

## **Accounting Scholars Program Business Casual Dress Code Guidelines**

### **Specifics for Men's Business Casual**

#### **Ties:**

Ties are generally not necessary for business casual, but if you are in doubt, you can wear a tie. It never hurts to **slightly** overdress. You can always wear a tie and discreetly walk by the room where the function is held. If no one else is wearing a tie, you can discreetly remove yours.

#### **Shirts:**

Long-sleeved shirts are considered dressier than short-sleeved and are appropriate even in summer. Choosing white or light blue solid or conservative stripes is your safest bet. Polo shirts (tucked in, of course) are acceptable **in more casual situations**.

#### **Socks:**

Wear dark socks, mid-calf length so no skin is visible when you sit down.

#### **Shoes:**

Leather shoes should be worn. No sandals, athletic shoes or hiking boots.

#### **Facial hair:**

Facial hair, if worn, should be well-groomed. Know your industry and how conservative it is; observe men in your industry if you are unsure what is appropriate or are considering changing your look. Accounting is conservative and facial hair is not common.

#### **Jewelry:**

Wear a conservative watch. If you choose to wear other jewelry, be conservative. Removing earrings is safest. Observe other men in your industry to see what is acceptable.

### **Specifics for Women's Business Casual**

Don't confuse club attire with business attire. If you would wear it to a club, you should not wear it in a business environment. Also, most attire worn on television is not appropriate for business environments.

#### **Pants / skirts:**

Women can wear casual pants or skirts. Neither should be tight. Fabrics should be crisp; colors should generally be solid; navy, black, gray, brown and khaki are always safe bets. For the most business-like appearance, pants should be creased

and tailored; neither extreme of tight or flowing. Accounting is a conservative industry. Observe well-dressed women in your industry on the job, at career fairs, at information sessions, etc.

**Skirt length and slits:**

Your skirt should come at least to your knees while you are standing. While you are seated, your thighs should be covered. If your skirt comes to just below the knee, a slit to just above the knee might be acceptable. A very long skirt should not be slit to above the knee. Generally slits in the center back of a skirt — to facilitate walking and stair climbing — are acceptable. Slits to facilitate a view of your legs are not appropriate for business purposes. Slips should not be visible.

**Shirt / sweaters:**

In addition to tailored shirts or blouses, tailored knit sweaters and sweater sets are appropriate business casual choices for women. Cotton, silk, and blends are appropriate. Velvets and shimmery fabrics suitable for parties are not appropriate. Fit should not be tight. Cleavage is not appropriate.

**Jewelry / accessories:**

Wear a conservative watch. Jewelry and scarf styles come and go. Keep your choices simple and leaning toward conservative. Avoid extremes of style and color. Accounting is conservative.

**Cosmetics:**

Keep makeup conservative and natural looking. A little is usually better than none for a polished look. Nails should be clean and well groomed. Avoid extremes of nail length and polish color. Only clear nail polish is considered acceptable in many firms.

**Shoes:**

Shoes should be leather or fabric / microfiber. Appropriate colors are black, navy and brown (to coordinate with your other attire and accessories); white and pastels are not appropriate. For the most conservative look, toes should be covered. Sandals are not appropriate in many accounting firms. Thin straps and high heels are not appropriate. Chunky heels and platforms are not appropriate. Make certain you can walk comfortably in your shoes; **hobbling around a job fair in shoes that are pinching your feet does not convey a professional image.**

**Hose:**

Some accounting firms require hose with dresses and skirts.

**Purse / bag:**

If you carry a purse, keep it small and simple, or carry a small briefcase or business-like tote bag in place of a purse. A structured bag tends to look more professional than something soft or floppy. Purse/bag color should coordinate with your shoes. A briefcase is certainly not necessary for most business casual events. Leather, microfiber and fine wovens are appropriate. Canvas and straw are not appropriate.

## **Grooming Tips for Men and Women**

### **Hair:**

Should be clean and neat.

### **Shoes:**

Should be in polished condition.

### **Details:**

No missing buttons, no lint; and don't forget to remove external tags and tacking stitches from new clothes.

### **Hands:**

Clean fingernails.

### **Fit:**

Clothes should be clean, neatly pressed, and fit properly, neither tight nor baggy.

### **Smell:**

Perfume or cologne should be used sparingly or not at all.

No odors on clothes.

Don't smell like smoke.

### **Padfolios:**

Preferred over a bulky briefcase. A small briefcase is also appropriate, but if you have no reason to carry a briefcase, don't.

### **Bookbags:**

Appropriate to carry to an information session held on campus (after all, you are a student). Don't carry a book bag to an event held off campus.

Adopted from: <http://www.career.vt.edu/Jobsearc/BusCasual.htm>