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A Report on Developments in Education—Prepared by the Relations with Educators Division,
American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

Number 7

September 1986

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO BEDFORD REPORT

Agreeing with the conclusion that education should be reexamined to respond to changes in the nature of accounting practice, the AICPA's Education Executive Committee communicated its views on the report of the AAA Committee on the Future Structure, Content, and Scope of Accounting Education to AAA President Stephen A. Zeff. The AICPA committee concurs with the recommendation of the committee, chaired by Norton Bedford of the University of Illinois, that the accounting profession broaden its scope beyond traditional financial accounting and become involved in the design and diagnosis of comprehensive information systems for all types and sizes of organizations. Concurring also with the Bedford committee's call for accountants to pursue lifelong learning, the Institute committee expressed the view that education should focus not merely on the imparting of knowledge, but on the learning process itself.

Although agreeing with the recommendation that education for accountants include graduate education, the Education Executive Committee did not believe that the graduate portion should be devoted entirely to preparation for a specialization. Rather, it believed that the total program should provide an appropriate mix of technical and nontechnical subjects. The AICPA also expressed disagreement with the AAA committee's suggestion that only graduate accounting programs be accredited.

SIXTY-ONE INSTITUTIONS NOW HAVE ACCREDITED ACCOUNTING PROGRAMS

In its fifth year of accrediting accounting programs, the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business announced that thirteen programs in nine schools were added to the roster, bringing the totals to 106 programs in sixty-one institutions.

Undergraduate programs were approved for accreditation at the University of Arkansas, the University of Houston at Clear Lake, North Carolina A & T State University, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Ohio State University, Oregon State University, the University of South Carolina, and Tennessee Tech University. Added to the list of accredited master of accounting programs were those at Arkansas, Florida International University, Houston at Clear Lake, and the University of South Carolina. The MBA accounting program at Ohio State was also accredited.

The accreditation of accounting programs is a cooperative effort involving the participation of the American Accounting Association, the AICPA, the National Association of Accountants, the Financial Executives Institute, and the Association of Government Accountants.

CPA EXAM CHANGES UNDER CONSIDERATION

A task force of the AICPA Board of Examiners is addressing the format and structure of the Uniform CPA Examination. One of the issues it is considering is the portion of the examination that should be in the form of objective, machine gradable questions. Another is the combining of the accounting practice and the accounting theory sections. Any changes it may recommend will be presented to the Board at its next meeting in the fall. Before the Board takes any final action, an exposure draft will be distributed to interested parties. Because the CPA examination is part of the licensing process, the final decisions will need the acceptance of the state boards of accountancy, which regulate the practice of public accounting.

DEVINE RECEIVES AWARD FOR ESSAYS

The 1986 AAA/AICPA Notable Contributions to Accounting Literature Award was awarded to Carl T. Devine for his five-volume work *Essays in Accounting* (Studies in Accounting Research No. 22), published by the American Accounting Association in 1985. A joint effort of the AAA and the AICPA, the AICPA committee selects the winner from the works nominated by the AAA committee.

The presentation of the twentieth award was made at the AAA's annual meeting on August 22 in New York City. Professor Joe Icerman, chairman of the accounting department at Florida State University, accepted the award for Dr. Devine.

AICPA COMMITTEE EXPLAINS NEED FOR INCREASING THE EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

Explanations of why the states should adopt a 150-semester-hour requirement to sit for the CPA examination are embodied in materials newly developed for the AICPA Postbaccalaureate Education Requirement Special Committee by the AICPA public relations division. Distributed to all presidents and executive directors of the state CPA societies, the materials consist of a pattern speech, a short article for use in the societies' publications, and a brochure, "Postbaccalaureate Education: A Year That Lasts a Career." In the 1986-87 committee year the chair of the committee will go to Doyle Z. Williams, Dean of the School of Accounting at the University of Southern California. Robert C. Ellyson of Coopers & Lybrand, Miami, Florida, served as the initial chairman of the special committee since early 1984.

SILVOSO HONORED AS OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR

At the May 17 AICPA Council meeting, the 1986 Outstanding Accounting Educator Award was presented to Joseph Silvoso, Peat Marwick Mitchell Professor of Accounting at the University of Missouri, in recognition of his achievements as an educator and for his active involvement in the accounting profession. Professor Silvoso has been an active participant in the AICPA, the Missouri Society of CPAs, the Federation of Schools of Accountancy and the American Accounting Association. His achievements as an educator have also been recognized by the students and alumni of the University of Missouri and by Beta Alpha Psi, which named him Accountant of the Year in 1977.

The nominees for the Outstanding Accounting Educator Award are made by the state CPA societies, which are encouraged to designate their nominee as the recipient of a joint AICPA/State Society Outstanding Educator Award. In addition to Silvoso, who also received his state's award, the recipients of the joint awards were: William Ross Heck, Florida State University; Norton M. Bedford, University of Illinois; William C. Fleenor, Southeastern Louisiana University; Anthony T. Krzystofik, University of Massachusetts; Harold Q. Langenderfer, University of North Carolina; Gary John Previts, Case Western Reserve University (Ohio); Elsa I. Berrios de Santos, Humacao University College of Puerto Rico; and Theodore R. Saldin, Washington State University.

EXPANDED SUPPLY/DEMAND SURVEY PLANNED

Aware that substantial changes are occurring in the job market for accountants, the AICPA Relations with Educators Division is expanding its annual "The Supply of Accounting Graduates and the Demand for Public Accounting Recruits" survey to include additional information about the firms' hiring practices, such as the number of experienced professional staff and the number of para-professionals hired, the areas of practice to which they are assigned, and staff turnover. The 1987 survey of the schools is also being expanded to include information on enrollment trends and the placement of graduates in public accounting, business and industry, government and other areas.

According to the 1986 survey report, the number of 1984-85 graduates with bachelor's degrees in accounting declined by 2%

from the preceding year (52,000) and those with master's degrees in accounting (5,900) declined by 7%. This contrasts with predicted increases of 2% and 7%, respectively. Compared with 1983-84, the CPA firms' hirings of bachelor degree graduates in accounting increased by 8% in 1984-85 to 15,600, slightly higher than the 15,300 that were expected to be recruited. Although the CPA firms' hirings of master's degree graduates have remained level at about 2,200 a year since 1981-82, the firms expected to hire 2,600 in 1984-85. Both the schools and the firms predicted increases in 1985-86.

CAREER VIDEOS' DISTRIBUTION SIMPLIFIED

Availing itself of a new approach to career film distribution, the AICPA has arranged through Video Outreach, a division of The JN Company, to make its two career films available to schools for duplication. The films are "Which Way Is Up?," a twenty-five-minute presentation for accounting majors on the different career paths in the profession, and "The Profession of Accounting Is . . .," a twenty-seven-minute tape designed to interest students in accounting careers. Both films appear on one tape that is available in different formats. Rather than booking a tape for a specific showing date, it can now be borrowed, duplicated, and be available whenever needed.

As part of the career education program a guide is included to help educators present the film(s), stimulate classroom discussion, and answer students' questions about accounting. To further encourage participation, specific student activities are recommended.

There is no charge for the service. The AICPA asks only that the borrower provide Video Outreach with the requested follow-up information on usage and abide by the stated copyright conditions. For further information write to: Video Outreach, c/o The JN Company, P. O. Box 1199, Melville, NY 11747.

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