

On your way to **BECOMING A CPA**



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Congratulations, your dream job awaits!

You have chosen one of the most respected, challenging and lucrative career paths available. Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) are advancing the state of business in Ohio in many cool and exciting ways. From Ohio's lieutenant governor to the CFO of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame to the managing partner of a public accounting firm, CPAs have a hand in driving Ohio's economy and helping businesses succeed.

As an accounting major or professional, you have many paths open to you after you graduate and enter the business world. Becoming a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) is a great step you can take toward a successful career.

CPAs have more earning power and career advancement opportunities than non-credentialed accountants. Starting salaries for accounting grads are on the rise and on par with engineering and computer science majors. And CPAs are sought out in business for their expertise and consultation.

There are six steps on your way to becoming a CPA:

1. Complete the education requirements
2. Take the CPA exam
3. Fulfill the ethics requirement
4. Gain the required work experience
5. Apply for licensure
6. Complete a criminal background check

This guide will walk you through the steps involved and outline the resources available to help you achieve your CPA designation.

The Ohio Society of CPAs (OSCPA) partners with the accounting profession to advance the state of business so Ohio can enjoy a healthy and sustainable economic environment.

With more than 100 years of experience, OSCPA represents 85,000 CPAs and accounting professionals who are the strategic financial advisors to Ohio's leading businesses.

OSCPA is driven by its values in professionalism, integrity, excellence and diversity to advance the accounting profession and build stronger communities across Ohio.

OSCPA is a hub of knowledge, learning and advocacy for members and we provide a vibrant, solutions-oriented community to help CPAs and the businesses they serve succeed.

These are just a few ways The Ohio Society of CPAs is helping to advance the CPA profession:

- Led efforts to overhaul Ohio's municipal income tax rules
- Fought off a proposed sales tax on accounting and professional services
- Advocated for improved national audit quality standards
- Helped Ohio become the first state to allow CPAs to earn credit for nano learning
- Recognized for efforts to build a more diverse Ohio accounting workforce

The Ohio Society of CPAs is committed to providing you with resources and connections that will help you earn the CPA credential and begin your journey to a rewarding, lifetime career.

We're here to serve as your link to all things accounting, including the CPA exam, accounting career paths, scholarships and more.

Let's get started!



STEP 1

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

To sit for the exam in the state of Ohio, you need to have completed 150 semester hours (225 quarter hours) of college education. Ohio institutions offer a variety of programs to meet the demands of a 150-hour educational requirement. The Accountancy Board of Ohio requires Ohio CPAs to have 30 semester hours in accounting (or 24 hours in accounting courses above the introductory level) and 24 hours in business courses.

Additional credits can help hone communication skills (writing and speech), expand information technology expertise, widen accounting knowledge and polish professional research skills. Because many entry-level accountants will have advanced degrees upon entering the workforce, OSCPAs encourages graduate education. Some options include pursuing a Master's of Accountancy, a Master's of Taxation or an MBA.

If you have met the accounting and business course requirements, but not the 150 semester credits, you may take the CPA exam if you achieve a score of 620 or better on the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT).

Considering a Career in Accounting as a CPA?

University of Findlay will prepare you for a meaningful life and productive career.

- Seamless transition from a CPA track to our MBA Program
 - Both can be completed within five years
 - Classes are online or on-campus
- Emphasis on professional work experience
 - Hands-on learning and mentoring
 - Study abroad opportunities
- 150 college credit hours are required before taking the CPA exam
 - UF exceeds Ohio's requirement for credit hours in business and accounting

GET STARTED TODAY!
VISIT WWW.FINDLAY.EDU/ACCOUNTING

STEP 2

THE CPA EXAM

Applying

The CPA exam is a uniform, standardized examination that all those who wish to earn the CPA credential must take. It consists of four sections: Auditing and Attestation (AUD), Business Environment and Concepts (BEC), Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR), and Regulation (REG).

You must pass all four parts within an 18-month timeframe. Each section is between three and four hours long.



Starting in April 2017, the CPA exam will undergo some changes. The exam will increase to 16 hours – four hours for each part. The new questions will test higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking and analytical ability. Contact OSCPAs for more details in early 2017.

