

# What can I do with a degree in... **ACCOUNTING?**

## Why study **ACCOUNTING?**

Western's Accounting curriculum focuses on building the student's knowledge of general business, auditing, law, tax, and other accounting-related functions. Our graduates will be Business Ready®, preparing students for successful careers in the private, government and public sectors.

We promote the personal and professional development of each of our students by offering and encouraging participation in engagement opportunities and by using interactive teaching methods that develop critical thinking and decision-making abilities. Using these skills, along with knowledge of current accounting theories and practices, general business skills, and understanding of global business issues, our graduates will be prepared to make an immediate contribution to their employers and communities.



## What is the **DEGREE OPTION?**

### **Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (B.S.B.A.) in Accounting**

*NOTE: Students may choose to earn dual degrees in Accounting and Finance. Or, students may minor in Accounting. Complementary minors include minors in Business Administration and Law, Cybersecurity, Finance, and Visual Analytics to Decision Making. Western Carolina University also offers a Master of Accountancy (M.Acc.) degree.*

## What is the **UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION PROCESS?**

Any currently enrolled student at WCU may declare Accounting as an undergraduate major. Please make an

appointment with your advisor via your MyWCU student portal.

## What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Our graduates are prepared to become a variety of professionals including account managers, accountants, business analysts, business consultants, investment associates, investment banking analysts, certified public accountants, business accountants, audit accountants, auditors, credit analysts, risk analysts, external financial auditors, financial analysts and consultants, and bookkeepers.

*NOTE: Advanced degrees may be required for some of the above careers. Please speak with an advisor or career counselor for more information.*

## Who employs **ACCOUNTING** graduates?

Our graduates work for a variety of employers including private accounting firms, non-profit organization, federal, state and local government agencies, businesses and industries, tax preparation companies, hospitals and health organizations, and banks and other financial organizations. Graduates may contact the Center for Career and Professional Development with assistance in job searching.

# MAJOR MAP

**How to use this map:** Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

## 1st YEAR

## 2nd YEAR

### EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

Coursework your first year will focus on foundational classes within the liberal studies catalog. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

The second year continues with additional liberal studies requirements as well as introductory accounting and economics courses. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

### GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness.

Consider joining clubs or organizations related to your major such as Beta Alpha Psi, the international honorary organization for financial information professionals, or the student chapter of [NCACPA](#).

See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU.

If you are thinking about attending a graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions.

Engage deeper with [DegreePlus](#); choose an additional competency to complete.

### BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Spark Award](#), a program aimed to encourage and recognize students who are connected with their community.

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

If you want to [study abroad](#), this is a good year to have that experience. The Study Abroad Office has excellent suggestions on places to go to your major specifically.

### PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [O\\*net Online](#).

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus.

Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools you wish to apply to in a few years; label your spreadsheet with each school's admission requirements and application materials so that you are aware of the expectations.

# Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Business Administration and Law  
Cybersecurity  
Finance

Entrepreneurship  
Management  
Marketing

Mathematics  
Visual Analytics to Decision Making

## 3rd YEAR

Courses in your third year will focus heavily on upper-level Accounting, Economics, and Business core requirements. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Complete an internship that will give you practical hands-on experience in your field. Contact the CCPD for help in your internship search.

Consider networking with professionals in your field. [NCACPA](#) has numerous networking events and professional development opportunities listed as does the [American Accounting Association](#).

Volunteer with nonprofits that focus on your ideal career path.

Connect with alumni in your field through [LinkedIn](#)

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter (Make an appointment through MyWCU)

Utilize the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) for GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Take the GRE, etc. Use [Big Interview](#) to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour graduate schools of your choice, if applicable.

## 4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will continue to focus on upper-level Accounting and business-related topics. Check out the [8-semester plan](#), make an appointment with your advisor, and complete your degree audit, and [apply for graduation!](#)

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs or graduate school admissions. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Join professional organizations such as the [American Accounting Association](#), [National Society of Accountants](#), or the [Institute of Management Accountants](#).

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual Career Fair Plus event, held each October and February.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Look for and [apply for jobs](#) between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by visiting the [CCPD](#).

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

# MORE INFORMATION

## **INTERNSHIP** Information

There are numerous internship opportunities for students. In some cases internships are established through a faculty member in the student's major. Oftentimes students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic adviser the possibility of receiving college credit. Generally, three hours of general elective credit can be earned for a minimum of 200 hours of experience.

## **SKILLS LEARNED** in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- information handling and organization
- statistical awareness
- oral and written communication
- numerical computation
- analytical and quantitative abilities
- problem solving
- technical skills
- teamwork
- working independently
- leadership

## **KNOWLEDGE** Base

This program will prepare students to:

- learn, understand and interpret information and apply knowledge to new situations
- set priorities, meet deadlines and effectively plan/manage time, data and resources
- make well-reasoned decisions, problem-solve challenges, think creatively and search for, identify and consider all sides of an issue
- analyze and interpret a wide range of information and data to discuss, support and/or reject ideas, opinions, reports, theories and proposals.

## Professional **RESOURCES**

- American Accounting Association: [aaahq.org](http://aaahq.org)
- Association of Financial Professionals: [afponline.org](http://afponline.org)
- Institute of Internal Auditors: [na.theiia.org](http://na.theiia.org)
- Institute of Management Accountants: [imanet.org](http://imanet.org)
- National Society of Accountants: [nsacct.org](http://nsacct.org)
- North Carolina Association of CPAs: [ncacpa.org](http://ncacpa.org)

## **QUESTIONS?**

For questions, please call the Accounting program at 828-227-3383 or visit [accounting.wcu.edu](http://accounting.wcu.edu).

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or [careerservices@wcu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wcu.edu).