

**What do Nonpublic Accountants Want in Accounting Education?
An Exploratory Investigation**

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Evidence suggests that accounting departments at many universities and colleges focus their programs on preparing students for a career in public accounting and successful completion of the certified public accountant (CPA) exam. However, the majority of students who earn these degrees subsequently pursue a non-public accounting career. This exploratory study looks at the nonpublic accountants' perspective on degree preference, importance of topics to be covered in courses and priority of skills to be attained prior to graduation. Additionally, the relevance of several professional certifications is investigated. Results indicate that a 120-hour bachelor's degree in accounting is the preferred degree, that intermediate accounting is the most important topic to be covered, and that critical thinking skill attainment has the highest priority. Finally, the CPA is the most relevant certification.