



SYLLABUS
ACCOUNTING CAREERS EXPLORATION (ACE)
Accounting 151 -- Unique #'s 2725, 2730, 2735 & 2740
Fall 2010

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Office Hour: Tuesday 4:00-5:00pm

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Locations: **Unique #'s 2725 & 2735- UTC 3.110**
Unique #'s 2730 & 2740- UTC 3.112

Time/date: **4:00 – 5:30 p.m., Monday, August 30 - November 15**
The class meets 11 times and concludes before Thanksgiving

Course purpose: The purpose of the Accounting Careers Exploration (ACE, ACC 151) course is to develop your awareness of the career opportunities that await you. Your first chance to exercise this knowledge will occur with internship recruiting in a few weeks. Therefore, this course has immediate relevance to a significant decision you will face very soon.

ACE develops a comprehensive framework through exposure to multiple talented professionals, faculty and experienced fellow students. A comprehensive framework has multiple advantages.

1. It enables you to better understand the job opportunities that you may wish to pursue in your internship and immediately thereafter.
2. The framework maps into your MPA track options.
3. In your first job you will better understand other businesses with which you interact and,
4. You will gain perspective on career options if you decide to change your job in the future.

The class is also designed to help improve your Microsoft Excel skills. This skill set is critical to your success in your internship and your future career as a professional.

Comportment: This is predominantly a guest speaker class attracting leading professionals who will talk about career opportunities and their organizations. Many of them will travel to Austin just for this class! ***It is imperative that we show speakers our utmost respect and courtesy.*** Top rankings are earned, not an entitlement. An important part of earning our stature is being professional- staying engaged and asking questions, as is expected of a top program.

Course Format & Location: The format of this class is unlike any other MPA class.

The ACE class will be broken up into four sections to allow for smaller classes. All classes will be held on Monday afternoon/evening, two different sections of the class will run concurrently from 4:00-5:30pm. Two additional classes will run concurrently from 5:30-7:00pm. Because there are multiple sessions, the class will be team taught.

There will be different participants assigned to each room and every participant will either be part of a panel or paired with another employer from the same industry. At the 35 minute mark, the participants will rotate to the other classroom so they can carry on a discussion with the other section of the class.

This is the only course that you will ever take that will allow you to listen to and ask questions of an incredible variety of professionals across the private and public sector.

Your efforts and dedication will enrich your ability to learn about the dynamic professional choices that will be available to you.

Important Note: Many of the participant firms will be interviewing students on campus in the near future. This class gives you a chance to show your knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism. It gives you a chance to make a great first impression and be favorably remembered!

Meeting Place: Your meeting place will depend on your unique number.
Unique Numbers #2725 & #2735 will meet in UTC 3.110.
Unique Numbers #2730 & #2740 will meet in UTC 3.112.

Meeting Time: Our meeting day is **Monday**, August 30 – November 15.

Our meeting time is either:

4:00 – 5:30 pm or 5:30- 7:00pm: For full attendance credit, you must be in your seat and *ready to start* no later than the start of your class. You must remain attentive until official adjournment (including not packing belongings). You should always attend your assigned section to ensure you receive credit for your attendance.

Dress: Casual

Grading: **THIS IS A GRADED COURSE.** Your final grade will be evaluated according to the following.

	<u>Points</u>	<u>%</u>
Timely and Full Attendance	55	25%
Homework	110	50%
Participation	<u>55</u>	<u>25%</u>
Total	<u>220</u>	<u>100%</u> (rounding)

A description of each evaluation category follows:

Timely and Full Attendance

The seat from your second class session will be your seat for the rest of the semester. When you arrive for class, you will find name tents on the desks. Please sit in the seat that corresponds to your name tent. At the end of class, please leave the name tent on the desk.

Your TA will record your attendance based on your attendance in your assigned section and the course instructor will evaluate attendance based on this record.

