

The Bedford Report

Future Accounting Education: Preparing For The Expanding Profession

Appendix B

A Plan for Implementation by the Year 2000

The continuing expansion of the scope of accounting practice and the constant development of new information concepts, techniques, and technologies means that improving accounting education will remain a dynamic and unfinished process. Nevertheless, as this report emphasizes, necessary and fundamental changes are required now to overcome the accumulated lag in accounting education. Making these changes will necessitate prudent judgments and a substantial amount of work by a large number of people. With the admonition that accountants constantly watch the weathervane for changes in direction, the task before accounting educators—teachers, textbook writers, administrators—is to examine, test, and implement the recommendations of this report.

The Committee suggests the following three-phase implementation process to colleagues in the academic practitioner communities:

Phase I - "Gathering Support" - (target completion date: 1987)

As an initial implementation step, the American Accounting Association (AAA) should solicit the support of the organized profession, business and government leaders, and senior university administrators for the restructured professional accounting education program presented in this report. The AAA might start by establishing an advisory board with the charge of evaluating this report, determining how implementation can be facilitated, and securing endorsements from major professional groups.

The following actions can assist in this implementation:

1. Encouraging the establishment by the profession of a major grant program that would be available to support accounting faculties who desire to restructure their programs according to the recommendations in this report. A competitive proposal process would enable the best of ideas to be funded and implemented.
2. A critical element in the review of proposals for funding should be to ensure that the education called for in this report does not preclude access to entry into the accounting profession by persons of various economic levels and ethnic identities. Hence, scholarships for minorities and others to study in the accounting education program should be included in the funding program.
3. Arranging a series of seminars throughout the nation to discuss the development of improved university accounting education.
4. Encouraging administrators of professional certification examinations to adjust their tests to the broader accounting education program.
5. Encouraging accrediting agencies to accredit only programs that present accounting as an economic or decision-making information development and distribution function.
6. Releasing a lengthy series of newsworthy announcements describing specific changes in professional accounting education courses, teaching methods, and standards as they occur.
7. Encouraging research studies on the costs and benefits of various changes in accounting

educational programs.

Phase II - "Putting it to Work" - (target completion date: 1990)

Future American Accounting Association Committees on Education should evaluate and publicize alternative education models for professional accounting education that fit within the framework of this report. The aim of this step in the implementation process should be to assure the publication of new textbooks, retraining of faculty, and university approval of the revised accounting programs. By this period in the implementation process, it is to be hoped that some of the report's recommendations will have found their way into accreditation and certification standards.

The following actions will aid in this phase of implementation:

1. Offering faculty seminars on effective methods of teaching students to learn.
2. Gathering and publishing for faculty and student use information about successful experience in preparing students for new accounting courses, personal capacity development, and life-long learning.
3. Giving awards and extensive publicity to textbook authors and books making effective presentation of accounting information systems.
4. Providing consulting service to accounting faculties needing assistance in developing effective accounting programs.

Phase III - "Mid-Course Review" - (target date: 1995)

A new committee should be established by the American Accounting Association to review, evaluate, and update the evolution of accounting education and make further recommendations for its continuing development through the year 2000.