Course Description and Objective:

This class introduces upper level business students to the fundamentals of tax as they relate to business and individuals. Emphasis will be placed on Federal income taxation and its impact upon business and personal financial decisions.

The course content is relevant to all aspects of business and accounting study. It will also provide a meaningful foundation for those students who choose to pursue further tax-related studies.

You will learn how taxes impact our lives and influence our society. This knowledge will make you a more informed business person and citizen.

After completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

1. How taxes impact our business and personal lives.
2. The fundamentals of tax planning as a component of business decisions.
3. How tax, accounting and financial outcomes can vary depending on tax treatment that applies.
4. The ability to compute Federal taxable income and liability for corporations and individuals.

Required Text and Course Materials:


This course will also utilize McGraw-Hill Connect on-line homework manager technology. Students should ensure that their textbook purchase includes access to this functionality.

Students can purchase a McGraw Hill Connect Access Card for Principles of Taxation for Business and Investments, 2016 Edition, through the campus bookstore or directly through McGraw Hill. Students may elect to purchase EITHER a hard copy of the textbook or an electronic version as long as the option chosen includes access to Connect. Should you choose to purchase an electronic version in lieu of the hard copy,
you should also elect to order the textbook printed in loose leaf form as well. You should bring the textbook or a binder containing the loose leaf copies of the relevant chapters to each class. The ISBN # for McGraw Hill Connect access with the hard copy textbook is 9781259605178. The ISBN# for the e-book with loose leaf printed copy and Connect Access is 9781259605185.

**CANVAS** will be used for course management and any additional readings, exercises or study materials will be posted there. These readings are part of the curriculum and will be reflected in quizzes or examinations.

We will also use Canvas for communicating with the class.

During the first week of class you should ensure that:
- You can access the class site in Canvas and have set up your communication preferences;
- Your McGraw Hill Connect access is functioning properly.

You should also have access to the Internal Revenue Code and related regulations. You are NOT required to purchase them, as sufficient access should be available via the internet or other sources. Additional required readings will be posted on Canvas or provided in class.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Course grades will be determined using the following deliverables and weights:

- Two Non-Cumulative mid-term exams
  - Lowest mid-term score 15%
  - Highest mid-term score 25%
- Final Exam (a combination mid-term & cumulative) 30%
- Graded homework assignments in Connect/quizzes 10%
- Projects 20%
- Total 100%

Incompletes will be given only in rare circumstances, according to university policy.

Plus or minus grading will be used for final grades. I expect to award a few B-‘s and C’s, many B’s and B+’s and some A-/A’s with an overall course GPA around 3.3.

Grade Appeals: If you believe a grading error has occurred, you must appeal within 10 calendar days after the item has been returned to the class or the grade posted on Canvas. Appeals must include a written explanation of the issue attached to the item in question, and be delivered to me in class or at office hours. After 10 calendar days, no appeals will be considered.

**Homework**

Homework problems which support the reading have been assigned for most chapters. You will complete these assignments in the Connect website, which will grade your submissions.

The primary purpose of the homework is to encourage and reward timely study and to assist you in learning the material. With this purpose in mind, I have set Connect to permit 3 attempts for each question.

Note that graded homework is intended to be an individual assignment governed by the University Code of Conduct, and is not a group project. Because the graded homework forms an invaluable part of your personal preparation for exams, it will be in your personal best interest to complete it yourself, without collaboration or group assistance.
The Course Schedule attached to this syllabus lists the assigned homework problems. The problems to be graded are noted in **BOLD and underlined**. They are also listed within the Connect website.

Assigned homework will be due by 9 am on the class day immediately following the relevant lecture.

Graded Homework problems should be completed after you have finished the assigned study and attended class. Connect will grade your answers and provide solutions (after all sections of ACC 355 have submitted their homework) giving insight into areas that warrant further study.

Homework will be graded as follows:

- Scores will be awarded based on accuracy of the answers submitted.
- Connect will accept up to 3 attempts for each question.
- Homework submitted late, but within 24 hours of the due date will be eligible for a maximum of 50% of the points otherwise available.
- After 24 hours from the due date, the Connect website will accept no further late homework.
- There are 22 homework assignments that will be graded. Some homework assignments have more available points than others. Your homework grade will be based on your 18 highest scores. In doing this, I have made allowance for those real world situations where unforeseen conflicts, commitments, technology or other causes may prevent timely submission of a homework assignment. No further adjustments to homework scores will be made.

The Syllabus lists additional study questions intended to help you master the material. These study questions will not be submitted nor graded. Solutions will be provided in Canvas. You are permitted and encouraged to collaborate with classmates on study problems which are not part of the graded homework.

If you have difficulty using Connect or encounter a problem with it, please email your question to Colin Koutney, the TA listed on the first page of this syllabus.

