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The Uniform CPA Examination Alert

December/January 2005

Preliminary Item Analysis

What makes the Uniform CPA Examination a “high-stakes” exam? The fact that the exam is one of the three prongs of CPA licensure together with education and experience? That its results can have a major impact on candidates’ lives? Is a key to entry into a highly respected profession? Or that it’s one of the most difficult professional examinations?

The answer is yes to all of the above. But what also makes the CPA Examination such a unique test are the aspects invisible to most people. Anyone who has ever studied for or taken the CPA Examination agrees that it is a thorough and perhaps grueling exam. However, few people realize the effort that goes into its development, implementation, and scoring. The multiple-choice questions and case study simulations that comprise the CPA Examination are the culmination of several years of work by professionals in the fields of accounting, business, education, law, test development, and psychometrics, among others. A combination of statistics and educational development, psychometrics is the science of measuring “psychological” aspects of a person such as knowledge, skills, abilities, or personality¹.

AICPA professional staff, together with volunteer members of CPA examination sub-committees and working groups perform certain tasks before, during, and after

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¹From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychometrics>.



The Director's Desk

Update from Gregory Johnson

Director — CPA Examination Strategy

Now that the computerized Uniform CPA Examination is firmly established, our focus has shifted to ongoing process improvement and examination strategy. We are spending a great deal of time and effort reviewing statistics and candidate feedback gathered during each testing window. We are carefully looking at test administration metrics, listening to exam candidates, and talking to state boards of accountancy. Exam strategy has been broadened with the formation of an enterprise-level strategy workgroup, which includes representation among the AICPA, NASBA, and Prometric. Immediately, however, we want to provide answers to questions and comments about the examination itself and educate our constituencies on the test development, grading, and reporting processes.

For example, in this issue of the CPA Exam Alert, we take a look at Preliminary Item Analysis, a critical component of the exam review process performed by AICPA staff. We also highlight ongoing efforts to improve the examination score reports and performance information. And while we can't draw conclusions until at least the first full year of testing has ended, we have included the passing rates for the examination's first two testing windows.

In addition, *CPA Exam Hot Topics* will become a regular feature in this newsletter. The section will focus on practical examination considerations. This section offers another opportunity to reach candidates with relevant and timely exam information.

Examination volume continues to grow, going from about 22,600 sections taken in April/May, to about 37,500 sections during July/August, and more than 41,000 sections in October/November. However, these numbers are not at the levels that were projected prior to the transition of the CPA exam to computer-based testing (CBT) and set forth in the joint AICPA-NASBA-Prometric CBT agreement. To identify why there's a discrepancy between actual and projected vol-

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the CPA Examinations are administered each quarter. Their goal is to make sure every test question and simulation is accurate, reliable, and relevant, and that examination scoring is done with the utmost accuracy and precision.

A Critical Component of the Exam Review Process

According to AICPA consultant Cheryl L. Wild, Ph.D., “A critical component of the CPA examination review process is Preliminary Item Analysis or PIA. PIA consists of statistical analyses done prior to scoring of the examination to identify any items (questions) that are not performing as expected.”

Dr. Wild explained that multiple-choice questions and to a lesser extent, simulations, are extensively pretested prior to being used in a CPA Examination. AICPA staff psychometricians analyze the statistics collected during pretesting, and can assess how candidates will respond to each question. During each examination testing window (the two months in each quarter the CPA exam is offered), candidates’ actual responses to each test question and simulation are collected and analyzed prior to final scoring. Questions that do not perform as expected are flagged for an intensive review by subject matter experts (SMEs) during this preliminary analysis.

“Generally, what happens is that a staff psychometrician flags any measurement opportunity² within an item in the current examination that does not seem to be acting properly (statistics are not what was expected),” said Dr. Wild.” These items or simulations are

² An instance of where a candidate can receive a score; there can be multiple measurement opportunities within a question or simulation.

then intensively reviewed by groups of subject matter experts (SMEs) during an intensive two-day PIA session. PIA is standard procedure for most major testing programs. However, few examinations include simulations. PIA for CPA Exam multiple-choice questions has been done for years as part of the exam development and scoring processes. Since simulations are new, PIA for these question types are much more complicated than for multiple-choice questions. We are continually developing and refining the process, and expect that CPA Exam simulation PIA procedures will probably become industry best practice.”

