

ADVISING NOTES FOR ACC, AIS, and TAX STUDENTS

Faculty Advisers

Who are the faculty advisers for the ACC and AIS programs?

BBA-ACC:	Professors Brickner, Bunsis, LaGore, Lewis, Mahoney, and Ross
BBA-AIS:	Professors Mahoney, Meharia, and Ross
BBA-ACC / MSA:	Professors Brickner, Bunsis, LaGore, Lewis, Mahoney, and Ross
BBA-AIS / MSA:	Professors Mahoney, Meharia, and Ross
BBA-ACC / MSTC:	Professors Brock, LaGore, and Meharia
MSA:	Professors Brickner, Bunsis, LaGore, Lewis, Mahoney, and Ross
MSTC:	Professors Brock, LaGore, and Meharia

Faculty contact information can be found on the College of Business website (www.emich.edu/cob).

General Program and Degree Information – Combined BBA with an MSA or MSTC

What is a Combined Bachelor's/Master's Program?

In a Combined Bachelor's/Master's program, students receive two degrees, a BBA (in ACC or AIS) and an MSA (Master's in Accounting) or an MSTC (Master's in Taxation Consulting). These programs are designed to fulfill educational requirements for licensing as a CPA in the State of Michigan. During the final semester of enrollment, students must file two graduation applications and pay two fees to receive their degrees.

Which one should I do – a Combined Program or the separate BBA, then MSA or MSTC?

Generally students find a combined program more attractive because of potential credit hours saved and the fact that they can have a semester in which they both finish BBA courses and start MSA or MSTC courses.

Should everyone do a Combined or MSA/MSTC programs?

There are numerous accounting positions and careers for which a bachelor's degree in accounting would suffice. Also, a bachelor's degree is sufficient for numerous accounting certifications (e.g., CMA, CIA, CISA, CFE, etc.). However, we believe that for the majority of our students, their short- and long-run job and salary opportunities in accounting will be best served by having a graduate degree. Also, 150 hours of college credit is currently required to become a CPA in Michigan.

If a student plans to complete a master's program, should they choose the MSA program or the MSTC program?

In general, the MSA program provides more broad-based accounting education for various careers in accounting (e.g., external and internal auditing, taxation with public accounting firms and in industry, financial reporting, managerial and cost accounting, accounting information systems, etc.). In contrast, the MSTC program is considered a specialized master's program, and would be appropriate for students planning to specialize and focus their careers in the areas of taxation and tax consulting.

What are the admission criteria into the graduate portion of a Combined program (i.e., the MSA or MSTC portion of program)?

In order to be admitted to the graduate portion of a combined program or the MSA or MSTC programs you must meet the admission criteria. The criteria currently include having an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and achieving a minimum score of 500 on the GMAT exam. **Note:** EMU accounting undergraduate students can have the GMAT exam waived by achieving an aggregate GPA of 3.2 or above in four accounting courses completed at EMU (excluding ACC 240 and ACC 241). ACC 340 must be included in the calculation of 12 ACC hours. Non-EMU Accounting majors also can meet criteria for the GMAT to be waived. Please refer to EMU’s graduate catalog for specific provisions for a GMAT waiver.

How and when do I get into a Combined Program (i.e., how do I apply for admission to Graduate School and what are the deadlines)?

As an undergraduate, you must declare that you are a major in a combined program. You will also need to formally apply to Graduate School, which can be done online at: www.emich.edu/admissions/apply. Questions about the application process can be directed to the COB Advising Office. There is an application fee and the admission process can take some time, so plan ahead. You should apply to Graduate School before you plan on taking courses in the graduate portion of the Program of Study. Admission application deadlines are as follows:

If you wish to begin the MSA/MSTC program during this semester:

Fall or Summer
Winter

You should apply for Graduate School and take the GMAT by:

February 1
September 1

You are responsible for taking the GMAT exam (if required for you, as described above) and applying to Graduate School on a timely basis. Applying late to Graduate School or taking the GMAT late delays permission to register for MSA and MSTC courses. Many of these classes fill up and close if you do not register on time. Students are strongly encouraged to take the GMAT exam prior to the deadlines listed above (e.g., to allow for time needed to re-take the GMAT exam, if necessary). Information about the GMAT exam, such as scheduling, preparation, cost, etc., can be found at: www.gmac.com. You can also find numerous GMAT preparation materials online, which most students will find very helpful, if not necessary in order to achieve the necessary GMAT score.

