Dear Current and Potential Accounting Major,

Welcome back to Campus! Hope you had an enjoyable and a productive summer. I am pleased to present to you the Fall 2010 edition of the Accounting Club’s annual newsletter. It is a pleasure to serve as an Advisor of this student organization. As in the previous years, this newsletter provides you with information and updates on news and exciting activities from the Accounting Club.

The two student-run organizations, the Accounting Club and Beta Alpha Psi, are an integral part of the Department of Accounting. The mission of Lehigh’s Accounting Club is to provide all CBE students considering accounting as their major and current accounting majors with opportunities to (1) learn and explore about various career options in the field of accounting through field trips, interactive activities and short instructional talks delivered by professionals, (2) network with accounting professionals from public accounting firms, Wall Street firms, consulting companies and other corporations, (3) network with Lehigh Accounting alumni currently working in a variety of roles in various organizations, and (4) develop soft-skills in areas such as business etiquette, ethical decision-making, social interactions in a professional setting, and interviewing skills. Membership of the Accounting Club is open to all CBE students interested in exploring accounting as their potential major, or those who are current accounting majors.

You will be delighted to know that in its 2010 annual survey of specialty rankings, Bloomberg’s BusinessWeek ranked Lehigh University’s undergraduate accounting program as No. 6 in the country. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the specialty rankings, and your undergraduate accounting program has secured a spot in the top ten for four out of the five years. You may access these rankings at the following url: http://www.businessweek.com/interactive_reports/bschools_undergraduate_specialty_rankings_2010_accounting.html. The stellar standing of the undergraduate accounting program in the national rankings is a testament to the quality and rigor of our curriculum, the hard work of our students, the dedication of the Accounting faculty and staff, accomplished and loyal alumni, and committed accounting firms and other corporate partners.

The success of both our undergraduate and graduate accounting programs is also evident in the fact that despite the continuing economic turmoil and financial crisis, accounting graduates continue to be highly sought after by firms from both public accounting and other industries. The Department of Accounting and the University’s Career Services Office work closely together throughout the year to help students prepare for various career opportunities, including externships, internships, and full-time entry-level jobs. For example, the Department of Accounting organizes a separate Career Fair and an Accounting Professionalism Conference during each fall semester. Events such as these help bring the accounting majors and interested recruiters together in Rauch Business Center, home of the College of Business and Economics (CBE). The recruiting success of Lehigh’s accounting majors is no secret to students enrolling in the CBE. Since 2006, the number of graduating accounting majors has grown by about 28% (from 85 in 2006 to 109 in 2010 with the year 2009 witnessing a peak of 120 undergraduate accounting majors). Many of our students continue to double major, mostly with finance as their second major.
CHAIR’S PERSPECTIVE

MESSAGE FROM THE ACCOUNTING CHAIR
continued from page 1

With New York State’s implementation of the 150-credit hour requirement effective July 1, 2009 and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania implementing it in 2012, I advise all potential accounting majors to start thinking about these new requirements as early in their Lehigh careers as possible. The Department of Accounting offers a MS/AIA (Master of Science in Accounting and Information Analysis) Program to help Lehigh’s UG accounting majors comply with this requirement in an educationally sound way. Many students are attempting to comply with the increased credit hour requirements by overloading their class schedules on the belief that the cost of the 5th year of education is high at Lehigh. First, overloading to complete 150-credit hours during four years is an educationally unsound strategy because it focuses on short-term benefit at the cost of long-term growth and success in the accounting profession. Second, the cost of completing Lehigh’s MS/AIA Program in one year is the lowest among our peers (i.e., Notre Dame, BYU, Bentley, Villanova, Bryant, Case Western Reserve, Wake Forest, University of Virginia, USC, and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign).

This year Lehigh’s MS in Accounting Program celebrates its 10th anniversary. Over the last ten years, it has graduated students who now hold positions of responsibility in many well-known organizations. The feedback from the recruiters hiring these students has been very positive. I strongly recommend all students thinking about accounting as their potential major to explore their options regarding complying with the 150-credit hour requirement as early as possible by meeting either with me or with Professor Heibatollah Sami, Director of the MS in Accounting Program (also see inside this newsletter a section on Q&A with me on 150-credit hour requirement).

Through extracurricular activities, the department continues the fine tradition of hosting prominent leaders from the accounting and auditing profession. This year students interacted with many such professionals. Noteworthy among them are (1) James L. Kroeker, current SEC Chief Accountant, who visited Lehigh as the sixth Segal Distinguished Speaker to interact with students and faculty in various classes and to deliver a public talk on International Financial Reporting Standards; (2) Lynn Turner, former SEC Chief Accountant, who co-taught with me, for the second year, a one-credit Senior Honors Seminar; (3) Craig C. Olinger, Deputy Chief Accountant in SEC’s Division of Corporation Finance, who spoke on International Financial Reporting Standards and Convergence; and (4) Mitch Cohen, Vice Chairman at PricewaterhouseCoopers, and James P. Liddy, National Managing Partner at KPMG, both of whom spent a day on campus as Executives-in-Residence to interact with faculty and students in and outside of the classes on various issues relating to accounting and auditing. I urge all students majoring or interested in majoring in accounting to make it point to regularly participate in as many of these events as possible. Interacting with speakers of the caliber mentioned above is a rare opportunity that your accounting program provides to you all at no cost.

In addition to classroom instruction, advising and participating with students in many events, the Accounting faculty engages in thought-leadership research and uses original insights gained from it to enrich their students’ classroom experiences, both in the undergraduate and graduate courses. Faculty also brings recognition to the department, the CBE, and the University by regularly presenting findings of its research at various national and international conferences. Because of their expertise and knowledge of accounting issues, many accounting faculty members are invited to serve as journal editors, manuscript reviewers, and board members and audit committee chairs. Various professional organizations and Lehigh University recognize faculty’s contribution in teaching excellence and research prominence with teaching awards, research fellowships and grants, and named professorships.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the outgoing members of the Executive Board (see inside the newsletter for their names and reports) for contributing their time and energy to run the Club during the 2009-10 academic year. Special thanks go to Abby Price, editor of this newsletter, for compiling an impressive set of stories and reports in a thematic manner to help convey, “what unique opportunities are provided to all Lehigh accounting students by the Department of Accounting and the College of Business and Economics.” Thanks are also due to Gabby Contrato, Assistant Newsletter Editor, who carried out all of Abby’s responsibilities admirably while she was away in Spain for a semester abroad.

