

# **TRI-STATE ACCOUNTING STUDENT INSIGHTS: A 2023 Regional Survey of Accounting Students on the CPA Exam and the Public Accounting Profession**

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## **Introduction**

Over the last two or three years, much has been written, discussed, fretted about, and debated regarding the decline in the number accounting students, the shortage of accounting professionals (especially in public accounting); the relative negative pay differential compared with other financial professions; the devaluing of the C.P.A. license; and the general unhappiness of accounting professionals working within profession. There have been national studies conducted by the Illinois CPA Society ([A CPA Pipeline Report: Decoding the Decline, 2021 Special Issue; A CPA Diversity Report: Uncovering the Barriers to Success, 2022 Special Feature](#)), and the AICPA ([2023 Trends: A Report on Accounting Education, the CPA Exam, and Public Accounting Firms' Hiring of Recent Graduates; Pipeline Acceleration Plan, May 2023, Version 4](#)). The results of these national surveys and studies provide some depressing news and trends. The authors of this article were curious regarding: (1) how accounting students in the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut (“the Tri-State Area”) perceive the current value of holding a C.P.A. license; (2) whether accounting students in the Tri-State area are motivated to take the C.P.A. examination; (3) whether accounting students in the Tri-State area are dissuaded by impediments to C.P.A. licensure such as the 150 hour credit requirement and the work experience requirement; (4) whether accounting students in the Tri-State are interested in public accounting as either an initial, or long-term career choice; and (5) whether accounting students in the Tri-State area view salaries in the accounting profession as competitive compared to other professions.

The survey was emailed to accounting students at the undergraduate and graduate levels at most of the colleges and universities in the Tri-State area that offer graduate or undergraduate accounting programs. The survey was emailed to students in the autumn of 2023. The following questions were included in the survey:

1. In your program of study, please indicate whether you are a:
  - a. Freshman
  - b. Sophomore
  - c. Junior
  - d. Senior
  - e. Graduate student
2. If you are an undergraduate student, what is your declared major?
  - a. Accounting is my only major
  - b. Accounting and one other major
  - c. Other business major
  - d. Other non-business major
  - e. Undeclared
  - f. I am not an undergraduate student
3. If you are a graduate student, what is your program of study?
  - a. Master in Accounting/Accountancy
  - b. Master in Business Administration
  - c. Master in Taxation
  - d. Master in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting/taxation
  - e. Graduate certificate in accounting/taxation
  - f. Other non-business graduate program
  - g. I am not a graduate student
4. Please indicate your gender:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Other
  - d. Prefer not to answer
5. Please indicate your ethnicity:
  - a. White or Caucasian
  - b. Black or African American
  - c. Hispanic
  - d. Asian or Pacific Islander
  - e. Other
  - f. Prefer not to answer
6. What is the likelihood that you will take the C.P.A. examination?
  - a. Very likely

- b. Somewhat likely
  - c. Uncertain
  - d. Somewhat unlikely
  - e. Very unlikely
7. How much does a 150-credit hour requirement impact your decision on whether to become a C.P.A.?
- a. Doesn't impact at all
  - b. Impacts very little
  - c. Uncertain
  - d. Impacts somewhat
  - e. Impacts very much
  - f. Not applicable
8. How does the work experience requirement impact your decision to become a C.P.A.?
- a. Doesn't impact at all
  - b. Impacts very little
  - c. Uncertain
  - d. Impacts somewhat
  - e. Impacts very much
  - f. Not applicable
9. What is the likelihood that you will pursue a career in public accounting upon graduation?
- a. Very likely
  - b. Somewhat likely
  - c. Uncertain
  - d. Somewhat unlikely
  - e. Very unlikely
10. If you intend to pursue public accounting (tax, audit, or advisory) as an initial career choice, how likely do you view public accounting as a long-term career choice?
- a. Very likely
  - b. Somewhat likely
  - c. Uncertain
  - d. Somewhat unlikely
  - e. Very unlikely
  - f. Public accounting is not my career choice.
11. If public accounting is not an initial career choice, please indicate your career choice from the following:
- a. Corporate or industry
  - b. Government/non-profit
  - c. Consulting or advisory firm
  - d. Academia
  - e. Other
  - f. Public accounting is my career choice

12. If public accounting is not an initial career choice, choose from the following your primary reason:
  - a. Unfavorable work/life balance
  - b. Compensation viewed low in comparison to the number of hours worked
  - c. Higher levels of stress
  - d. Heard horror stories
  - e. Promotion or advancement is too slow
  - f. Partner potential limited by gender or race
  - g. Other
  - h. Public accounting is my career choice
13. Starting salaries for recent accounting graduates are competitive or higher than other majors.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
14. How much value do you place on becoming a C.P.A.?
  - a. Very high value
  - b. Moderate value
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Low value
  - e. No value
15. What other thoughts about the C.P.A. license or public accounting would you like us to know? (Open-ended).

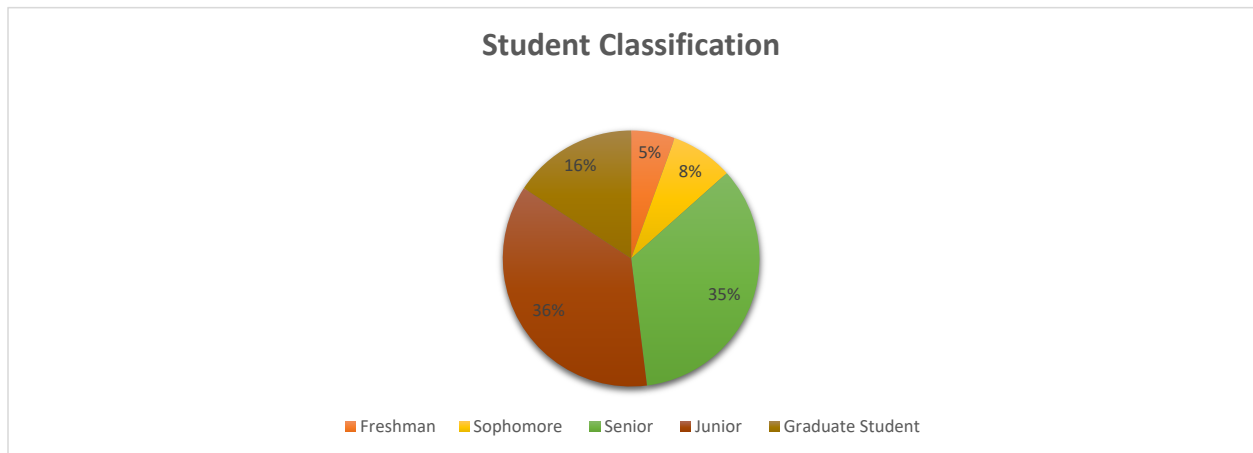
The results of our survey were surprisingly encouraging, and even optimistic. Where possible and appropriate, this article will also compare our findings with those of the national survey performed by the Illinois CPA Society.