There are **no automatic unexcused absences**. For full attendance credit you must be in your seat and *ready to go* no later than the start of your class time (4:00 or 5:30pm depending on your assigned section). You must remain fully attentive until the session is adjourned. Gathering materials, packing backpacks, and other pre-adjournment disruptions are discourteous to our guests and will result in point deductions. Please be attentive and respectful until each session is officially adjourned.

Full credit will be awarded each session if you arrive and are ready to start by the beginning of class, and you are attentive (and not disruptive) until the class is adjourned. Point deductions will result if you fall below this standard, including zero credit for no attendance.

Excused absence(s). You will be excused from class if there is a “legitimate reason.” More than one excused absence will be subject to review. An excused absence(s) requires:

1. An email request in advance sent to your TA
2. Documentation that supports the reason for your absence, and

3. A “legitimate reason,” which may include one of the following:
- Your illness or injury
 - The illness, injury, or death of a family member
 - The observance of an official religious holiday
 - Your wedding
 - An immediate family member’s wedding
 - The birth of your child

Examples of items that are ***not*** “legitimate reasons” include:

- Office visits and recruiting events
- A “tight” exam schedule
- Preparing for an exam or project in another class
- Extracurricular activities (i.e.: cheerleading practice, intramural sports)
- Family reunions
- Sporting events
- A transportation failure
- And other events not listed under “legitimate reasons”

Unexcused absence(s)--possible make-up session upon approval. If you have an unexcused absence, a make-up assignment may be possible upon a written appeal by you to your TA with a copy to your course instructor.

If approved, to count as a make-up assignment you must conduct online research of the organizations that presented on the day that you were absent.

You will then write a 4-page paper describing:

1. The organization and its divisions,
2. What you find interesting about those organizations including a detailed explanation of why you find it interesting.

Homework

You will have homework in preparation for every class after the first one. Homework assignments will be posted on Blackboard and are indicated in the course schedule and explained below. Unless otherwise indicated, please bring your homework to class on the homework due date.

Please note there are no group assignments. It is expected that all assignment will be done on an individual basis and not in conjunction with other students.

- Your Industry Night Preferences Paper—***Assignment 1.*** *Due Thurs., September 9, noon. The following companies will be present at the Industry Night on September 20:*
 - *Anadarko Petroleum*
 - *ConocoPhillips*
 - *Dell*
 - *GM*
 - *Halliburton*

- *IRS*
- *Marathon Oil*
- *Spectra Energy*
- *Texas Instruments*

This assignment calls for you to research (see potential methods of research below in the upcoming speaker question section), select and rank order 3 of the entities from this list. You will then write a one to two page (double spaced paper that begins with the rank order at the top. For example:

1. Anadarko
2. ConocoPhillips
3. Dell

After the rank order, please explain the reasons why those companies were your chosen top preferences.

When finished, please upload the assignment to Blackboard.

- ***Upcoming Speaker Question—Assignments 2,5, 7, 8, 9, 10*** The assignment preceding most classes will be to draft one good question about careers and job activities relevant to the upcoming speaker—for example, a question about their industry or company. This is your chance to get answers to questions of genuine interest to you from a professional in the area.

For homework credit, your question pertaining to the coming Monday session must be included in your blue book journal prior to the start of each class.

To formulate your question you can:

- Visit the website of the upcoming company(ies) to enable a question specific to the company(ies),
- Undertake a web browser search, such as a Google search, to determine issues facing the upcoming company(ies) or industry(ies) as the basis for a good question,
- Use library and online resources, such as Vault and WetFeet to research industries and career fields,
- Access the McCombs MPA Alumni Network Group on LinkedIn and the McCombs Online Resources to connect with alumni to research career topics, and/or
- Incorporate any other career relevant information into your question derived from your personal reading, experiences, media broadcasts, or the like.

A “full credit” question must:

1. Be informed—drawing on, for example, the resources bullet pointed above,
2. Relate to career opportunities, ***and***

3. Use proper English composition.

In general, full credit will be awarded for each question if it meets criteria 1 - 3 above. Point deductions will result if you fall below this standard, including zero credit if you do not hand in an assignment on a timely basis or if your question is grossly deficient.

