

Michigan State University
Department of Accounting and Information Systems

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

9/24/2018

Q1: What are the course requirements for graduating with an undergraduate degree in Accounting?

A: The degree requirements can be found at the site below. Please review these requirements carefully.

If you were admitted to Broad before Fall 2018:

<https://uas.broad.msu.edu/files/2017/08/Degree-Requirements-FS15.pdf>

If you were admitted to Broad in Fall 2018 or later:

<https://uas.broad.msu.edu/files/2018/09/BROAD-DEGREE-REQUIREMENTS-FS18-2.pdf>

Q2: Is there a sequence in which these courses must be taken?

A: You can search for course prerequisites using this handy website:

<https://reg.msu.edu/courses/Search.aspx>

Q3: Are there any requirements regarding the sequence in which accounting classes are taken?

A: ACC201 and ACC202 are prerequisites for ACC300 and ACC321. ACC300 is the Accounting prerequisite for ACC301, ACC331, and ACC341. You should take ACC301 in the semester after you take ACC300. The order in which you take ACC331 and ACC341 is up to you. ACC300, ACC321 and STT315 are prerequisites for ACC411 and ACC411 should be taken in your final year as an Accounting undergraduate. Students often choose to take ACC331 and ACC411 in separate semesters.

We strongly recommend that you take ACC250 in your sophomore year as it is designed to help students 1) be prepared to look for jobs/internships in the field (e.g., resumes, interviewing, job search- all with an accounting twist), 2) understand educational/professional preparation required in the field (e.g., certifications, 150 hour rule, ethics, etc., and 3) learn about career options in the field of accounting.

If you plan on taking the CPA examination, we strongly recommend that you take ACC308 and GBL451 as preparation. These two 1-credit classes probably would be

most useful if taken in your senior year closer to when you will take the exam. Both classes are electives but ACC308 is required to sit for the CPA exam in Michigan as the Board of Accountancy says you must have coverage in government and not-for-profit topics and ACC308 is the only course that covers that.

We strongly recommend that you NEVER take more than 7 credits of accounting classes in the same semester.

Q4: What about electives? How many do I need to take?

The number of electives that each student must take varies on a student to student basis. You MUST have at least 120 credits to graduate with an undergraduate degree. At least 9 of the total number of elective credits must be outside of the Business, Mathematics and Statistics departments. (ESL credits cannot count in this requirement as well). Below is a link to commonly taken (but by no means required) list of electives by Broad students:

<https://uas.broad.msu.edu/files/2011/07/Possible-Electives1.pdf>

You may decide to use your electives to earn a minor. Minors are at a minimum 15 credits but could be 18, 21, or more credits. There is a link to minors in the university at:

<https://reg.msu.edu/ACADEMICPROGRAMS/Programs.aspx?PType=MNUN>

There are a few minor specializations in the Broad College that you may find interesting: Information Technology, International Business, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Insurance and Risk Management.

You cannot minor in any majors (Finance or Supply Chain, e.g.) within the College of Business, but you can use your electives to take courses within those fields.

Q5: If I decide to do an internship during the spring semester of my junior year, will I be able to graduate on time?

That depends on your willingness to take courses in the summer and whether you came into MSU with AP credits. Check the MSU schedule of courses to see what courses are offered each semester. You will have to carefully plan out your course schedule in order to make this work.

We strongly recommend that you NEVER take more than one Accounting class per seven-week summer session.

You might want to enroll in ACC493 Internship in order to receive an additional credit and have access to the MSU libraries during your internship.

Q6: I am planning to study abroad for a semester. How can I adjust my schedule to make this work?

You must work with the Study Abroad office to see which course credits will be transferred to support your degree requirements. The Accounting Department does not transfer in any Accounting courses taken in a study abroad program. See the discussion in response to Q5 above.

Q7: I don't know much about the Accounting profession and am unsure if I want to choose Accounting as my undergraduate major. What should I do to get more information?

Representatives from national, regional, and local accounting firms as well as corporations are often on campus. If you are on the Accounting Listserv, read your emails from the department because they will be chock full of important event and career-related information. The plasma screens on the first floors of Eppley and BCC are also good sources of event information. ACC250 is a great introduction to the profession as well as described in Q3 above.