The purpose of PIA is to “make sure that nothing changed during the time the item was approved for use in the exam, and the time the exam was given, that may affect scoring,” added Dr. Wild. “For example, changes in content, law or regulation may have occurred since a question was pretested and accepted into the exam. We also want to be sure nothing was changed or lost when translated to a computer format. In the case of simulations, which are a new item type, we want to identify any new ways of responding that may not have been apparent when a question was being developed, but may be valid. Candidates are very creative and at times come up with responses we never dreamed of; we do PIA to be sure we’re very fair and that all questions, especially simulations, are scored fairly.”

The AICPA makes every effort to thoroughly review the test and ensure scoring is done properly. As noted by Dr. Wild, “Such thorough review prior to and during scoring is the reason final scores are rarely changed during the

rescore or appeal process.”

Adds Credibility

“A lot of people think that it’s like it was in college, where a teacher writes and grades the exam,” said Leonard Jones, CPA, private practitioner, vice president of North Carolina State Board of Accountancy, and a member of AICPA Content Subcommittee. “The CPA Exam is a lot more challenging and complex. There’s a lot of thought and process behind it. Here, it’s all these other groups — psychometricians, subject matter experts, test developers — writing and reviewing the exam. It’s not just a bunch of college professors.”

This all adds to the CPA Examination’s credibility. “A lot of testing goes on before, like pretesting and reviews, and even after the test is taken, a lot of review is going on to make sure it’s fair,” said Mr. Jones. “PIA is done to make sure candidates get credit where they deserve credit.”

AICPA test developer Joseph A. Dutz, CPA, explained the PIA process and what sub-committee members can expect when they participate in this type of review. “During PIA, sub-committee members review flagged simulation measurement opportunities and a variety of statistical analyses. These include distributions of specific candidate responses and the distribution of answers across the total candidate pool. We’re mostly concerned with moderate and high performers, since that’s where the determination is made whether a candidate is qualified to become a CPA”.

Sub-committee members also review what are called “biserial correlations,”

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umes, the CBT Steering Group has created a joint Exam Volume team comprised of staff from all three organizations, state boards and state CPA societies, to research this issue and make recommendations for how to increase exam volumes. The Steering Group will

issue a report to state boards in April 2005.

We also want to welcome the new and returning members of the AICPA’s Board of Examiners in this issue. Especially now, the BOE plays a critical role in establishing examination policy

and guiding the development of ongoing Exam Strategy.

As always, we want to hear from you. Feel free to e-mail me at gjohnson@aicpa.org with your suggestions or comments about *The Uniform CPA Exam Alert*.

Hot Exam Topics

⚡ Premature Exam Terminations

Several candidates recently had the experience of signing in at the examination, only to have their exams terminate before they began responding to questions. This occurred because the candidates paused before opening the first testlet. **Test sessions terminate automatically if the time allotted to introductory screens is exceeded.**

Candidates must promptly move through the sign-in and preliminary screens presented at the beginning of each examination. Sufficient time (approximately 5-10 minutes) is allotted for candidates to read the text and follow instructions. **Candidates should NOT pause to “brain dump,” write notes, do relaxation exercises, or have last-minute conversations with test center staff before they open the first testlet.**

⚡ Exam Responses

Candidates who run short of exam time do not have a chance to click on “Done” to indicate that they have completed the last testlet/simulation. They sometimes worry that their responses were not captured by the system. This concern is unfounded. **Candidate responses are automatically saved every 30 seconds**, regardless of whether the candidate has signaled completion of the last testlet/simulation.

Also, the fact that a computer or functionality malfunction occurred during testing does **not** necessarily mean that the candidate’s result file has been affected:

- Problems with result files are exceedingly rare; even when they do occur they are unlikely to be related to irregularities experienced during the examination.
- In the improbable event that a result file has not been recovered and all attempts to resuscitate it have failed, candidates are contacted by NASBA and given an opportunity to re-take the examination free of charge.