Last but not least, I welcome the incoming Executive Board members: Andrew Klein (President), Alex Tamm (Vice President), Lauren Silberman (Secretary), Christie Dugan (Treasurer), and Dong Shin (Webmaster). I also welcome Professor Joseph Manzo as Club’s new Associate Advisor. I look forward to working with the new team.

Please enjoy the rest of this newsletter as you read about numerous Accounting Club activities. As you can see, these activities provide invaluable learning and networking opportunities for you. I wish you all the best in your studies at Lehigh as we start the new academic year.

If you want to chat with me in more detail about any of the activities and articles mentioned in this newsletter, please do stop by my office or email me at ppg0@lehigh.edu. I look forward to seeing you at various events hosted by the Accounting Club and the Department of Accounting.
EXECUTIVE BOARD PERSPECTIVE

INTRODUCING THE OUTGOING & INCOMING EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE LEHIGH UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTING CLUB

OUTGOING: ACCOUNTING CLUB EXECUTIVE BOARD (2009-2010)

President
Kevin Ostroksi
Major: Accounting and Finance
Internship: KPMG LLP
Activities: Psi Upsilon, Global Union, Assoc. of Student Alumni

Vice President
Scott Silberman
Major: Accounting - Minor, Psychology
Internship: PwC, Job offer
Activities: Beta Alpha Psi

Secretary
Jennifer Waughtel
Major: Accounting - Minor, Spanish
Internship: PwC, Job offer

Treasurer
Steven Balter
Major: Accounting and Finance
Internship: WithumSmith+Brown, Job offer
Activities: Alumni Student Association

Webmaster
Stephen Frey
Major: Accounting - Minor, Communications
Internship: E&Y, Job offer
Activities: Asst. Capt., Lehigh Ice Hockey Team

Newsletter Editor
Abigail Price
Major: Accounting - Minor, Journalism
Internship: PwC, Job offer
Activities: Brown & White, Gamma Phi Beta, Global Citizenship, NSCS, Beta Gamma Sigma

INCOMING: ACCOUNTING CLUB EXECUTIVE BOARD (2010-2011)

President
Andrew Klein
adk212@lehigh.edu

Vice President
Alex Tamm
apt212@lehigh.edu

Treasurer
Christie Dugan
cmd212@lehigh.edu

Secretary
Lauren Silberman
lds213@lehigh.edu

Webmaster
Doug Shin
dcs212@lehigh.edu

Parveen Gupta,
Professor and Department Chair
Faculty Advisor
ppg0@lehigh.edu

Joe Manzo
Professor
Associate Faculty Advisor
jmm6@lehigh.edu

Committee:

Brittany Rockefeller: ber211@lehigh.edu
Major: Accounting
Internship: PwC, Job offer
Activities: Women in Business, Appr. Teacher for BIS 1 (Introduction to Business)

Alex Ziets: ahz211@lehigh.edu
Major: Finance and Accounting
Internship: Evolution Media Capital
Activities: Accounting Club Competition Chair

COURTESY OF
Welcome to the 2010-2011 edition of Dollars & Sense! This newsletter is intended to inform prospective students about Lehigh’s Accounting Program, update current Lehigh Accounting students and faculty with exciting opportunities and events taking place throughout the year, as well as maintain communication with firms, recruiters and alumni. As I am an Accounting major and Journalism minor at Lehigh, I felt that this would be the perfect place to combine both skills and create a newsletter that students, faculty, alumni and accounting professionals would find interesting and enjoyable. The articles I chose to be included in this newsletter represent an overall theme I wanted to portray, focusing on the unique opportunities provided to Lehigh accounting students, the quality of the education received, as well as the tremendous career and networking opportunities that are available to them. I felt that this theme was an appropriate choice, as it is why I, and many of my peers chose to be accounting majors. In addition, it is why we have continued with the program and become so involved with all the many opportunities offered.

Actually, I did not come into Lehigh as an accounting major; in fact, I was pursuing a degree in Journalism and Political Science. However, after choosing to transfer into the business school, pursuing a degree in Accounting was never a question in my mind. This is a degree where you acquire a specific set of technical skills that allows you to go into the public or private accounting world, as well as any other area in business you choose. As an accounting major, you are learning the language of business, which is something that will help you understand the fundamentals and then build upon them from there. In addition, the economic downturn has created a very difficult job environment for many students - however, being an accounting major has shown me that there will always be a need for accountants, in good economic times and bad, while providing a wide range of services to your employer. That being said, the Lehigh accounting program is one that takes the technical education to a new level, by providing its students with networking opportunities with fellow accounting students, alumni, and firms, as well as events that keep students informed of current trends in the accounting world professionally. After interning this summer at PwC and talking to fellow interns, we were so surprised at how many employees we knew - from associate to partner level- as well as the many types of things we had been exposed to, which demonstrated that Lehigh’s program prepares its students to stand out, be leaders, and feel comfortable in the competitive business environment.

In this edition of Dollars & Sense, each article is meant to represent a different aspect of the overall theme of Lehigh’s stellar accounting program. The officer reports are to explain to students the responsibilities involved with each position and hopefully create an incentive for students to become more involved with the Accounting Club and the events it sponsors. I have also included articles from the student perspective, which have been broken down into two categories: “Projects, Competitions, and Events,” and “From Rauch Business Center to the Real World,” which are designed to illustrate all of the different advantages provided to students in the accounting program. All of these opportunities serve to maximize our potential and ultimately help us stand out amongst our peers. In addition, I have included two articles from an alumni perspective, one by a Lehigh graduate who is now a partner at an accounting firm, and one by a mother, a Lehigh accounting graduate, and her daughter, a current Lehigh accounting major, that emphasizes the strengths that continue to make Lehigh’s Accounting program unique. I have also included an article by a recent graduate of the Lehigh MS in Accountancy program, as well as a “Q & A with Dr. Gupta” explaining the 150-credit hour requirement that is a critical detail important for all prospective or current accounting students.

