

The University of Texas at El Paso College of Business Administration
Department of Accounting
ACCT 3327 Section 005- FEDERAL INCOME TAX FOR INDIVIDUALS-CRN 25081
M W 10:30-11:50 am College of Business, Room 311
Course Syllabus – Spring 2014

Instructor: Sarah A. Robertson
Email: Blackboard only
Office hours: By appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

ACCT 3327 is an introductory course in the federal income taxation of individuals and includes - to a limited extent - various universal taxation concepts including such topics as cost recovery, at risk and passive limitations, and the alternative minimum tax. Students are exposed to major provisions contained in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as Amended, the Federal Regulations, and other primary and secondary sources of tax law.

A goal of the course involves an introduction into technological advances in the area. Students are exposed - on a limited basis - to available Internet resources and tax computer software used in tax planning and practice and are required to work on an extensive basis with various websites in the delivery of course material. Experience in the use of these websites is designed to enhance student familiarity with the use of technology in information access.

Finally, this course enhances the AICPA's Core Competencies needed for strong research skills to access relevant guidance and other information through the research of and communication (both oral and written) of current tax issues where both analytic and communication skills are emphasized.

OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT MEASUREMENT PROCESS:

As part of the Accounting Department's formal assessment process, student competency and understanding of the course and ability to meet these and certain program goals and objectives will be measured by an analysis of homework problems, quizzes, exam questions, research projects, and the preparation of individual tax returns. To this end, the following program goals and learning objectives will be addressed in the Department of Accounting measurement process:

Learning Objective: Identify and measure relevant data and report results in formats that both meet the needs of the report users and adhere to legal and professional standards (measured in quizzes and homework problems).

- appropriately apply a given measurement method
- describe uncertainties about data and how items should be measured
- identify types of information and uncertainties relevant to a given report
- recognize appropriate reporting requirements

Learning Objective: Use technology in the accounting/business environment (measured in active learning projects, quizzes, and homework problems).

- use appropriate communication technologies such as email and discussion boards

- access and recognize commonly used information databases
- use of electronic spreadsheets and other software and technology in evaluating and presenting solutions to business problems and information

Learning Objective: Demonstrate strong research skills (measured in research project).

- apply existing standards, regulations, and legal authorities to a given problem

Learning Objective: Demonstrate effective problem solving and decision-making skills (measured in research project, quizzes, homework problems, and active learning projects).

- identify financial information, evidence and related uncertainties that are relevant to a problem
- make valid and reliable evaluations of information in problem definition and solution
- organize and evaluate information, alternatives, and cost/benefits associated with alternative scenarios in problem definition and solution

Learning Objective: Communicate relevant financial and non-financial information effectively while ensuring its integrity (measured in research project).

- place information in an appropriate context when listening, reading, writing and speaking
- deliver relevant information with conciseness and clarity when writing in a business context

Learning Objective: Recognize and analyze ethical problems that occur in the accounting/business environment (measured in research project, quizzes, homework problems, and active learning projects).

- identify ethical dilemmas in accounting and business contexts
- discuss ethical issues and alternatives in accounting and business contexts

CLASS PREREQUISITES:

ACCT 2302 (Principles of Accounting II) with a “C” or better, and demonstrates proficiency in spreadsheet and database software applications, or has department approval.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- McGraw-Hill’s *Taxation of Individuals 2014 Edition* Brian Spilker, Ben Ayers, John Robinson, Ed Outslay, Ron Worsham, John Barrick, and Connie Weaver **9781259181443 (Looseleaf) at the UTEP Bookstore. This includes Connect Access and TaxACT accounting software.**
- Internet Access Ability: Blackboard Access, Connect Access and IRS Website at www.irs.gov

SUGGESTED COURSE MATERIALS:

- May, Effective Writing: A Handbook for Accountants, 9th edition

BLACKBOARD USE:

This will be the website at which you will find class announcements, handouts, assignments, etc. Notices on class website constitute part of the program for this course. ***Failure of the students to check the web within 24 hours of the class is done so at the student’s risk of missing materials and assignments.***

COURSE GRADE POINTS / COURSE GRADE DETERMINATION:

Assignment	Points	Percentage of Overall Grade
Quizzes - Chapters 1 - 10 (10 pts. each, drop lowest grade)	90	12%
Research Memo	50	6%
Research Client Letter	50	6%
Tax Return I	50	6%
Tax Return II	50	6%
Tax Return III	50	6%
Exams – 4	400	50%
In-class Assignments/Attendance	60	8%
Total Points Available	800	100%

Points Earned Equivalent Letter Grade	
720 -- 800	A
640 -- 719	B
560 -- 639	C
480 -- 559	D
Below 479	F

QUIZZES:

A chapter quiz must be completed before a new chapter is covered in class to ensure students have read and understand the assigned chapter and are prepared for class. Students are required to access the quizzes through the Connect software provided with the textbook. The quizzes will be open beginning at the end of the class covering the prior chapter and will close at the start of class covering the new chapter. Students that do not take the open book quiz during the time the quiz is open will receive a zero for the quiz. To get credit for all quizzes make sure you read the chapter and take the online quiz before the start of class covering the new chapter. Once the quiz is closed, it will not be reopened. The quizzes are open for a minimum of 2 days. Please do not wait until the last minute to complete the quizzes. Connect could be down or you could have a computer problem. Please note open periods for each quiz to ensure you have plenty of time to complete the quiz.