⚡ Petitions for Re-Test

For the vast majority of candidates, their experience with the Uniform CPA Examination is uneventful. Exam retest rates are extremely low (0.169% in April/May and 0.164% in July/August). However, there is a process in place for candidates who experienced difficulties during testing (for example, computer crashes or functionality problems), and who believe their testing environment was disrupted to such an extent that they could not perform at a level consistent with their skills and knowledge. Such candidates may petition NASBA for a free re-test by writing to candidatecare@nasba.org. **Because all re-test decisions must be made before scores are released, petitions for re-test must be filed well before the score release date.**

In order to file a petition for a free re-test with NASBA, candidates must have reported the problem at the test center, and test center staff must have filed a report on the incident. Test center reports are essential in investigating the circumstances outlined by candidates in their re-test petitions.

Petitions for re-test must include detailed descriptions of the problems encountered by candidates and explanations of how these problems created an unfair testing environment. NASBA investigates every petition and consults with the candidate’s board of accountancy. A free re-test will be offered to the candidate if the situation merits it, as determined by the state board and/or NASBA.



⚡ New Toll-free NASBA Telephone Number

CPA Examination candidates may now reach NASBA at the following new toll-free telephone number: **1-866-MY-NASBA (1-866-696-2722).**

Before the examination, candidates should use this number if they are applying through their boards of accountancy and have questions about the Notice to Schedule (NTS) or payment coupon. (Candidates who are applying through CPA Examination Services should continue to call 1-800-CPA-EXAM if they have questions about the NTS). After the examination, all candidates, regardless of the application process they followed, should report any problems or concerns to the new 1-866-MY-NASBA number.

⚡ Revised Notice to Schedule (NTS)

The Notice to Schedule (NTS) has just been revised to include additional information that candidates should have before they report to test centers. The revised NTS is scheduled to be provided to candidates who will take the examination in the January/February 2005 testing window.

Exam Time Issues—What Candidates Need to Know

Examination Time vs. Session Time

There is a difference between examination time and session time, and candidates must manage their test time with this difference in mind. *Examination time* is the time designated for the examination section: 4.5 hours for AUD; 2.5 hours for BEC; 4 hours for FAR; and 3 hours for REG. *Session time* is examination time plus 30 minutes, the time assigned for the candidate's session at the test center. The additional 30 minutes are provided to allow candidates to complete the sign-in process and survey without taking time away from the examination. Examination time never changes - not even when candidates fail to use the entire 30 minutes given to them for the sign-in and survey.



Time Management

How quickly candidates can complete the component parts of the examination is, of course, dependent on many factors that vary with every individual. However, most candidates find that they need between 30 and 50 minutes to complete a single simulation. As a result, when planning for an examination section that consists of three multiple-choice question testlets and two simulations, candidates may want to: (1) allocate between 30 and 50 minutes

for *each* simulation; and (2) divide the remaining examination time into three equal parts to arrive at the time allocation for each multiple-choice question testlet.

The Examination Clock

The examination clock begins to count down as soon as the candidate opens the first testlet. This means the clock continues to run when a candidate is on a break or speaking with test center staff. The only time the clock stops is when the exam is temporarily disconnected from its power source, or interrupted due to systems failure or by the test center administrator. Once examination operations resume, the time clock starts running again.

Test center staff cannot extend or adjust examination time; they have no control over the examination clock. The most they can do is interrupt the examination while a problem is being resolved.

How NOT to Lose Time

Candidates can make the best use of their time by making certain that none of it is wasted. Here are some suggestions:

1. *Report equipment and computer functionality issues **immediately** to test center staff.* Candidates who attempt to correct or circumvent a

problem by themselves risk using up valuable examination time without necessarily resolving the issue.

2. *Report content issues to test center staff **after** the session has ended.* Test center staff is not familiar with the examination and cannot help with content. As a result, it is not helpful to call their attention to content issues while the examination clock is running.

Candidates who believe there is a problem with the content of a question or simulation should make a note of the testlet or simulation tab in which the issue is found and report it to test center staff at the end of the examination. Subsequently, they should also report the problem in writing, as directed in the confirmation of attendance issued after the examination.

3. *Don't write examination responses on paper in the hope of having them submitted for grading.* The scratch paper issued to candidates at test centers is shredded after the examination session.

4. *Follow directions at all times.* In simulations, candidates should not try to copy and paste when asked for a written response and, conversely, they should not try to write their responses when the directions call for copying and pasting. Time-consuming difficulties in entering responses are often caused by the attempted use of an incorrect response format.