You should get all of your general education requirements finished no later than the semester in which you apply for admission to Graduate School (e.g. don’t leave a literature course until the very end of your program). Also, you should complete the undergraduate portion of the program prior to commencing the graduate portion of the program (although you are allowed one semester in which you can take courses in both programs).

What graduate GPA do I need to graduate from the MSA or MSTC or a Combined Program?

MSA and MSTC students are required to have a minimum overall 3.0 GPA for all graduate courses taken. Combined program students are required to have a minimum 3.0 GPA for the eight courses in the graduate portion of their Program of Study. No more than two of these courses with grades below B- may be used for graduation.

Registering for Graduate Classes

How do BBA students get permission to register for graduate 500 level classes?

If you are a BBA student and wish to register for a 500 level class, you must obtain the “Undergraduate Request to Enroll in a 500-Level Course for Undergraduate Credit” permission form from. (You can obtain this form online on EMU’s Office of Records and Registration website.) You are required to complete the form and submit it to an appropriate BBA adviser (i.e., ACC or AIS) for approval. The completed form should then be emailed to Records and Registration for system input to register. Undergraduate students are generally limited to nine graduate ACC credit hours – at the 500 level. You must have completed 85 credit hours and have a GPA of at least 2.70 to be allowed to take a graduate course. Undergraduate students may not take 600 level classes under any conditions.

How do Combined program students not yet admitted to graduate school get permission to register for graduate 500 level classes?

If you have not been formally admitted to the graduate portion of your program before you register for classes, you must obtain the appropriate Program of Study form, and fill out the undergraduate portion. This should include the 500 level courses that you intend to take in the undergraduate portion of your program. The form should then be taken to one of the Combined program ACC faculty advisers for approval and signature. You then take the completed form to COB Advising in order to register.

The Advising Office should also unofficially review your complete undergraduate record. This is important because admission to the graduate portion of your program requires completion of General Education and College of Business course requirements. You will encounter difficulties in registering for courses and eventually during your graduation audit if you do not complete these requirements in a timely manner. (And if you are at this stage and haven’t already done so, you need to apply for graduate admission and possibly take the GMAT, as described above.)

One complication that can arise relates to if you are taking a 500 level course that you want counted in the graduate portion of your Program of Study. You will have to later petition after admission to get the course moved to your graduate record, since at this stage you are still an undergraduate and the course would otherwise count toward your undergraduate degree requirements.

How do MSA, MSTC and Combined program students who have been admitted to graduate school get permission to register for graduate classes?

If you have been admitted to the MSA or MSTC without conditions, you should be able to register yourself for 500 level and 600 level classes. If you have been admitted with conditions or have a hold on your records, you will need to go to COB Advising for their system input to register. Please remember that ACC and non-ACC electives require advance accounting faculty adviser approval.

Selecting Appropriate Graduate Courses to Take

Which graduate courses should Combined program students take in the undergraduate portion of their program? Should they take ACC 344 or ACC 544?

Combined program students are required to take six ACC graduate hours at the 500-level in the undergraduate portion of this program (i.e., the top portion of the Program of Study form for the combined program). Undergraduate students are generally limited to no more than nine graduate ACC credit hours at the 500-level; although most students would want to take only 6 graduate hours in the undergraduate portion of the combined program in order to save on tuition costs. **These graduate courses are ACC 540 (required), ACC 544 (required if ACC 344 not taken), and a restricted ACC elective (must be 500-level if ACC 344 is taken instead of ACC 544; otherwise a 400-level ACC elective can be chosen).** Undergraduate students may not take 600 level classes under any conditions. Also, you must have completed 85 credit hours, and have a GPA of at least 2.70 in order to take graduate level courses; and remember that you need a GPA of at least 3.0 for graduate admission.

Which Accounting or non-Accounting elective graduate courses should students take in the MSA program (including the MSA portion of a Combined program)?

First, it is important to emphasize that **pre-approval of all graduate electives is required**, so please meet with a graduate accounting adviser to decide upon the appropriate electives for you.

Our MSA program requires the selection of several restricted elective graduate courses (i.e., 500- or 600-level). Most of these courses are required to be ACC courses, although one course may be a non-ACC COB course. Any non-ACC graduate COB courses must carry a COB course prefix; specifically, these prefixes are: COB, DS, FIN, IB, IS, LAW, MKTG, MGMT, OM and SCM.