### **Tri-State Survey Demographics**

In the fall of 2023, our survey was sent to department chairs or program chairs to disseminate to their accounting students in all of the colleges and universities in Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey that offer an accounting major or a graduate program with an emphasis in accounting. The authors received 127 responses to the survey questions. The

breakdown, according to their academic classification, of the 127 students that responded is as follows:

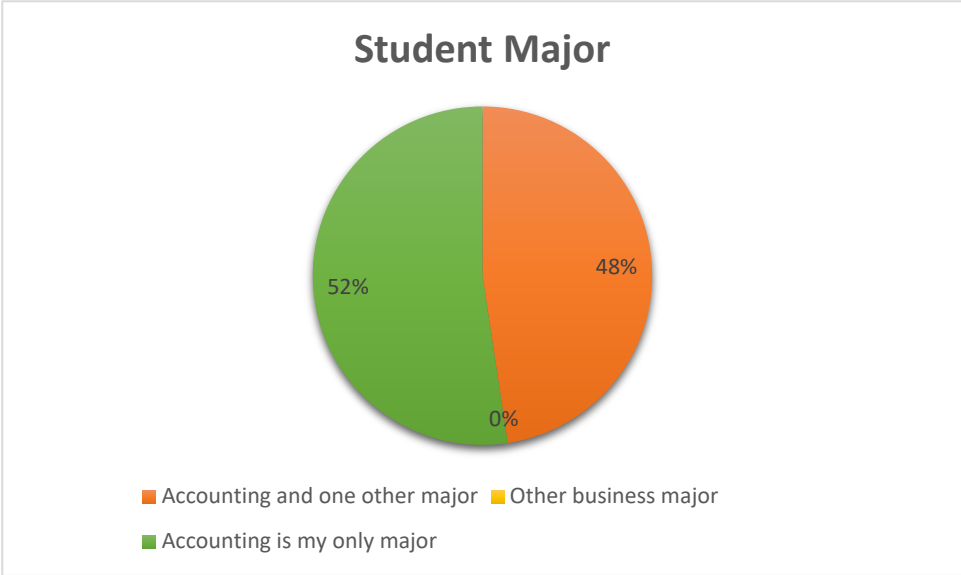
Freshman	7	6%
Sophomore	10	8%
Senior	44	35%
Junior	46	36%
Graduate Student	20	16%
	127	



Undergraduate juniors and seniors (71%) represent the greatest amount of the responses.

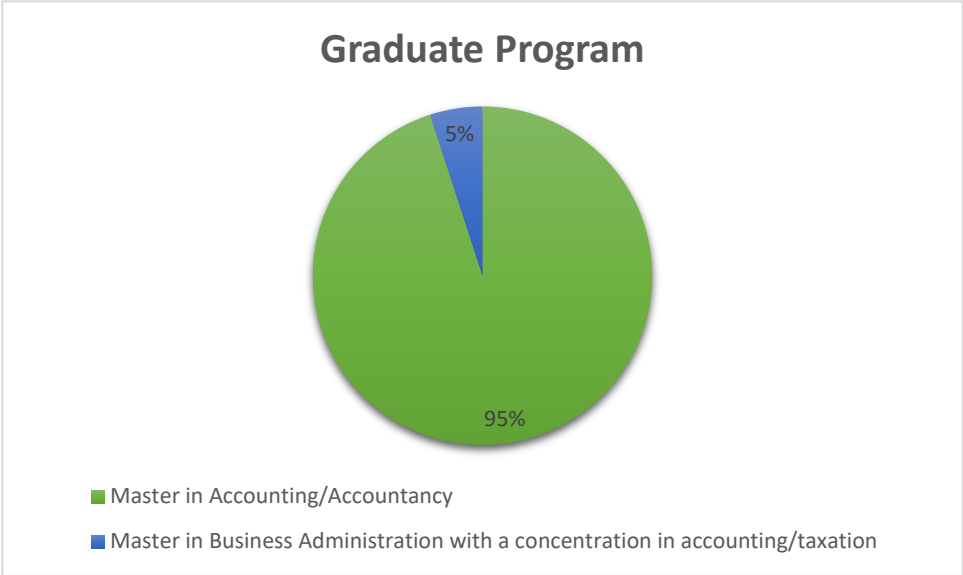
The delineation of undergraduate students that responded who major in accounting as their sole major and those students who major in accounting along with another major is depicted below:

Accounting and one other major	50	48%
Other business major	0	0%
Accounting is my only major	55	52%
	105	



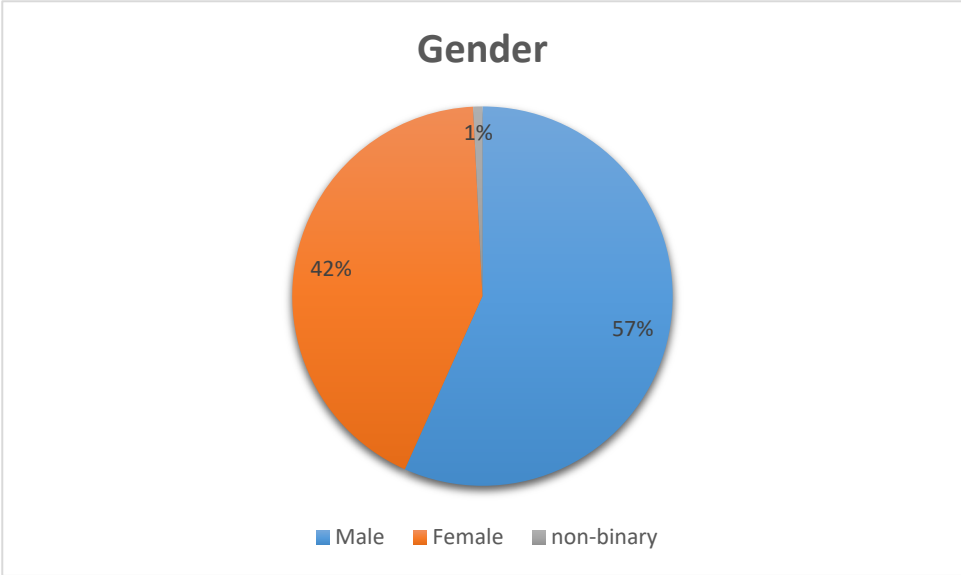
The undergraduate students that responded were either students who only majored in accounting or who majored in accounting along with another major. Depicted below, among the graduate students, except for one student, 95% are enrolled in a master’s degree in accounting and one is enrolled in an MBA program with a concentration in accounting.

Master in Accounting/Accountancy								19	95%
Master in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting/taxation								1	5%
								20	



With respect to the gender of the respondents, most were male (57%), female (42%), and non-binary (1%). Our survey contrasts with the Illinois CPA Society that received male responses of 44% and female responses of 56% ([A CPA Pipeline Report: Decoding the Decline, 2021 Special Issue; A CPA Diversity Report: Uncovering the Barriers to Success, 2022 Special Feature, page 6](#)). The Illinois survey included both prospective C.P.A.s as well as current C.P.A.s

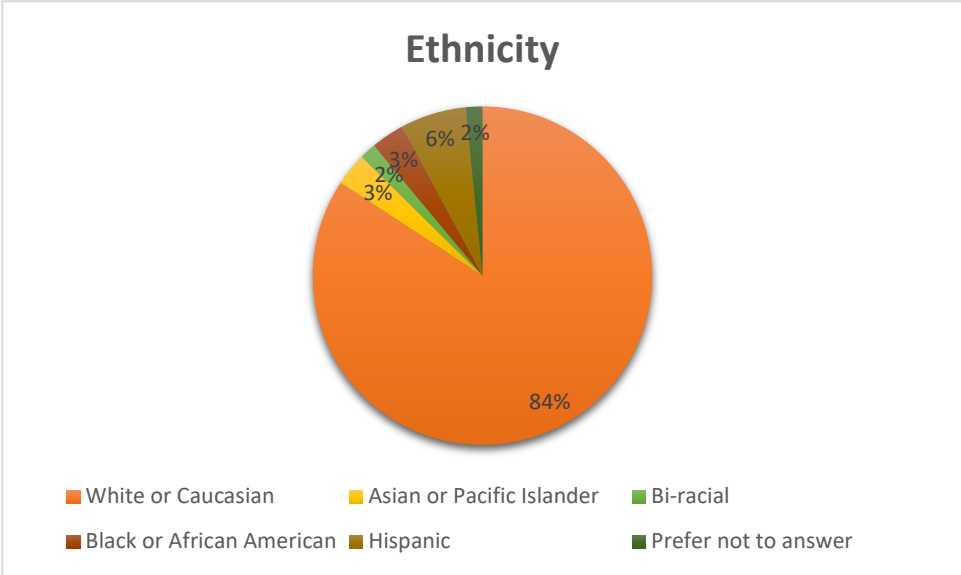
Male		72	56.69%
Female		54	42.52%
non-binary		1	0.79%
		127	



With respect to the ethnicity of the respondents, the vast majority of the respondents were White/Caucasian (84%) with Hispanics as the second highest (6%). The delineation of the ethnicity of the respondents is depicted below:

