Department of Accounting
ACC 364 – Fundamentals of Taxation
Fall 2017 Syllabus

Instructor: Donna Johnston-Blair
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Office: GSB 5.126F
Office Hours: MW 3:30-5pm (311 priority)
TTH 12:30-2pm (Tax priority)
Email questions are also encouraged and office appointments can be set up via email.

Teaching Assistant: Garrett Shuffield
Email: Acc364TA@gmail.com
Office & Office Hours: TBD – See Canvas
Email questions are also encouraged and office appointments can be set up via email.

Class time and location: Unique #02845 T/TH 11:00am-12:30pm GSB 2.120

Required Materials and Equipment:

  o On-Line Homework Manager: McGraw Hill Connect, packaged with the textbook. Follow this link once you have purchased the textbook: http://connect.mheducation.com/class/djb364-fall-2017
You can purchase the required text and Connect access in one of two ways:
1. If you want a hard copy of the text the Co-op sells a discounted bundle with the loose-leaf version of the text. The ISBN# for the discounted bundle is 9781260234213.
2. If you are happy with an Ebook you can purchase just the Connect access (w/Ebook included) for $115.00 during the Connect course registration process. Instructions for this access/purchase should be on Canvas. The url for the Connect purchase is: http://connect.mheducation.com/class/djb364-fall-2017

However, whatever option you choose must include access to Connect. You should note that the combined cost of the e-book, Connect access, and loose-leaf copy is substantially less than a hard copy of the text with Connect access. In addition, because tax law is constantly changing, a hard copy textbook will rapidly become out of date.
Supplements

- Certain Homework Solutions (will be made available on Canvas)
- Instructor PowerPoint Slides (will be made available on Canvas)
- Additional required readings will be posted on Canvas or provided in class.
- Canvas Website

Objectives of the course: To learn the following:

This class introduces students to the fundamentals of tax as they relate to business and individuals. Emphasis will be 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, and any business major. It will also provide a foundation for those students who choose to pursue further tax-related studies.

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

After successfully completing this course students will have an understanding of:
1. The fundamentals of tax planning as a part of business decision-making.
2. How tax, accounting and financial outcomes can vary depending on tax treatment that applies.
3. The ability to compute Federal taxable income and liability for corporations and individuals.

Course Routine

I will conduct the course by giving lectures, facilitating solutions to in-class exercises and conducting discussions in a manner that encourages class participation by students, consistent with the objectives of the course and the time available.

Students are expected to study the chapter readings before topics are introduced in class and do assigned homework questions, exercises and problems to reinforce what they learn. Students are encouraged to ask questions and to request that particular points be explained in more detail if they remain confused or uncertain about items discussed or if concepts remain unclear.

Homework

There are two types of homework in the course, Tax Return Projects and textbook homework (Jones).

Tax Return Projects

There will be two projects to be completed outside of class. One will give you the opportunity to prepare a Federal Individual income tax return (Form 1040). All essential information needed to prepare the required forms and schedules will be provided to you.

The actual tax forms are available at www.irs.gov. Tax preparation software is NOT permitted.
The second project will give you the opportunity to apply a set of facts related to corporate financial information and to prepare a corporate income tax return, Form 1120. It will require you utilize excel in the tax return preparation.

Unlike the graded homework, these outside projects can be discussed with your fellow students. However, each student will be responsible for the timely submission of his or her own tax returns.

Textbook 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 answers. The purpose of the homework is to encourage timely study to assist in learning the material. With this in mind, I have set Connect to permit 3 attempts and 1 “check my work” for each homework question.

Note that graded homework is an individual assignment governed by the University Code of Conduct. It is not a group project. Because the homework is a vital part of your exam preparation, it is in your best interest to do the homework yourself. Simply stated, the better you understand the homework, the better you will do better on exams.

The Course Schedule attached to this syllabus lists the assigned homework problems. They are also listed within the Connect website. Assigned homework will be due by midnight on the date indicated on Connect. All homework is due on Friday unless otherwise indicated. Late homework will not be accepted.

Graded Homework problems should be completed after you have finished the assigned reading and study and attended class. Connect will grade your answers and provide solutions at 5pm of the homework submission day. 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.
- After the homework due time, the Connect website will accept no further homework.
- The homework grade is the percent of all graded problems completed correctly.
- No homework assignments can be dropped in computing the final homework grade

The textbook contains additional Application Problems, which can help you master the material. To assist you, solutions to the Application Problems not assigned as homework will be provided in Canvas. You are permitted to collaborate with classmates on study problems, but not on those problems that are part of the graded homework.

If you have difficulty using Connect or encounter a problem with it please first try to resolve the problem with Connect Customer Support: 800.331.5094. If you have questions about how to solve the exercises or problems, please see your instructor or TA (listed above).
Quizzes/Other Assignments
Instructor discretion may include (but is not limited to) announced or unannounced quizzes (in or out of class), quizzes on Canvas, participation, extra homework, or group projects. Scores for such assignments will be included within the Homework portion of the grade. If you miss a quiz you will receive a zero for that quiz. There are no make-up quizzes. Not all quizzes will have the same point value. I do not return graded quizzes, but they are kept in my office and you may come and examine yours and ask questions.