This past semester I went abroad to Barcelona, Spain, and while there, still had to figure out how I was going to identify compelling subjects for the newsletter, and subsequently find people to write them. That said, I really want to take the time to recognize a fellow Accounting student, Gabby Contro, who helped me immensely during the spring semester and assisted me in making this newsletter possible. I also sincerely enjoyed working with the other members of the Accounting Club Executive Board, as well as Dr. Parveen Gupta. Lastly, I want to thank all of the firms that placed advertisements, everyone who contributed articles, as well as KPMG for funding the 2010-2011 edition of Dollars & Sense. I hope you all enjoy the newsletter and if you are not a current accounting student, perhaps you will now make the decision to consider this exciting and challenging field!

Best regards,

Abigail Price
Different perspectives.

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At Deloitte & Touche USA LLP and its subsidiaries, diversity isn’t just a philosophy – it’s how things get done. It’s how ideas are presented from the organization’s many people with different backgrounds, experiences and skills. It’s giving clients a 360° perspective on complex business issues they face, from assurance, and tax to financial advisory and consulting. Respect for their business and their culture, and the conviction that teamwork invariably produces the best results helps build strong, enduring relationships with clients – clients who appreciate a multidisciplined, multidimensional approach to their business issues.

To learn more, visit us at www.deloitte.com.
Becoming an accounting major at Lehigh University opens many doors. Students learn technical knowledge and accounting methodology through classes, such as accounting information systems, financial accounting I & II, and cost accounting. There is also the opportunity to learn from three distinct concentrations, which facilitates students with the decision of how they want to use their accounting degree career-wise. What about the skills outside of academia? Many of us have been asked, or will soon be asked by recruiters and interviewers, “what are the skills that make a good intern or new hire?” Not only being able to answer this question, but being able to demonstrate this answer, both on the job and throughout an internship, is something that I believe gives Lehigh students an edge on the competition.

This past summer, the aforementioned question was asked to my intern class at a Big 4 firm. Interns responded with answers of dressing professionally, proper business etiquette, strong networking skills, and having an adequate background of the field you are working in. No one in the room was able to say that they ever encountered anything within their course work that had prepared them to be a good intern. Sure, one might say that taking an audit course your senior year will give you a good background in audit and prepare you to be a new hire in public accounting, but will you learn in your course the different roles of each position on the engagement team? You will most likely not. This is where Accounting Club and Accounting Department events step in and start developing us into strong job candidates.

During the fall semester, the club brought in eight firms to put on presentation about a variety of topics including “Interview Skills and Resume Writing,” “Business Etiquette: More than just eating with the right fork,” and “Branding U,” to name a few. Each presentation left time at the end to network with the professionals and recruiters from the firm hosting the event. In the fall semester, the accounting department held an Accounting Career Fair and an Accounting and Professionalism Conference. The Accounting Career Fair brought more than a dozen organizations looking at Lehigh students as prospective candidates, who were encouraged to drop off a copy of their resume. This event was a unique opportunity for accounting majors to have a career fair tailored to their interests, and it is an entirely separate event from the career fair held for Lehigh students, in general. The Accounting and Professionalism Conference is a two-day event for accounting majors in their junior year. On Friday evening, students attend a networking event where they eat dinner in business attire with professionals from various firms. They also hear from a panel of Lehigh Alumni who have used their accounting degree to pursue various career paths. On Saturday, the emphasis is placed on students learning skills that you will not find inside of the classroom. A multitude of firms put on presentations that provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become “good” professionals.

One of the Accounting Club’s most noted events during the fall semester was the Junior Class Trip to New York City. On this trip the students visited the offices of KPMG LLP and Eisner LLP. Students also attended an annual networking reception at PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP that evening, and they were joined by fellow Lehigh Accounting Alumni living in the Tri-state area.

In the spring, the Accounting Club coordinated events with other organizations on campus, focusing on different career paths with an accounting major, networking skills, technology in business, as well as information about the CPA exam. We also coordinated the submission of two national Big 4 competitions for Lehigh University, and also organized a trip for sophomore accounting majors to Deloitte LLP and Eisner LLP.

I would like to thank the executive board members: Steven Balter, Stephen Frey, Abigail Price, Scott Silberman, Jennifer Waughtel, as well as our faculty advisor, Professor Parveen Gupta, for their strong commitment and support to the club this past year. I would also like to recognize Kathy Smith, who was a great resource throughout the year and helped to coordinate events. Finally, I would like to thank all of the firms that supported the club throughout the 2009-2010 academic year; it is through their continued participation in our programs and events that we are still able to provide students with all of these extraordinary opportunities.

On a final note, I urge all students interested in accounting, no matter what year or level, to take advantage of the programs that both the Lehigh Accounting Club and Department have to offer. Not only will they open up new doors and experiences for you, but they will also build upon the skills you will need to excel once you start your career.
Suzanne McHenry is no feather in the wind.
Every day, she rises with the sun to run with the homeless.
Every day, she’s feeding her life, her career and her future.

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PricewaterhouseCoopers introduced the Project Make [it] count competition to Lehigh University this year, and was warmly accepted by members’ representing a variety of clubs. Project Make [it] Count awards 20 schools with up to $5,000 for a community service project. Groups from the different schools submit a proposal in which they provide an innovative idea for making a positive change at their school or in the world around them.

The participating organizations included the Accounting Club, Beta Alpha Psi, Computer Science & Business, National Hispanic Business Association, and Investment Management Club. Given three weeks to develop and submit our proposal, it was a race against the clock. There were numerous creative and resourceful ideas expressed in the meetings we held, all of which would immensely improve the lives of others. After visiting the Boys & Girls Club of South Bethlehem, we saw a unique opportunity that would make a difference. The Boys & Girls Club of South Bethlehem has provided a service to allow children of low income, working class parents to develop quality friendships with other children and receive quality assistance with schoolwork, while allowing parents to utilize an economical alternative to a day care or baby sitter.