- **Paper—Assignment 3. Due Thursday, September 16, noon.** On Tuesday, September 7, each student will receive the name of a prospective company employer to research in depth and write about in a two-page (double spaced) paper. The paper should include the following:
 - When the company was established,
 - What kind of services or products the company provides,
 - Who are its competitors,
 - Where it is located,
 - Why (3 reasons) a student may want to start a career with this company,
 - Other observations you wish to include, and
 - *Three* well thought out career questions to pose to the company you are researching.

For Assignment 3, full credit generally will be awarded for informed submissions. Point deductions will result if you fall below this standard, including zero credit if you do not hand in an assignment on a timely basis or if your paper and/or Q&A are grossly deficient.

When finished, please upload the assignment to Blackboard.

- ***Start Here Go Places Website- Assignment 4- Due September 27 at your assigned class time. Please bring both parts to class. This assignment has two parts.*** First, begin by going online to Startheregoplaces.com and reviewing the website. Note the three most interesting aspects of the site and write a one page (double spaced paper) listing why you find those aspects interesting.

The second part of the assignment is as follows:

1. Log on to startheregoplaces.com
2. Wait for the “Build My Future Me” button to appear. Click on it.
3. Answer all the questions.
4. Click on “Make this my future me”
5. Print the next page showing your name, position, key stats, and career path. You will turn this in on September 27 at your assigned class time.

Both parts must be completed to receive full credit.

- **Resume—Assignment 6. This assignment has two phases. The following summary will be explained further in our class on Monday, September 27th.**
Phase 1: Complete a draft of your resume and email it directly to your TA (not via Bb) by 11 pm, Monday, Nov 1st.

Phase 2: Email your final resume directly to your TA (not via Bb) by 11 pm, Monday, November 22nd.

- ***IFRS Research- Assignment 11***

Many of you will be seeking internships or full-time positions in the near future. When evaluating candidates for these positions, employers often use behavioral style questions that focus on competencies necessary to be successful within a given firm. One of these competencies includes being informed and knowledgeable on the latest accounting news. A topic that is currently being discussed within the world of accounting is IFRS.

To help you with your familiarity of this topic, come up with short, 1-2 sentence answers for the following questions:

1. What does IFRS stand for?
2. Name a country that uses GAAP and a country that uses IFRS?
3. Why will IFRS be important in the future?
4. What is an example of an accounting item that is treated differently by GAAP vs. IFRS?
5. What is the current status and likely timetable for the adoption of IFRS?

The following websites will be helpful in your search for answers.

<http://www.ifrs.com/>

<http://www.iasb.org/Home.htm>

- **Microsoft Excel Tests (1-8)**

You will use the Cengage SAM system to develop and improve your Microsoft Excel skills. The deadlines for each assignment are listed on the course calendar (see pages 9-10). To receive full credit: you must have each Excel test completed by the assignment deadline with a score of 70% or better.

You will receive partial credit if you completed the Excel test and received a score below 70%. You will receive no credit if you have not completed the test by its deadline.

Note: if your score is below 70% you may take the test again prior to the deadline. I would encourage you to do so, since your Excel skills will be extensively utilized in your upcoming internship.

Participation

It is expected that you will keep a dated blue book journal of class presentations and include **three** interesting observations from each class. You should also include the reason why you think those observations are interesting. You only need **three** observations per class to receive full credit.

The blue book journals will be collected at different times during the semester and graded. When a blue book journal is collected you will be expected to start a new blue book.

Participation points result from:

1. The observations you make in your blue book journal, and
2. General assembly questions you pose to our guest speakers.

Clearly this is a subjective assessment, but it will not be the first or last time in your academic experience or career when performance will be based on subjective measures.

