Greetings!! Winter semester is now in full swing. I hope that everyone had a restful break and spent quality time with family and friends as we begin to tackle the new semester.

I am happy about what we accomplished during the fall semester at the School of Accounting. One of the most important accomplishments was curricular.

The program changes should be in place for the next academic year. The most important curriculum change is the addition of two emphases in the MSA program. In the past many MSA graduates have completed significant graduate coursework in either taxation or finance, but received no credential recognizing their advanced competencies in these areas. Once the program changes are approved, a student will be able to incorporate either a taxation or a finance emphasis. This will also help employers easily identify such individuals from academic transcripts. Revisions have also been made to MSA requirements.

Minor changes have been made in the scheduling of graduate courses for next year. These changes were made to encourage students to start the CPA exam while still in the program. For fall 2011 two courses are scheduled that will help students with the regulation section of the exam. In winter 2012 the student can register for auditing in preparation for that section of the exam. In addition, starting in May students have the opportunity to sign-up for accounting BOOT CAMP at GVSU. Becker’s FastPass starts on May 9th and ends on August 9th with plenty of time in between to study and take the various sections of the exam.

Again, as always, I welcome your suggestions for improvement.

Regards,
Denise de la Rosa, Ph.D.

The School of Accounting scholarship application form was emailed to all declared accounting majors on January 17, check your email so you don’t miss this opportunity.

Accounting majors with an overall cumulative GPA and an Accounting GPA of 3.2 or higher and who have completed or are currently enrolled in a 300 level accounting class are invited to apply for scholarships offered through the School of Accounting. Applicants need not apply for each of our scholarships individually as this application will be reviewed by the Scholarship Committee to determine qualifications for specific awards.

The deadline for submitting scholarship applications is February 11th, 2011. Awards are announced in April for assistance to begin the following academic year. Direct any questions regarding this application to Professor Lara L. Kessler (email: kessllar@gvsu.edu or 331-7260).

Tutoring Here, There and Everywhere

Start your semester off on a positive note by taking advantage of tutoring offered by School of Accounting Graduate Assistants for ACC 212 & ACC 213. We have several graduate assistants that are ready to help answer your questions as you work your way through your course. Tutors are here nearly 40 hours per week in room 468C DEV. The tutoring schedule is available from your instructor, the School of Accounting office, and is posted on the tutoring office door.

Tracking our grads….

Please! We need your help! The School of Accounting is separately accredited by AACSB and one of our required challenges is to track placement of our students after they graduate. When you accept an offer of employment, it would be an immense help if you could shoot us an email to share this information; company name and job title are what we need. We know you want to get on with life when you graduate but having placement statistics helps the School of Accounting to improve our programs and this will benefit future students. Info can be sent to goralskk@gvsu.edu. Thank you all.

NEW this semester!
Tutoring for ACC 310 & ACC 311

Now available - tutoring for ACC 310 and ACC 311. Students enrolled in these courses are encouraged to see our graduate assistant for additional help. Tutoring is offered on Tuesday and Wednesday in 475C DEV from 1:00-3:30 on a walk-in basis. Bring your books and other pertinent information and use this service to stay on track.
Writing Center for Seidman Students

Accounting employers stress writing skills as an important qualification when hiring. Last fall, Seidman teamed with the Fred Meijer Center for Writing to jointly request a Graduate Assistant to assist business students with their writing. This position was filled by David Boruta, who continues as a GA in the same position for the Winter semester of 2011.

David is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) degree from Grand Valley, and is available to assist Seidman students in all stages of the business writing process. David is available both in Allendale and on the Pew Campus at the hours listed below.

Mon:  9-12 PM, Allendale; 4-7 PM, DeVos
Tues:  2-3:30 PM, DeVos
Wed:  9-12 PM, Allendale; 2-5 PM, DeVos
Thurs:  2-3 PM, DeVos
Fri:  9-12 PM, Allendale

Students can make appointments with David by visiting the writing center's website at www.gvsu.edu/wc or calling the center at 331-2922. The Writing Center is located in LOH 120 in Allendale and on the Pew campus in the DeVos Building C student study area.

Faculty Advising Can Help You Reach Your Goals

1. If you have recently transferred to GVSU or changed your major to Accounting and have 40 or more credits, see an Accounting faculty member in the next few weeks. You need to be sure that the classes you are planning on taking are the best choice for you.

2. Have a conversation with a faculty member regarding your career goals and what courses will help you the most in attaining those goals. A collection of carefully chosen electives can make you more marketable.