The current state of the facility was well below satisfactory, and thus we proposed a plan to restore the facility into an acceptable condition. We proposed purchasing picnic tables so that children could do work and eat outside, new desks and computer chairs, cubbies to safeguard assets, and other supplies that need repairing. Unfortunately, it was a very competitive contest and while Lehigh did not win, it was a very valuable experience for all of the participants. Hopefully PricewaterhouseCoopers continues this competition next year so that Lehigh, as well as other schools could have the opportunity to team together towards a common and charitable plan.
This semester, several members of the Accounting Club had the opportunity to participate in Ernst & Young’s Your World, Your Vision competition. This competition involved teams from numerous universities designing a plan to utilize a $10,000 budget to improve the world around us. The teams’ plan required focus on entrepreneurship, education, or environmental sustainability and had to detail how the budget would be used, how it would be implemented, and how it would impact the community. After an initial informational meeting, the team of five students was set to create the plan to represent Lehigh University. In addition, Ryan Murray, a Lehigh alumnus and assurance services professional in Ernst & Young’s Philadelphia office provided guidance along the way.

With such a broad range of options and a relatively short deadline, the team began brainstorming ideas of projects that would benefit the local Bethlehem area. After long discussions about the numerous possibilities, the team decided to undertake a project combining the education and entrepreneurship topics to benefit local high school students. Our plan consisted of two components: one focused on educating high school students about career planning, microfinance, and long-term financial planning, and the other component would teach stock market basics through a simulation game. Eventually, program participants are given access to money to invest through a microfinance organization. Additionally, after the initial stock simulation, a faculty member at the high school who volunteers with our program is given access to an investment fund to invest in stocks so the participants can learn about long-term investing, with profits benefitting the high school.

The team encountered several challenges during the creation of the plan. The first challenge was to determine which of the three topics to focus on, and this decision was made by exploring how we could make the biggest impact in the community. After deciding that we would become involved with high school students, the next step was analyzing what we would teach them. We settled on teaching skills that would help shape them throughout their lives, including career and financial planning and investing, as well as ways to help others through microfinance. The team felt these topics were familiar enough to teach to the high school students.

Overall, despite not being a winning team, the Lehigh students involved gained valuable knowledge from the Your World, Your Vision competition. We had the opportunity to think critically about how we could use the information and skills we learned at Lehigh to best serve the community. Also, we learned to work as a team and communicate effectively during our brainstorming sessions as well as in the days leading up to the deadline when the individual components were being completed. Finally, we learned that there are many ways to impact the community and environment and that those opportunities exist at accounting firms like Ernst & Young.

Employees of KPMG, including Tom Whittle, visited Lehigh University in Fall 2010 to present to Lehigh’s accounting students the differences in IFRS and U.S. GAAP. This presentation, like many others offered to Lehigh accounting students, was extremely valuable because it allows students to extend their knowledge beyond the classroom. One of the most exciting parts of the event for the students was their recognition of being able to grasp and understand many of the complex concepts presented by Mr. Whittle. During many of our lectures, Lehigh professors introduce the difference between both GAAP and IFRS relating to the specific topic we are learning. However, it was very helpful to have a comprehensive view of IFRS. This is critical for current accounting students because these concepts have a substantial impact on our careers. Therefore, the earlier we are exposed to the information, the easier it will be for us to adapt to changes. This knowledge and experience will allow us to become extremely valuable members of our future employers because of our awareness of current information and practices.
At the beginning of June, I was fortunate enough to be one of four Lehigh students nominated to attend the New Jersey Society of Certified Public Accountants’ Scholars Institute. This program, co-sponsored by Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers, is a two-day residency program dedicated to Accounting majors, providing attendees with training that will assist in making the transition from college into internships and jobs.

The days flowed between a number of information sessions about the CPA exam, different areas and types of Accounting, as well as business etiquette. At most every meal there were about 20-100 professionals recruiting from the 100 students attending the event for jobs and internships at their various firms. Not only were there professionals from the Big 4, but smaller firms, and even individuals who work in the private accounting world, such as the media and sports industries.

What truly benefited me the most was on the second day when every student was assigned to an HR professional from the various firms present, and they reviewed our resumes and used the time to get to know us on a more personal level. I was really lucky because I was assigned to someone who happened to be a Lehigh alumna. As she was only one of many Lehigh alumni I met throughout the weekend, it was evident how Lehigh’s network is much broader than anything we experience on campus, and will only prove to be an added benefit as we begin to search for jobs and launch our careers.

It never fails to amaze me just how strong the Lehigh connection is, and how comfortable alumni make current students feel, whether it is giving advice, introducing them to other professionals, and more to facilitate the internship and job process.

After only two days at the Scholars Institute, I left knowing the next steps required for my career, details of the CPA exam, and a pocket full of 17 business cards. Given that there were 100 other students who attended the program, I had expected minimal opportunities to speak personally with the accounting firms present, yet this was not the case.

HR personnel were very happy to talk to students, and almost every person I had a conversation with said they would be interested in speaking further about internships, which in large part was because of the strength and quality of the education Lehigh does to prepare its Accounting students for the professional world.

I would have never known or been able to participate in such an event had Professor Gupta not been the one to recommend me, and the 3 other Lehigh students for this opportunity. If ever given the chance to attend the Scholars Institute, I encourage each and every student to do so. If I have learned one thing so far from my time at Lehigh, it is this— if a professor tells you it would be in your best interest to go to a program like this, or to even go to a speaker being held at the business school, you should be there. Lehigh’s Business School and its professors actively work to get students into the best and most competitive firms in the industry, so I highly recommend that you take advantage of every outlet and opportunity given. The counseling offices, Career Services, and your professors are all great resources to take advantage of if you need direction with your career—and never once have I been steered wrong.

