

Course Advising for Accounting Majors

When planning your schedule, it is important that you think ahead and plan to take the courses you need to meet your goals. If you are pursuing CPA licensure, it is imperative that you ensure that you will meet the necessary requirements. Refer to our [CPA Information](#) webpage for more information.

The A&IS major is a combination of two LSB majors: Accounting and Management Information Systems. As a result, you will be taking major courses in two different departments. Students majoring in A&IS are required to take 12 major-specific classes: 7 from accounting and 5 from information systems.

Course advising for accounting majors is described in a separate webpage.

Useful page links:

- SCU Course [Bulletin](#)
- Information about [Pathways](#)
- Information regarding [prerequisites](#)
- Accounting major requirements [checklist](#)
- Information about [tentative course offerings](#) (This link brings you to the registrar's office main page. Select the link on this page that has the word "tentatives" in its title to find tentative course listings by quarter before they arrive on CourseAvail).
- How to complete your [course plan](#)
- Scheduling [tips](#)
- Guidelines for [first-year business students](#)



General advice for Accounting and A&IS majors:

1. The business school core curriculum requires business majors to take at least two accounting courses: ACTG 11 (Introduction to Financial Accounting) and ACTG 12 (Introduction to Managerial Accounting). Students typically take ACTG 11 in the fall or winter quarter of their sophomore year, and take ACTG 12 in the winter or spring quarter of the same year.

2. Don't be afraid to attend a career fair or recruiting event in your first year at SCU! It's never too early to begin looking at opportunities, especially if you identify as a minority or a first-generation student. Many CPA firms have diversity programs for first-year students that can lead to internships after your sophomore and junior years. Even if you're not set on majoring in Accounting or A&IS, these programs provide great work experience as well as resume builders that can help to kickstart your career.

3. Once you register as an A&IS major, the Accounting Department and SCU Accounting Association will continually send you information by email about upcoming events. Many of these events (e.g., Meet-The-Firms Night; Corporate Accounting Career Night; Accounting Information Night; Sophomore Accounting Career Fair) occur in the fall and winter quarters of your sophomore year.

4. The Accounting Department website maintains a [calendar of upcoming activities](#) and events for Accounting and A&IS majors. We recommend that you view this calendar on a weekly basis for updates.



5. Many Accounting and A&IS majors begin their professional careers at CPA firms. Advice for students interested in working at a CPA firm is included below under the following headings:

- Tips for Students interested in interning at a CPA firm
- Tips for Students who are interested in working for a CPA firm after graduation

6. SCU Accounting and A&IS alums serve in a variety of leadership positions at Professional CPA Firms (including all the Big Four), professional service and financial service firms like Accenture and Blackrock, and at both well-known and not-so-well-known companies throughout California and the rest of the nation. Most significant CPA firms designate SCU as a target school for their recruiting activities.

7. Most accounting professors previously worked at CPA firms and corporate businesses before joining SCU and they continue to interact with professionals at Silicon Valley CPA firms while working at SCU. Please contact your accounting professor, your SCU Accounting Association officers, and your accounting peer advisors if you have any questions about the recruiting process or about career opportunities for Accounting and A&IS majors.

8. The Accounting Department maintains a [set of recruiting guidelines](#) that CPA firms must follow when recruiting SCU Accounting and A&IS majors. The guidelines are designed to provide a level playing field among the recruiting firms and insure that students have the time they need to adequately consider their internship and employment options. Based on feedback from students and firms, we continually update these guidelines to create a constructive recruiting environment for our majors.

9. The SCU Center for Accounting Research and Education (CARE) organizes information and networking events for SCU Accounting and A&IS majors and supports our students in their recruiting interactions with CPA firms. Please contact us (actg-care@scu.edu) if you encounter recruiters who are not following the SCU Accounting Program recruiting guidelines or if you wish to consider alternative career decisions.

10. Effective September 2023, the SCU Accounting and Information Systems (A&IS) major will receive a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) designation.

- A STEM designation formally recognizes how the A&IS program educates students in information technological aspects of the accounting field and further enhances the major's reputation in the workplace that increasingly places an emphasis on greater analytical and information technology skills.
- With this designation, eligible A&IS students holding a student visa may apply to extend their 12 months of optional practical training for an additional 24 months after graduation.



