Michigan State University  
Department of Accounting and Information Systems  

Honors Advising Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)  
7/11/16

We have an Accounting Honors Students D2L site. This site will be referred to as “our D2L site” in the document below. If the web links below break, cut and paste the address into your browser.

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

A: The degree requirements are listed on the Table of Contents on our D2L website. Please review these requirements carefully.

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: Do you have any recommendations regarding the sequence in which Accounting classes are taken?

A: Technically, honors students do not have to meet course prerequisites to register for a course. However, prerequisites exist for a reason. In general, they help to ensure that you are able to perform at your highest level in your classes. We recommend that you follow the prerequisite requirements. You should complete ACC201 and ACC202 before you take ACC300 and ACC321. 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 should be taken before ACC411 and ACC411 should be taken in your final year as an Accounting undergraduate.

We strongly recommend that you take ACC250 in your sophomore year or earlier.

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 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.asp?PType=MNUN

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

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.

You could also take 800 level courses to satisfy the remaining credits you need to graduate if there are seats available in those classes. You must obtain approval from the Director of the MSA program in order to register for 800 level accounting classes.

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 brought AP credits into MSU. 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 in order to receive an additional credit and have access to the MSU libraries.
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.

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 has a student chapter of the Institute of Management Accounting (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:

http://accounting.broad.msu.edu/events/institute-management-accountants-ima/

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:

http://msunaba.weebly.com/
Q8: What are the other requirements that I must meet to graduate with honors?

You must maintain an overall GPA of 3.2 and complete eight (8) Honors Experiences. Three of the Honors Experiences must be completed before the end of your sophomore year. Honors experiences can be met with honors sections of courses, honors options completed under a professor’s guidance, and/or 500, 800, or 900-level courses. Information about Honors Experiences can be found at:

http://honorscollege.msu.edu/honors-option

BE AWARE that summer courses often do not offer Honors sections or options. If you plan on taking summer courses, you need to take this fact into account. You must also file an H.C.A.P.P. Academic Progress Plan in May of each year. This can be found at:

http://honorscollege.msu.edu/academic-progress-plan

Q9: I have heard of Accounting Honors Students who were allowed to substitute one or more of their business core courses with classes that they find more interesting. Is that possible?

To some extent, yes. Keep in mind that the Business faculty have carefully chosen the core curriculum and opting out of a business core class is not a request that we take lightly. For a handful of very specific courses, the Honors Advisers may be able to help you to get approval for substitutions. In general, approval requires that the course be swapped for another course that is of similar or greater difficulty.

Q10: 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 once you complete your undergraduate accounting studies (including the 1-credit government and not-for-profit course mentioned in Q3); however, you have to 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.
Please see the certification requirements for Michigan here:

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

Q11: What are the requirements to take the CPA exam? When do I take it?

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/

Q12: 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”.

Q13: 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.

The GMAT exam may be required of a masters program. See the MS in Accounting Program Admissions information at www.broad.msu.edu for the criteria to be met to be exempted from the GMAT exam for MSU’s graduate program.

In order to apply to the MSA 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.

Q14: Are there ways I can work with faculty on research?

The Honors College has a “Professorial Assistant” program that is an excellent way to spend time with faculty who agree to work with you. For information on this and other opportunities, choose the Current Students tab at:

www.honorscollege.msu.edu