Lehigh’s business faculty and administration are some of the most knowledgeable in the country, and accounting firms realize this and know that the Accounting majors coming from Lehigh will be some of their best recruits based on the level of courses and professors they are exposed to.
Jim Liddy, the National Managing Partner of US Auditor for KPMG, came to Lehigh on February 23, 2010 to speak to the Lehigh accounting students about the keys to success within the accounting profession. As he briefly spoke about the mentoring culture that exists at KPMG, specifically, he more so discussed the adequate preparation the Lehigh accounting program provides its students with in order to stand out in this competitive business environment. As mentioned previously, Liddy stressed the importance of students creating their own personal brand in order to stand out and differentiate from others.

Liddy defined this idea of a personal brand as how one relates to people, how one evaluates things from their vantage point, and how one takes advantage of creating their own experience throughout the firm in which they launch their career. When asked what Lehigh students should focus on when entering the accounting profession, he said, “setting yourself out has never been more vital. We want to see students challenging themselves as much as possible in order to broaden their personal resume.”

A common misconception many students have regarding the accounting profession is the necessity of intrapersonal and communication skills in order to succeed in this industry. As a result, only a select few of accounting programs that exist put emphasis on acquiring these skills and putting them into practice when found in a professional setting. However, Liddy said that Lehigh’s program distinguishes itself by providing its students with unique opportunities allowing them to develop these skills but inside and outside the classroom. Liddy said, “it is crucial for Lehigh students to take advantage of the many opportunities the program presents them with. It is imperative that students reduce the size of the business world by putting themselves out there, meeting people, and seizing opportunities to get involved on a global basis, which provides them with a cultural perspective that influences their personal brand.”

Liddy suggested, that we as students, need to be focused on acquiring skills rather than titles and that we must be willing to be proactive about seizing opportunities when they are presented. Liddy stressed the importance of flexibility, ethical behavior, and a positive attitude to avoid diluting your personal brand. Liddy said, “Remember, it’s not a job, it’s a career and you need to consider getting the necessary balance that you want.”
This past fall, as part of what has become a Lehigh University Accounting tradition, members of the Lehigh Accounting Club took a trip to New York City. The trip included a stop at two prestigious accounting firms, KPMG and Rothstein Kass, and concluded with a networking reception hosted at the PriceWaterhouseCoopers firm. The Lehigh students, dressed in formal attire, were ready to put their best foot forward as they boarded the bus outside the Rauch Business Center.

The first stop of the day was at the KPMG office. Partners Rob Arning and Tom Whittle helped get the group acclimated by separating the Lehigh students into tables of five with a KPMG staff employee accompanying each group. Their presentation began with an overview of the firm that offered valuable insight into KPMG as well as the general accounting profession. A game was then constructed where the Lehigh students had to interview the KPMG staff employee at their table and, in a creative manner, present the information they found to the rest of the groups. The Lehigh students’ creativity did not disappoint. From game shows like Jeopardy to Facebook profiles, the Lehigh students presented the information about their KPMG staff employee in a very resourceful and innovative fashion. This activity allowed the Lehigh students to demonstrate their creativity, team working ability, and public speaking skills, all critical for one’s career later in life. After breakfast with the firm, it was time to depart to our next firm, Rothstein Kass.

Rothstein Kass presented an alternative to “the Big 4 accounting firm career path” as the company is substantially smaller in size than an organization like KPMG. The Lehigh students were able to get a much better idea of the differences between working at a large company versus a boutique style organization. Again, the Lehigh students were separated into groups, this time of about fifteen students each. Rothstein Kass gave an overview of their firm and their specialization in the auditing of financial service companies. A variety of ice breaker games were played thereafter, including memory activities and team building workshops.

Yet again, the emphasis on the importance of issues like communication and teamwork was illustrated. Also, a brief presentation was given on IFRS which helped to outline some of the major differences between IFRS and US GAAP. The Lehigh students particularly enjoyed this presentation, recognizing that it will have much relevance in the years to come. The day at Rothstein Kass concluded with a late lunch and informal networking event with the Rothstein Kass employees. The Lehigh students were graciously given thank you gifts from the firm as well; no one went home empty handed.

The final stop on the Lehigh Accounting tour was the office of PriceWaterhouseCoopers. This reception, which consisted of Lehigh University alumni professionals from a variety of firms, enabled current and former Lehigh students to interact and meet on a more informal and personal level. The opportunity to interact with many professionals gave the Lehigh students a better perspective on the current job market and a greater knowledge of the careers they are looking to pursue. The evening concluded with a valuable and informative presentation by PWC partner Karen Stuckey. The Lehigh Accounting trip proved to be a great experience for the juniors who attended. They were given exposure to a variety of accounting firms by size, specialization and philosophy, allowing the Lehigh students to pinpoint the many differences that lie between the two. Most importantly, the students were afforded the chance to network with a variety of experienced and knowledgeable professionals.

The Tauck Scholarship is an elite opportunity given by a Lehigh alumnus to provide selected students with the opportunity to be a part of an international business internship. After being chosen from an extremely selective group of students, I knew that I had to maximize my potential by taking advantage of this learning process within a truly unique setting and part of the world. After extensive research, I decided to spend five weeks in Johannesburg, South Africa and be involved in the transformation currently going on culturally, as well as within the business world. Having the opportunity to learn more about international accounting standards and foreign exchange currencies through this internship with KPMG directly tied into my education in the accounting and finance departments at Lehigh. The opportunity to acquire this knowledge in an international setting provided me with additional insight I may not have ever obtained in the United States.