If you have questions regarding the exercises or problems, see one of the TA’s during his/her office hours.

**Projects**

As noted in the syllabus there will be two projects to be completed outside of class. One will give you the opportunity to prepare components of a Federal Individual income tax return (Form 1040) in a real world scenario. All essential information will be provided to prepare the required forms and schedules.


The second project will give you the opportunity to work through a set of facts related to corporate tax and accounting computations, and will require you utilize excel in the final deliverable.

Unlike the graded homework, these outside projects can be undertaken in groups. However, it is important to note that each student will be responsible for the timely submission of their own deliverable.

**Quizzes/Other Assignments**

Class quizzes and other graded work may be assigned, depending on my assessment of class progress. Examples might include (but are not limited to) announced or unannounced in-class quizzes, quizzes conducted in Canvas, or additional problem assignments. Scores for such assignments will be included as part of the Homework grade.
Exams:

1. Exams will be given on the dates and times specified in the class schedule. (Note that they are in the evening.) Please reserve these dates and times so that you do not have a conflict. If a conflict arises due to another scheduled class or exam, you must notify me at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled exam date to arrange to take the exam in advance. In an extraordinary event (death in immediate family, illness requiring hospitalization, etc.), contact me before the exam to resolve the matter.

2. All exams will test material covered since the last exam; however, since tax principles build upon one another, there may be a comprehensive aspect to each exam. You should expect that tests will build on lessons learned in earlier chapters, and that material may appear more than once in homework or exams.

3. The format of the two mid-term exams will be a combination of problems, short answer, essay and multiple choice.

4. The final exam will test BOTH material covered since the preceding mid-term and material covered throughout the semester. In this regard, it will contain both a mid-term and COMPREHENSIVE nature, and will be weighted accordingly. It will be multiple choice, true/false, and matching.

5. I will inform you in advance of the exam what materials you may bring to use as resources. Always bring a calculator, but laptops, tablets, cell phones or other PDA devices will NOT be allowed in exams. Calculators that can store text are NOT allowed for exams.

Class Preparation and Success: Tax law rarely reflects “common sense”. Although challenging, the material we will cover can be learned with reasonable effort, and consistent study.

Because the concepts build upon themselves, you will want to keep up with the assigned reading and homework assignments. The best path to success will be doing the reading and homework on time, and coming prepared for classroom discussion.

Classroom sessions will focus on: 1) lectures to bring the content “to life”, 2) reviewing problems, and 3) group exercises to enhance your understanding of the principles. I encourage questions in class, and you will have opportunities to discuss the material and participate in problem solving exercises.

Classroom Standards and Expectations: Our classroom will apply “business meeting” etiquette:

- Come prepared to add to the class and to contribute to the discussion.
- Silence your phones. No texting.
- Laptops/tablets are allowed for note-taking or uses directly related to class with internet disabled.
- If I discover laptops or tablets being used for other purposes, you will forfeit use of them for the rest of the semester.
- Bring your financial calculator to class. Calculators that store text are NOT allowed for exams.
- Please, no extraneous conversation or disruptive behavior. We want one focused discussion.
- Please be on time. Should you be late, please enter quietly and engage as quickly as you can.
- If you must leave early, please notify me in advance.

You must attend the class section in which you are registered. Class limits are set to ensure a quality experience for everyone. Also we may do in class projects in pre-assigned groups.

Drop/Add, Withdrawal, or Incomplete policy: Please refer to the academic calendar for the last day to drop/add a course without financial or academic penalty. It is the student’s responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.
If a student fails to complete this course for illness or other reason deemed adequate, I will use my discretion to assign a grade of I (Incomplete). This will be handled on an individual basis.

**Religious Holy Days:** An absence on religious holidays listed in the University calendar are recognized as an excused absence. Nevertheless, students are fully responsible for all material presented during their absence. If a religious holiday falls on an exam date, please notify me as early as possible. I will handle on an individual basis.

**Thanksgiving Holiday:** As noted on the class schedule, there will be no class session on the Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving Day.

**Privacy in Canvas:** Information in Canvas is protected by your UTEID login. Please be aware that I will use a merged Canvas site for all sections of the course that I am teaching this semester. This will allow students in other sections to see that you are enrolled in the course and send you email from within Canvas. However, they will not actually learn your email address and no other personal data will be revealed through Canvas. If you have any concerns, please contact the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 for help removing your name from view of other students.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities 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/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/).

**Academic Integrity:** The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the Policy Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty for the McCombs School of Business:

By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all of the faculty responsibilities described in that document. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all of the student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of that Policy Statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Policy on 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. Since 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/](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/) or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

**CAVEAT:** This syllabus includes policies and plans for the course that may require adjustment as the course progresses. The instructor reserves the right to make changes at any time during the semester with notice to the class.