

## **Report of College of San Mateo Accounting Department Advisory Council Fall 2012**

To: Kathy Ross, Dean, Business/Technology Division  
From: Rick Ambrose, Bruce Maule, Rosemary Nurre

The advisory council met on Monday, November 5. Council members are listed below:

Rick Ambrose , Full-time faculty  
Bruce Maule, Full-time faculty  
Rosemary Nurre, Full-time faculty  
Mike Ray, Senior VP, CFO and Treasurer, California Casualty Management Company  
Jack Klingler, formerly Director, Financial Accounting, Alcoa Inc.  
Brian Ponty, Finance Director, City of Redwood City  
Laura Olson, Senior Manager, Seiler LLP  
David Grisham, Partner, Litigation & Forensic Group, Hemming Morse LLP  
Amalia Stein, Assurance & Advisory Senior Associate, Frank, Rimerman + Co.

The following is a summary of the recommendations made by committee members and recommended actions to be taken by the CSM accounting department.

- Beginning in 2014 CPA licensure in California will require 150 semester hours of education.
  - ⇒ CSM should offer the courses needed to meet the 150 hour requirement.
- At higher career levels little distinction is made between degrees in accounting and finance; finance is tested on CPA exam; strong finance skills required to succeed at highest level of profession
  - ⇒ CSM should develop a series of courses in finance
- Students can have successful careers in accounting with a non-accounting bachelors degree
  - ⇒ CSM should offer classes required for students with non-accounting bachelors degrees to make the transition to a career in accounting
- Some professionals working in accounting or finance need to become a CPA for career advancement but need additional accounting and business units to sit for the CPA exam.
  - ⇒ CSM should offer the courses needed for students with a bachelors degree to meet the educational requirements to sit for the CPA exam.
- Recent graduates should pass CPA exam as soon as possible because workload increases each year in profession
  - ⇒ Help students connect with Becker CPA Review and self-study resources.
- For most pathways in accounting outside of taxation (such as forensic accounting) a background in auditing (3 – 5 years) is required.
  - ⇒ Make students aware of career pathways
- Governmental and non-profit entities do not hire recent college graduates, must have 3 – 5 years of challenging professional experience in the private sector.

- ⇒ Make students aware of career paths to governmental and non-profit entities; advertise internship opportunities with City of San Francisco
- For students interested in a career in taxation a masters in taxation is needed to reach the highest level of professional achievement.
  - ⇒ Enhance partnership with Golden Gate University to make students aware of opportunity and make smooth transition from CSM to GGU.
- To succeed in entry-level and mid-level accounting jobs students must have a strong command of debits and credits
  - ⇒ CSM accounting courses should continue to place heavy emphasis on technical skills such as debits, credits, T-account analysis
- Problem solving skills essential, must learn new skills each year; strong reading, writing, and verbal skills essential; must read, summarize, explain financial statements, actuarial reports, complex tax and accounting regulations, and explain issues to non-technical users in writing and in presentations; most career paths in accounting and taxation will require periods of long hours and deadlines.
  - ⇒ Maintain high-level, challenging accounting curriculum
- Professionals at all levels of their career need communication and customer service skills; at higher career levels only 5% of daily activities accountings, ability to communicate, influence strategic planning, develop personnel essential; jobs will involve variety of work, travel, social skills.
  - ⇒ Create opportunities for CSM students to participate in clubs and other extracurricular activities related to accounting
- The California Society of CPAs provides educational and networking opportunities that will help professionals succeed in a career in accounting; mentors are important to career success
  - ⇒ CSM should help students connect with CalCPA and other professional organizations to network and create mentoring opportunities
- The job market remains challenging; there are few job openings and most people who get a job are very highly qualified applicants with personal connections to someone at the firm.
  - ⇒ Encourage students to complete as many courses as possible, pass the CPA exam, get any work experience possible no matter how low-level, and network through CalCPA
- Local CPA firms offer internships and direct hire programs
  - ⇒ Work with Eileen O'Brien, CSM Career Services, and HR directors at mid-size CPA firms such as Seiler, BPM, Frank Rimmerman to connect CSM students to internship and job opportunities
- Small and mid-size businesses use QuickBooks, Peachtree, Microsoft Dynamics
  - ⇒ Develop new courses in Peachtree and Microsoft Dynamics; add higher level QuickBooks courses.