With the rapidly approaching conversion to IFRS accounting, coupled with the unique lectures from the past Chief Accountant of the SEC, Lynne Turner, as well as the current Chief Accountant, James Kroeker, I was able to understand both the academics and practice of IFRS accounting. My global finance class lectured about exchange rate risk when conducting international transactions with multinational corporations. The education that I have received at Lehigh proved to be a key component to my success during my internship abroad. Although KPMG provided me with the necessary training, Lehigh created the foundation for a successful approach, providing me with this tremendous chance to learn business in another culture. The amount of knowledge I have acquired from my experience through the Tauck Scholarship Program has broadened my scope of international business exposure, as well as helped me focus on exploring the possibility of other international experiences in the future.
LEHIGH IN PRAGUE SUMMER 2009

Julie Raice ('11)

Due to the demanding requirements necessary to graduate with an accounting degree from Lehigh, there are limited opportunities for accounting students to study abroad. However, Lehigh’s Summer in Prague program affords accounting students the opportunity to take Accounting Information Systems, a class required for the major, while interning for credit over a month in the Czech Republic. I participated in this program during summer 2009 and interned at KPMG, where I evaluated the financials of around 30 European energy companies. The quality of the class content was similar to a class that would have been taught during the semester. The initial part of the curriculum was taught at Lehigh during the spring semester and the other half was taught in Prague at a classroom located at PricewaterhouseCoopers to ensure that all of the important material was covered. Because the class size was smaller than that of a class taught during the semester, I was able to receive a substantial amount of personal attention from my professor and teaching assistant that further reinforced my understanding of the material. The professor and the teaching assistant were always available for extra help at Lehigh and in Prague with regards to the class material as well as getting around the city. My internship reinforced concepts that I learned in my introductory accounting courses as well as information I was simultaneously learning in Information Systems. Through my internship, I was also able to learn more about the Czech culture and the accounting profession using International Financial Reporting Standards and having clients across the continent.

The Prague experience aided with networking opportunities in the fall because I was able to discuss much of what I learned in there through my class and internship as well as recount my valuable travel experiences through Europe.
When the request came to describe the unique opportunities that my Lehigh education provided me, specifically the quality of my education and resultant networking opportunities, I immediately thought, why not, this will be easy! But it is not that easy to succinctly describe in words what I firmly believe was an outstanding Lehigh education and network that led to a successful career.

Back in the 70s, women were a bit of a rarity, an “experiment” in Lehigh’s efforts at being coeducational; however, the business department took us seriously. Our accounting professors always guided students to the most rigorous curriculum, which was the one that would meet the standards for the most rigorous state CPA requirements, regardless of where you “thought” you might be practicing. While the substance of the courses has undoubtedly expanded to accommodate the numerous changes within the professional environment, the basics and fundamentals are the same, including intermediate, advanced, cost, tax, and more. Like, my daughter, Maryhelen, I had Professor Sinclair when I was at Lehigh, and I roared with laughter when I learned that it is still dangerous to come to his class unprepared! Didn’t matter where you were sitting, eventually you would hear him ask, “Miss Werley...what is the answer?”

The Lehigh education coupled with the extracurricular activities during my four years prepared me extraordinarily well for a career in public accounting. As anyone who is in public accounting, or any business for that matter, knows quite well, it is much more than aptitude that defines “success.” Could anything have prepared me more for dealing with staff and clients than being president of my sorority, or living with other women?! It is difficult to describe how I know I received a quality education, but I just knew it once I began my career at Price Waterhouse.

And of course, that segues into the networking opportunities that Lehigh afforded me. Certainly the placement office during that period was humming - and all we had to do was sign up and show up. Corporations seemingly flocked to campus, eager to recruit a Lehigh student. I know that the Lehigh placement office, thanks to the reputation of the accounting department, was far superior to that at other colleges where I was a Lehigh student. Lehigh was, and still is, very well connected in the business world-Lehigh alumni reached out and sought Lehigh grads. At the time, the Philadelphia office of Price Waterhouse was teeming with Lehigh grads on the partner and manager levels, and this Lehigh connection created a very comfortable environment between light staff accountant and partner. In fact, my husband, a non-Lehigh grad and former PW partner, used to jokingly comment on the extent of the Lehigh cartel at PW Philly.

While I believe it is true that there are many colleges one can find happiness and a good education, I am steadfast in my opinion that Lehigh provides an extraordinary accounting education and opens the doors with many opportunities for success after leaving the hallowed grounds, thanks to superior connectivity and networking.

My mom and I don’t always see eye-to-eye, but when it comes to Lehigh, and more specifically the Accounting Program, we both agree that they are one-of-a-kind, and top notch. When graduating from Lehigh’s accounting department there is at least one thing you can be sure of, which is that you will have been prepared as well, or better, than any other student to enter the “real world.” As many times as I had been told this, I have now experienced this during two summer internships.

Lehigh’s accounting department is rare in that the professors are at times impossibly challenging, yet they are some of the most beloved professors on campus. They not only test you academically, but also as a person. You cannot walk into an accounting class without having any idea of the material being reviewed. I would be willing to wager that there is not a student who has gone through Professor Sinclair’s Cost Accounting course without feeling as though you were on the verge of a heart attack. Many would find that experience feeling miserable and off-putting, yet again, I don’t know a single accounting student, past or current, with a bad sentiment towards him.

In my first semester of my junior year I was enrolled in Cost Accounting, Intermediate Financial Accounting and two other business courses, along with the responsibility of being President of my sorority, Gamma Phi Beta. During this semester, I learned more about my abilities as a student, leader, and as a person in general, than any other time in my life.

After completing Cost Accounting, I came out feeling like I could survive any scenario thrown at me. The accounting classes prepare you for uncomfortable situations that are guaranteed to come our way while working in a professional setting. We will not always know every answer to every question asked by a colleague or our boss, but after going through only a few accounting classes at Lehigh, I am confident that I will be able to carry myself proudly and confidently.

There is an uncanny sense of pride and unity that comes with being a member of the Lehigh community, and within that, there is another unexplainable sense of community that comes from having gone through Lehigh’s Accounting program.

My mom and I both agree that we are the people we are today, in large part, because we made the very wise decisions of attending Lehigh University, becoming accounting majors, and being the Presidents of our sorority. Knowing that I only have my senior year left at Lehigh is depressing to say the least, but because of the amazing networking of Lehigh and its Accounting Program, I know that my Lehigh life has only just begun!
CHOOSING YOUR CAREER IN ACCOUNTING: MORE THAN THE BIG 4

By Sean Denham ’94, Partner, Grant Thornton

What were the qualities that you looked for in a university when you first started looking at colleges as a high school junior or senior? Was it the proximity to home? Was it the professor to student ratio? Was it the beauty of the campus? Was it the size of the undergraduate class?