White or Caucasian			107	84%
Asian or Pacific Islander			4	3%
Bi-racial			2	2%
Black or African American			4	3%
Hispanic			8	6%
Prefer not to answer			2	2%
			127	



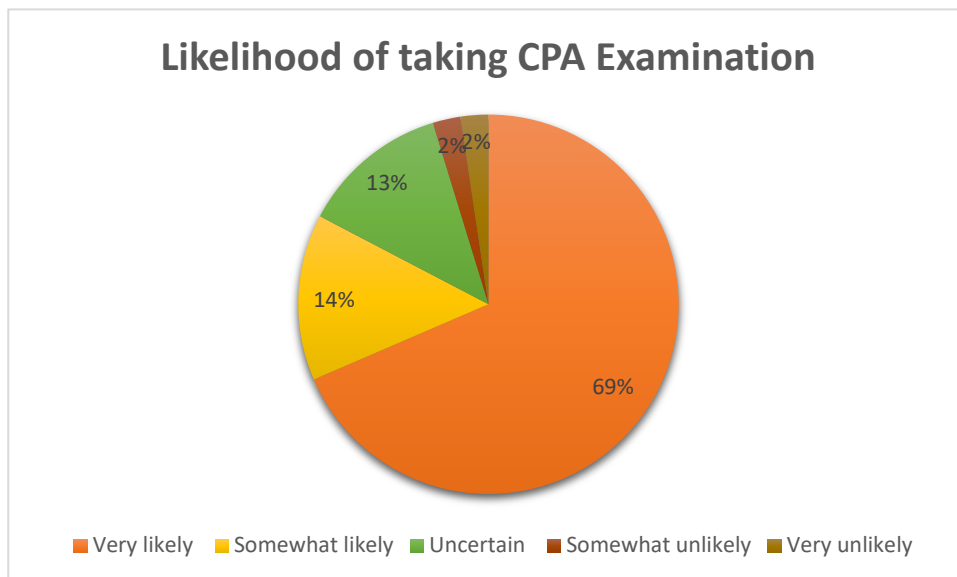


Our survey lends support to the fact that non-white students comprise a small fraction of the accounting student population. Our results are somewhat in line with the survey done by the Illinois CPA Society. The Illinois CPA Society survey reported that 67% of their respondents were White/Non-Hispanic ([A CPA Pipeline Report: Decoding the Decline, 2021 Special Issue; A CPA Diversity Report: Uncovering the Barriers to Success, 2022 Special Feature, page 6](#)). The Illinois survey included both prospective C.P.A.s as well as current C.P.A.s

**Likelihood to Taking the C.P.A. Examination**

We were encouraged by our findings that 83% of respondents indicated that they were either “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to take the C.P.A. examination, with 69% indicating “very likely.” These results appear to contradict much of the “water cooler” discussion that today’s students are not interested in taking the C.P.A. examination. The results of this question are depicted below:

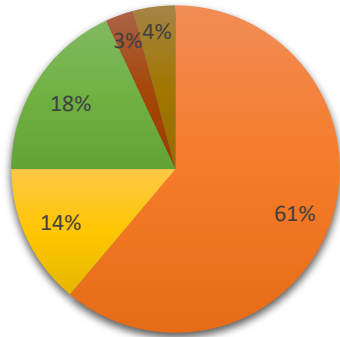
What is the likelihood that you will take the C.P.A. examination?					
Very likely	87	69%			
Somewhat likely	18	14%			
Uncertain	16	13%			
Somewhat unlikely	3	2%			
Very unlikely	3	2%			
		127			



Among males and females, 75% of males indicated “very likely” or “somewhat likely” compared to 93% of females that indicated “very likely” or “somewhat likely.”

Males			
Very likely	44	61%	
Somewhat likely	10	14%	
Uncertain	13	18%	
Somewhat unlikely	2	3%	
Very unlikely	3	4%	
		72	

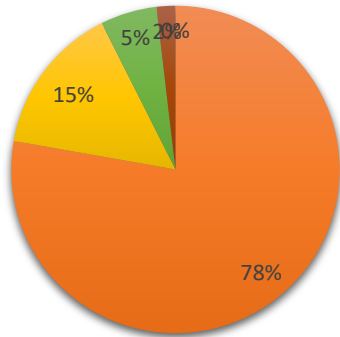
### Likelihood of taking CPA Examination Male



Very likely Somewhat likely Uncertain Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

Females			
Very likely	42	78%	
Somewhat likely	8	15%	
Uncertain	3	6%	
Somewhat unlikely	1	2%	
Very unlikely	0	0%	
	54		

### Likelihood of taking CPA Examination Female

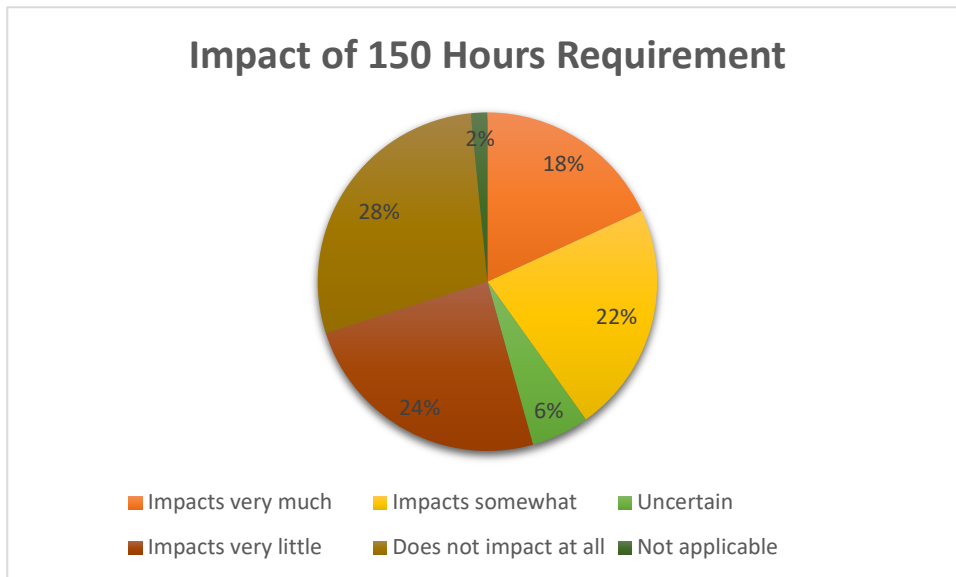


Very likely Somewhat likely Uncertain Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

### Impact of the 150-Hour Requirement

Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey all require 150 postsecondary higher education credit hours for C.P.A licensure. We were pleasantly surprised that the majority of respondents (52%) indicated that the 150-hour requirement had either little impact or no impact on their decision to become a C.P.A. The results are depicted below:

How much does a 150-credit hour requirement impact your decision on whether to become a C.P.A.?							
Impacts very much		23	18%				
Impacts somewhat		28	22%				
Uncertain		7	6%				
Impacts very little		31	24%				
Does not impact at all		36	28%				
Not applicable		2	2%				
		127					

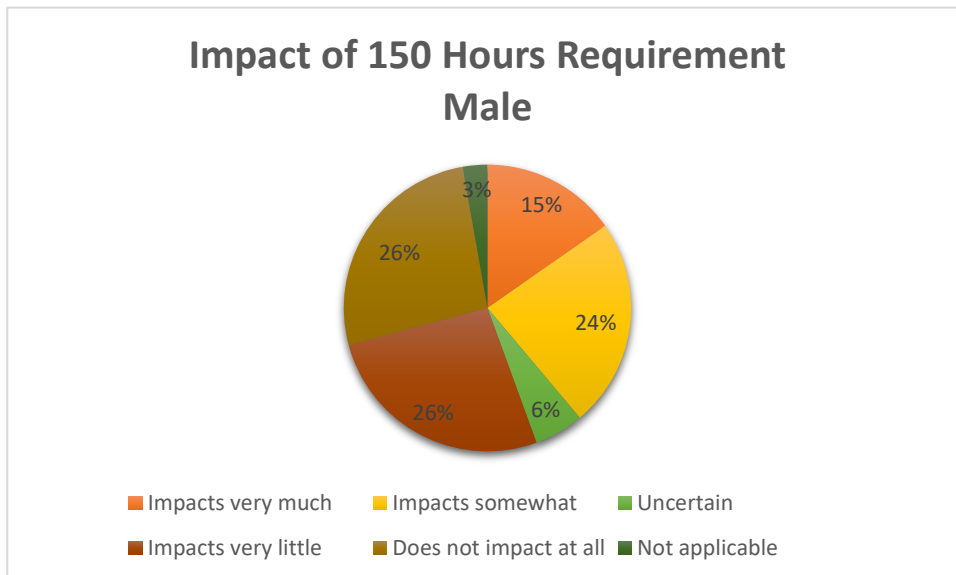


It would be interesting to explore this result further considering anecdotal evidence that students are reticent to continue their education beyond the standard 120-credit four-year degree. On pure speculation, one possible explanation is that funding the extra 30 credits may not be as significant an issue in this part of the country. The authors are also aware that the 150-credit hour requirement is being re-evaluated by certain states, such as Minnesota. (Sadovi, Maura

