

Major spotlight: Accounting

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If you wish to follow in the footsteps of author John Grisham or Nike founder Phil Knight, join the 117 other accounting majors at Penn State Harrisburg.

Both Grisham and Knight moved on to other careers, but started off as accountants.

Most PSH accounting graduates take jobs at certified public accountant (CPA) firms or work for a specific business such as Hershey, according to Dr. Amile, the program coordinator of the accounting major.

A CPA is one of the most common careers with a degree in accounting. A CPA manages a business finances. This would include conducting audits and reviewing statements, plan tax strategies and work with the client on business plans and expansion. A CPA requires a separate certification in addition to a degree in accounting.

During their course of study, students must take general business classes along with a core of 24 credits in accounting classes, said Amile.

The bulk of these classes deals with profit enterprises, but also includes tax accounting, auditing and financial accounting.

"It is a difficult course of study, but when you graduate, you have a good skill set," said Amile.

Lisa Myers, a 1987 graduate of the accounting major, is now a partner at Boyer & Ritter, a CPA firm, where she is responsible for client relations and networking as well as CPA work.

Myers said that the most important qualities for an accountant are the ability to communicate, honesty, integrity, teamwork, analytical skills, flexibility and adaptability, strong interpersonal skills and motivation.

Taking internships over the summer at local firms is the best way to build a resume and secure a job after graduation, according to Myers.

She also recommends maintaining a 3.4 GPA and obtaining a CPA license as soon as possible.

Even if a student does not wish to peruse a career in accounting, the degree is a launching pad to different careers.

"Every business and industry in the world uses accounting," said Myers.

Freshmen, want a good roomie?

By **KATHLEEN MEGAN**
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How do you get a kind, compassionate, supportive roommate who is also a friend? The answer is simple: Be one.

That's according to University of Michigan researchers who studied more than 300 college freshmen assigned two share rooms with other students they didn't know.

"Roommate relationships can be really good or they can be really bad. And the fear is that they'll go from bad to worse," says Jennifer Crocker, one of the social psychologists who conducted the university's study. "But our study shows that you can create a supportive relationship and turn the stranger who's your roommate into a friend."

One of Crocker's colleagues, Amy Canevello, says that college freshmen often wait to

become friends with roommates before interacting in a caring, compassionate manner. If you have a goal from the beginning to be caring and supportive, Canevello says, "the friendship will come and you become that much closer and develop a really strong friendship." Here are some guidelines:

Don't just be polite or tolerant of your roommate; practice caring about them, responding compassionately and supportively.

You can't fake this. The researchers say that roommates were very aware if the other was acting "nice" or "supportive," but wasn't sincere. Roommates easily spot the motives of someone who asks how his partner's day went mainly because he wants to talk about his own day, Canevello says.

After years of impressing

teachers and coaches with their intelligence and skills, some kids come to college thinking that's the way to make friends. Canevello says trying to impress a roommate creates distance. A far better goal for a relationship is to be supportive.

Have the difficult conversations with your roommate early and with sensitivity, says Canevello. If your night owl roommate is keeping you up too late, or she's messy when you're neat, don't see it as "her problem." See it as "our problem." Get away from the "ego-system" approach - in which each person focuses on their own needs and tries to shore up their own self-image -- and instead move toward an "eco-system" approach, in which roommates are motivated by genuine caring for each other.

The accounting major falls under the School of Business, which has been accredited from the AACSB.

Students are given the opportunity to join the accounting club on campus along with a

management honor society Sigma Iota Epsilon.

Job outlook for accounting employment, according to the 2008 Occupational Handbook, is expected to grow by 18 percent between 2006 and 2016. With

an increase in the number of businesses and new government regulations, the demand for accountants and auditors will rise to create about 225,000 new jobs.

Photo Club contest winners: Week 1



RUNNER UP
"Fireworks" by Robert Hoffer

FIRST PLACE
"Mykel" by Melissa Gaela