The exam is managed jointly by:

- The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA), which oversees the candidate database
- The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA), which develops and scores the exam
- Prometric, which offers the authorized test sites to deliver the exam

CPAs are the only licensed accounting professionals. State boards of accountancy issue CPA licenses in 55 jurisdictions – all 50 U.S. states – as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. There is no national CPA licensure in the United States.

Visit the Accountancy Board of Ohio’s website at www.acc.ohio.gov for the most up-to-date information and rules specific to Ohio candidates.

Prior to scheduling your exam, you will need to complete and submit an online application and academic transcript. Please note, you may no longer submit a Certificate of Enrollment in place of your transcript in order to schedule your exam. You can find the online application on NASBA’s website at: <https://nasba.org/exams/cpaexam/ohio/>.

According to the Accountancy Board of Ohio, you can apply to take as many of the four sections of the exam as you wish, but should only apply for a section if you are ready to take it within the next six months. To speed the process, ensure your application is complete and accurate. CPA Examination Services, a division of NASBA, will contact you once they have reviewed your application.

You will be required to pay an application fee as well as an examination fee. The current fee amounts as of August 2016 are:

Examination fees	
First-time Application Fee	\$155.00
Auditing and Attestation (AUD)	\$193.45
Business Environment and Concepts (BEC)	\$173.60
Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR)	\$193.45
Regulation (REG)	\$173.60

Fees are subject to change. Please check the Accountancy Board of Ohio’s website at www.acc.ohio.gov for up-to-date information.

Scheduling

Once NASBA has verified your eligibility, you will receive a Notice to Schedule (NTS), allowing you to choose the time and location of your exam. You must take the exam at a Prometric testing site. Visit www.prometric.com to find a testing site near you and schedule your exam.

OSCPAs suggests that you avoid scheduling all four exam sections in one testing window. Take the sections individually and in any order. A good rule of thumb is to take the exam section you feel most confident about first. A positive test experience will boost your confidence as you prepare for the next section.

The CPA exam is only offered in a computerized format and is offered five (and sometimes six) days per week during two months of every quarter. These periods are known as testing windows.

Testing is available	Testing is NOT available
January and February	March*
April and May	June
July and August	September
October and November	December*

* There will be an extended testing window in December 2016 and March 2017. Check www.acc.ohio.gov for exact testing dates.

STEP 3

FULFILL THE ETHICS REQUIREMENT

You can take the sections during any testing window and in any order you wish. Once you pass one exam section, you have 18 months to pass the remaining three sections. (Refer to the Accountancy Board of Ohio for any specific rules that may apply to Ohio candidates.)

Studying

There are four sections of the CPA exam:

- **Auditing and Attestation (AUD)** covers knowledge of auditing procedures, generally accepted auditing standards and other standards related to attest engagements, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.
- **Business Environment and Concepts (BEC)** addresses knowledge of general business environment and business concepts that candidates need to know in order to understand the underlying business reasons for and accounting implications of business transactions, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.
- **Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR)** focuses on knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles for business enterprises, not-for-profit organizations, and governmental entities, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.
- **Regulation (REG)** assesses knowledge of federal taxation, ethics, professional and legal responsibilities, and business law, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

OSCPA recommends completing the exam tutorial and sample tests at www.cpa-exam.org before taking any parts of the actual exam. Getting familiar with the exam in advance will give you an added measure of confidence on testing day.

Exam resources

There are numerous CPA exam review providers offering tools and resources to help you prepare for the exam. See page 15 for a list of providers that offer OSCP members-only discounts.

What happens after the exam?

After you successfully complete each section of the exam, Prometric forwards your responses to the AICPA for scoring. The AICPA then forwards your score to NASBA for processing. Once you pass the exam in its entirety (within 18 months), NASBA will forward your scores to the Accountancy Board of Ohio.

The Accountancy Board of Ohio requires three hours of CPE credit in Professional Standards and Responsibilities, commonly known as “ethics,” in order to apply for or renew an Ohio CPA license. OSCP offers the course in locations across the state and throughout the year to help exam candidates satisfy the requirement. For a full list of applicable courses, visit www.ohiocpa.com/cpe/ethics.