In general, the full credit will be awarded if you have been an active participant throughout the semester based on criteria 1 and 2 above. Point deductions will result if you fall below this standard, including zero credit if you participate only on the rarest occasion, if you are disruptive to your group or the assembly, if you are disrespectful to the speakers, or as a result of any other inappropriate behavior (including, but not limited to, texting and accessing the web on your phone).

Correspondence: ACE correspondence will be communicated via Blackboard (emails or postings) and/or placed in your mail slot located in the MPA mailroom. It is a challenge to keep up with other addresses you might have, such as *hotmail* or *yahoo*, so please check your UT address which is associated with Blackboard. It is also recommended that you check your mail slot and university e-mail regularly.

Date	Topic	Homework
August 30	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet your Teaching Team • McCombs Career Services Code of Ethics • MPA Code of Conduct • The Syllabus • Introduction to Online Excel Training Modules 	HW Assignment 1- Your Preferences for Industry Night-Paper (see syllabus) Due: Thursday, Sept 9- Noon HW Assignment 2—Upcoming Speaker Question for Finance and Consulting Opportunities Night (Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) Due: Monday, Sept 13- Class Time Excel Test 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b. Due: Monday Sept 13- Class Time
Sept 6	Labor Day Holiday- No Class	HW Assignment 3—Paper (see syllabus) Due: Thursday, Sept 16- Noon
Sept 13	Finance and Consulting Opportunities	Excel Test 3a, 3b, 3c. Due: Monday Sept 20- Class Time
Sept 20	Industry Night	HW Assignment 4- Start Here Go Places (see syllabus) Due: Monday, September 27 – Bring to your assigned class section. Excel Test 4a, 4b, 4c. Due: Monday Sept 27- Class Time
Sept 27	Mid Term Prep (Academic Services & Resume Writing)	HW Assignment 5—Upcoming Speaker Question for Recruiter Straight Talk Panel (Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) Due: Monday, October 4, Class Time Excel Test 5a, 5b, 5c. Due: Monday October 4- Class Time
Oct 4	Recruiter Straight Talk Panel (Bluebook Journal 1 collected)	LOOKING AHEAD HW Assignment 6—Resume (explained in class), <i>Phase 1:</i> Emailed a draft of your resume to your TA by 11 pm, Mon, Nov 1 HW Assignment 7—Upcoming Speaker Question for Internal vs. External Audit(Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) Due: Monday, October 11, Class Time Excel Test 6a, 6b Due: Monday October 11- Class Time

Date	Topic	Homework
Oct 11	Internal vs. External Audit + IT Audit	<p>HW Assignment 8—Upcoming Speaker Question for Domestic, International & State/Local (Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) <i>Due:</i> Monday, October 18, Class Time</p> <p>Excel Test 7a, 7b <i>Due:</i> Monday October 18- Class Time</p>
Oct 18	Tax (Domestic, International & State/Local)	<p>HW Assignment 9—Upcoming Speaker Question for Jobs in Public Service (Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) <i>Due:</i> Monday, October 25, Class Time</p> <p>Excel Test 8a, 8b <i>Due:</i> Monday October 25- Class Time</p>
Oct 25	Jobs in Public Service Austin Opportunities Night	<p>HW Assignment 10— Upcoming Speaker Question for Jobs in Advisory Services (Blue Book Journal) (see syllabus) <i>Due:</i> Monday, Nov 1, Class Time</p>
Nov 1	Advisory Services — (Mergers & Acquisitions, Structured Finance, etc...)	<p>HW Assignment 6—Resume <i>Phase 1:</i> Email a draft of your resume to your TA (<u>not via Bb</u>) by 11 pm November 1.</p>
Nov 8	How to Research Employers: Opportunities and Locations (Bluebook Journal #2 collected)	<p>HW Assignment 11— IFRS Assignment (see syllabus) <i>Due:</i> Monday Nov. 15 during your assigned class time (Final Blue Book Journal Collected)</p>
Nov 15	Class Wrap-up and Spring Recruiting Q&A	<p>HW Assignment 6- Resume <i>Phase 2:</i> Email final copy of your resume to your TA by Nov 22 11pm.</p>