

**THE EDUCATION
YOU NEED FOR
THE ACCOUNTING
CAREER YOU WANT**



CAPELLA UNIVERSITY



WHY ACCOUNTING?

If you're looking for a business career filled with job possibilities, solid earnings potential, and limitless opportunities to learn and grow, accounting is the field for you. Skill with numbers is important, of course, but professionals in accounting must also be able to communicate and collaborate, navigate complex ethical issues, and understand the implications of legal and regulatory issues.

Accounting is multifaceted—it's not just about a balance sheet!

1 DIVERSE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Individuals with accounting degrees can specialize in one or more subfields, including: tax, audit, governmental, nonprofit, public, financial, managerial, or forensic accounting.

2 SATISFYING & ACCESSIBLE

Accounting ranks high among careers in terms of expected openings, advancement opportunities, emotional fulfillment, and salary expectations. U.S. News and World Report ranked accounting as the third best business job in its **2016 "Top Jobs" survey**.

SOURCE: <http://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/accountant>

3 GROWING FAST

As corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies seek to stay ahead of the game, the number of jobs in accounting and auditing is expected to grow at a rate of **11% through 2024**.

SOURCE: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/accountants-and-auditors.htm#tab-6>



TWO PATHS: ACCOUNTANT OR CPA

Accountants and certified public accountants (CPAs) play an important role in most organizations, preparing financial statements, monitoring tax payments, offering advice on investment decisions, and overseeing financial operations.

On the job, they may specialize as government accountants, public accountants, auditors, forensic accountants, tax accountants, consultants, etc.

In some cases, accountants and CPAs handle similar work. However, there are certain tasks that only CPAs are certified to perform. Their license, issued by their individual state after the applicant has passed a rigorous test and met all other qualifications, allows them to go beyond the usual duties of an accountant and perform these functions. They also must abide by a strict code of ethics and complete 80 hours of professional education every two years to maintain their license.





TYPICAL DUTIES: ACCOUNTANTS VS. CPAS

Here's how the two positions are similar and different.

WHAT ACCOUNTANTS GENERALLY DO

- Prepare, organize, and maintain financial records.
- Make sure that taxes are paid properly and on time.
- Oversee the financial operations of a business.
- Advise management on financial best practices.
- Manage an accounting team.

WHAT CPAS GENERALLY DO

- Serve as expert witnesses in litigation.
- Provide investment and financial planning to individuals.
- Advise employers and clients on business matters.
- Audit a business's financial records.
- Attest to financial statements.
- Take overall responsibility for financial health of an organization.

(Plus all of the accountant duties)

WHAT ONLY CPAS CAN DO

- Conduct audits and reviews of financial statements.
- Represent their clients before the IRS.
- File a company's financial records with SEC and other government agencies.



SO WHICH PATH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Deciding whether to seek certification or not depends on your future career plans. Consider the following questions:

- What are your career goals?
- What would you like to focus on?
- What skillsets are you looking to gain?
- What excites you about the accounting field?
- What do you know about the accounting field and CPA credential?



SKILLS THAT EXTEND BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Accountants of all stripes—whether CPAs or not—must not only be savvy with numbers.

1 TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW

As finance and accounting departments shift from producing reports to generating more analytics for operational use, many companies and organizations are seeking technical, job-related skills, including:

- Advanced Excel skills
- ERP experience
- Expertise in data analytics, advanced modeling techniques and the use of SQL
- Knowledge of business intelligence software (e.g. IBM Cognos)
- Aptitude with Hyperion (for analyst and financial reporting roles)
- Knowledge of QuickBooks or similar software (for positions with small and midsize firms)
- Risk and compliance expertise
- Cloud-based software experience

SOURCE: 2016 Robert Half Salary Guide for Accounting and Finance

2 NON-TECHNICAL SKILLS

In accounting, the ability to work with people can be as important as the ability to work with spreadsheets. From collaboration to communication, these skills figure largely in accounting work. Non-technical, or “soft”, skills defined by CEB, a best practice insight and technology company, include:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Project management
- Persuasion
- Business acumen

BECOMING AN **ACCOUNTANT**

THE EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK FOR ACCOUNTANTS IS BRIGHT.

