Master of Professional Accountancy

UCI Paul Merage School of Business
The Master of Professional Accountancy (MPAc) at The Paul Merage School of Business is a rigorous, full-time, one-year program – one of only two UC-based MPAc programs in Southern California – that provides an intensive, focused level of training designed to prepare you for an executive career in accounting.

Throughout your Master’s experience, you will have the opportunity to interact and work with current MBA students and get connected with the broad network of Merage School alumni. You will be immersed in a curriculum, that coupled with your prior coursework, will enable you to meet new State of California Board of Accountancy education standards, for licensure as a Certified Public Accountant. Upon successful completion of the MPAc program, you will be awarded a Master’s Degree in Professional Accountancy.

UC Irvine's MPAc program offers the following benefits:

- More than 80 firms and companies recruit our graduates including the Big Four, Mid-Tier, Regional, and Local Firms
- Paid internship opportunity with some of the top firms in the industry
- Career management and advising; professional development workshops
- Access to recruitment fairs, speaker events, campus interviewing and job postings
- Classes and networking opportunities with current MBA students
- Interaction with top-notch researchers, faculty and professionals in all areas of accounting
- Master’s degree in Professional Accountancy from a UC school

“In the ever-changing accounting industry, it is important for our employees to be as dynamic as the clients we serve. A Master of Professional Accountancy provides students with not only the technical skills they need to succeed, but also the business skills to be competitive in today’s job market.”

Alan Herrmann
Southern California Tax Practice Leader and Partner in Charge
Irvine, Grant Thornton LLP
The Merage School MPAc program requires a minimum of 11 courses (44 units) to include seven graduate level accounting and taxation courses and four electives. Among the required courses is a distinctive Career and Professional Development Proseminar workshop, a unique program designed to hone professional and career building skills including technical and soft skill creation, career choice counseling and networking skills. Electives, including a paid winter-quarter internship timed around the accounting industry’s busy season, allow you to gain experience, earn credit toward your MPAc, and in the case of the internship, partially offset the cost of tuition.

In addition to your required courses, you will be expected to enroll in and successfully complete at least 16 units of elective coursework in the Winter and/or Spring quarters. Along with a number of elective offerings available through the School's Fully Employed MBA program and those offered through the Merage School’s Real Estate program, the MPAc program offers specialized graduate elective courses in accounting including:

- Accounting Policy and Research
- Forensic Accounting
- Governmental and Non-For-Profit Accounting
- International Accounting
- Advanced Financial Statement Analysis

More information is available at [merage.uci.edu/go/mpac](http://merage.uci.edu/go/mpac)

“\[Quote\] We at PwC continue to be extremely impressed by the quality of graduates from the Merage School’s MPAc program. They are extremely well rounded and very prepared for the demands of a career in public accounting, having mastered technical accounting skills, gained an understanding of business issues, developed a strong understanding of the opportunities and challenges of a global economy, and honed their leadership skills.”

Suzanne Fradette
Audit Partner, PwC

“I strongly support the establishment of the MPAc program at the Merage School. Ernst & Young requires students to meet the California Education Requirements to be eligible for hire in our audit practice. A similar requirement will be established by other accounting firms.”

John A. Belli
Orange County Office
Managing Partner, EY LLP

Admission Requirements

Applicants may apply online and must meet all prerequisite requirements at the time of matriculation into the program.

Admission to graduate standing in The Paul Merage School of Business is accorded to those possessing an undergraduate degree with an acceptable level of scholarship from an institution of recognized standing. Applicants for admission will be evaluated on their academic record and potential for leadership as demonstrated in submitted application materials including:

- Official transcripts from all institutions attended to obtain undergraduate degree (with English translation if needed)
- Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) or Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores – scores valid for five years
- Two letters of recommendation
- Two essays
- Resume
- Official TOEFL, PTE, or IELTS (international applicants)
- $150 application fee
- A personal interview (by invitation only)
Students educated in a country where English is not the primary language will be required to possess a minimum score on the Test of English for Foreign Language (TOEFL) of 600 for the paper-based test and 80 for the Internet-based test. Further, international applicants may also take the Pearson Test of English (PTE). The minimum required score for admission is 53. Scores are valid for two years.

Applicants must also have satisfactorily completed the following prerequisite courses (or their equivalents) in accounting:

- Introductory Financial and Managerial Accounting (two courses)
- At least six of the following eight upper-division courses:
  1. Intermediate Accounting I*
  2. Intermediate Accounting II*
  3. Individual Taxation*
  4. Auditing*
  5. International Accounting
  6. Advanced Accounting
  7. Corporate and Partnership Taxation
  8. Accounting Information Systems

*Please note these 4 courses are required prerequisites for graduate level MPAC courses and need to be completed before the program begins in the fall.

Students lacking up to two upper-division undergraduate accounting courses will be permitted to petition to enroll in those courses as an additional part of the MPAC program. "Provisional admission status," will be offered at the discretion of the Admissions Committee to highly qualified candidates who have met most, but not all, of the prerequisite requirements and who will satisfy the requirements prior to matriculation.

My favorite experience at the Merage School has definitely been the people I have met. The students that I work with every day have come from all over the world, and everyone has such different backgrounds.

I expected to meet students that came straight from an accounting undergraduate program like me, but I have met people from the army, an elementary school teacher, and company controllers. I love getting to know such a wide variety of people and personalities, and learning from everyone's experiences."

Erin Greenwood, MPAC ’15
Tax Associate, EY
MPAc Career Advising Structure

One of the benefits of attending the MPAc program is employment and career coaching. Students receive individualized career preparation guidance and training to prepare them for interviews, and networking events to help them land an internship or full-time position. We also focus on building each student’s personal brand, professionalism and executive presence for a successful career in accounting.