Please note in the selection of your graduate elective courses, you may NOT take a course if you have already taken the undergraduate equivalent course.

For example, with respect to **COB courses**, you may:

- a. **not** take DS 501 if you have had DS 251 or DS265.
- b. **not** take FIN 502 if you have had FIN 350.
- c. **not** take IS 502 if you have had IS 215 or ACC 356.
- d. **not** take LAW 503 if you have had LAW 293.
- e. **not** take MGMT 501 if you have had MGMT 386.
- f. **not** take MGMT 505 if you have had both MGMT 202 and 386.
- g. **not** take MKTG 510 if you have had MKTG 360.
- h. **not** take OM 503 if you have had OM 374.

Also note that you cannot receive credit for ECON 500 if you have completed ECON 201 and ECON 202.

This concept applies to **ACC courses** as well. Thus, you may:

- a. **not** take ACC 501 if you have had ACC 240 and 241.
- b. **not** take ACC 544 if you have had ACC 344.
- c. **not** take ACC 550 if you have had ACC 450.
- d. **not** take ACC 560 if you have had ACC 460.
- e. **not** take ACC 605 if you have had ACC 342. (ACC 605 is just for MBA students, not MSAs.)
- f. **not** take ACC 642 if you have had ACC 442.

Also, **you may not take ACC 646**, as it is offered for nonprofit certificate students only. Furthermore, ACC 592 and ACC 699 are not regularly-offered courses and are only provided under very unique circumstances. (Please note that the above lists are not necessarily all-inclusive.)

Is there a specific non-Accounting elective graduate course that is recommended?

Although most students are advised to take all ACC classes in the MSA program, one exception is to consider taking LAW 615 ('Law – Financial Professionals'), which is tentatively scheduled for fall semesters. This class would be helpful with the 'Regulation' section of the CPA exam.

Which specific elective graduate courses are MSA students advised to take?

The MSA program requires the selection of six restricted elective graduate courses, at least five of which must be ACC courses (up to one COB course). Students' decisions related to their elective courses should be driven by their career goals. Students planning to pursue the following professional certifications are advised to take the elective classes or MSA Tracks that are identified below:

The four **MSA** tracks are as follows:

1) Accounting Information Systems

1. ACC 548 Information Systems Audit and Control
2. ACC 510 Contemporary Accounting Information Systems
3. ACC 511 Accounting Data Analytics and Emerging Technologies
4. ACC 550 Professional Internal Auditing (or see an adviser for an alternative 4th ACC course)

2) Internal Auditing

1. ACC 550 Professional Internal Auditing
2. ACC 560 Fraud Examination
3. ACC 548 Information Systems Audit and Control
4. ACC 642 Strategic Cost Management **and/or**
ACC 510 Contemporary Accounting Information Systems **and/or**
ACC 511 Accounting Data Analytics and Emerging Technologies

3) Tax & Financial Planning (Note: Students interested in specializing in Tax should consider the **MSTC program**.)

1. ACC 585 Income Tax Accounting II
2. TAX 561 Federal Tax Research & Writing
3. TAX 563 Federal Taxation of Corporations & Partnerships
4. TAX 569 Income Tax Periods & Methods

4) Financial Services & CPA

1. ACC 541 Advanced Financial Accounting
2. ACC 546 Government and Nonprofit Accounting (required for Michigan CPA's)
3. ACC 585 Income Tax Accounting II
4. ACC classes from the 'Tax and Financial Planning' list above (if planning on a tax career)
ACC 548 Information Systems Audit and Control (if planning on a career in auditing) **and/or**
ACC 550 Professional Internal Auditing (if planning on a career in auditing) **and/or**
ACC 510 Contemporary Accounting Info. Systems (if planning on a career in auditing) **and/or**
ACC 511 Accounting Data Analytics/Emerging Tech (if planning on a career in auditing) **and/or**
ACC 560 Fraud Examination (if planning on a career in auditing)
5. LAW 615 Law - Financial Professionals (helpful for the REG section of the CPA exam)

Please note that students are not required to select one of the four tracks listed below in order to fulfill the requirements for the MSA degree. However, the tracks organize related courses together to help students select the appropriate ACC elective courses based on their career goals. Please meet with an MSA adviser to discuss the appropriate six elective courses for you.

