

# The Bedford Report

## Future Accounting Education: Preparing For The Expanding Profession

### Part II: The Current State of Accounting Education

#### Program Types and Diversity

The Committee has noted that the basic content of most university accounting educational programs has remained relatively unchanged for many years and has not yet fully adapted to the changing scope of accounting practice. Accounting courses are found in a variety of institutions ranging from community colleges to university units which offer only graduate [instruction](#).<sup>1</sup> Units assigned academic responsibility for accounting instruction range from free-standing schools of accounting to loosely defined accounting faculty sub-groups in other disciplines such as economics or finance. Degree programs also vary significantly both in content and title. An individual university's accounting education program is likely to reflect, in varying degrees, the general themes of financial statement preparation, information development, and management decision making. Individual programs vary in the relative emphasis given to these broad themes.

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<sup>1</sup>Most of the approximately 3,200 institutions of higher education in the U.S. have some type of accounting instruction. A much smaller number of universities have a degree program in accounting. Enrollment in accounting programs has risen dramatically over the past 15 years, due in part to the employment opportunities for graduates. The number of bachelor accounting degrees granted increased from 23,800 in 1971–72 to 49,870 in 1979–80, a 110% increase. The rate of increase in master's degrees increased even more sharply from 2,200 in 1971–72 to 5,280 in 1979–80, a 185% increase. The AICPA survey on supply and demand for accounting graduates projects 54,220 bachelor's degrees and 6,800 master's degrees in accounting for 1984–85, representing increases over 1983–84 of 2% and 7%, respectively.