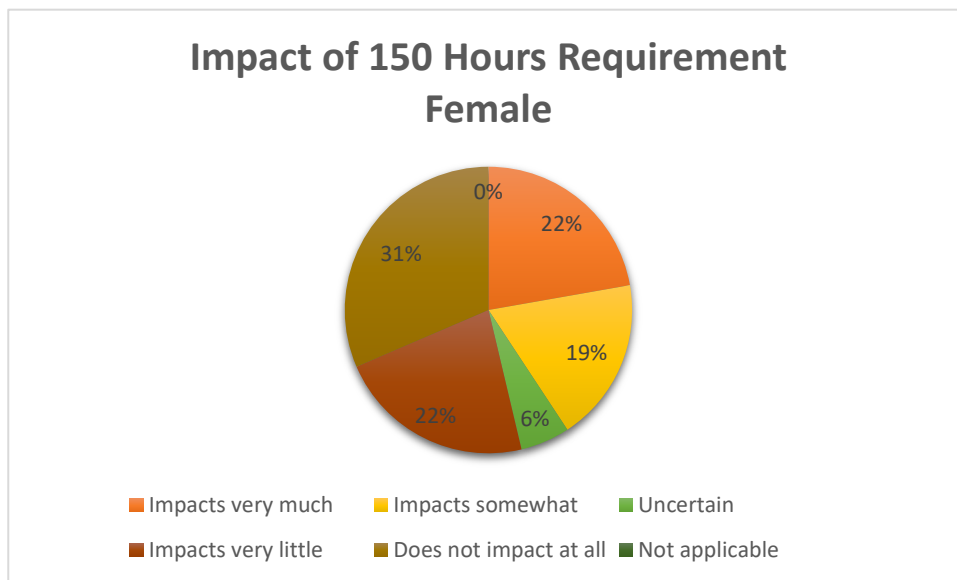
Webber, *Minority CPAs drop 26% after 150-hour rule: MIT, CFO Dive*, February 9, 2024.) A study shows that the effect of the extra 30 education credits upon minority C.P.A. candidates has also resulted in a significant decline in minority participation. (Sutherland, Andrew; Uckert, Matthias; and Vetter, Felix, *Occupational Licensing and Minority Participation Labor Markets, Journal of Accounting Research*, Jan. 2024.

The results between male and female are essentially equal. The breakdown between male and female is depicted below:

Male			
Impacts very much		11	15%
Impacts somewhat		17	24%
Uncertain		4	6%
Impacts very little		19	26%
Does not impact at all		19	26%
Not applicable		2	3%
		72	



Female				
Impacts very much		12	22%	
Impacts somewhat		10	19%	
Uncertain		3	6%	
Impacts very little		12	22%	
Does not impact at all		17	31%	
Not applicable		0	0%	
		54		

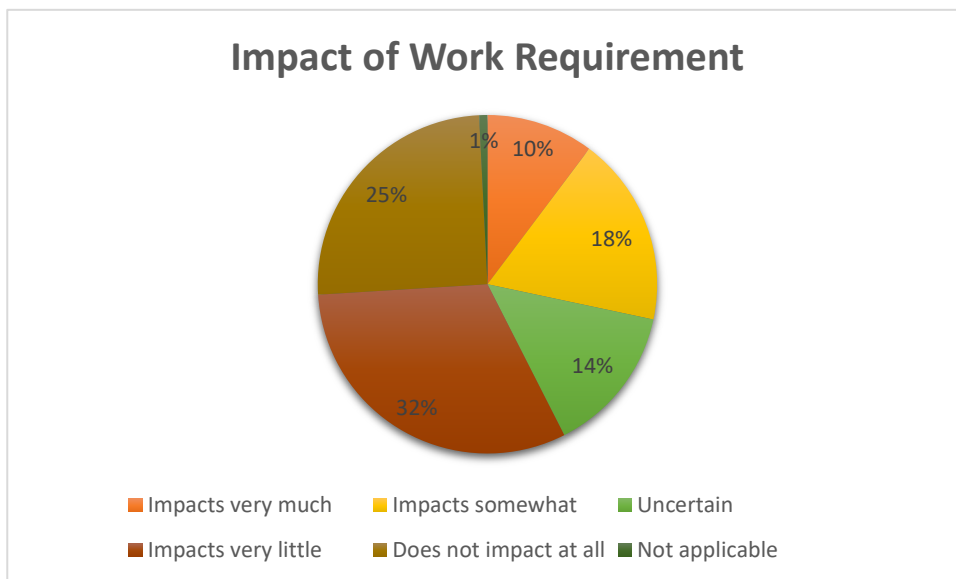


Regarding the cost to obtain the extra 30 credits, the Illinois CPA Society survey exhibited results with only 12% of respondents indicating that the cost of the extra 30 credits is a “Top Anticipated Challenge” to becoming a C.P.A. ([A CPA Pipeline Report: Decoding the Decline, 2021 Special Issue; A CPA Diversity Report: Uncovering the Barriers to Success, 2022 Special Feature, page 12](#)).

**Work Experience Requirement**

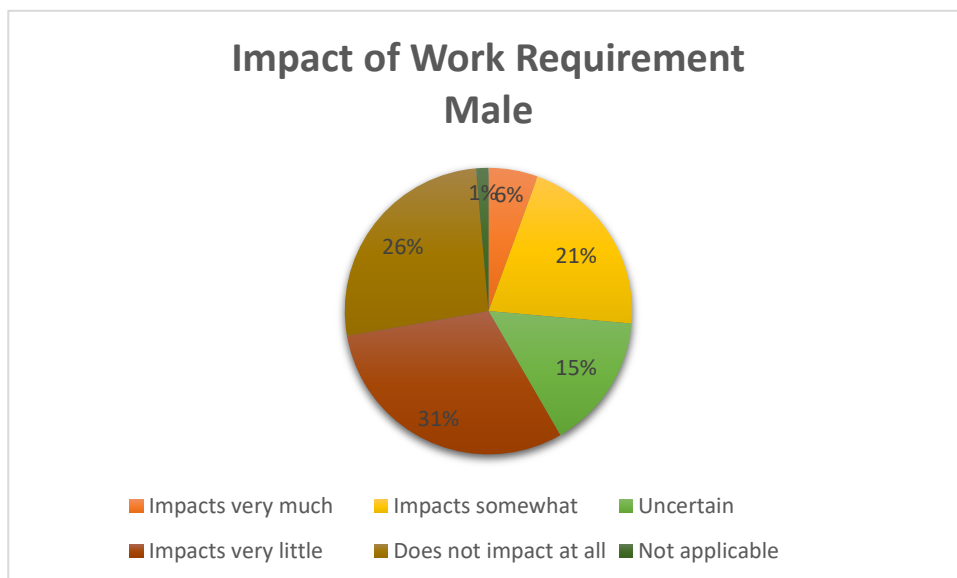
Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey all require a certain length of work experience for C.P.A. licensure. Our survey indicated that 56% of the respondents responded that the work experience requirement either “Impacts very little” or “Does not impact at all” while only 28% responded that the work requirement “Impacts very much” or “Impacts somewhat.” This is also good news. Considering that the two common barriers to C.P.A. licensure, the 150-hour requirement and the work experience requirement are anecdotally offered as excuses for the decline in the number of accountants, our respondents appear to reject the negativity of these limitations.

