

## Financial Statement Analysis ACC 380K.7 – Fall 2012

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### COURSE MEETING TIMES AND LOCATION

<u>Section #</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
02860	Mon, Wed	8:00-9:20am	CBA 4.332
02865	Mon, Wed	9:30-10:50am	CBA 4.332

### COURSE OVERVIEW

We will use firms' publicly available financial statements to (1) assess current performance, (2) forecast future performance, and (3) estimate the fundamental value of the firm. Many of you will go on to jobs as analysts and managers, while others will be preparers or auditors of financial statements. This course is intended to give you a *user's* perspective on financial reporting. You will better understand their role in the financial reporting process if you understand how financial statements will ultimately be used.

This is formally an "accounting" course and we will discuss key accounting issues related to financial reporting, including the relevant US and international standards. However, the primary focus of the class is on learning to *use* accounting information to assess performance and value rather than enhancing your knowledge of accounting standards.

### COURSE MATERIALS

1. **Required text:** *Financial Reporting, Financial Statement Analysis and Valuation: A Strategic Perspective*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, by Wahlen, Baginski and Bradshaw (Cengage).
2. **Coursepack** available at UT Copy Center (McCombs location only – GSB 3.136).
3. Readings, cases and supplemental materials on Blackboard (<https://courses.utexas.edu>).
4. **Supplemental reading:** If you are looking for a book to supplement your understanding of valuation and the usefulness of accounting information for valuation, I highly recommend *Accounting for Value* by Stephen Penman (Columbia University Press).

## PREREQUISITES

I assume familiarity with basic accounting and financial reporting concepts (e.g., ACC 356, 381, BA 384T, or the equivalent). However, students have a wide range of backgrounds, and you do not need to be experts in accounting or financial reporting to succeed in the course. Both accounting knowledge and other types of institutional knowledge (e.g., through work experience) will be useful in contributing to class discussions and group work. Accordingly, I expect students with strong accounting knowledge to contribute their expertise in accounting, and those with other backgrounds to share their business experience.

## ASSESSMENT

Element	Description	Points	% of Total
<b>1. Full case analyses</b>	Two cases x 100 possible points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose 2 of 4 cases labeled "Full Analysis"</li> </ul>	200	20.0%
<b>2. Brief case analyses</b>	Six cases x 25 possible points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The two cases for which you do not write up a full analysis (you must complete brief analyses for these)</li> <li>Choose 4 of 6 cases labeled "Brief Analysis"</li> </ul>	150	15.0%
<b>3. Ratio assignment</b>	Individual ratio assignment	75	7.5%
<b>4. Forecasting assignment</b>	Individual forecasting assignment	25	2.5%
<b>5. Valuation assignment</b>	Individual valuation assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will use the Kohler case for this assignment, but it does NOT count as a full or brief case analysis.</li> </ul>	100	10.0%
<b>6. Participation &amp; Professionalism</b>	Instructor evaluation of in-class participation and professionalism, incorporating peer evaluation of contribution to group work	100	10.0%
<b>7. Group project</b>	(a) Midterm Written Report	150	15.0%
	(b) Final Written Report	100	10.0%
	(c) Final Presentation	100	10.0%
Total Points		1,000	100%

## GRADING SCALE FOR FINAL COURSE GRADES

I will determine the final distribution of letter grades *at the end of the semester*. This means that numerical scores on specific assignments do not necessarily correspond to a particular letter grade. My expectation is that the final distribution (combined across all sections) will be similar to the following guidance provided by the MBA program office:

- A (4.00): 25%
- A- (3.67): 20%
- B+ (3.33): 15%
- B (3.00): 35%
- B- (2.67) or below: 5%

The spirit of this distribution is that it yields an average GPA of 3.42. This target has been benchmarked against peer MBA programs. However, keep in mind that it is a target, not a rule, and the distribution within an individual section might deviate considerably (either up or down).

