important for success in the workplace.

### **Course Requirements**

**General education:** The School of Business requires 63 credit hours in the business foundation, including general education courses selected from the disciplines of the natural sciences, human behavior, institutional studies, literature, philosophy, language, and the arts, in addition to the following general requirements:

ENGL 101 & 200 Writing and Rhetoric Workshop  
ECON 210-211 Principles of Economics  
MGMT 171 Math Applications for Business  
MGMT 212 Calculus for Business  
SPCH 121 or 321 Speech or Speech for Business  
ACCT 203-204 Introduction to Accounting

**Major courses:** The advanced program includes 30 credits in the advanced business core and 27 credits in major courses.

The advanced business core includes:

- Business Statistics
- Business Information Systems
- Introduction to Marketing
- Organizational Behavior
- Productions/Operations Management
- Financial Management
- Legal Environment of Business
- Organizational Communication
- Managerial Economics
- Strategic Management

Accounting majors may take courses such as:

- Cost Accounting
- Governmental & Not-For-Profit Accounting
- Financial Accounting
- Management Control Systems
- Tax Accounting

### **Careers in Accounting**

The accounting major provides a good background for entry to any number of occupations. Some of these careers include:

- Accountant
- Administrator
- Internal Auditor
- Bank Examiner
- Budget Accountant
- Claim Adjuster/Examiner
- Commodities Trader
- Compensation/Benefits
- Consumer Credit/Loan Officer
- Controller
- Cost Department Supervisor
- EDP Auditor
- FBI Agent
- Financial Investment Analyst
- IRS Agent
- Payroll Manager
- Tax Accountant

### **Further Study**

Those pursuing the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) certification are required to have a baccalaureate degree and 150 credit hours.

## Next Steps

If you are interested in learning more about becoming an accounting major at VCU, consider doing each of the following things. Check them off as you complete each step.

- Check out the VCU School of Business webpage.
- Take an introductory accounting course.
- Read about the accounting major in the *Undergraduate Bulletin*.
- Review the accounting major graduation worksheet with an academic advisor.
- Talk to one or more upper-level accounting students about their major.
- Discuss the major with one or more accounting professors.
- Go to the Career Center to read about careers in accounting and explore internship opportunities.
- Go to the VCU bookstore and browse in the accounting textbook section.
- Investigate business student organizations at [http://www.bus.vcu.edu/usib/student\\_org.html](http://www.bus.vcu.edu/usib/student_org.html)
- Check out the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants website at [www.aicpa.org](http://www.aicpa.org) for information on topics related to the study of accounting.

# Virginia Commonwealth University

## School of Business

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