STEP 4

GAIN THE REQUIRED WORK EXPERIENCE

The experience required for the Ohio CPA certificate consists of performing one or more public accounting activities as defined by the Accountancy Board of Ohio’s rules. The experience must be verified by a CPA. You may earn experience through employment in public accounting or employment outside public accounting (i.e. business, government or academia). And yes, internship experience does count! The Accountancy Board of Ohio evaluates part-time experience (fewer than 40 hours per week) at the rate of 2,000 hours per year. The Accountancy Board of Ohio defines the amount of experience required as follows:

- One year of experience is required if you complete 150 semester hours of college credit prior to sitting for the CPA examination.
- One year of experience is required if you do not need to meet the 150-hour requirement because you sat for the CPA examination prior to the year 2000.
- Two years is required if you complete fewer than 150 semester hours of college credit prior to sitting for the CPA examination, but have the 150 semester hours of college credit prior to CPA certification.
- Four years is required if you have obtained a partial waiver of the 150 semester hours by achieving a total score of 620 on the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT).

STEP 5

APPLY FOR LICENSURE

Congratulations!

You're ready to apply for your CPA license. You need to complete the following Accountancy Board of Ohio forms:

- CPA Certificate Application - Original
 - Requires three non-family reference signatures
 - Must be notarized
- Record of Experience Form - complete one for each employer
 - If your supervisor is (or was) not a CPA, you must also complete a Statement of Verifying CPA Form for the relevant position.
- Ethics Course Verification Certificate

For a complete list of forms, fees and requirements, visit the Accountancy Board of Ohio's website at www.acc.ohio.gov.

STEP 6

COMPLETE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

You're in the final stretch!

Before you can receive your CPA license or a reciprocal license in Ohio, you must submit to a criminal records check by the Bureau of Criminal Investigation & Identification (BCI). The criminal records check will include an FBI criminal records check.

Ohio applicants are required to use "WebCheck," Ohio's electronic fingerprint system, to electronically submit their fingerprints to BCI. The Board will typically receive the results of a criminal records check submitted via "WebCheck" within 7 to 10 business days.

Out-of-state applicants (persons living outside Ohio) will receive instructions and fingerprint cards upon receipt of the CPA certificate application.

In addition to the BCI fee (currently \$22) and FBI fee (currently \$24), the electronic fingerprinting company or agency will charge an additional handling fee to process the fingerprints.

Since the law requires you to complete a criminal records check with both the BCI and the FBI, you MUST use the services of a vendor that participates in the "National WebCheck." The Sheriff's offices in most 88 Ohio counties participate in the "National WebCheck." A list of all "Webcheck" vendors, searchable by county, is available online at the following link: www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/webcheck.



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A **Master of Accountancy (MAcc)** from Cleveland State's Monte Ahuja College of Business can help you stand out from the competition within your organization.

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Invest in yourself. Visit csuohio.edu/macc for more information and to apply.



Accountancy Board of Ohio - www.acc.ohio.gov

Confirm CPA exam requirements, required courses, list of foreign credential evaluation services, current application fees and certificate and CPA license requirements.

American Institute of CPAs - www.aicpa.org and www.ThisWaytoCPA.com

Discover all of the opportunities available as a CPA, review skills for success, and explore industries and specializations.

National Association of State Boards of Accountancy - www.nasba.org

Apply online for the exam and download forms such as testing accommodations request and score reprints. Find re-exam information if you previously applied to take the exam and were found eligible to take any section of the exam.

Prometric - www.prometric.com/cpa

Locate a testing center to schedule, reschedule, cancel or confirm an exam.

The Ohio CPA Foundation - www.ohiocpafoundation.org

Apply for college scholarships, participate in leadership programs, and learn about a variety of student events and programs.

The Ohio Society of CPAs - www.ohiocpa.com/students

Find news and information for accounting students and recent graduates, become a student member, and connect with other students and CPA professionals.

Uniform CPA Examination - www.cpa-exam.org

View the exam tutorial, take a sample test, view exam FAQs, find information about how to prepare for the exam, and access professional literature.

The right CPA review course can mean the difference between passing and failing. Whether you want live instruction or self-study, OSCPA's partners offer you many opportunities and tools to help you succeed.