How does the work experience requirement impact your decision to become a C.P.A.?						
Impacts very much			13	10%		
Impacts somewhat			23	18%		
Uncertain			18	14%		
Impacts very little			40	31%		
Does not impact at all			32	25%		
Not applicable			1	1%		
			127			



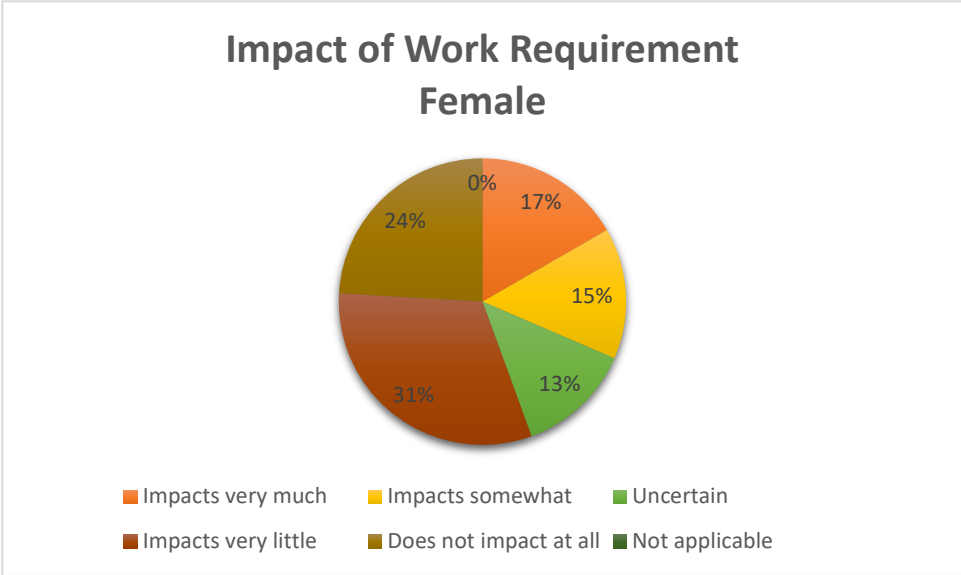
The delineation between males and females is depicted below:

How does the work experience requirement impact your decision to become a C.P.A.?							
Male							
Impacts very much			4	6%			
Impacts somewhat			15	21%			
Uncertain			11	15%			
Impacts very little			22	31%			
Does not impact at all			19	26%			
Not applicable			1	1%			
			72				



How does the work experience requirement impact your decision to become a C.P.A.?							
Female							
Impacts very much			9	17%			
Impacts somewhat			8	15%			
Uncertain			7	13%			
Impacts very little			17	31%			
Does not impact at all			13	24%			
Not applicable			0	0%			
			54				



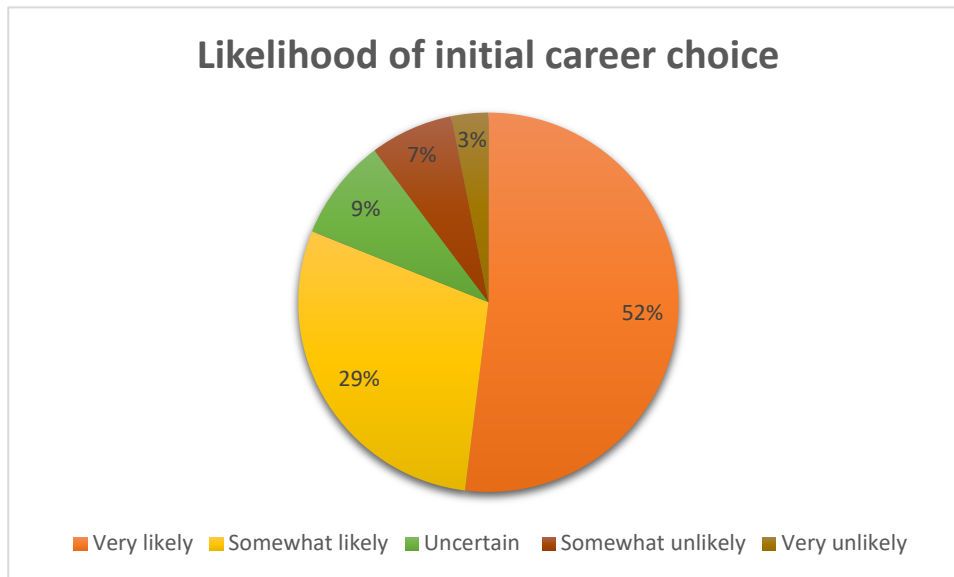


There was little distinction between males and females regarding the work experience requirement.

**Career in Public Accounting upon Graduation**

Despite historic complaints about life as a public accountant, our survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated public accounting would be their initial career choice. We believe that two factors are possible explanations. First, many colleges and universities now require an internship as a degree requirement. Public accounting firms, especially the national firms, appear to have embraced internships as a good avenue to fill their recruitment pipeline. Second, public accounting firms have made great efforts to improve work-life balance, or at a minimum have improved the perception that work-life balance is achievable in public accounting. Eighty-one percent of the respondents either indicated “Very likely” or “Somewhat likely” that public accounting is their initial career choice.

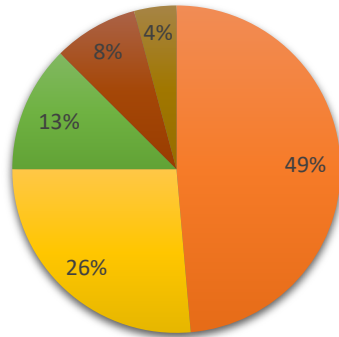
What is the likelihood that you will pursue a career in public accounting upon graduation?							
Very likely		66	52%				
Somewhat likely		37	29%				
Uncertain		11	9%				
Somewhat unlikely		9	7%				
Very unlikely		4	3%				
		127					



Between male and females, females (89%) showed a greater interest in public accounting as an initial career choice than males (75%).

What is the likelihood that you will pursue a career in public accounting upon graduation?							
Male							
Very likely		35	49%				
Somewhat likely		19	26%				
Uncertain		9	13%				
Somewhat unlikely		6	8%				
Very unlikely		3	4%				
		72					

### Likelihood of initial career choice Male

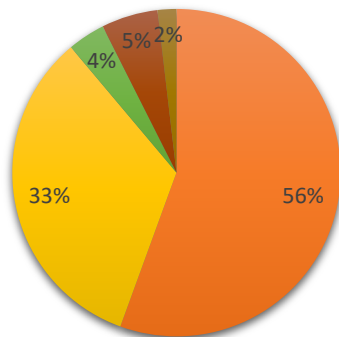


Very likely Somewhat likely Uncertain Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

What is the likelihood that you will pursue a career in public accounting upon graduation?