Class Protocol
If for some reason you are running late, do not feel you should skip class. Please come in quietly and take a seat at the side or in the rear of the classroom. If you must leave class early, please tell me before class starts. I would appreciate it. Such comings and goings during class should be rare—do not let them become a habit.
If you need to miss a class or other required activity, including an examination, for any reason, please inform me as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that I can approve the absence as excused and arrangements can be made to complete any missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. If you miss a class or other required activity, including an examination, for reasons beyond your control, precluding prior notice, inform me of the circumstances as soon as you are able.

E-mail and Canvas
The use of email and Canvas is required for this course. I will frequently communicate with the class with announcements and guidance and I will answer questions via email. I check my e-mail at frequent intervals during weekdays and somewhat less regularly over weekends. I will use the email addresses that are supplied to me on Canvas. They are the email addresses that you have given the University for directory purposes. If you need to update your email address with the University go to your UT Direct page and, under personal info/all my addresses, change your email address. Before each class, I will post on Canvas any PowerPoint slides I intend to use. You can print them in handout style to save paper—either six slides to a page or, if you prefer, three slides accompanied by note-taking space. It is your responsibility to regularly check both your e-mail and the class website on Canvas.

Grading Questions or Appeals
Do not wait until the end of the semester to question or appeal grade components other than the final examination.
If you feel there exists a grading error on any of the grade components, or if you feel you need to bring to the attention of our Teaching Assistant or me other facts or circumstances that might affect the grade for that item, you will have ONE WEEK from the date the grade is posted on Canvas to take such action and have the matter resolved.

Electronic Class Rosters & Privacy in Canvas
A recent opinion from the US Department of Education states that the University must inform students in advance if their name will be appearing on an electronic class roster: Since Fall 2001, web-based, password-protected class sites have been available for all accredited courses taught at The University. Class e-mail rosters are
a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1. For information on restricting directory information see: http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gl00-01/app/appcc09.html

Privacy in Canvas: Information in Canvas is protected by your UTEID login. If you have any concerns, please contact the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 for help removing your name from view of other students

Academic Standards

A high academic level will be maintained with respect to (a) the quality of the course and (b) grading. Semester grades will be determined using the following factors and relative weights:

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

- Three Non-Cumulative exams
  - Lowest exam score 20%
  - Remaining two exam scores (25% each) 50%
- Graded homework in Connect & quizzes 10%
- Projects 20%
- Total 100%

The ACC faculty has adopted the University’s plus/minus grading as the standard.\(^1\) The faculty believes that plus/minus grading permits us to better distinguish gradations in performance and provides better feedback to students on their performance.

Grades will be based on the total points earned in the course (as shown above). You may assess your performance based on the traditional grade cutoffs of 90% = A-, 80% = B-, 70% = C-, 60% = D-, and below 60% = F. No grades will be associated with scores on exams or quizzes during the semester. In addition, no individual exam grades will be curved during the semester.

Incompletes will be given only in the RAREST of circumstances and only in accordance with university policy. There will be no opportunity to raise your course grade by doing “extra credit” work during or after the end of the semester—that would violate University policy.

Examinations are individual work; no collaboration of any kind is allowed. All exams are also closed book/notes. Calculators that can store text are not allowed.

Only students with conflicts with other UT classes or UT exams, medical or other documented emergencies and special needs will be given exams at times other than the uniform exams. If you have a job or extra-curricular activities at the times of the exams, this is notice that you are responsible to be excused, miss or work around those other activities. Individual makeup exams must be taken within 72 hours of the original exam.

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\(^1\) Under the traditional grading system an undergraduate student needs a D or better to receive credit for a course; under the plus/minus system an undergraduate student needs a D- or better to receive credit.
Unexcused absence from any examination will result in a score of zero. If you miss an exam due to an illness or other emergency reason, you should notify me as soon as possible and provide me with written documentation (e.g., a note from the attending physician) after you return. I have final authority to determine if your absence should be excused and if I can give you a make-up exam. If you have an excused absence from a mid-term exam and I cannot give you a make-up exam, you will receive extra weight on your final to compensate for the missed examination.

If you need to make early travel reservations for the end of the semester, you should make them for travel on December 21st or later—because we will not know until well into the semester exactly when our examination will be scheduled by the University. If you make non-refundable (or non-cancelable) arrangements for travel before December 21st they will not be an acceptable reason for taking the final exam early.

**Religious Holy Days**

By UT Austin policy, you must 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, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Dropping the Course**

Students must go through the official procedures to drop the course. A student who stops attending the class and fails to officially drop will receive a grade of F. Consult the Academic Calendar on the Registrar’s website (http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/) for specific deadlines.

**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://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

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 BBA Program’s Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty at http://my.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBA/Code-of-Ethics. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all faculty responsibilities described there. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described there. If the application of the Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty to this class or its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. 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, the integrity of the University, and the value of our academic brand, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly
enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/ to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

Campus Safety

Please note the following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation, provided by 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 the 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.
- Further information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: http://www.utexas.edu/emergency.

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.