Cal Poly Accounting Student Planning Time-Line and Checklist

Big Picture Issues

• There are CPA careers and non-CPA careers.
  o Academic preparation for CPA career is 5 years.
  o Academic preparation for non-CPA careers may be 4 years.
  o There are non-CPA careers at CPA firms as well as in industry and government.
• Always keep your eyes on Mustang Jobs as not all internship or full-time opportunities follow the same time line. Mustang Jobs posts announcements for summer leadership, internships, full-time positions, etc.
• Stay involved in CPAC to increase the depth of your understanding of career options and the CPA process.
• See undergraduate concentration courses for concentration declaration before 2011—2013 below
• Review the requirements under the link for Junior Scholarships applications
• Review the application requirements for a Master’s Program in Accounting
• CPA examination (sit for exam as soon as you are eligible). The goal is to complete the exam by the time you begin your full-time job.
• The academic requirements to sit for the CPA exam are different than the academic requirements to obtain CPA licensure. See the links on the CPA Exam tab.

Cornerstones

• Students will have completed the academic requirements for CPA licensure before beginning full-time employment with a CPA practice.
• Student internships will be within approximately 15 months before beginning full-time employment with a CPA practice.
• Students strive to pass the CPA exam before beginning full-time employment.

Time-Line and Checklist

• Fall Quarter – 3rd year
  o Attend Fall Symposium to network with firms
  o Attend Careers in Accounting Day to network with firms.
  o This quarter is one year prior to CPA practice internship recruiting.
  o Interview for summer internships (between 3rd and 4th year) with one or more of the following groups of firms, (1) Industry, (2) regional or local CPA firms and (3) Big 4 CPA firms (non CPA practices, example: advisory services). There may be additional interview opportunities Winter Quarter, however, do not wait until Winter Quarter.
• Winter Quarter (3rd year)
Apply for junior scholarships ($1,000 to $3,500 each). There were 33 junior scholarships awarded at the 2011 Spring Banquet. Application deadline is the end of the first week of Spring Quarter.

Scholarship application is available at: http://www.cob.calpoly.edu/aareas/accounting-and-law/scholarships-award-information/

Apply (between 3rd and 4th year) for CPA firm Summer Leadership Program. Summer leadership interviews may continue into Spring Quarter.

- Spring Quarter (3rd year)
  - Information gathering for Masters in Accounting. Do you want MS-Tax or MS-Financial Accounting? See the curriculum for these programs at: http://mba.calpoly.edu/ms_accounting_overview.html
  - Research schedule and location for GMAT exam. Success on the GMAT requires significant preparation.

- Summer Quarter (between 3rd and 4th year)
  - Apply for Masters in Accounting with the goal of obtaining a conditional admission prior to recruiting in October of your 4th year. (see MSA Graduate link in navigation bar)
  - Take GMAT exam (you can start MS Accounting application process before taking the GMAT exam).

- Fall Quarter (4th year)
  - Attend Fall Symposium to network with firms just weeks prior to interviews.
  - Submit resume to Mustang Jobs by deadline.
  - Interview for Summer Internship (between 4th and 5th year).
  - Interview for a full-time position (non-CPA careers such as industry or advisory services)
  - Complete your MS application by applying through CSU Mentor (submit GMAT scores, transcripts).

- Winter Quarter (4th year)
  - Apply for senior awards. Application deadline is the end of the first week of Spring Quarter.

- Spring Quarter (4th year)
  - Plan to take CPA exam as soon as you are eligible

- Summer Quarter (between 4th and 5th year)
  - Internship with firm
  - Apply and sit for the CPA exam (you are eligible once you have your undergraduate degree, 36 quarter units of business subjects and 36 quarter units of accounting subject).

- Three week summer session (just prior to the start of the 5th year)
  - 2 Masters courses, all day Monday through Friday
  - Begins 3rd week of August.

- Fall Quarter (5th year)
  - Attend Fall Symposium to network with firms (if applicable)
  - Submit resume to Mustang Jobs by deadline (early October)
  - Interview for full-time position

- Winter Quarter (5th year)
  - Internship course (MSA – Taxation students only)
- Sit for part of the CPA exam
- Spring Quarter (5th year)
  - CPA exam review course
  - Sit for part of the CPA exam

Please also see the following helpful sources:

State Board of Accountancy Web site: [http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/](http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/) See handbooks in right column under "applicants"

**Undergraduate concentration courses if your concentration declaration is for a catalog before 2011-2013**

- After BUS 322 take BUS 425 and two of the following: BUS 412, BUS 417 (if you do not plan to go into MS-Financial Accounting), BUS 422, BUS 424, BUS 464 (low income tax payer clinic). One of the courses will be your elective and one will be automatically substituted for BUS 429.
- BUS 424 is recommended in anticipation of the ethics requirement under the CPA licensure requirements that will become effective January 2014.

For more information on educational requirements stop go to the following web page on the California Board of Accountancy website: [http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/faqs/faqnewlic.shtml#newlic](http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/faqs/faqnewlic.shtml#newlic)

*The above information is unofficial. Official information is available from CalPoly registration systems, hiring firms and the State Board of Accountancy.*

(revised 11/2011)