Before deciding Lehigh was your choice for a valuable academic foundation, the decision came after substantial preliminary research and various campus visits to Lehigh, as well as at least two to five other colleges and universities of various sizes and locations. Of course, the academic philosophy and mission of a college or university are of different levels of importance to every prospective student; however, for the vast majority of you, your choice to attend Lehigh was not solely based on how it ranked among other schools in *U.S. News and World Report*.

The search for an employer should be no different than the search for a university.

As a prospective employee, your focus should be on the factors that are most important to you personally and find those same qualities in your employer. As a Lehigh graduate, I faced the same dilemmas you now face. In deciding on a university as a high school senior, I applied to the University of Pennsylvania, William and Mary and Lehigh University. Being from a small New Jersey beach town, I wanted to attend a prestigious university that had the same small hometown atmosphere I was accustomed to and where I felt comfortable. I knew I was going to be spending 4 years at a new home and it was very important for me to be happy with my decision. For me, that place was Lehigh.

In searching for an employer my junior and senior year, I considered many of the same criteria. After interviews and offers from the Big 6 accounting firms (Big 4 today) and various other accounting firms, I ultimately accepted an offer from a regional New Jersey firm and turned down offers from the Big 6. Most people questioned my decision to turn down the other offers but for me, it was the right decision. I was looking for the same qualities in an employer as I had in a university. It would have been very easy take one of the other options but I wanted to work for a company that had more of a family type environment but, at the same time had a national reputation.

As you enter the Lehigh recruiting season, take time to reflect on matters that are important to you. Take the time to research both the public and private worlds of accounting. I encourage you to not only look at the Big 4 accounting firms but research other national and regional firms as well as reputable private companies. You will find in the interview process that not only is every accounting firm and private company’s culture different but the culture from office to office in a firm is also very different. Reflect on the matters that are important to you and you will be prepared to ask the right questions in your interviews.
My name is Montana Clelland and I am graduating in 2010 from Lehigh’s MS in Accounting and Information Analysis Program. I graduated undergrad from Lehigh in 2009 with an accounting major, finance major, and ethics minor. Throughout both my Lehigh undergraduate and graduate experience, I have had the pleasure of interacting with highly intellectual individuals, including students, faculty, and professionals. I was honored when asked to write a brief article on Lehigh’s highly reputable MSAIA program.

Overall, the one-year program seeks to provide students with a broader view of business than that of a typical undergraduate program, while also preparing them for the demanding accounting marketplace. The program is a 30 credit-hour accredited academic program requiring students to take courses ranging from an ethics course on professional issues in accounting to a business risk course on corporate governance structure and risk management systems.

While many students seek further accounting education to meet the 150-credit hour prerequisite for CPA licensure, Lehigh’s graduate program offers more than just those extra credits. It provides skills that will advancement far beyond the entry level requirements when launching an accounting career. Such skills include, but are not limited to, the ability to work effectively in a team environment and the ability to interact with clients.

Although many would like to say that they have had enough group experiences throughout an undergraduate education, the MSAIA program enables students to fine tune communication team skills that will significantly enhance their ability to operate in a team-oriented environment, which is typical of the business world. By requiring interaction among all students in each and every class, students are able to establish levels of trust and tolerance that were not present in undergrad. Furthermore, they broaden their intellectual horizons by working with diverse knowledge backgrounds.

One of the most memorable experiences of the program was the ability to interact with a client on a live project. Students are assigned, in groups, to entrepreneurs who have signed up with Lehigh’s Small Business Development Center to engage in providing consulting services to their business. The project required frequent meetings with the client to gain a general overview of the particular line of business. Once the students had a comprehensive understanding of the business, they established value drivers for the business and completed risk analysis of the company. This project is extremely valuable to the student because it enables them to contribute to the success of local entrepreneurs, while also obtaining necessary real life experience. This project is even more applicable to the candidate seeking employment in the public accounting arena, because it provides the interaction and information gathering skills necessary in those early audit stages.

Lehigh’s MSAIA program is a phenomenal program that eases the transition between undergraduate studies and work. The program provides the opportunity to more finely hone a work-oriented frame of mind. Such an example can best be illustrated through the recently integrated forensics accounting class. The class offered students the opportunity to analyze the many recent cases as well as auditing standards to begin to establish the necessary level of professional judgment that has become increasingly important after the fraudulent activities of late. The program also develops a more mature and professional student to enter the workforce. The MSAIA program specifically helped me establish a skill set that has essentially connected the dots between accounting rules and real-life application.

Consequently, I am more prepared and more confident in my knowledge and I am ready to take that next step into the public accounting arena. Furthermore, I encourage any student contemplating a career in accounting or finance to seize the opportunity to give your career giant leap forward and consider Lehigh’s MS in Accounting and Information Analysis.
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Q & A WITH DR. PARVEEN GUPTA
150-CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENT...

Since majority of Lehigh Accounting Majors begin their careers in public accounting and implementation of the 150-credit hour requirement in New York State is a relatively new development, I felt that current and prospective accounting majors will greatly benefit with a brief Q & A with Professor Gupta on this topic. I hope I have chosen the questions that are most frequently asked by the students in this area.

What is the 150-hr requirement?
150-credit hour requirement is a rule that was passed by the auditing profession many years ago, that says to be eligible to practice as an auditor and to have a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation one must have successfully completed 150-credit hours of education. It is important to note that this rule is specific to candidates seeking a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license, meaning those interested in practicing public accounting. Candidates who are not interested in practicing as an auditor or who do not seek the CPA designation are not affected by this requirement. The initial reasoning for this new requirement was that public accountants need to have a broader knowledge base and deeper understanding of the businesses they audit to do better and effective audits. Over the years complexity of the business transactions has increased manifold. Accordingly, the auditors need to broaden their education and training to match this complexity and interconnectedness in business transactions. Although, the profession as a whole agreed this was going to be the minimum educational standard, the individual State Boards of Accountancy are responsible for enforcing it, as they are the ones who can only grant a CPA license. Various states adopted the mandate at different points in time. For example, Florida and Texas have had these requirements in force for a while now but the New York State just implemented them effective July 1, 2009.