Passing Rates

Below are the pass rates for each section of the computerized Uniform CPA Exam during testing in April/May 2004 and July/August 2004, and from inception of the computer-based test to date. Recognize that comparisons cannot be made among the passing rates for the paper-based CPA Exam and the computerized CPA Examination due to differences in format, content, and administrative processes. We will not know the full impact of the new administrative processes until we have closed four windows of testing.

Section	April/May 2004 Percent Pass	July/August 2004 Percent Pass	Inception to October 04 Percent Pass
AUDIT	48.42%	42.99%	44.79%
BEC	44.12%	44.66%	44.48%
FAR	46.60%	43.74%	44.88%
REG	47.47%	42.32%	44.23%

Exam Score Reporting

Distribution of CPA Exam scores is the responsibility of the state boards of accountancy. Currently, the AICPA sends advisory scores and performance information to NASBA at the end of each testing window. NASBA then forwards advisory scores to the boards of accountancy for distribution to candidates, usually within one week. Each board of accountancy sets its own schedule regarding the frequency with which it will approve and release scores.

Generally, scores are reported to candidates during the first month of the testing window following the one in which they tested. (For example, those who completed testing in October/November can expect to receive scores in January).

The AICPA, NASBA, and state boards are working to reduce the time it takes to report scores. According to Arleen Thomas, AICPA Vice President-Professional Standards & Services, the AICPA plans to report scores monthly by August 2005.

The current score report was selected by NASBA and the AICPA as the best report to use during the first year of computerized test administration. In the future, as data is collected about the examination and how candidates use the results, enhancements to the score reports will be made. Now that actual exam data and candidate feedback are available, the organizations are working to revise the score report and the performance information provided to candidates. "We not only want to speed up the score reporting process so candidates who may have failed can quickly re-apply and reschedule their exam sections, but also make the score reports easier to read and understand," said Craig N. Mills, Executive Director of the Examinations Team at the AICPA. "We are committed to improving the score reports and exam performance information as we gain more experience with the computerized CPA Examination. We have been, and will continue, to gather feedback from candidates about all aspects of the Examination, including the score report."

Important Score Report Information

- Most jurisdictions report numeric scores to candidates; however, New York State reports only the Pass/Fail decision.
- The passing standard for the CPA Exam is set at a *scaled score* of 75. This score does **not** represent a percentile or percentage of points or correct responses on the examination. A reported score of 75 represents the required examination performance to represent mastery of knowledge and skills needed to protect the public.
- The score scale for the computer-based CPA Exam is *not comparable* to the scale for the paper-based examination. The paper-based and computer-administered examinations include different content and skills. The required passing scores for each were determined separately by the Board of Examiners. Therefore, a score of 75 on the computer-based CPA Exam is not comparable to a similar score on the paper-based examination.
- The AICPA does *not* release or discuss scores with candidates. Candidates must go through their boards of accountancy or NASBA if they wish additional information about their scores.
- The performance bar graphs included in score reports are NOT calculated in the same way that the total reported score is calculated. The reported total score is a scaled, weighted aggregate of all components of the exam. Specifically, the total reported score includes scored responses to the multiple-choice questions and simulations, including written communications. The bars are intended to allow candidates to evaluate relative strengths and weaknesses in the areas identified.
- *It is not possible to compute or estimate the reported total score from the bar chart information.* The scores used to chart performance on content areas and simulations are selected, scored, and scaled using different methods, and cannot be compared to the reported total score.
- Performance information bars for *content areas* summarize selected responses to the multiple-choice questions and simulations. The multiple-choice questions and simulation performances used for this chart are only 90% of the total reported score because written communications are not included (10% of the reported score). The performance information bar for *simulations* includes responses to both simulations, except written communications. The responses to simulations represent 20% of the reported total score. The written communication responses are not currently included in the performance feedback.
- Go to the CPA Exam web site at www.cpa-exam.org, (click on *Take the Exam*, then *Score Reporting*) for information about the Re-score and Appeal processes, and to download a sample score report.
- To obtain information about the score reporting schedule, or to inquire about scores, candidates should contact their boards of accountancy.