We also recommend that you look into joining the Accounting Student Association (ASA). This organization often hosts speakers from the accounting profession and offers great opportunities to talk with newly graduated MSU alums that are working in the field. The ASA website is located at:

<http://www.msuasa.com/>

MSU also has a student chapter of the Institute of Management Accountings (IMA). This organization conducts field trips to corporations around the state and provides exposure the MSU alums that are working in industry at various levels of responsibility. The chapter's website is located at:

<https://msu.edu/~imasc/index.html>

MSU also sponsors a chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA). NABA also provides site visits to corporation and sponsors presentations by corporate leaders. The chapter's website is located at:

<https://msunaba.weebly.com/>

Q8: I am considering a double major in accounting and another field of study and plan on graduating with 150 credits. Am I all set to take the CPA exam and become certified as a CPA in Michigan?

You will meet the requirements to sit for the CPA examination in Michigan once you complete your undergraduate accounting studies; although, you must have a bachelors' degree in hand to sit for the CPA exam.

However, you will not have enough accounting credits to become certified (licensed) as a CPA in Michigan because our curriculum has 26 credits of accounting and certification requires 30 credits. You will have to arrange to take an additional 4 credits of accounting while you are an undergraduate or after you graduate.

Note that the Michigan State Board of Accountancy does not accept internship credits toward the additional 4 credits needed required for certification.

Please see the certification requirements for Michigan here:

<https://www.micpa.org/career-center/becoming-a-cpa/education-requirements>

Q9: What are the requirements to take the CPA exam? When do I take it?

CPA certification and the 150 hour rule for the State of Michigan are covered in ACC250.

The educational, citizenship, and residency requirements needed to take the CPA exam differ by state. The requirements to become a CPA after you have completed the exam also differ by state. A list of all requirements by state can be found at many sources including:

<https://nasba.org/exams/cpaexam/>

Q10: This is a lot of information. Who keeps track of my progress towards my undergraduate degree?

YOU are ultimately responsible for making sure that all of your course and honors options requirements are met by the time you graduate.

We strongly recommend that you create a spreadsheet to keep track of your progress and regularly check to make sure that your records match those of the University by using "Degree Navigator" on "Student Info".

Q11: I am thinking about getting a Master Degree in Accounting either at MSU or at another college or university in the U.S. What should I keep in mind?

Grades are only one performance measure that admissions committees look at when determining whether to admit a student. A high GPA helps, but you should take on leadership roles in organizations here at MSU or in your local community. Volunteering and other extracurricular activities are also important.

In order to apply to the MS in Accounting program at MSU (and many other schools), you will need to submit two letters of recommendation of which one must come from a faculty member. These recommendations ask for a rating of student performance in key areas: leadership ability, computational skills, verbal skills, writing skills, ethics, and interpersonal skills. Certainly, no one instructor can speak to all of these characteristics. But it is up to you to make sure that you show your strengths in as many areas as possible in each and every class that you take. That way, it will be much easier for an instructor to write you a strong recommendation when the time comes. Some programs require the GMAT/GRE exam. Review the criteria for waiving the GMAT/GRE if you are a current MSU student applying to MSU's MS in Accounting program at:

<http://broad.msu.edu/welcome/MS/admissions/>

Q12: I have heard about a new linked BA/MS in Accounting program. Where can I find information on this?

The linked bachelor's – master's program in accounting allows accepted students to get an early start on their graduate program. It also allows the application of up to 9 credits toward the master's program for qualifying 400-level and above coursework taken at the undergraduate level.

Students interested in pursuing the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license must have 150 credit hours of college/university credit to be eligible for certification. The linked program, depending upon an individual student's circumstances, may not reduce the overall number of credits that a student needs to take. It can however, provide a cost savings to the student allowing up to nine graduate program credits to be taken at undergraduate tuition rates. This will be considered and built into the student's study plan.

More information can be found at:

<https://accounting.broad.msu.edu/academic-programs/ms/admissions/linked-program/>