Below is the complete list of CPA exam review course providers that offer discounts to OSCPA members:

Another71.com + NINJA CPA Review - www.another71.com

Becker Professional Education - www.becker.com

Fast Forward Academy - www.fastforwardacademy.com

Gleim CPA - www.gleim.com

Lambers CPA Review - www.lambers.com/cpa

MDS CPA Review - www.mdscpareview.com

Roger CPA Review - www.rogerCPAreview.com

Surgent CPA Review - www.surgent.com/cpareview

Wiley CPA Review - www.efficientlearning.com/wileycpaexcel

Yaeger CPA Review - www.yaegercpareview.com

For links to the member discounts, visit www.ohiocpa.com/my-oscpa/ways-to-save.



The OSCPA Career Center is your personal career concierge, assisting you at every professional stage, beginning in college.

- **Read articles on how to build career success skills**
- **Get advice from a career coach on resume and interview prep**
- **Post your resume and search for internships**
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Learn how to reach your full potential at

www.ohiocpa.com/careercenter

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*Based on OSCPA discounted Select Course Package of \$1,440.75 at an APR of 10%, paid over 12 months. Does not include shipping or taxes.

WE'RE EXCITED TO HELP YOU JUMP-START YOUR CAREER.



Accounting is one of the
fastest rising careers

11% expected growth rate by
2024 according to the U.S.
Bureau of Labor Statistics

U.S. News & World Report
rates accountants as the

#3 best business job
for 2016



OSCPA will sponsor your **FREE** student membership until you graduate. Become a student member today by completing this brief application.

FREE student membership in The Ohio Society of CPAs

A **FREE** student membership helps you kick start your future and move successfully from college to career with these great benefits:

- Opportunities to earn thousands of dollars in scholarships through The Ohio CPA Foundation
- Career Center resources, including career coaching, job search tips, and internship and job opportunities
- Discounts on CPA exam review courses
- Networking events, including social and sporting events
- Ways to connect with accounting professionals on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Snapchat
- News and information on the accounting profession and business world
- Learn more at www.ohiocpa.com/students

Join and explore all of OSCPAs benefits as you prepare for your future career as a CPA.

Complete the membership application today or go online at www.ohiocpa.com/studentsjoin.

College Student Membership Application

Required

Name _____

College/University _____

Graduation Date _____ Email _____

Cell _____ Are we able to send you notifications via text?

Birthday _____

Optional

Permanent Address _____

Secondary Email _____

High School Attended _____

Gender _____ Race _____ Level of Education _____

Major: Accounting Finance Economics Business Undecided

Other _____

Questions? Contact your Member Service Center at
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“The ASCEND Leadership Conference strengthened my confidence in pursuing my dream of becoming a CPA. Connecting with practicing CPAs, recruiters and other accounting majors provided new insights to the possibilities ahead and further solidified my decision to pursue the CPA license.”

– Nate Williams, 2015 ASCEND Leadership Conference participant

The Ohio CPA Foundation creates opportunities for you to:

- Get an inside look at the profession.
- Meet CPAs and learn about career paths you may have never considered.
- Be inspired to pursue an accounting degree and become a CPA.

Learn more about programs and scholarships at www.ohiocpafoundation.org.



Investing in the Future



MAKE YOUR ACCOUNTANCY EDUCATION COUNT

Choosing a college for your accountancy degree is one of the most important decisions of your life. Choose the school that puts student success first.

#2 Public Institution for Undergraduate Teaching
#2 for Study Abroad – **60%** of Farmer School students participate

#3 Undergraduate and **#4** Masters Accountancy Programs among schools without doctoral programs
TOP 10 College for Fortune CEOs

That's why the job placement for accountancy graduates is **99%** and nearly twice as many employers recruit at Miami as compared with other universities our size.

Whether your goal is a Bachelor's, Master's or combined degree, our faculty will be by your side every step of the way.

And, our innovative **3+1 COMBINED BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S DEGREE** makes it possible for you to graduate with both degrees in four years and be immediately qualified to sit for the CPA examination in the state of Ohio and many other states.

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With our comprehensive study materials, you'll be 100% ready by exam day and will feel perfectly at home in the Prometric testing environment. You will also be able to contact our CPA Exam expert mentors at any time during your exam preparation; they are available by phone or email.



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you get very good at
matching
skilled candidates to
accounting positions.

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