Meet New BOE Members



Robert H. Brewer, CPA, Past Chairman of the AICPA Business and Industry Executive Committee and Nominations Committee, is Vice President of Global Corporate Audit Services at Office

Depot, Inc., a position he has held since 1998. Prior to joining Office Depot, he was Director of Audit at W.R. Grace & Co., Director of Audits/Security at Praxair, Inc. and Manager, Audit Regions at Union Carbide Corporation. He qualified as a CPA in West Virginia in 1980.

In addition to his involvement with AICPA committees, Mr. Brewer's contribution to the profession includes participation in the activities of the West Virginia Society of CPAs and service as the Institute of Internal Auditors' Vice President of Student Relations. He is also a popular speaker on the subject of internal audit department best practices.



Walter C. Davenport, CPA, a former member of the AICPA Board of Examiners, is an audit partner with Cherry, Bekaert & Holland. He concentrates on auditing and financial and business consulting for not-for-profit entities, and

serves as director of the firm's Not-For-Profit Industry Group. Mr. Davenport began his public accounting career in 1970 with Arthur Anderson and Company. In 1974, he joined Nathan T. Garrett to form Garrett & Davenport, P.C., the largest and oldest minority-owned CPA firm in North Carolina. Subsequently, Garrett & Davenport merged into Cherry, Bekeart and Holland.

Mr. Davenport has served on the North Carolina State Board of CPA

Examiners, the AICPA Minority Recruitment and Equal Opportunity Committee (in addition to the BOE), and numerous committees of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA). He is currently Director-At-Large on NASBA's Board of Directors. He also holds board positions with Duke Health Raleigh Hospital, BB&T (City Board), Triangle United Way and serves as Chairman of the Board of the Elizabeth City State University.



Fritz Drasgow, Ph.D. is the President of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) and Professor of Psychology and Labor and Industrial

Relations at the University of Illinois. He was previously Assistant Professor at Yale University's School of Organization and Management. With psychological measurement and computerized testing as his main research interests, he has examined numerous topics related to cognitive ability tests and used multimedia computer technology to assess social and interpersonal skills not easily measured by paper-and-pencil tests.

Dr. Drasgow is the former chair of the American Psychological Association Committee on Psychological Tests and Assessments, the U.S. Department of Defense Advisory Committee on Military Personnel Testing, the Department of Defense and Department of Labor Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Norming Advisory Group, and the American Psychological Association Taskforce on Internet Testing. He serves on the editorial review board of eight professional journals, including *Applied Psychological Measurement*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and *Personnel Psychology*.



Nicholas J. Mastracchio, Jr., CPA, Ph.D., has practiced accounting since 1964. From 1976 to 1991, he was Managing Director of Charles L. Marvin and Company, a CPA firm in upstate

New York. Currently, he is A.A. Alumni Professor of Accounting at the University at Albany, and a Partner in LCS&Z, L.L.P., a CPA and consulting firm.

Dr. Mastracchio limits his practice to the valuation of businesses and related areas. His valuation methodology has become case law in New York State, and his valuation work has included sales, mergers and acquisitions, gift and estate tax planning, buy-sell agreements, ESOP valuations, pension plan valuations, and litigation in the areas of matrimonial and minority shareholder, licenses, loss of income, and breach of contract. He has published numerous books on valuations (including two issued by the AICPA) and many articles on business valuation, practice management and ethics topics.



Derek A. Smith, CPA, CA, a former member of the AICPA Board of Examiners, is Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Castel, Inc. Previously, he was CFO of First Knowledge Partners, Inc. and

CFO of Organizational Dynamics, Inc. He has also held executive and CFO positions with Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., Penguin Books USA Inc., and Warren, Gorham & Lamont, Inc. He practiced public accounting with KPMG, in Boston, MA, and KPMG Canada, and was with the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

Preliminary Item Analysis *(continued from page 2)*

which compare performance on simulations with how the candidates did on the multiple-choice part of the exam. “It’s expected that candidates who did well on the multiple-choice questions will do well on simulations,” explained Mr. Dutz. “During the review, the SMEs view the actual simulation and the statistics of how candidates responded to the individual measurement opportunities within the simulation. Then they conclude that the answer contained in the exam answer key is correct or whether another response could or should be considered an appropriate and valid answer.”