Our MPAc career advisors partner with students to help them focus their career objectives to achieve their personal career goals using our four key pillars of Career Advising:

Consultations and Workshops

**Initial Career Consultation Appointment:** Discuss career goals and receive an overview of MPAc Career Services. Explore the various career options MPAc students may pursue and consider which accounting area fits best with your strengths and skills.

**Resume and Cover Letter Reviews:** A well-written cover letter and concise resume are important to making a good first impression. MPAc Career Services provides guidance and assistance to help you create a quality cover letter and resume.

**Mock Interviews:** Once an employer has reviewed your cover letter and resume, it is imperative that you perform well during an interview. MPAc Career Services conducts mock interview sessions, providing constructive feedback, to prepare students for phone, video and in-person interviews.

**Career and Skill Development Workshops:** Professional skill development workshops help you acquire and hone the skills you will need to be successful, not only in today’s competitive marketplace, but throughout your career.

Winter or Spring Internship Opportunity

**Winter or Spring Internship:** Students who attend the MPAc program and are eligible to work during winter quarter may apply and recruit for a part-time or full-time winter internship. Alternatively, students may complete a part-time internship during spring quarter. Internships and the overall recruiting process will be covered in detail during orientation. If a student enrolls in the MPAc Accounting Internship course, 2 units of academic credit will be granted upon completion of the course and internship.

Recruitment and Proseminar

**Strong Relationships with Big 4, Mid-Tier, Local Firms and Companies:** The MPAc Career Advising Team is focused on building and maintaining strong relationships with accounting firms and companies to develop our recruiter base. During fall quarter, MPAc students attend numerous recruiting events such as Meet the Firms, a Firm, Faculty & MPAc Breakfast Reception and Information Sessions. During spring quarter, MPAc students have the opportunity to attend a Spring Career Fair to network with corporate and private companies for industry positions.

**Fall and Spring Proseminar Courses:** The Proseminar courses are designed to hone career building skills and prepare students for a successful future in accounting. During the fall, we have guest speakers and panelists from various accounting industries. In the spring, we focus on preparing students for long-term career success in the accounting field.

Career and CPA Exam Preparation

As a graduate of the MPAc program, you will have met the educational requirements necessary to sit for the CPA exam. In addition, we offer information sessions and provide guidance on how to apply and study, so that students are well prepared to pass the exam.

“I chose to join the Paul Merage’s MPAc program because it gives students more choices to determine their academic and professional goals. Not only does the program give students the opportunity to compete for a winter internship, but also it allows us to take multiple MBA courses. Giving students the autonomy to define their own education is a unique addition that other programs do not provide for their students.”

Matthew Marnell, MPAc ’15 Assurance Associate, PwC
The University of California, Irvine

Founded in 1965, the University of California, Irvine combines the strengths of a major research university with the bounty of an incomparable Southern California location. UC Irvine’s unyielding commitment to rigorous academics, cutting-edge research, and leadership and character development makes the campus a driving force for innovation and discovery that serves our local, national and global communities in many ways.

The Paul Merage School of Business at UC Irvine consistently ranks among the top 10% of business schools in the world. Our pioneering curriculum and dynamic network attract business leaders, the best and brightest students, and the global companies that recruit them. Our reputation includes accolades from BusinessWeek, U.S. News and World Report and the Financial Times. At the Merage School, you will build close relationships with a diverse group of students, receive personalized attention from faculty, and gain access to the University of California system.

The Land of Beaches, Business, and Big Ideas

Irvine is strategically located in the heart of Orange County, the second largest county in the state. It’s also at the center of Southern California’s Tech Coast, with Irvine being the primary breeding ground for on-the-rise businesses and industries—mainly biotech, medical, fashion, real estate, finance and auto design. Innovative companies, such as Allergan, Broadcom Corporation, Disney, Google, Oakley, PIMCO and Taco Bell, are all just minutes away from the Merage School.

Orange County is bordered on the west by the Pacific Ocean, on the north by Los Angeles County and on the south by San Diego County. A perennially warm Mediterranean climate and 42 miles of sandy beaches make it the ultimate environment for balancing original thinking with exhilarating adventure.

The famed sailing and surfing beaches of Newport, Laguna and Huntington are a short bike ride from campus. Hiking trails, desert camping and mountain resorts for snowboarding and skiing are within two hour’s travel distance from Irvine. Adjacent to the campus, the San Joaquin Marsh serves as a natural classroom of peaceful refuge, with its eleven-plus miles of trails.

“The business arena is increasingly global, technologically demanding and marked by calls for more comprehensive financial disclosure and accountability. A Master of Professional Accountancy will give students the tools to face these challenges head on by providing a balanced education rich in core fundamentals, cultural perspective and technological relevance.”

Paul G. Short
Partner, KPMG LLP
“There is high demand for employees with master’s level training. With the field of accounting so highly competitive, a master’s degree helps students differentiate themselves from others and enhances their long-term earnings and career potential.”

Patricia Wellmeyer
Full-Time Faculty and Program Director, MPAc
The Paul Merage School of Business

“As businesses globalize and digitize, and industries face disruptive innovations, the demand for skilled accountants and auditors has never been higher. UCI’s Master of Professional Accountancy program emphasizes the development of technical, professional and real world practical skills that allow the graduates to hit the ground running and deliver real value to organizations.

Michael Juergens
Principal, Deloitte

“My number one priority and goal is to get my CPA designation. I see myself at a successful and dynamic company where I’m a decision maker.

I have learned so much here. I now have a foundation to succeed in the industry that will enable me to move forward, bust my career wide open, and find something very exciting and dynamic!

Right now I’m investing in myself, I’m investing in my future, and I’m investing in where I want to be.”

Sheila Hope, MPAc ’14
Audit Staff, Deloitte