Tips about accounting courses:

1. ACTG 120 (Accounting Data Analysis and Visualization) is designed to be taken in your sophomore year, though students can take it in either their sophomore or junior years.

2. Students can enroll in both ACTG 120 and ACTG 134 (Accounting Information Systems) in their sophomore year. The only prerequisite for ACTG 134 is ACTG 12, but students can be enrolled in both concurrently. We recommend that students take ACTG 134 in either their sophomore or junior years.

3. Business majors must take either OMIS 34 (Science, Information Technology, Business and Society) or ACTG 134 to fulfil part of the business school core curriculum. However, students who take OMIS 34 before declaring an accounting major will still need to take ACTG 134 to meet the requirements of the

accounting major. In other words, ACTG 134 can replace OMIS 34 for the purpose of meeting the accounting major requirements.

4. ACTG 130 (Intermediate Financial Accounting I) is the prerequisite for most upper division accounting courses, so it is best to get it done as early as possible. Since students must have junior standing to take ACTG 130, we encourage students to take ACTG 130 in the fall of their third year, unless they are studying abroad. If students study abroad in the fall quarter of their third year, then they should take ACTG 130 in the winter of their third year.

5. ACTG 131 is typically taken in the quarter following ACTG 130.

6. Each required accounting course (e.g. ACTG 130, ACTG 138, etc.) is usually offered in two different quarters each academic year. Please refer to the “Accounting Upper Division Cheat Sheet” (see the link below) to determine when accounting courses will be offered each quarter.

7. While it is important you get all the courses you need, you will need to remain somewhat flexible with the timing of when you take each course. Given the demand for accounting classes and the limited number of seats available, some of the most popular courses may have a wait list. The SCU Accounting Department guarantees that each Accounting major will be able to take at least one required accounting course per quarter in your junior and senior years (as long as the course is scheduled for that quarter).

8. Some of the required courses offered by the Accounting Department and the business school take more time than others. Among these are ACTG 131 (Intermediate Financial Accounting I), ACTG 138 (Taxation), BUSN 179 (Business Writing), and MGMT 162 (Business Capstone). If possible, we recommend that students do not take any of these courses during the same quarter. If you must take two of these courses in the same quarter, we recommend that you do not take an overload of courses in that quarter. The workload associated with these classes is very high, so we tend to see students having more success with these classes when they are spread out across a student’s schedule.



9. SCU students are required to supplement their core curriculum courses with a “Pathway” cluster of courses that promote integrative and intentional learning. While business majors have a multitude of Pathway options to choose from, many Accounting majors elect Design Thinking or Applied Ethics because both include classes that overlap with other coursework. Please refer to SCU’s “Pathways” webpage for more information (see the link above).

10. Workday will not let you register for more than 19 units in your initial registration period. Sometimes you will find that the courses that you want to take are full. If you defer taking some 4-unit lower division core classes until your junior or senior years (when you are mostly taking 5- unit upper division courses),

you can optimize your schedule to take exactly 19 units (3 upper division, 1 lower division) in a single quarter.

11. Though Workday will not let you register for more than 19 units in your initial registration period, many Accounting majors end up taking more than 19 units in some quarters. Students can register for the additional units starting the first day of the quarter.



Tips for students interested in interning at a CPA firm

1. Many SCU A&IS majors intern at CPA firms during the summer following their third (junior) year). CPA firms conduct formal interviews for these internships at two different times:

- Sophomore winter quarter interviews
- Junior fall quarter interviews

2. *Sophomore winter quarter internship interviews.* Many A&IS majors interview for junior summer internships during the winter quarter of their sophomore year (more than a year before these internships begin). About one-third of A&IS majors accept CPA internships through the winter interview process. The SCU Accounting Department holds a career fair in mid-February so that students can discuss these internship opportunities with CPA firms. Students who receive internship offers from these interviews will have acceptance deadlines ranging from May through August. Students who are not ready to accept these “early” offers can decline the offer and interview again with the same firm (and other firms) in the fall quarter.



3. *Junior fall quarter internship interviews.* A&IS majors interview for junior summer internships during the fall quarter of their junior year. About one-third of A&IS majors accept internships at CPA firms and other consultancies through these fall interviews. The SCU Accounting Association holds a career fair (Meet-The-Firms Night) in the second week of the fall quarter so that students can discuss these internship opportunities with CPA firms. Students who receive internship offers from these interviews will have an acceptance deadline of the Friday before Thanksgiving.