What states that Lehigh students typically go to require the 150-hours?
Most Lehigh accounting majors work in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts etc. Pretty much all of these jurisdictions either now require the 150-credit hour of education or they will be soon requiring it, say by 2012.

Many schools, such as Lehigh, have created a 1-year Masters Program, providing students with the opportunity to complete the 150-credit hour requirement. What differentiates Lehigh’s Master’s Program from those at other schools?
Since our undergraduate accounting program already embraces a rigorous academic schedule of courses, any attempt to try to build additional coursework into this four-year program will be counterproductive. Additionally, it will put undue pressure on students and would compromise the quality of their overall UG education at Lehigh. Thus, Lehigh’s Accounting Program launched the Master of Science in Accounting and Information Analysis (MSAIA) program during fall 2001 to help students meet the 150-credit hour requirement in an educationally sound way. The MSAIA program includes a dedicated and an award-winning set of graduate courses that challenge students with higher-level thinking and real-life case problems. These courses address ethical decision-making, corporate governance, enterprise risk management, advanced information systems auditing, internal control audits, business consulting, financial accounting theory and a capstone course that integrates together accounting, finance and other business topics. It is important for the students to understand that the MSAIA coursework is designed to challenge their thinking in an unconventional way and to impart those skills to them which they would need beyond the entry-level jobs.

Does a Lehigh undergraduate student have any advantage over applicants from other undergraduate programs when it comes to being accepted into Lehigh’s program?
We have rigorous admission standards that we apply uniformly and consistently across the board. That being said, UG accounting majors from Lehigh constitute a large proportion of each year’s MSAIA class. Many of these students are Presidential Scholars with a high GPA. Each year, we also admit many non-Lehigh students (i.e., international students and students whose UG major is other than accounting). Unlike Lehigh accounting majors, these students may be required to complete necessary background courses in accounting or business or in English language before being allowed to enroll in the core MSAIA courses. Lehigh’s UG accounting majors may or may not possess an advantage over other applicants because they are most likely to be personally known by one or more of the admission committee members and many of the departmental faculty.
is more than adequately informed about such students’ true ability to pursue graduate studies. In case of the non-Lehigh students, the Committee has to appropriately account for this information asymmetry.

How can a current Lehigh student position himself or herself to be a strong candidate for Lehigh’s program?

My advice for a Lehigh UG Accounting major considering to pursue the MSAIA program is simple: (1) Continue to work-hard to ensure that your overall as well as accounting GPA remains above 3.0, (2) Ensure that your accounting professors view you as a hardworking, dedicated and an ethical individual with a great work-ethic who is really interested in taking on the challenges of the graduate education, and (3) start to prepare early to score high on the GMATs. Of course, competition, each year is increasing for the MSAIA program as more and more students are opting in favor of 5th year of education.

The Master’s Program is expensive, and many people may not have the finances to fund such a program—what are some of the things that Lehigh is doing to help students through the program financially?

First of all, allow me to dispel this myth that Lehigh’s MSAIA program is expensive. Those who think like that are most likely extrapolating the cost of their four-years of UG education into the 5th year of the MSAIA Program. It is important for the candidates to understand that per credit hour tuition rate is almost half for the MSAIA program when compared with the UG tuition rate. Second, when you shop around you will find that Lehigh’s MSAIA program tuition is the least of all the schools that we compete with. Having said this, Lehigh and the CBE work hard to provide resources to all MSAIA students as part of its graduate school. This help comes in the form of RA’s (Research Assistants) who are provided tuition remission and monthly stipend. The Accounting Department itself has very limited resources and it helps the MSAIA students by hiring them on an hourly basis as graders for the UG courses and also to serve as non-tuition RAs to work with faculty on a variety of research projects. The CBE and the Department are continually exploring opportunities to raise additional resources to help more and more students defray some of the costs associated with the 5th year of accounting education.

What are other options students have to fulfill the credit-hour requirement other than the Master’s Program?

That really depends upon where a UG accounting major is in terms of credits. For majority of students, pursuing a MS in Accounting is the most educationally sound decision because with a combination of an UG Accounting and a MS in Accounting from Lehigh, they do not really have to worry about something known as the “transcript audit.” In a transcript audit, the relevant state regulator evaluates the adequacy and appropriateness of every single course on a candidates’ transcript to ensure that he/she meets the relevant credit breakdown requirements. For example, the New York state requires a minimum of 33 credits in accounting and 36 credits in business. Even within these broader classifications they mandate what courses/subject areas must be covered. Thus, if you were to obtain your 150-credit hours by completing both the UG accounting major and the MSAIA program from Lehigh, you would deemed to have complied with all the New York State Requirements without having to go through the “transcript-audit.” However, not all students want to pursue this route.

Some of these students graduate with lesser than 150-credit hours and complete remainder of their credits in a “check-list” kind of way by taking courses in the evening at an institution near their place of work or through on-line programs. Additionally, there are students who try to “overload” their schedules during the four-years at Lehigh at the cost of their broader education and learning. Students should note that there are certain specific Lehigh requirements that must be met before a student is allowed to overload.

Is there anything that Lehigh is doing to tailor its undergraduate accounting program to accommodate these new requirements?

As I said earlier in the interview, each state has different specific course and credit requirements within the broader 150-credit hour rule. We really cannot tailor-make our UG accounting curriculum to meet the requirements of all the U.S. states requiring 150-credit hours of education. However, since a large majority of our students go to work in New York State, we are doing something to help students meet their requirements. Remember, out of the 150-credit hours, the New York state requires a minimum of 33-credits in Accounting and 36-credits in Business. So far, Lehigh’s UG Accounting Program offered only 30-credits in accounting. Given the new rules in New York State, starting the current academic year, the department is experimenting with a new 3-credit course in Tax at the UG – level to provide students with an option to complete all of their 33-credits in accounting at Lehigh. The business credits are not a problem as plenty of business courses are offered in the CBE.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to ask your professors, or send Dr. Gupta an e-mail (ppg0@lehigh.edu) to arrange a meeting.
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## 2009-2010 ACCOUNTING CLUB EVENTS

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