Accounting is known as the “language of business.” That’s one reason why Joel Tuoriniemi, Professor of Practice in Accounting and Director of the MS in Accounting program, believes “there is literally no undergraduate major that would not benefit from studying accounting.” As part of its foundation, SBE offers finance and economics students an excellent path to becoming a Certified Public Accountant. Alumnus Troy Hecht ’15, who works at Deloitte & Touche LLP as an Audit Senior Assistant, states, “My education has given me the opportunity to apply for and pass the CPA exams. It made sense to pursue an MS… the additional credits put me over the required threshold and added to the base of knowledge I gained from my undergrad studies.”

But Professor Tuoriniemi is quick to note that the program offers much more. Increasing numbers of students are seeing the value of an accounting education in launching businesses, fast tracking their management careers, or as a springboard into PhD programs. He explains, “Finance majors develop a keen understanding of financial statement analysis to assist in valuations; information systems majors learn the importance of integrating applications and business needs to develop reporting that is both understandable to the end users and a provides a critical tool in decision making; math majors sharpen big data analytics skills to refine models and better interpret results.” He notes that in addition to the traditional CPA exam, MTU graduates are prepared to pursue certifications as financial analysts, fraud examiners, control specialists, and risk analysts.

Even engineers are coming on board. Through the MS in Accounting program, students are able to complement their STEM education and differentiate themselves by demonstrating an understanding of concepts in production costing, capital budgeting, and lean management. They are able to earn certifications in management accounting and cost estimating, which give them an edge over job search competitors. As Professor Tuoriniemi says, “It’s a great thing to be able to sit in an interview with a potential employer and convey that not only can you design a great product, you also possess a skill set to help make sure the company is profitable in doing so.”