3. Be aware of opportunities that can enhance your resume whether they be courses, job experience, study-abroad or extra-curricular activities.

4. If you are pointing towards becoming a certified public accountant, have a serious conversation with a faculty member regarding how you will reach the 150 hour requirement and be prepared to pass the exam by second semester junior year.

5. If you are interested in any form of certification, seek the advice of a professor regarding the best path to success regarding the certification.

Backstage Pass — Careers in Accounting

The School of Accounting is proud to host the third annual Backstage Pass/Careers in Accounting event on March 29, 2011. Backstage Pass is a fun and entertaining way to learn about career opportunities in accounting. Accountants from both local and national firms will put on skits, network with students, and provide giveaways and raffle prizes in addition to free food and soft drinks. You will hear about jobs, travel, social life, and other opportunities that an accounting education can provide. You will learn how accounting is not just number crunching and how an accounting education is a great way to develop business skills desired by employers and graduate schools.

Backstage Pass is an invitation only event. You must be an ACC 212, ACC 213, ACC 240, or ACC 310 student. In addition, you must have a B average or better in your accounting classes. Study hard and keep your grades up. You don’t want to miss this event! Invitations will be e-mailed out in February.

Accounting Alum Facebook Page

The Accounting Alumni & Friends Organization has its own Facebook site and invites our accounting majors to “like” it. The link is: http://www.facebook.com/GVSUAccountingAlumni

Once you join this site, you’ll be able to keep up with the events the alumni organization plans. You’ll find this is a terrific way to keep in touch with your GVSU friends when you graduate and you may even decide you want to become involved in this organization.

Annual Accounting Awards Banquet

April 22, 2011. Mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend the annual awards banquet. Every accounting major is sent a complimentary (yes, that means free) dinner invitation for the banquet. This is an opportunity to celebrate with fellow students who will be receiving scholarships and enjoy networking with peers, friends, faculty and business colleagues from our supporting businesses and firms. The banquet will be held at The University Club of Grand Rapids in the Fifth Third building. More information will be forthcoming later this semester via email.
Faculty Profile—Chris Harper

Professor Harper began distinguishing debits from credits around the same time that Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa were battling for baseball’s single-season homerun record. He presently enjoys his role as a senior manager for Hungerford, Aldrin, Nichols & Carter. Prior to his current public accounting role at Hungerford, Professor Harper served as a corporate controller and founded Durus Consulting, a CPA firm that he operated as a sole practitioner. He graduated from Grand Valley with his accounting degree in 1999 and earned his MBA from Michigan State in 2002.

Professor Harper was elated when Grand Valley invited him to return to campus in 2005 as an adjunct accounting instructor. He loves the opportunity to connect with students and to augment the classroom experience with real-life examples from public and private accounting. Professor Harper works hard to make the classroom experience fun and interesting. In fact, “Jokes so lame they’re funny” has appeared on more than one of his student evaluations.

Professor Harper often reminds students that while an accounting degree can help them obtain a job in tax or audit, it can also be a gateway to non-traditional opportunities. In his role at Hungerford, Professor Harper manages the firm’s broadcast services practice in addition to overseeing traditional tax and financial statement engagements. Through the broadcast services practice, Professor Harper provides specialized financial information to roughly 500 television and radio stations in more than 80 United States television and radio markets. The broadcast services practice also collects and reports nationwide financial information by assisting a national broadcasting industry trade association. The results of his work have even been presented in conjunction with Congressional hearings regarding broadcast-industry issues.

One of the elements of public accounting that Professor Harper finds most enjoyable is meeting and interacting with a variety of people. The very nature of public accounting exposes a professional to a wide range of business and individual clients. Because each client’s needs and circumstances are unique, Professor Harper never experiences a dull moment in his professional practice. Crafting individualized solutions for clients provides variety that makes each day different in the life of a CPA in public accounting.

Professor Harper likes to emphasize variety when discussing the profession with students that are contemplating accounting as a career choice. He has found that accounting is a stepping stone that can lead individuals down a plethora of career paths. As an example, last year he was invited to teach continuing education classes to CPAs in Arizona, Michigan and Hawaii. As a student, he never would have imagined that his professional work would take him to Hawaii and he knows that GVSU’s current accounting students will have a host of unique opportunities that will develop as they pursue their own careers.

When he isn’t at the office or in the classroom, Professor Harper enjoys flying airplanes, running, bicycling, camping, hiking and spending time outdoors. He is a licensed commercial airplane pilot. He has competed in two marathons, several half marathons and three triathlons. Most of all, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Sarah, and their two young children, Blake and Brooke.