## CASE ANALYSES

### Full Case Analyses

You are required to complete full case analyses for two of the four cases labeled “Full Analysis” (you *will not* be allowed to complete more than two full analyses; only the first two full analyses submitted will be graded, and once you have submitted a case analysis you cannot change your mind about submitting it). *Your case analyses must be your own work*. While you can discuss the case issues and computations with others, *the write-up and exhibits must be done individually and must be your own work*. You are required to complete brief analyses of the two cases for which you choose not to do full analyses (see below for brief case analysis requirements).

Case assignment questions will be posted to the course website at least one week prior to their due date. In general, each *full case analysis* will consist of a memo of no more than five typed pages conveying your responses to the case assignment questions, recommendation(s) for the case issues and/or an explanation or justification for the recommendation, if required. You will need to attach as exhibits any computations or other analyses used to resolve case issues; these exhibits will not count toward the five-page length.

*Format and length for full case write-ups:*

- a. Memos must be written concisely and in a proper memo format (as if you are writing a memo to professional colleagues). Proper memo format is NOT simply listing question numbers and responding.
- b. Memos must reference any attached exhibits that are used to resolve case issues. Exhibits can include computations or any other analyses that are required in the case assignment and/or that you believe are needed to support arguments advanced in your memo. Exhibits do not count toward the memo’s maximum page length.

- c. Memos must include your name and section number at the top of each page (in a header), and page numbers at the bottom (in a footer).
- d. The content portion of memos (excluding exhibits) must be:
  - no more than five pages in length, and;
  - typed, double spaced, with 12 point Times New Roman font and a minimum of 1" margins for the text of the memo.

If the memo exceeds five pages and/or if the 1" margin and 12 point font requirements are not met, only the content of what would be on the first five pages with proper margins and font will be graded.

### **Brief Case Analyses**

You are required to complete six brief case analyses. This includes the two cases for which you choose not to write up full analyses (in other words, you must complete analyses for all four cases labeled "Full Analysis" – two of these will be full analyses and two will be brief analyses). You will also select four of the six cases labeled "Brief Analysis".

Each brief case analysis will consist of your brief thoughts and/or notes in response to each case question. I expect your write-up will consist of no more than two typed pages and be comprised primarily of discussion points for class. You can use whatever format you like in responding to the questions (e.g., a few brief sentences in response to each question, bullet points). Computations are not required for brief analyses unless explicitly asked for. If you choose to include computations, please attach them as an exhibit. The purpose of brief analyses is to provide evidence that you have read the case and at least briefly thought about the case questions before coming to class.

### **Submission of case analyses**

You will submit case analyses via the course Blackboard site. You must submit one copy of each case analysis *before the beginning of your class section*. Bring a copy for your use during class so that you can participate in that day's discussion.

*Case analyses will not be accepted after the start of your class section. There are no exceptions to this policy, including sleeping late, computer problems, etc.* I realize this is tough, but a deadline must be set and it is set at the start of class out of courtesy to those who arrive ready to go. In general, neither excused nor unexcused absences will change the deadlines for case analyses.

### **INDIVIDUAL RATIO, FORECASTING AND VALUATION ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to the case analyses, you will complete three assignments designed to solidify your understanding of the key analysis tools we learn in class – ratios, forecasting and valuation. Unlike the case analyses, which you will complete *before* we discuss the cases in class, these three assignments will be due *after* we discuss the topics in class so that you can benefit from class discussion and ask questions to ensure you understand how to implement the analysis tools. Specific due dates and times for the three assignments are listed on the course schedule at the end of this document.