Female								
Very likely	30	56%						
Somewhat likely	18	33%						
Uncertain	2	4%						
Somewhat unlikely	3	6%						
Very unlikely	1	2%						
	54							

### Likelihood of initial career choice Female

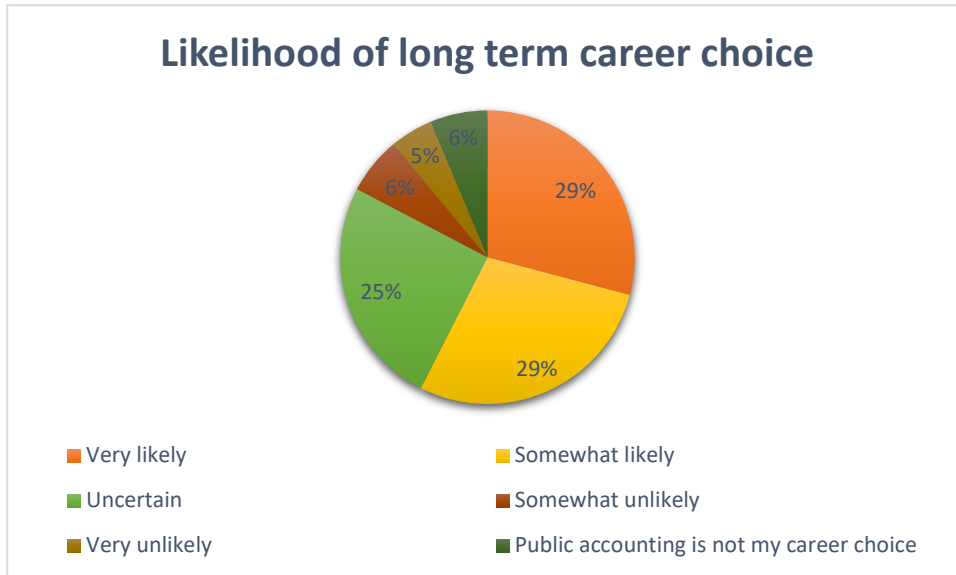


Very likely Somewhat likely Uncertain Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

**Public Accounting as a Long-Term Career Choice**

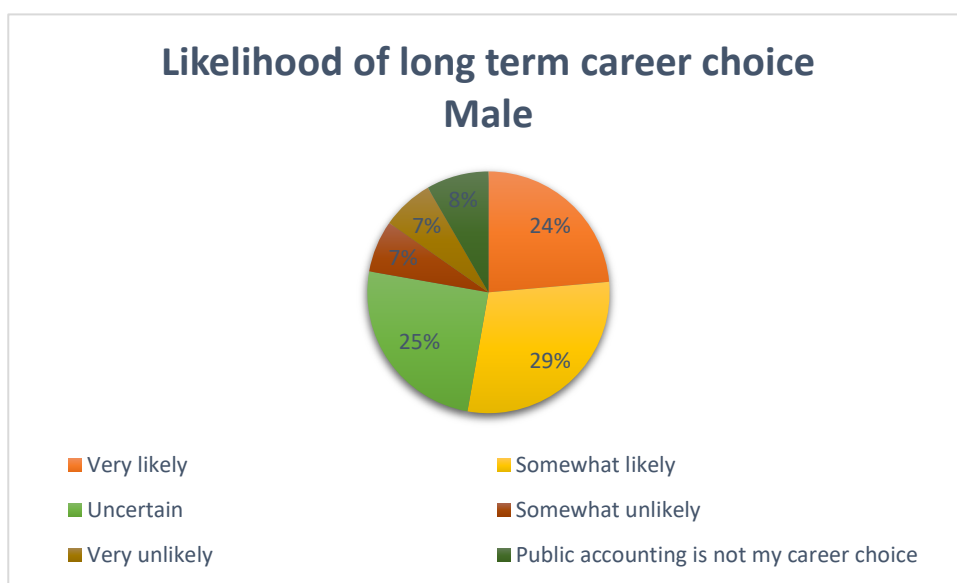
Another pleasantly surprising response was that the majority of the respondents indicated that public accounting as a long-term career is either “Very likely” or “Somewhat likely.”

If you intend to pursue public accounting (tax, audit, or advisory) as an initial career choice, how likely do you view public accounting as a long-term career choice?					
Very likely				37	29%
Somewhat likely				36	28%
Uncertain				32	25%
Somewhat unlikely				8	6%
Very unlikely				6	5%
Public accounting is not my career choice				8	6%
				127	



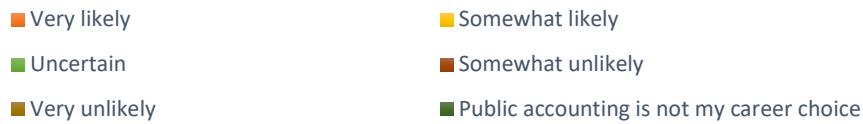
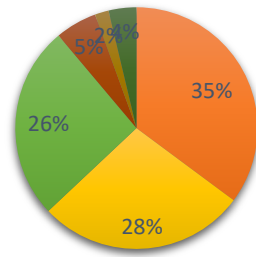
Between males and females, females (63%) showed greater interest in a long-term career in public accounting than males (53%).

If you intend to pursue public accounting (tax, audit, or advisory) as an initial career choice, how likely do you view public accounting as a long-term career choice?					
<b>Male</b>					
Very likely				17	24%
Somewhat likely				21	29%
Uncertain				18	25%
Somewhat unlikely				5	7%
Very unlikely				5	7%
Public accounting is not my career choice				6	8%
				72	



If you intend to pursue public accounting (tax, audit, or advisory) as an initial career choice, how likely do you view public accounting as a long-term career choice?					
<b>Female</b>					
Very likely				19	35%
Somewhat likely				15	28%
Uncertain				14	26%
Somewhat unlikely				3	6%
Very unlikely				1	2%
Public accounting is not my career choice				2	4%
				54	

### Likelihood of long term career choice Female

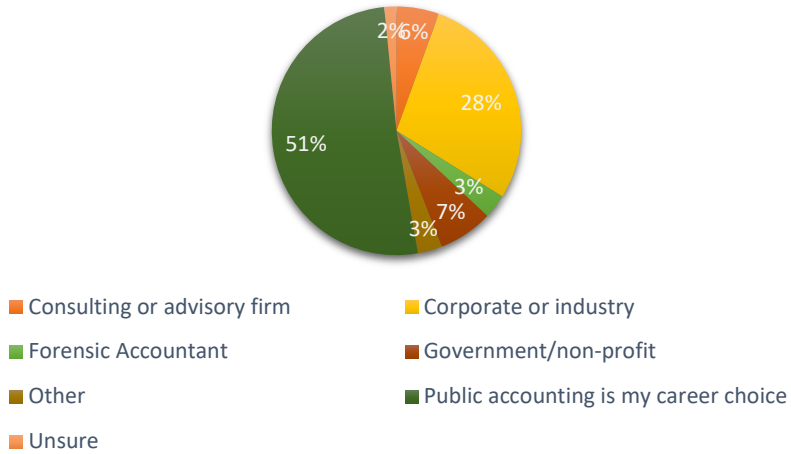


### Career Choices other than Public Accounting

We asked what career choices would be chosen if public accounting was not the initial career choice. Not surprisingly, corporate or industry (28%) was the leading choice overall, and for both males and females. We believe that there is a continuing perception that corporate offers a preferable work-life balance with more predictable hours.

If public accounting is not an initial career choice, please indicate your career choice from the following:							
Consulting or advisory firm			7	6%			
Corporate or industry			36	28%			
Forensic Accountant			4	3%			
Government/non-profit			9	7%			
Other			4	3%			
Public accounting is my career choice			65	51%			
Unsure			2	2%			
Total			127				