The above tracks are related to the following accounting professional certifications:

Certified Public Accountant (CPA): ‘Financial Services & CPA’ track

Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA): ‘Accounting Information Systems’ track

Certified Internal Auditor (CIA): ‘Internal Auditing’ track

Certified Management Accountant (CMA): ACC 642 (see an adviser for other elective classes)

Additional information about each of these certifications and the related educational and work experience requirements can be found on-line:

CIA: www.theiia.org/certification/

CISA: www.isaca.org/

CMA: www.imanet.org/certification.asp/

CPA: www.aicpa.org/

Note: Each state has different certification requirements to become a CPA. Please check the respective State Board of Accountancy’s website for specific state requirements (e.g., State of Michigan Accountancy Board). Links for others states can be found at: www.nasba.org.

Suppose I am an MSA student who completed my undergraduate degree in accounting at EMU or elsewhere and completed ACC 540, ACC 544, and/or ACC 567 (or their equivalent) previously. Do I need to take those courses (again) in order to fulfill the requirements of the MSA degree?

Students in this situation would need to substitute a different graduate level ACC course(s) in place of the same (similar) courses previously taken. Under no circumstances would a student’s MSA degree require less than 30 credit hours. If you are in this situation, you should meet with an MSA adviser as soon as possible to discuss your degree requirements and complete your Program of Study form.

Prerequisites for Capstone Courses

Must I follow prerequisites in order to take ACC 496?

Yes. ACC 496 is required of all BBA–ACC, BBA-AIS, and combined program students. The prerequisite courses are ACC 296, ACC 340, ACC 342, ACC 344 (or 544), and ACC 356. If you have not completed ACC 344 (or 544), you may apply for an exception to take ACC 344 (or 544) concurrently with ACC 496. No other exceptions are currently allowed.

Must I follow prerequisites in order to take MGMT 490?

Yes, students required to take MGMT 490 must complete FIN 350, MGMT 386, MKTG 360 and OM 374 before taking MGMT 490. This applies to all BBA and Combined program students. The Management Department will allow the exception of OM 374 being taken concurrently with MGMT 490, but this will require you to get both instructor permission and Management Department permission to enroll.

Advising Recommendations for BBA-AIS/MSA Students

Which elective graduate courses should Combined program BBA-AIS/MSA students take?

Combined program BBA-AIS/MSA students are required to take six (6) ACC graduate hours (two courses) at the 500-level in the undergraduate portion of this program (i.e., the top portion of the combined program). Undergraduate students are generally limited to no more than nine graduate ACC credit hours at the 500-level (three courses); although most students would want to take only 6 graduate hours in the undergraduate portion of the combined program in order to save on tuition costs. For BBA-AIS/MSA students, these graduate courses would be ACC 548 (required), ACC 544 (required if ACC 344 not taken), and a restricted ACC elective (must be 500-level if ACC 344 is taken instead of ACC 544; otherwise a 400-level ACC elective can be chosen). Undergraduate students may not take 600-level classes under any conditions. You must have completed 85 credit hours and have a GPA of at least 2.70 in order to take graduate level courses. Also, you need a GPA of at least 3.0 for graduate admission.

In the graduate portion of your program you should take ACC 510 (offered Winter only) and ACC 511 (offered Fall only) among your electives. If you intend to become a CPA, you should also take ACC 546, and consider taking ACC 541, ACC 585, and/or LAW 615. If you are interested in taking graduate IS courses, please see an AIS adviser to discuss viable course options.

Advising Recommendations for MSTC Students

Which elective graduate courses are recommended for MSTC students?

MSTC students are encouraged to take whichever three courses (nine credit hours) that they wish to from the list of restricted graduate accounting electives. However, students planning to sit for the CPA exam should take both ACC 546 and ACC 567 if they have not previously taken a course in Governmental Accounting and Auditing (external). Those classes would be necessary to sit for the CPA exam in Michigan. Other courses that would be helpful in preparing for the CPA exam include ACC 541 and LAW 615.

Final Advice/Reminder

Do I need advance Accounting adviser approval for all of my graduate electives?

YES!!! All MSA, MSTC and Combined program students must get a Program of Study (POS) form signed by an adviser before taking elective courses. If you decide to change your electives you must update your POS form to reflect the change and have it signed again by an adviser. That form will ultimately be used as the basis for your graduation audit; you are not allowed to graduate without one.