Q: Why would someone want to earn a Master of Professional Accounting (MPAcc) degree?
A: Increasingly, accountants serve both their immediate clients and the public in understanding and evaluating complex transactions. Whether in an audit, management accounting and consulting, or tax advisory role, a contemporary accountant needs the theoretical and practical background offered by a Master of Professional Accounting degree. In recognition of this need, most states (including Washington) now require an additional year of education beyond the four years generally needed for a bachelor’s degree to qualify for the CPA examination. The MPAcc program offers students the opportunity to earn a master’s degree in accounting while meeting the 5th year educational requirement to become a Certified Public Accountant.

Q: What’s the advantage of the MPAcc over other methods of meeting the additional educational requirement?
A: The MPAcc curriculum targets a student’s additional study to meet expected professional needs in areas such as auditing, financial reporting, and other related professional areas such as finance and operations. It signals potential employers that an individual has the intellectual potential for more challenging and complex work as well as the skills and discipline required to advance rapidly in the profession.

Q: Why should I consider the WWU MPAcc?
A: Western’s MPAcc program combines a high-quality faculty, a professional level education, small classes, and a collegial environment. All of these attributes enhance an MPAcc student’s experience.

Since the revised curriculum began in Fall Quarter 2013, 18 students have enrolled in MPAcc Program. All 18 have secured a professional accounting internship, successfully graduated on time, and joined a local, regional, or global public accounting firm with the majority employed by Moss Adams, EY, VSH, and Clark Nuber.

Q: How does the MPAcc compare with other graduate business programs?
A: The greatest similarity is the common commitment to professional level education. The difference between the MPAcc and the MBA is the focus of study. The MPAcc focuses on the technical and conceptual skills required of an accounting professional.
What is the MPAcc?

Q: How is the typical MPAcc structured?
A: MPAcc programs combine theory and practice. Usually, students take a variety of advanced seminars, other graduate courses within a college of business and economics, and may complete an internship in professional accounting.

Q: What about the MPAcc curriculum at WWU? How is the schedule organized?
A: At WWU, the MPAcc requires continuous enrollment in the colloquium series (every quarter for 1-2 credits per quarter, totaling 4 credits per year), and a comprehensive exam as part of the capstone course taught during Spring Quarter. The program design permits students to customize their graduate study by taking courses that complement their undergraduate coursework. MPAcc students may select from more than a dozen graduate-level electives. Students may also receive credit for an Internship in Professional Accounting.

Entrance/Application Details

Q: When can I start the WWU MPAcc program?
A: The next MPAcc class will begin in Fall Quarter. Because of the integrated nature of the curriculum, a new cohort of students will enter full-time study every September and graduate in the following June.

Q: Is it possible to start the program in the Winter Quarter rather than the Fall Quarter?
A: Currently this program has a Fall Quarter start date only.

Q: What if I do not have an undergraduate degree in accounting?
A: The MPAcc is designed for students with substantial undergraduate coursework in accounting. Usually, this means an undergraduate accounting major. If a prospective student has a bachelor’s degree in another field, he or she will have to complete significant undergraduate study in accounting and related fields prior to entering the MPAcc. The specific number of courses depends on a student’s prior undergraduate program.

Q: Do I need to submit official transcripts if I transferred to WWU as an undergraduate?
A: If you previously transferred classes from a community college or university as an undergraduate, you do not need to submit official transcripts to Western a second time. However, if you took additional courses at a different institution, official copies of those new transcripts must be submitted. In other words, anything that wasn't submitted to Western previously, must be submitted with your application.

Q: Are MPAcc applicants required to submit a Statement of Purpose?
A: Yes, a Statement of Purpose is required. The average length is one to two pages. It should include: 1) how the WWU MPAcc will enable you to advance your career goals, 2) your choice of the Western MPAcc over other academic options, 3) the attributes you will bring to the program to contribute to an effective graduate school experience for both you and your classmates.
Q: What are the entrance requirements and how do I apply?
A: Admission to the MPAcc program is competitive and selective. State law requires a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 90 credits completed. We require a 3.2 GPA in upper-division accounting coursework. Depending on the strength of the other qualifications, a GMAT score much lower than 600 will usually not be sufficient.

See our website for application details: https://cbe.wwu.edu/acct/mpacc

Graduate application process:

Q: If I submit my application prior to the February 15 priority deadline, but my GMAT scores are not submitted until after that date, will my application then be considered only if there is space in the program?
A: You may submit your application prior to taking the GMAT. However, we must have an unofficial GMAT score to consider an application and make an admission decision.

Q: The graduate program admission site mentions letters of recommendation but the MPAcc page does not. Could you clarify this for me please?
A: Letters of reference are not required. They may be submitted to augment your application or if you are close to the admission standard and you think they may help the admission committee.

Program Details

Q: Is this a daytime or evening program?
A: This is a full-time day program. Students who need to work full-time might consider WWU's evening MBA program.

Q: Is it possible to do the MPAcc program part time (e.g., over a 2-year period)?
A: No, this program requires a full-time commitment during Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters. We urge students to limit outside commitments while they are enrolled. During the Spring Quarter, students will also be required to take a comprehensive exam.

Q: How do I get a Winter Quarter internship? What if I don’t have an internship?
A: The Department does not provide the internships; however, relationships with potential employers have been developing over time and students should have a number of options for the internship. Students find their own internships with the assistance of a graduate career advisor. Most public accounting internships will qualify for credit. Please contact the internship coordinator or department chair to inquire about non-public accounting internships.

Q: Who can I talk to about the WWU MPAcc program?
A: Dr. Burak Dolar Burak.Dolar@wwu.edu or (360) 650-2270
Dr. Audrey Taylor: Audrey.Taylor@wwu.edu or (360) 650-2204
Scholarship Opportunities

Q: Are there scholarships available?
A: Yes, there are scholarships available to MPAcc students.

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