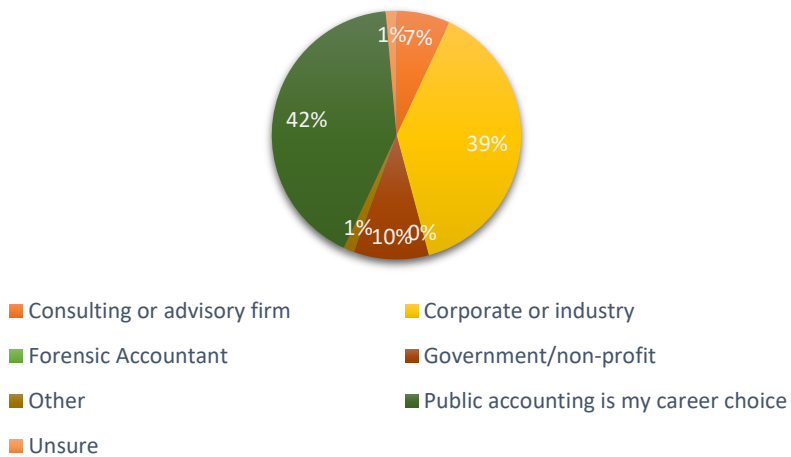
### Other career choice



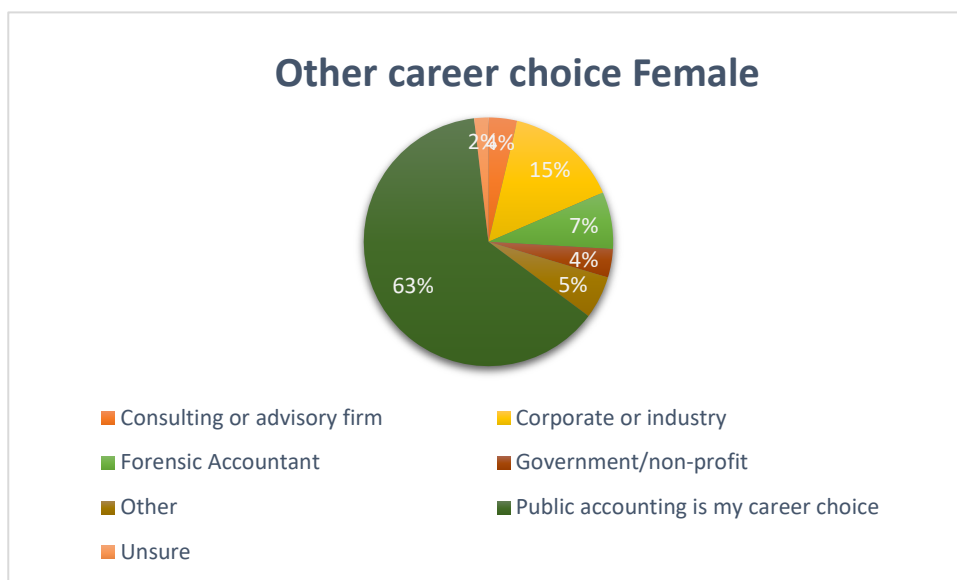
If public accounting is not an initial career choice, please indicate your career choice from the following:

Male									
Consulting or advisory firm			5	7%					
Corporate or industry			28	39%					
Forensic Accountant			0	0%					
Government/non-profit			7	10%					
Other			1	1%					
Public accounting is my career choice			30	42%					
Unsure			1	1%					
<b>Total</b>			<b>72</b>						

### Other career choice Male



If public accounting is not an initial career choice, please indicate your career choice from the following:										
Female										
Consulting or advisory firm				2	4%					
Corporate or industry				8	15%					
Forensic Accountant				4	7%					
Government/non-profit				2	4%					
Other				3	6%					
Public accounting is my career choice				34	63%					
Unsure				1	2%					
Total				54						



**Why Not Public Accounting?**

We asked those respondents who indicated that public accounting was not their initial career choice to comment on the reason. By far, “unfavorable work/life balance” was the most frequent reason for not choosing public accounting. Other frequent reasons included “compensation viewed low in comparison to the number of hours worked,” “higher levels of stress,” and “heard horror stories.” We acknowledge that the AICPA and other state societies have been campaigning to improve the C.P.A. image and the perception of public accounting; however, it certainly appears that more needs to be done.

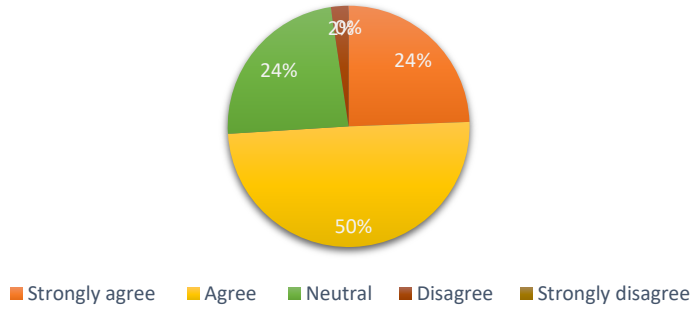


## Starting Salaries for Accounting Graduates

Accounting firms' starting salaries have traditionally lagged behind salaries in other financial sectors, such as private equity and hedge funds. While there may still be a disparity between accounting and finance salaries, the authors have noted that starting salaries for accounting majors have recently risen dramatically. Many of our recent undergraduate students have been offered starting salaries at the four largest national firms between \$75,000 and \$80,000. In our survey, we asked accounting students whether they believe accounting salaries are competitive with other majors. Seventy-four percent of the respondents either "Strongly agree" or "Agree" that accounting salaries are competitive with other majors. The delineation between males and females showed slight differences with males at 78% and females at 70%. These responses are also a positive reflection of the great strides made by accounting firms to attract prospective accounting students to the accounting field.

Starting salaries for recent accounting graduates are competitive or higher than other majors.			
Strongly agree	31	24%	
Agree	63	50%	
Neutral	30	24%	
Disagree	3	2%	
Strongly disagree	0	0%	
	127		

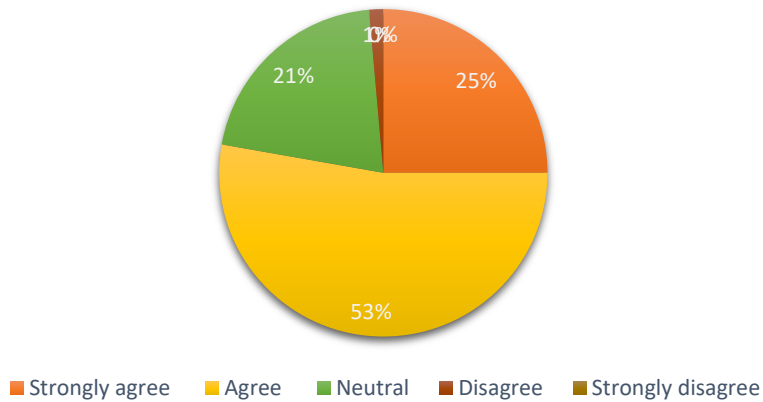
### Competitive Salaries



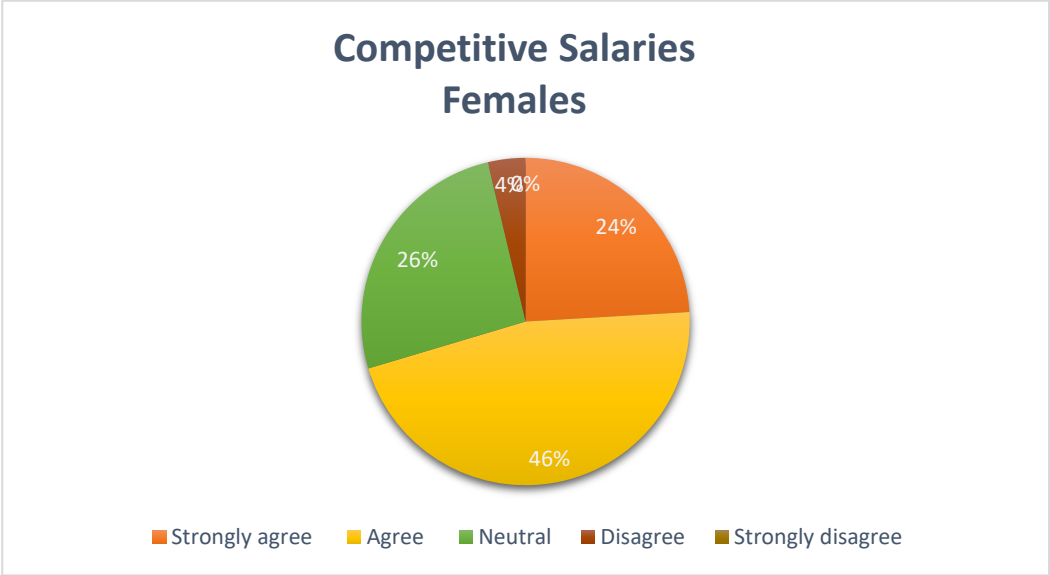
Starting salaries for recent accounting graduates are competitive or higher than other majors.