## **PARTICIPATION AND PROFESSIONALISM**

I expect you to treat this class as you would any professional responsibility. Accounting at McCombs has consistently been ranked as the #1 program in the country, and the professionalism of our graduates is a big part of that. You therefore owe it to yourself, your professors, your fellow students, and past and future McCombs graduates to behave professionally, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Active participation in class and group work is a key element of professionalism. Accordingly, I will assess your participation in class discussion. Some characteristics of effective class participation include:

- Are the points that are made substantive and relevant to the discussion in terms of increasing everyone's understanding, or are they merely regurgitation of facts? Do the comments provide useful insights?
- Do the comments take into consideration the ideas offered by others earlier in the class, or are the points isolated and disjointed? The best contributions tend to be those that reflect not only excellent preparation but also good listening, interpretative and integrative skills.
- Do the comments show evidence of a thorough reading and analysis of the required readings/cases and of prior class information?
- Does the person distinguish among different kinds of data (facts vs. opinions vs. assumptions) and provide reasonable substantiation of arguments?
- Do the comments take the discussion into a new and relevant direction, without disrupting the current flow of the discussion?
- Is there a willingness to test new ideas or share uncertainties, or are all comments "cautious" or "safe" (sharing uncertainties about an issue can be valuable and can in fact lead the discussion in interesting directions)?
- Is the person willing to interact with classmates by asking questions or challenging conclusions in a courteous manner?

You're not required to contribute to each and every class session. You *are* required to make good contributions in multiple class sessions in order to earn a B for your class participation grade; you'll need to make good contributions consistently over the semester in order to earn an A. Some of the best contributors in the past have been those who participated in only some sessions, but their contributions were truly insightful and persuasive --- the issue is one of quality, not quantity.

Since so much of the learning in this class takes place through discussion and debate, attendance is necessary to your success --- it's impossible either to contribute or to benefit from others if you're not in class. However, perfect but passive attendance is not sufficient for your success and it will not ensure you a passing (C) participation grade. In short, don't confuse participation with attendance.

So that I'll be able to effectively evaluate your participation, I'll make a tremendous effort to learn your name so I can easily identify your contributions. If you find I don't know your name after several class periods, that's an indication that you should increase your contribution to discussions. You'll receive an assessment of your participation around the middle of the semester so you can gauge your performance in this area to date.

Here's a general idea of how I plan to grade your class participation over the course of the semester:

- **Outstanding Contributor (A±):** Contributions to large-group discussions reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights and sometimes change the direction of the class for the better. Arguments, when presented, are generally well substantiated and often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the large-group discussions would be diminished significantly. In addition to exceptional large-group discussion contributions, also actively participates in small-group discussions.
- **Good Contributor (B±):** Contributions to large-group discussions reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, generally provide useful insights, and occasionally offer a new direction for the discussion. Arguments, if presented, are reasonably well substantiated. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the large-group discussions would be diminished. In addition, also offers comments in small-group discussions.
- **Marginal Contributor (C±):** Contributions to large-group discussions reflect some minimal preparation. Ideas offered are occasionally substantive but seldom provide clear insights or new directions for the discussion. Arguments may be occasionally presented but are generally not well substantiated. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the large-group discussions would be diminished only slightly. This grade is warranted for those who participate only in small-group activities with no large-group contributions.
- **Non-participant (D):** This person has maintained attendance to some extent but has said little or nothing in class; hence there is no adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussions would be unchanged.
- **Disruptive Contributor (F):** If present in class at all, contributions to discussions reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are rarely substantive, provide few, if any, insights and never offer a constructive direction. At best, contributions are obscure, confused, and indicate a lack of familiarity with the fact of the issues under discussion. At worst, comments demonstrate disrespect for others. If this person were not a member of class, valuable airtime would be saved.

### **The Classroom is a Boardroom**

I ask that you observe the MBA Program's "the classroom is a boardroom" protocol:

1. Arrive on time and post your name card (at least until I learn your names)
2. Be prepared (to discuss the case, summarize the readings, etc...)
3. Listen respectfully
4. Build on previous points
5. Direct comments to your classmates
6. State your assumptions
7. Speak concisely
8. Articulate your argument systematically
9. Give evidence to support your claims
10. Participate wholeheartedly
11. **No cell phones or laptops**

In recognition of the high value I place on professionalism, my assessment of your participation and professionalism will make up 10% of your course grade. To assist me in assigning these grades, I will ask you to submit detailed feedback about each of your group members. If you take this task seriously, I will incorporate the feedback into your teammates' participation and professionalism grade.