Demand for accounting professionals is projected to **grow 11% over the next decade**, with as many as **166,000 new positions** opening up.

SOURCE: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Business-and-Financial/Accountants-and-auditors.htm>

ACCOUNTANTS EARN GOOD SALARIES.

Salaries are dependent on size of company, years of experience, and education level, but the median pay for accountants in 2015 was **\$67,190**.

SOURCE: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Business-and-Financial/Accountants-and-auditors.htm>



ACCOUNTING PROGRAMS + CAREER PATHS

Accountants are increasingly called upon to be business partners—interacting with the HR, IT, and operational functions of organizations. As a result, individuals who understand accounting as well as foundational business principles are more likely to find employment and success in the business world. Here are several programs that will give you solid grounding in both.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS, ACCOUNTING SPECIALIZATION

Who it's for: Individuals pursuing a career in accounting.

Potential positions with this degree:

- Actuarial assistant
- Inventory analyst
- Junior accountant
- Loan administrator
- Staff accountant
- Tax preparer

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE, ACCOUNTING

Who it's for: Individuals with no degree who desire an entry level position in accounting, or those with an undergraduate business degree who want to move into accounting.



ACCOUNTING PROGRAMS + CAREER PATHS (continued)

MBA, ACCOUNTING SPECIALIZATION

Who it's for: Accountants interested in senior level accounting, finance and analytical roles.

Potential positions with this degree:

- Accounting manager or director
- Assistant treasurer
- Consultant
- Escrow officer
- Financial services manager
- Purchasing manager
- Tax accountant
- Treasurer

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE, ACCOUNTING

Who it's for: Individuals who have a bachelor's degree and aren't necessarily interested in a CPA but want more accounting knowledge.

BECOMING A CPA

EMPLOYER DEMAND FOR CPAS IS HIGH.

A CPA remains the most sought-after designation by employers. And high demand for CPAs means broader opportunities, career stability, and higher income.

CPAS HAVE BIGGER PAYCHECKS.

CPAs with graduate degrees tend to earn 10% - 15% more than accountants without a CPA license.

SOURCE: Robert Half® 2016 Salary Guide for Accounting & Finance



CPA PROGRAMS + CAREER PATHS

Individuals interested in becoming a CPA need specialized accounting credits, of course. But they also need to understand business and non-technical fundamentals to be effective communicators, business partners, and leaders. Business programs that combine deep accounting and broad business coursework provide the necessary requirements for career success.

BS IN BUSINESS, ACCOUNTING CPA PATHWAY SPECIALIZATION

Who it's for: Individuals intending to pursue the CPA exam.

Potential positions with this degree and a CPA*:

- Public accountant
- Auditor
- Consultant
- Forensic accountant
- Fraud investigator
- Management accountant
- Mergers acquisition analyst
- Tax accountant
- Risk manager

**Many of these job titles prefer or require a licensed CPA. A BS Business Accounting, CPA Pathway alone does not adequately prepare individuals to be eligible to sit for the CPA exam or to become licensed certified public accountants.*

CPA PROGRAMS + CAREER PATHS (continued)

MBA, ACCOUNTING CPA PATHWAY SPECIALIZATION

Who it's for: Individuals with an undergraduate degree in accounting, or an undergraduate business degree and undergraduate certificate in accounting, who need additional credits and want to sit for the CPA exam.

Potential positions with this degree and a CPA:

- Auditor
- Chief compliance officer
- Consultant
- Director of finance
- Escrow officer
- Financial manager
- Forensic accountant
- Fraud investigator
- Management accountant
- Mergers acquisition analyst
- Public accountant
- Risk manager
- Tax accountant

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE, ACCOUNTING CPA PATHWAY

Who it's for: Individuals with an undergraduate degree in accounting or undergraduate certificate in accounting who want to sit for the CPA exam and have additional accounting credits they need to fulfill.



