

# The Road to 150: Four Options for Maximizing the Final 30 Credits

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The journey to becoming a CPA is filled with myriad requirements and, oftentimes, various twists and turns. The first step to achieve this desired goal is the education requirement. The path for the first 120 credits is usually straightforward, since most students follow the university's curriculum in taking the required classes needed to earn a bachelor's degree in accounting. The remaining 30 credits are not as straightforward, as students are offered more flexibility in choosing classes to take to complete the educational requirement needed for licensure.

The freedom that these last 30 credits affords can be a double-edged sword. While the freedom and flexibility provide a great opportunity for candidates to branch out and focus on specific subjects of their choosing, it can be daunting for those overwhelmed by numerous options. The road to 150 credits is an experience that will be different for each person, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Below are four options to consider when selecting courses to fulfill the 30 credits.

## 1. IMPROVE ACCOUNTING KNOWLEDGE

Most students have one or more areas of the accounting curriculum they could improve on. Devoting time to these areas by taking additional classes would certainly help strengthen any weak areas.

Peruse the college course catalog and select subjects/topics that will enhance knowledge in those areas. Gaining more exposure in a specific area can also help prepare candidates for the CPA Exam.

## 2. SELECT AN ACCOUNTING CONCENTRATION

College is a great time to begin to explore various interests within the accounting profession. Candidates don't have to wait for an internship or first job to begin this exploration. The accounting field is quite extensive; the opportunities in the profession are endless, just like the various options for concentrations. Forensic accounting, data analytics, finance and real estate are just a few of the many concentrations in which students can take a deeper dive. For candidates who are not looking to obtain a master's degree, this is a great option for the remaining 30 credits.

## 3. EXPLORE GENERAL CLASSES OF INTEREST

For students who are at the point where they feel comfortable with the number of accounting-related courses they have already taken, there is a benefit to exploring outside of the accounting arena. Students can consider other classes or courses that intrigue them and spark their interest. The accounting profession caters to many different industries: music, real estate,

construction, technology, pharmaceutical and more. For example, a student interested in music could take a music theory course. Those credits could help set them apart when applying for an accounting position in the music industry.

## 4. EARN A MASTER'S DEGREE

Another popular option that most candidates consider is the master's degree route. Colleges often have a five-year accounting track where a candidate can earn both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. Some colleges even offer a hybrid BS/MS where you can earn both degrees in less than five years. There are various graduate programs to choose from such as an MST (Master's in Taxation), MAcc (Master's in Accountancy) or MBA (Master's in Business Administration). These are all great ways to earn a dual degree while at the same time fulfilling the necessary 150 credits. This option is also more straightforward, as candidates can simply follow the five-year track of course offerings as outlined by their university.

The road to 150 is not set in stone. Each person's path for the last 30 credits can be customized to meet their needs and prepare them for a successful accounting career. 📚

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