## GROUP PROJECT

In this course, as in life, working effectively in a team is important. This is reflected by the fact that 35% of your final grade will be based on a two-part group project.

In the second or third week of class, you will self-select into groups of three or four. Because of the diverse backgrounds of students in the class, *each group must have at least one “accounting expert” and at least one “business expert”*. This requirement can be most easily met by having at least one MPA student and at least one MBA student in your team, but other configurations are possible. When submitting your company selections, please list each group member’s degree program, work experience and other relevant qualifications (e.g., CPA, degree in accounting).

As a group, you will choose two U.S. publicly traded firms who operate in the same industry. You may NOT choose to analyze a firm on which we spend a substantial amount of time in class (e.g., Facebook). In addition, I would NOT recommend that you choose to analyze a pair of financial services firms (e.g., banking, insurance) as these types of firms often operate in unique markets with unique accounting issues. You have until Monday, September 17 to form groups and submit company selections. The company selection sheet will be available on Blackboard.

A complete firm analysis has four parts: (1) a business analysis, which includes an analysis of the primary industry or industries in which the firm operates, and an analysis of the firm’s competitive and corporate strategies; (2) an accounting analysis, which includes a complete analysis of the firm’s accounting practices and procedures; (3) a financial analysis, which includes ratio analysis and cash flow analysis; and (4) a prospective analysis, which includes forecasts of future performance and valuation. The midterm project assignment will cover parts (1) through (3) of the firm analysis described above for both of the firms that you choose to analyze. The final project assignment will cover part (4) of the firm analysis described above for *one* of the two firms that you choose to analyze and will require you to make an investment recommendation. The final project will include a written analysis and a presentation. These elements will be equally weighted (each making up 10% of total points), reflecting the importance of *communicating* your analyses in a concise and effective way.

Due dates and times are listed on the course schedule at the end of this document. I will post detailed requirements for the midterm and final projects to Blackboard no later than four weeks prior to the due date for each project.

## GRADING DISPUTES

My TAs and I make every effort to grade all of your work fairly and accurately, but grading errors can occur. If you believe there’s an error, you may request a re-grading of the assignment or project. Be aware, however, that grading errors can occur in both directions - errors can make grades too high as well as too low. Therefore, if you request a re-grading, *your entire assignment will be re-graded*, and *all* grading errors will be corrected. By requesting a re-grade, you accept the possibility that your grade may go *either up or down*.

To request a re-grade, you must submit a *written* request to me *within one week from the class period in which the assignment was first returned* to students. The request must be accompanied by the graded original and must state the area of dispute, your recommendation for change in grade, and an explanation or justification for your recommendation.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I am committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards in my research and teaching, and I expect the same from my students. Here is the school's policy statement on scholastic dishonesty:

*The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Because dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/> or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty.*

If the application of the policy statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification.

The number one way you could get into trouble in this course is by copying or plagiarizing work – either from a fellow student or from another source. I am well aware that there are many resources (online and elsewhere) that make cheating tempting and easy. I ask you to make the most of your education by resisting that temptation. Also be aware that my TAs and I have access to the same resources as you, and we will be vigilant in detecting cheating. Further, I will report ALL violations to the Dean of Students.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you require accommodation for a disability, please let me know. You may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

## RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

In accordance with University policy, please notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class or project/homework due date in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable period.

## CAMPUS SAFETY

Please note the following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>:

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation should inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050
- Further information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency).