It is important to note that neither the AICPA, nor its committee members, are privy to candidate names or other identifying information at any time during the review or scoring processes. The statistical analyses and scoring are all done using codes and candidate identification numbers.

Any recommendations resulting from PIA are sent to an AICPA scoring sub-committee for further review and final disposition. If the recommendations are accepted, the examination answer keys are changed and the tests are ultimately scored using the revised key.

Supports the Validity of the Exam

Joe Obst, a CPA from New Jersey, who helps formulate and write simulations for the CPA Examination, talked about his first experience as a PIA subject matter expert. “The process

is important because it solidifies our professional beliefs (as CPAs) as to the validity of the exam questions. Candidates should know about PIA and other exam reviews because it provides more assurance that professionals are doing a lot of work behind the scenes, and that they can rely on the examination and the answers. When I took the CPA exam, I often heard people ask, ‘Who wrote the exam? Are they qualified?’ This also shows we have enough flexibility to provide another layer of assurance that the exam is fairly scored,” Mr. Obst commented.

Another subject matter expert, Nick Fiore, is an attorney as well as a freelance editor/writer and a former CPA Examination reviewer. He believes PIA adds value to the entire examination saying, “It improves the process, especially for those of us who have written the questions. Sometime what you think is obvious to candidates is not, or you’re so far removed from a candidate’s level you have a different perspective.”

Marsha Huber, Ph.D., CPA, accounting professor at Otterbein College in Ohio, and member of the AICPA Regulation Simulation development working group stated, “I was surprised at how thorough they (AICPA Examinations Team) are. I think that it’s amazing, how well thought-out the exam is and how much testing, preliminary testing, and statistical analysis is done to make sure the exam is fair.”

Meet New BOE Members *(continued from page 6)*

Mr. Smith qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1978 and is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario. He became a Certified

Public Accountant in 1983 and is a member of the Massachusetts Society of CPAs. He served as Chair of the AICPA’s CAQEX Subcommittee from

1994-96, and has been Chair of the International Uniform Certified Public Accountant Qualification Examination (IQEX) Subcommittee since 1997.

Don’t Miss the Free Interactive Webcast for CPA Candidates - February 16, 2005

The next webcast for CPA candidates and students: “Strategies for Taking the Uniform CPA Examination” will be held on February 16, 2005. A successful candidate will discuss the CBT experience and suggest how to prepare for and pass an examination section. A faculty member will offer helpful information about completing simulations. Check www.cpa-exam.org for exact time and registration instructions.

The Uniform CPA Examination Alert

December/January 2005

Upcoming Events

January 4-5, 2005

AICPA Auditing Subcommittee
(Fort Lauderdale, FL)
Contact: Linda D. Mills (201) 938-3196

January 6-7, 2005

AICPA Regulation/Tax
Subcommittee
(San Antonio, TX)
Contact: Tim Habick (201) 938-3423

January 7-8, 2005

AICPA BEC Subcommittee
(San Antonio, TX)
Contact: Vincent Lima (201) 938-3317

January 9-10, 2005

AICPA Content Committee
(San Antonio, TX)
Contact: Ahava Goldman (201) 938-3424

January 14-15, 2005

AICPA FAR Subcommittee
(New Orleans, LA)
Contact: Adell Battle (201) 938-3435

January 20-21, 2005

AICPA REG Simulations
Development Group
(San Diego, CA)
Contact: Dick DeVore (609) 671-2911

January 21-22, 2005

AICPA Board of Examiners
(Phoenix, AZ)
Contact: Diane Babuin (201) 938-3361

January 27-28, 2005

AICPA BEC Simulations
Development Group
(Washington, DC)
Contact: Dick DeVore (609) 671-2911

February 25, 2005

AICPA FAR Subcommittee
(Atlanta, GA)
Contact: Adell Battle (201) 938-3435

February 26-27, 2005

TRIO
(Scottsdale, AZ)
Contact: Krista Breithaupt (609) 671-2908

April 9-10, 2005

TRIO
(Montreal, CA)
Contact: Krista Breithaupt (609) 671-2908

April 22-23, 2005

AICPA FAR Subcommittee
(Ft. Lauderdale, FL)
Contact: Adell Battle (201) 938-3435