

Career Opportunities for Accounting Majors

For an SCU Accounting major, the world is your oyster. From opportunities in public accounting to consultancies to industry to government, there is always someone hiring accountants.

Santa Clara University's close relationships with Big Four and other significant accounting firms in San Francisco, Silicon Valley, and the Greater Bay Area enable our majors to interact with industry professionals who are looking for new talent. From Meet-The-Firms Night (our annual accounting career fair where over 25 firms come to campus), to monthly Coffee Chats with different firms, our majors have unique access to the job market before they graduate.



If you choose to start your career in public accounting, you will join a significant portion of our graduates. Public accounting firms range in size, from large, international firms (such as Deloitte, EY, KPMG, and PwC) with presence across most major cities to local and regional firms (such as Abbott, Stringham & Lynch, Armanino, BDO, BPM, Frank, Rimerman + Co, Grant Thornton, Moss Adams, Novogradac, RSM, and Sensiba San Filippo).

- Within the CPA firm, there are many areas, called “service lines,” where you can work. These are commonly grouped in the following categories: Assurance (or Audit), Tax, and Advisory/Consulting.
- The same holds true in business and industry, where you can choose to work at companies of all sizes, working in diverse areas financial accounting and reporting, managerial accounting, financial analysis, financial planning and analysis, corporate finance, and tax planning and compliance.
- Accountants can also provide services in specialized areas of accounting, such as business valuation, personal financial planning, IT consulting, and financial forensics.

CPA Certification

Many of our SCU accounting majors accelerate and expand their career opportunities after graduation by achieving Certified Public Accountant (CPA) certification. This professional certification opens many doors to leadership within companies. SCU's accounting curriculum provides the requisite classes and units for our students to successfully meet the requirements for CPA examination and licensure. Please refer to our [CPA Information](#) and [Course Advising](#) webpages for more information.



Potential Accounting Careers

Below are some popular career choices for accounting majors.

- **Certified Public Accounting**
Certified public accounting (CPA) firms provide accounting, assurance, tax, and consulting services for corporations, governments, nonprofits, and individuals. Many Accounting/A&IS majors begin their professional careers with CPA firms, which have deserved reputations for offering excellent training, annual promotion, opportunities to take on large amounts of responsibilities very early in a career, and a platform for launching careers in corporate accounting, finance, consulting, entrepreneurship, government, management, and other areas. CPA managers, directors, and partners have career experiences that translate to executive and C-level positions in private, public, and nonprofit corporations.
- **Tax Planning and Compliance**
Tax accountants are consistently in high demand for their services. Tax accountants determine tax strategies that defer or minimize tax payments while maximizing earnings, and arrange audits with taxation authorities. These accountants also prepare tax documents for a clientele that can include public and private companies, nonprofit organizations, and private individuals. Accounting/A&IS majors can develop careers paths as tax accountants within a CPA firm or a corporate entity, or later branch out into career paths that involve other accounting, finance, and/or management functions.
- **Corporate Finance**
Accounting/A&IS majors often work for a company's finance group in various capacities, including budgeting, FP&A, risk management, investors relations, or working as financial analysts, etc. These positions prepares Accounting/A&IS majors to become Financial Controllers, FP&A Directors, Chief Accounting Officers, and Chief Financial Officers.

- **Controllershship**
Financial controllers have the primary responsibility of managing all accounting, internal audit, internal control, and finance-related activities within a firm. Accounting/A&IS majors serve the controllership function in a variety of positions, developing experience that facilitates their advancement to Chief Financial Controller or Chief Financial Officer.
- **Financial Planning & Analysis**
The Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) team is responsible for all budgeting, forecasting, key performance indicators (KPIs), variance analysis, and related functions in a company. Many FP&A skills are taught in our Managerial Accounting courses. Accounting/A&IS majors can begin their careers as an FP&A analyst, or transfer to FP&A after gaining experience in public accounting. Along with controllership, FP&A experience is considered a potential stepping stone to the CFO position.
- **Investor Relations**
The Investor Relations (IR) team is responsible for managing communication between a company's corporate management and its investors, including the communication of financial results and expectations, marketing strategies, investment plans, financial risks, and valuation models with investors and equity analysts, and conveying investment community feedback to senior management. While companies rarely hire fresh graduates into IR positions, the sophisticated understanding of financial reports and analytic methods developed by Accounting/A&IS majors are important skills for IR managers.
- **Internal Audit**
The Internal Audit (IA) team is responsible for evaluating a company's internal controls, risk management policies, and IT processes. Internal auditors ensure that companies comply with relevant laws and regulations, help maintain accurate and timely financial reporting and data collection, and issue recommendations for correcting problems. Accounting/A&IS majors can be directly hired into corporate IA teams or transfer into IA positions after gaining audit experience at CPA firms.
- **Forensic Accounting / Special Agent**
Forensic accountants are in high demand and the career options available to them are diverse. For example, forensic accountants can investigate financial and securities fraud, computer fraud, money laundering, human trafficking, tax evasion, and much more. computer Additional Career choices for Accounting & Information Systems Majors Accounting/A&IS majors work as forensic accountants for CPA firms, professional consultancies, insurance companies, and government regulators, and as special agents for the FBI, SEC, and other investigatory entities.

Photos

- The photos in these pages were taken at Accounting career fairs in previous years.