**Tentative Schedule, Fall 2012 (additional readings will be added as the semester progresses)**

Session	Date	Topic	Reading/Case	Notes
<b>I. Framework &amp; Financial Analysis</b>				
1	W	29-Aug	Course introduction	
<i>No class on Monday, 3-Aug (Labor Day)</i>				
2	W	5-Sep	Review of financial accounting and reporting <i>Coursepack:</i> MacCloud Winery Case (Brief Analysis) <i>Textbook:</i> Chapter 1, pp. 17-41 & Skim Chapter 2	
3	M	10-Sep	Intro to accounting for valuation <i>Blackboard:</i> Penman, Chapter 2 of <i>Accounting for Value</i> <i>Textbook:</i> pp. 884-888	
4	W	12-Sep	Industry and strategy analysis <i>Textbook:</i> Chapter 1, pp. 1-17 <i>Blackboard:</i> Facebook Prospectus (Read Summary + scan sections on Business, Risk Factors & Letter from Zuckerberg)	<b>Brief Analysis #1 due by start of class</b>
5	M	17-Sep	Financial Analysis: Cash flows <i>Textbook:</i> Chapter 3, pp. 153-172 & 179-183. <i>Blackboard:</i> Bergevin, “Advanced Cash Flow Analysis”	Deadline to form groups and select firms for project
6	W	19-Sep	Financial Analysis: Profitability & Risk <i>Textbook:</i> Selections from Ch. 4 & 5	<b>Ratio Assignment due by Friday 21-Sept at midnight</b>
7	M	24-Sep	Financial Analysis: Cost of capital <i>Coursepack:</i> Midland Case <i>Textbook:</i> <i>Blackboard:</i> “Do You Know Your Cost of Capital?”	<b>Brief Analysis #2 due by start of class</b>
<b>II. Accounting Analysis</b>				
8	W	26-Sep	Accounting analysis: Assets/Expenses <i>Coursepack:</i> Dendreon Case	<b>Brief Analysis #3 due by start of class</b>
9	M	1-Oct	Accounting analysis: Revenue Recognition <i>Coursepack:</i> Apple Case	<b>Full Analysis #1 due by start of class</b>

10	W	3-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Income Taxes	<i>Coursepack</i> : Ford Motor Company Case	<b>Brief Analysis #4 due by start of class</b>
11	M	8-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Fair Value 1	<i>Coursepack</i> : Land Securities Case	<b>Full Analysis #2 due by start of class</b>
12	W	10-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Fair Value 2	<i>Coursepack</i> : State Street Case	<b>Brief Analysis #5 due by start of class</b>
13	M	15-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Leases	Case: TBD	<b>Full Analysis #3 due by start of class</b>
14	W	17-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Derivatives	Case: TBD	<b>Brief Analysis #6 due by start of class</b>
15	M	22-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Goodwill	<i>Coursepack</i> : Talbots Case	<b>Full Analysis #4 due by start of class</b>
16	W	24-Oct	Accounting Analysis: Wrap-up and Accounting Quality		Midterm Evaluations
17	M	29-Oct	No Class: Midterm Projects Due		<b>Midterm Projects due by Midnight</b>
<b>III. Prospective Analysis &amp; Valuation</b>					
18	W	31-Oct	Prospective Analysis: Forecasting the Income Statement		
19	M	5-Nov	Prospective Analysis: Forecasting the Balance Sheet		
20	W	7-Nov	Valuation: Accounting for value revisited	<i>Coursepack</i> : Kohler Case	<b>Forecasting Assignment due by start of class</b>
21	M	12-Nov	Valuation: Implementing the model	<i>Coursepack</i> : Kohler Case	
22	W	14-Nov	Valuation: Sensitivity Analysis & reverse engineering		
23	M	19-Nov	Current Issues 1 (Tentative plan: CSR reporting)		<b>Valuation Assignment due by start of class</b>
24	W	21-Nov	Current Issues 2 (Tentative plan: Decision making traps in financial statement analysis)		
25	M	26-Nov	Group presentations		
26	W	28-Nov	Group presentations		
27	M	3-Dec	Group presentations		
28	W	5-Dec	Group presentations		
29	W	12-Dec			<b>Final Projects due by Midnight</b>