

Accounting

SPEARS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate Program | Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Internship Spotlight



Michael Ray's Story

GRADUATION DATE **May 2012**

MAJOR **Accounting**

JOB TITLE **Tax Intern, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP,
Dallas, Texas**

Michael Ray always knew he wanted to work in the business world, but he was never quite certain what career would suit him best. After researching numerous schools and majors, he decided a degree in accounting from the Spears School of Business was the perfect fit.

"The accounting profession is a very competitive and fast growing industry that offers a lot of job security with good pay and benefits," Michael said. "Though most accounting classes are more time consuming and carry a heavier work load than other business classes, it pays off in the long run when you are trying to find an internship or a job or attempting to pass the CPA exam."

Accounting certainly seems to have paid off for Michael thus far. He just completed an internship with the prestigious PricewaterhouseCoopers firm in Dallas, Texas. During his internship, Michael worked on many of the same projects first year associates and even senior associates were working on, and he was directly involved with clients.

"The internship experience is all about getting to know the firm and getting a taste of what you will be doing if offered a full-time position after graduation," Michael said. "From my experience with PwC, I enjoyed the variety of work that I was assigned to and the extensive training I received. During the 10 weeks I was interning with PwC, I felt that I learned more than I could at school in a year. I received a full-time offer at the end of my internship because of the effort I put into it."

Michael will begin his new position once he completes his bachelor's and master's degrees from OSU and passes his CPA exam. To do this, Michael plans to take part in the Professional Program in Accounting and the CPA exam prep course offered at the Spears School. The PPA program allows undergraduate students to begin graduate work before graduation, and the CPA exam prep course is specifically geared to help students pass all four parts of the grueling CPA exam.

"The PPA program is geared to the successful completion of the CPA exam upon graduation," Michael said. "Passing the exam and completing the requirements to earn a CPA license are incredibly challenging, but having a CPA license allows you to choose a broader career path and makes you a more attractive candidate for employers."

Though completing the PPA program, earning his degrees and obtaining his CPA license will be difficult, Michael said he is looking forward to the challenge. If you also enjoy a challenge, contact the Spears School's School of Accounting today!

Why Accounting?

The accounting profession is an integral part of a dynamic business environment and is experiencing rapid change as a result of technology and a global economy. As a student in the School of Accounting in the Spears School of Business at OSU, your coursework will emphasize technological, cognitive and communication skills and will encourage you to recognize the importance of professional ethics, personal responsibility and the continuing development of leadership skills.

To earn a bachelor's degree in accounting, you will complete 120 hours of undergraduate course work. If you desire to become a Certified Public Accountant, you should arrange to enter the Professional Program in Accounting (PPA) or the accounting master's degree program at the end of your studies. In addition, double majors and minors are common for accounting students. Particularly popular double majors at OSU include: accounting/agricultural economics, accounting/finance and accounting/management information systems.

Internships and Scholarships

The Spears School encourages participation in internship opportunities prior to graduation to gain work experience, improve your competitiveness in the labor market, and discover through real world experience whether the career you are pursuing is a good fit. One of the best places you can find internships and begin interacting with employers is through the OSU Career Services website, hiresugrads.com. Last year, more than \$275,000 in scholarship and stipends were paid out to Accounting students from the School of Accounting or Spears School college funds.

Student organizations

Accounting students can become part of Beta Alpha Psi, an honorary organization for accounting students and professionals. The OSU chapter of Beta Alpha Psi has received the OSU Outstanding Community Service by a Student Organization award four out of the past five years.

Study abroad/travel programs

The Center for Executive and Professional Development in the Spears School provides a number of short-term, study abroad and travel programs to expose you to different cultures, experiences, and business views. Courses within these programs are designed specifically for the setting within which the travel experience takes place and allow you to advance your academic and professional education.



School of Accounting

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Career Spotlight



Latrice Williams' Story

GRADUATION DATE **May 2011**

MAJOR **Accounting**

MINOR **Marketing**

JOB TITLE **Accounting/Finance Analyst for ConocoPhillips, Bartlesville, Oklahoma**

A career in accounting simply involves doing a bit of math, balancing accounts and handling taxes, right? It means sitting at a desk day after long day, staring at a computer, doesn't it? According to Latrice Williams, that's not the case at all.

"Most people believe working well with numbers means that accounting will be a good fit for them," said Latrice, a May 2011 graduate from the Spears School of Business's School of Accounting. "However, accounting is much more than just crunching numbers. Updates in technology, regulations and operations always provide new, interesting challenges in the accounting field."

Latrice should certainly understand the realities of a career in accounting. She works as an accounting analyst for ConocoPhillips at their Bartlesville, Okla., office. In her position, Latrice books revenue for the oil and gas ConocoPhillips pumps from the San Juan region of Colorado and New Mexico. Some of her responsibilities include handling volumes from the pipelines, obtaining rates from the company's transportation and processing contracts, and working with land owners of the company's numerous drill sites.

"Since accounting is the core of any company's financial foundation, it will constantly challenge you to investigate, analyze and solve financial issues in an efficient and effective manner," Latrice said. "From my experience, skills such as organization, effective collaboration, problem solving and leadership are important for any accountant."

To obtain these skills, Latrice recommends getting involved in student organizations.

"The more experience a student can have working with groups, solving problems and taking responsibility with any leadership role will benefit them in a corporate setting," Latrice said. "I would also encourage students to find an internship within the field of their major. As a student, you will never really be able to comprehend how your course work compares to a corporate job if you don't take the time to test what you know in a work setting."

Finally, Latrice said every student should take advantage of the programs and assistance offered by the OSU Career Services Office.

"I believe, with the help of the career services staff, every student could graduate knowing they have a job waiting for them after walking across the stage," Latrice said. "And, honestly, isn't that one of the major reasons we all come to college?"

Accounting career areas

Accountants are needed in virtually every company regardless of sector. Opportunities abound in corporations, accounting firms, not-for-profits and privately held companies.

Auditing

- A certified public accountant (CPA) examines an organization's financial statements and issues an opinion as to the fairness of the statements. Many CPAs work for themselves and spend most of their time consulting with small businesses.

Cost management

- These accountants provide information that helps managers control operations and make decisions. They are key players on management teams.

Tax accounting

- Tax accounting is a rapidly growing area of employment in the governmental sector as systems become more sophisticated.

Accounting systems

- The accounting department is the largest information system in most organizations. With the move toward client/server computing, there is an enormous increase in the demand for graduates with a strong background in both accounting and management information systems.

Government accounting

- All levels of government employ large numbers of accountants. Accounting provides an excellent opportunity to combine a rewarding career with public service.

Forensic accounting

- Forensics is a rapidly growing area and involves performing "financial detective" work to support legal cases.

Career resources for accounting majors

A few helpful Web sites and professional organizations for accounting students include:

OSU Career Services hireosugrads.com

I Hire Accountants..... ihireaccounting.com

Accounting Net..... accountingnet.com

CPA Journal..... cpajournal.com

American Accounting Association..... aaahq.org

Institute of Internal Auditors..... theiia.org

Nat. Assoc. of Tax Practitioners..... natptax.com

American Institute of CPAs..... aicpa.org

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