Michigan Accountancy Foundation Scholarship

This information was emailed to all accounting majors and it’s still not too late to make the 1/31/11 deadline to apply to the Michigan Accountancy Foundation 5th/Graduate year scholarships. There are 2 scholarships that are exclusively for African American students as well as our other scholarships that are open to all students. Several of our GVSU students have received these scholarships and it is well worth your time to apply. These are $3,000 scholarships; in 2010 MACPA awarded 35 scholarships!

Eligibility: If you are entering your fifth/graduate year, you can apply.

Information: MAF Scholarship overview web page http://www.michcpa.org/MAFscholarship

Selection Criteria http://www.michcpa.org/Content/Files/Public/Documents/students/2011MAFCriteria.pdf

Application Form http://www.michcpa.org/Content/Files/Public/Documents/students/2011MAFapplication.pdf

Deadline: January 31, 2011

Faculty Profile—continued

Becker 2011 CPA Exam Review

Becker FastPass classes are being offered at GVSU Spring 2011. Visit www.becker.com for full details. Grand Valley Students Receive a $400 discount off the full tuition cost.

Take advantage of Becker’s 0% Student Financing for CPA Exam Review! See link for details:

http://www.becker.com/accounting/cpaexamreview/financing/
Morgan Hickman, President
The Kappa Beta Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi is looking forward to another busy semester. We have invited numerous guest speakers in to explain the many facets of accounting. We will also be welcoming Becker Professional Education to discuss the new CPA exam which now includes International Financial Reporting Standards.

Beta Alpha Psi is undergoing changes as we welcome an entirely new E-Board to the mix. One of our goals is to broaden our collaboration with other groups on campus and throughout West Michigan. We plan to achieve this goal by sponsoring a Euchre Tournament with some of the other fraternities on campus for charity as well as hoping to plan a joint meeting with the Gamma Rho Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi at Western Michigan University later this semester.

Our members are also working on a great volunteer project. VITA is the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program and in the past we have teamed up with the United Way to visit their tax preparation sites and volunteer by preparing income tax returns for low income individuals who are unable to seek this service elsewhere. This year we have decided to take on our own site located on the Devos Campus in order to reach the lower west side of Grand Rapids, which is an area that is typically not reached by this program. Besides working with the United Way to get things up and running, we are also teaming up with Other Way Ministries who is helping to schedule appointments for the people their services already help.

Check out our website for more information about Beta. http://www.gvsu.edu/bap/

Student Chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants, Nate Schultz, President
The Student Chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants at Grand Valley (IMA @ GV for short), was started last year and known as the Student Management Accountants’ Association. The name has been changed to reflect our members’ participation in the IMA, an internationally-known professional organization for management accountants and finance professionals. The IMA offers annual leadership conferences, regional workshops, networking opportunities, scholarships and other sources of student support.

As a student chapter of the IMA, we hope to provide guidance and leadership for students planning on a career in accounting. We will be collaborating with our parent chapter, the Grand Rapids Chapter of the IMA, for some of our meetings including Student Night on February 15th, in which the National President, Dr. Sandra Richtermeyer, will be the keynote speaker. We were able to bring in guest speakers from the local community including economy and career development experts, FBI and IRS agents, technical experts and Grand Valley State University professors. Also, we were able to take a plant tour to Hudsonville Ice Cream and are planning a joint plant tour with the IIA at Amway Global.

This upcoming semester we hope to continue to bring in professionals and experts in the field of managerial accounting and finance to increase the awareness of career options for soon to be graduates. Most of all we hope that these networking opportunities will help our members to get an up-close and personal look at their chosen profession. Meetings are typically twice a month and Chapter dues are only $10 dollars.

Please contact Nathan Schultz, President, with any questions at nateschultz.ima@gmail.com.

Student Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors, Charles DeCoster, President
The Student Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors aims to help students further educate themselves about the field of internal audit, as well as increase networking opportunities with internal audit department staff from the area. We work closely with the professional IIA Chapter of West Michigan, which has monthly meetings that are free to students. The professional chapter will be putting on a student night on February 15th at the University Club, which is located on the 10th floor of the 5/3 building downtown. For further information on this event please see the professional website at http://www.theiia.org/chapters/index.cfm/view.event_detail/cid/125/event_id/16912.

If you are interested in this student organization please contact the student chapter president Charles DeCoster IV at decostec@mail.gvsu.edu.