PREPARING FOR THE CPA LICENSURE

Although each state's Board of Accountancy sets specific requirements and issues licenses, the following are general requirements. You must:

- Earn an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university.
- Have 150 semester credits or 225 quarter credits (in most states). States require specific amounts of credits in accounting, business, ethics, etc.
- Pass the Uniform Certified Public Accountant exam, developed by the American Institute for Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).
- Undergo a background check regarding your fitness to practice.

Most states/jurisdictions require at least two years of public accounting experience. Some states require successful completion of the AICPA Ethics exam. **Check your state's Board of Accountancy to understand your state's specific requirements.**

PREPARING FOR THE CPA EXAM

There are four parts to the exam.

They include:

- Auditing and Attestation
- Financial Accounting and Reporting
- Regulation
- Business Environment and Concepts

Once you pass a section, you have 18 months to complete the remaining three sections.





THE CPA SUPPORT YOU NEED, WHEN YOU NEED IT

If your goal is a CPA, Capella has the people and tools in place to help you prepare and sit for the exam with confidence.



- Our enrollment counselors can match Capella curriculum with the educational requirements you need to sit for the CPA exam in your state.
- Our licensure support team is available to support you through the license application process during your program, after graduation, and throughout your career.

WILEY

- The Wiley CPAexcel® exam preparation program is integrated into the MBA and Graduate Certificate curriculum to help you prepare for licensure on the path to your degree. With the proven Wiley Efficient Learning platform, 9 of 10 students pass the CPA exam.
- After you complete your program, you'll continue to have access to the Wiley CPAexcel® exam preparation materials and academic support team until you pass all four test modules of the CPA exam.



A PROGRAM THAT **FITS YOUR PATH**

From certificates to doctoral degrees, Capella offers a wide variety of options for individuals who want to pursue a career in accounting. You can gain the skills and knowledge to help you manage finances for a small business, prepare to become a CPA, or teach the next generation of accounting professionals.

CERTIFICATE

- [Undergraduate Certificate, Accounting](#)
- [Graduate Certificate, Accounting](#)
- [Graduate Certificate, Accounting CPA Pathway](#)

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS

- [BS in Business, Accounting specialization*†](#)
- [BS in Business, Accounting CPA Pathway specialization](#)

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

- [MBA, Accounting specialization*†](#)
- [MBA, Accounting CPA Pathway specialization](#)

DOCTORAL

- [DBA, Accounting specialization](#)
- [PhD in Business Management, Accounting specialization*](#)

*Accredited by the ACBSP. | † Available via FlexPath format.



RELEVANT CURRICULUM

Capella's bachelor's through doctoral accounting curricula was designed by industry experts to help ensure you'll gain skills and knowledge you can immediately use in your career. All of Capella's courses are focused on real-world applications, so you'll be able to boost your performance and capabilities, even before you graduate.

- You'll learn fundamental accounting concepts with a **bachelor's degree**, including budget analysis, investment planning, and internal control audits.*
- You'll acquire deep knowledge in business and accounting with a **master's degree**, including emerging areas such as accounting ethics, forensic accounting, and international accounting.*
- You'll prepare to lead at the highest level with a **DBA**, learning the problem-solving and decision-making skills necessary to oversee and manage changes in the field.
- You'll become a scholar practitioner with a **PhD**, gaining the skills and knowledge needed to generate new research that advances the field.

**Because the educational requirements for CPA licensure vary from state to state, Capella's Accounting CPA pathway specialization includes built-in flexibility that enables you to tailor your program to your state's requirements.*

WHAT SETS **CAPELLA APART?**

ACCREDITED DEGREE PROGRAMS ALIGNED TO INDUSTRY STANDARDS.

Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.



The Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs (ACBSP) has accredited Capella University business programs and select specializations. The full accreditation statement and the list of accredited programs and specializations is available [here](#). Established in 1988, ACBSP is the only organization offering specialized business accreditation for all degree levels, from associate to baccalaureate to doctoral degree programs.



THE MOST **DIRECT PATH** TO YOUR **GOALS**

Capella's accounting programs are focused on the skills and knowledge you need to succeed, and are designed to put you on a direct path to your goals.

Our approach to education is designed around the critical skills, knowledge, theories, and abilities — or “competencies” — required to master the subject matter in your degree program. You gain the relevant competencies you need to advance your career — and in the most efficient way.



FlexPath, Capella's self-paced learning format, is available for select programs* and lets you work at your own pace and use the knowledge you've gained in your profession to move quickly through familiar subjects—saving you time and money.

** FlexPath is currently available for BS Business Accounting and MBA Accounting programs.*

THE MOST **DIRECT PATH** TO YOUR **GOALS** (continued)

Students will also have the opportunity to apply for undergraduate and graduate certificates, an added benefit for your career.

- MBA in Accounting students can apply for graduate certificates in Business Management and in Accounting.
- MBA in Accounting CPA Pathway students can apply for graduate certificates in Business Management and in Accounting CPA Pathway.



- BS in Business, Accounting students can apply for an undergraduate certificate in Accounting.





AFFORDABILITY

Capella offers a variety of ways to make your degree even more affordable.



EMPLOYER DISCOUNTS AND TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Tuition discounts from Capella-affiliated employers and colleges can make your degree more affordable, saving you thousands. Additionally, many employers offer tuition reimbursement to their employees — even those without a formal program. Check with your HR department or manager to see if you are eligible.



MILITARY DISCOUNT

Capella offers a discount of 10 to 15% to members of the military.



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

To recognize what you've previously accomplished, Capella lets you earn credit from prior learning and knowledge gained from professional certifications. [Not available for doctorate programs. PLA cannot be applied toward eligibility for the CPA exam.]



TRANSFER CREDITS

Reduce the time and cost of finishing your degree by maximizing your transfer credits.



SAVE UP TO \$10,000 WITH SOPHIA

With Sophia Pathways for College Credit, you may save up to \$10,000 and complete your bachelor's degree sooner by taking Capella and Sophia courses at the same. [Sophia courses cannot be applied toward eligibility for the CPA exam.]



SCHOLARSHIPS

Capella offers several scholarship opportunities for new students to save thousands on your degree. And the best part: they never need to be paid back.



WHY SHOULD YOU CHOOSE CAPELLA?

- **Educational credentials** that fit your needs.
- **Learning experiences** that can be applied immediately in the field.
- **Up-to-date curriculum** and knowledgeable faculty who are experts in accounting.
- **The most direct path to your goals** with 100% online courses for the **ultimate flexibility**.
- **The support you need to gain CPA licensure** with specially trained enrollment and licensure support counselors.
- **Partnership with Wiley** to prepare you for the CPA exam.
- **An affordable education** with many financial support options.



RESOURCES

GETTING STARTED

[Calculate your costs and graduation date](#)

[Online learning at Capella](#)

[Scholarships for new students](#)

[Try a Capella trial course](#)

[Learn more about Capella](#)



**TALK TO A CAPELLA
ENROLLMENT COUNSELOR:**

1.866.933.5819

[CAPELLA.EDU](#)

[REQUEST INFORMATION](#)

See graduation rates, median student debt, and other information at www.capellaresults.com/outcomes.asp

ACCREDITATION: Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.
HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION: <https://www.hlcommission.org>, 800.621.7440
CAPELLA UNIVERSITY: Capella Tower, 225 South Sixth Street, Ninth Floor, Minneapolis
MN 55402, 1.888.CAPELLA (227-3552)

© 2016 Capella University | 16-8802d