Male		
Strongly agree	18	25%
Agree	38	53%
Neutral	15	21%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
	72	

### Competitive Salaries Males



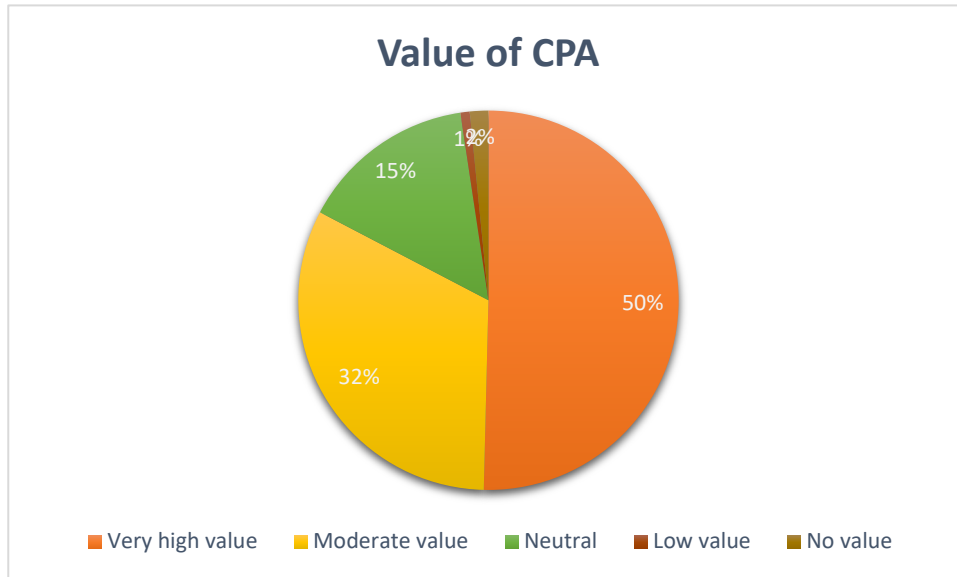
Female			
Starting salaries for recent accounting graduates are competitive or higher than other majors.			
Strongly agree	13	24%	
Agree	25	46%	
Neutral	14	26%	
Disagree	2	4%	
Strongly disagree	0	0%	
	54		



**Value of the C.P.A. Credential**

The Illinois C.P.A. Society survey showed that approximately 75% of their respondents who are planning to become a C.P.A. viewed the C.P.A. credential as “very valuable,” with only 2% of those planning to become a C.P.A. viewed the C.P.A. credential as having “little value.” In our Tri-State survey, 82% rated the C.P.A. credential as either of “Very high value” or of “Moderate value.”

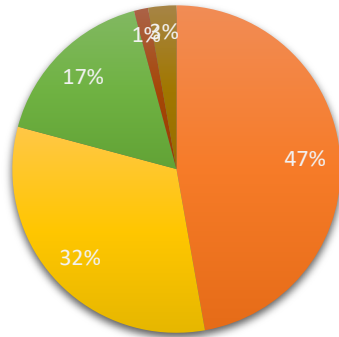
How much value do you place in becoming a C.P.A.?			
Very high value	64	50%	
Moderate value	41	32%	
Neutral	19	15%	
Low value	1	1%	
No value	2	2%	
	127		



Females in our survey viewed the C.P.A. as more valuable than males. Eighty-seven percent of females rated the C.P.A. credential as either of “Very high value” or of “Moderate value,” while males were at 79%.

Male			
How much value do you place in becoming a C.P.A.?			
Very high value	34	47%	
Moderate value	23	32%	
Neutral	12	17%	
Low value	1	1%	
No value	2	3%	
	72		

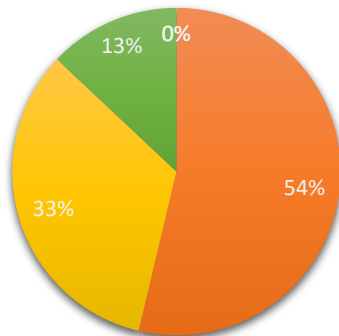
### Value of CPA Males



Very high value   Moderate value   Neutral   Low value   No value

Female			
How much value do you place in becoming a C.P.A.?			
Very high value	29	54%	
Moderate value	18	33%	
Neutral	7	13%	
Low value	0	0%	
No value	0	0%	
	54		

### Value of CPA Females



Very high value   Moderate value   Neutral   Low value   No value

## **Open-ended Student Comments**

Our survey provided the student respondents with an open-ended opportunity to provide any further comments. A sample of their comments is provided below:

- I would like to both take my CPA and go to law school; however, the hour requirement is discouraging for my career choice.
- Seems like it will be hard to go into the workforce then expect to become a CPA while trying to afford a living, a full-time job, and paying off my student loans.
- I think there should be more CPA prep courses and practice exams we can take before we actually sit for the exam.
- With the exam changing, it feels as though I am finishing an undergraduate degree with classes that are no longer relevant to me.
- I believe becoming a C.P.A. as an international student is quite difficult considering the fact that work experience is needed to become licensed and as an F1 student you are unable to work.
- CPA exam 150 credit requirement is very unfortunate because it plays a huge role in graduates not taking the exam. You are basically forced to go to graduate school. I know that the 30 credits can be from any area of study - but still. Public accounting is more enticing than Private because you meet new clients and deal with different people every day.
- I am excited to get my CPA license and explore the options that come with that.
- It is hard that each state has different restrictions for obtaining a CPA license. It would be easier if there was only one list of restrictions for the entire country.
- One reason I chose to become a CPA is due to job security.
- Not sure what I want to do.
- It's very difficult and firms should value more than just if you are a CPA or not.
- I think it's a great career path with tons of opportunities.
- I think the process to become a CPA is lengthy, but the payoff is worth it.

- With the changes made to the exam I hope that more people will consider the CPA route as an accounting major.
- Start CPA study as early as possible.
- I am aware that the CPA exam has recently changed and would like to know how classes will adapt to this new change.
- I think it's very reasonable to obtain. I would only not get it if I go into finance.
- It sounds like going for a Masters in Accounting is very important when going for your CPA license.
- It is what it is, I guess. Hopefully will lead to other job opportunities other than public accounting and 90-hour work weeks.
- Both my parents and brother have their CPA. So, I will likely end up doing it myself because it is a valuable asset to have. In terms of going into public accounting I believe that it is a great start to a career, but without a CPA it is very hard to move up the chain.
- Lower wages than in finance with an extra year of school. Not worth it in the long run.
- I believe the C.P.A. license is of major importance in the field I am currently working towards.
- None, look forward to completing my CPA license as soon as I complete my 150 credits and work experience!
- I am a Finance major as well; I am only really looking at the CPA to have a better understanding of accounting to help for the Finance side of things.
- Not worth \$100,000 of student loans on any students' behalf. Income far too low for the average individual attending a university. Compiling debt distribution simply decimates students who are incapable of receiving appropriate funds (grants, scholarships, FAFSA, etc.) to further enable their future successes but rather entrap them in uncanny debt cycle especially if the individuals are incompetent in the personal finance department. Those are my thoughts, which is why I am pursuing law.

- Going to be a situation decision, if affordable, I will go right to graduate school and prepare for the test, if not I will work first and take the test at a later date.
- Having help with discussing the C.P.A. requirements for the state I would like to become certified in has been helpful (especially, making sure I am taking enough accounting courses). It is something I have sought out.
- I definitely want to look into it but currently I plan on going into law with an accounting background.
- Starting salary is a very important aspect of obtaining the C.P.A. license for me and is a big reason as to why I want to obtain this license.
- I think public accounting is a great field of choice for a job and I am sticking to it.
- I think it will be a great challenge but once I am there it will be worth it.
- Don't be discouraged if it's really what you want to do.
- It may be hard but it's what sticks out compared to others who don't have it.
- The 150-credit requirement becomes a detriment to many. The CPA exam is difficult as is, balancing work and more studying on top of that will continue to affect the CPA shortages. Future CPAs require more support.
- Having your CPA license opens up so many doors when entering the corporate world.
- The test is stressful.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The results of this Tri-State survey are surprisingly encouraging. Based upon the popular accounting press and casual conversations with colleagues, the authors anticipated responses overly critical of the accounting profession, especially the 150-credit requirement. On the contrary, the Tri-State responses appear to signal that for these students, the C.P.A. credential is valuable and worth the struggle, the cost, and the time to achieve.