Recommendation from the Virginia Board of Accountancy regarding graduate study as part of the education required for the CPA license
Adopted 10/24/08

One of the VBOA's responsibilities is to establish minimum levels of education required to become licensed CPAs and to protect the public interest. Most states, including Virginia, now require a minimum of 150 semester hours of education and also specify a minimum number of semester hours in accounting courses and in business courses. The goal of these requirements is to assure an adequate depth of knowledge in accounting and business, as well as adequate breadth in general education.

Some students may be able to meet all of these requirements via an intensive study of accounting and business during their undergraduate study. Others may pursue both undergraduate and graduate study of accounting. Still others may focus much of their study of accounting and business at the graduate level, having pursued an undergraduate major other than accounting. All of these strategies can fulfill the minimum educational requirements to become a licensed CPA.

The VBOA encourages students preparing to become licensed CPAs to elect courses wisely in meeting the requirement of 150 semester hours of education, such as courses that provide knowledge, skills and abilities that can assist them to become better accounting professionals. They should seriously consider incorporating at least some graduate level study of accounting into their educational plans. The VBOA believes that the increased rigor and the strategic focus of graduate level courses can be valuable in preparing future accounting professionals to meet the increasing demands of the marketplace and to excel in the practice of public accounting.

The VBOA offers this recommendation as the shared opinion of its members, not as an official Board position. The formal educational requirements for licensure are specified in the VBOA's statutes and regulations, which can be found on the Board's website at www.boa.virginia.gov.