4. CPA firm internships typically provide three types of services: advisory, assurance, and tax related services. Many A&IS students intern in one of these areas during the summer following their junior year (assurance is the most popular of the three service lines). Knowing this, we recommend that you take either ACTG 135 (Audit) or ACTG 138 (Taxation) before your summer internship based on the service line you choose (e.g., if you are hired as an advisory or assurance intern, taking ACTG 135 will help you better understand the work you will be doing as an intern). That being said, please plan ahead as much as possible: the Accounting Department cannot guarantee that you will be able to take ACTG 135 or 138 in your junior year just because you have an internship in that field.

5. Students who do not get CPA firm internships (or did not receive or accept a full-time position following a junior summer internship) can interview for full-time positions at CPA firms during the fall quarter of their senior year. All CPA firms that recruit as SCU will seek to hire senior A&IS majors who have not previously accepted a position.

Tips for students who are interested in working for a CPA firm after graduation

1. There are educational requirements which must be met if you want to become a licensed CPA. These requirements require students to take a certain number of courses in specific subject areas and a minimum number of units of education at a college or university. Santa Clara Accounting and A&IS majors are typically able to meet the educational requirements for CPA licensure in California with our four-year program.

- Careful course planning is essential and we encourage students who are considering Accounting or A&IS majors to familiarize themselves with the resources listed in our [CPA Information webpage](#).
- If you wish to become licensed in a state other than California, you will need to check with the Board of Accountancy in that state, as licensure requirements differ across states.
- Many CPA firms in California will not allow their new employees to begin working fulltime after graduation until they meet the educational requirements for CPA licensure.

2. CPA candidates in California must complete 45 units of accounting courses before obtaining a CPA license. All SCU Accounting and A&IS majors meet this requirement by completing the required courses in their majors. It is not possible for students in other majors (other than Accounting or A&IS) to meet this requirement without taking post-graduate courses.



3. CPA candidates must complete 225 quarter units of education before obtaining a CPA license. Most SCU A&IS majors create course plans to meet this requirement before graduation (qualifying units can include advanced placement courses that transferred to SCU, as well as course units taken at other colleges and universities). Please contact the Drahmann Center Faculty Advisor for Accounting (Wendy Donohoe), an A&IS peer advisor, or your faculty advisor for assistance in developing a course plan to meet this goal.

4. CPA candidates must take an accounting ethics course before obtaining a CPA license. Though not required for A&IS majors, we recommend that students take ACTG 144 (Accounting Ethics) if you wish to eventually be licensed as a CPA in California. If you are deciding to pursue a CPA certification, it is important you factor this course into your schedule. Please refer to the “Accounting Upper Division Cheat Sheet” (see the link below) to determine when ACTG 144 will be offered each quarter. Note: since this course is not required for the major, it can be taken on a P/NP basis.

5. Students interested in obtaining additional units for CPA licensure can consider taking the contemporary business seminar series offered to juniors (ACTG 161; 162) and seniors (ACTG 171, 172) during the fall and winter quarters of their final two years. Each course is 2-units and may be taken on a P/NP basis. Space in each course is guaranteed for any Accounting or A&IS major who wishes to take the course.

6. Students can also obtain additional units for CPA licensure by registering for ACTG 198 (Accounting Internship) during the quarter in which they work in local accounting or corporate firms. Students can register for independent study units ranging from 2-10 units on a P/NP basis.

7. Studying abroad will not inhibit a student’s ability to graduate on time nor become CPA eligible. The Accounting and A&IS programs are designed so that students can study abroad and complete all their coursework within four years.

Additional advising resources

- Link to the most recent [Accounting Annual Group Advising Session](#) information (held in Spring Quarter)
- [Schedule](#) of upper division accounting courses for current academic year
- LSB Accounting [Peer Advisors](#)
- Drahmann Center Faculty Advisor for Accounting Department ([Wendy Donohoe](#))

Photos

- The photos in these pages were taken at one of the previous Accounting/A&IS Senior BBQs hosted by the SCU Accounting Department and held at the Adobe Lodge.