RESEARCH TOPIC/MEMO:

Students are required to submit a research topic via Blackboard. A research memo (minimum of 1 page, maximum 2) is due **Monday February 24, at 10:30 am at the beginning of class**. The Research Topic must be typed on a computer/word-processor and prepared **according to posted instructions that I will give you and the chapter relating to Memos in the Effective Writing Handbook for Accountants/May textbook**. The assignments will be graded on the basis of both accuracy and written presentation (including composition, spelling, conciseness, etc.).

TAX RETURNS, ACTIVE LEARNING, CURRENT TAX TOPIC:

Three returns (computer prepared portion) are assigned and should be submitted via Blackboard. Final drafts of IRS-ready tax returns and working papers showing calculations are due on assigned dates. **Copies of your completed assignments should be made before the assignment is turned in.** Consider yourself to be the paid preparer on tax return projects.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS:

No late assignments, tax returns or quizzes will be accepted. Please do not email me your assignments unless Blackboard is down or you cannot upload your assignment through Blackboard.

Assignments are to be turned in **ON OR BEFORE** the beginning of class on the assigned due date. No assignments will be accepted outside of class. Please do not wait until the last minute to upload any assignment. Blackboard could be down or you could have a computer problem.

Completion of all major assignments is mandatory to pass the course. The instructor will **not** pass you unless all requirements (i.e. exams, quizzes, research project, memos, and tax returns) are completed. This includes any student that may be passing all the exams but failed to take all quizzes or complete the research memo or the tax returns. This policy is to insure all learning objectives are met and the instructor cannot make exceptions based on circumstance.

EXAMS:

Exams incorporate material from several sources including text, lecture, research project, tax return materials, etc. Exam and quiz questions are multiple choice and true/false based on theory and short problems.

No Makeup exams will be given under any circumstance.

If any single exam is missed, a COMPREHENSIVE final exam will be offered to absorb the weight of the missed exam. This option is available only to students who have given the instructor prior notice of an inability to make an exam and been given approval for this comprehensive final to absorb the weight of the missed exam. Only legitimate, documented reasons (serious illness (U.S. doctor's note required), official University activities, etc.) provided to the instructor BEFORE the missed exam will be considered. Only date and time-stamped emails are to be considered acceptable prior notification.

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is required. Classes are run on the basis of class interaction. ***You are expected to read and understand the chapters prior to coming to class.*** Class is intended to serve only as a discussion of the chapter and to clarify the parts of the reading material you have difficulties with. The lectures and in-class assignments are designed to aid you in developing and integrating the material. You **cannot** learn tax by listening to lectures. Learning the material requires reading the materials and completing all assignments. Class discussions will center on the text, cases, problems, current laws, and events. You are responsible for these and must be prepared to work on problems for credit in class. Class participation is a very important aspect of this class and is reflected in your final grade.

Class lectures will include material **not covered in the text**. If you miss a class, you should get a copy of the class notes from another student. Class attendance will be reflected in the student's class grade. At the professor's discretion, the final course grade will be adjusted downward 10 points for each class missed (beginning with the third class missed). A student who is late to class has the responsibility of determining at the end of class that the class roll reflects attendance for the given class.

WITHDRAWING FROM CLASS WITH A "W":

The student drop deadline is **Friday, April 4**. Students are responsible for seeing they are dropped by the deadline, and will automatically receive a grade of "W". After the student drop deadline, students will be dropped with a grade of "F" except under extraordinary circumstances and only with the approval of the instructor and academic dean. See "Important Information", in the *Spring* Schedule of Classes for additional information. **Do not assume the instructor will drop you automatically if you stop attending class before the April 4th deadline.**

CELL PHONE/BEEPER/FOOD POLICY:

Out of respect for your classmates, there are to be no cell phones, pagers, bells, buzzers, musical calculators, or other noisemakers in use during the class period. If you are expecting an important phone call please make arrangements to receive it outside of class. Additionally, text-messaging during class is not acceptable. You may eat or drink in class but be sure to dispose of drinks or food brought into the classroom before you leave.

THREE-TIME RULE:

The University has adopted a policy that limits undergraduate course enrollment. In most instances a student may enroll in an undergraduate class a maximum of three times, except with the permission of the student's academic dean. This includes enrollments that result in a grade of "W", "F", "D", or "P". A student may not enroll in a course in which a grade of "C" or higher has been previously earned. Moreover, a student may not enroll in a course in which he or she has an unresolved grade of "I". A student may enroll more than three times in a course that is identified as "may be repeated for credit."

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve based on the quality of the work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of scholastic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing grades on the work in question, to failing grades in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

SPECIAL NOTE TO SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY POLICY:

Study groups are popular at UTEP and are encouraged in this course. Additionally, "team" solutions will be required at times during the semester. When applicable, these team solutions are SPECIFICALLY AND EXPLICITLY allowed on given assignments and are part of an increasing focus on "teams" in the workplace. However, individual answers are required where EXPLICIT instructions are not received involving group work. Answers to questions/problems (1) copied directly from the book or (2) consisting of substantially the same wording as other papers in the class will receive zero or split credit, respectively. Relying on the understanding of another person will leave you unprepared to deal with exam material.

STATEMENTS ON FACULTY AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Statements on faculty and student responsibilities may be found on the College of Business website at: <http://business.utep.edu/About/responsibilities.aspx>.

POLICY ON DISRUPTIVE ACTS:

The obstruction or disruption of any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service or other authorized activity on campus or on property owned or controlled by the University is prohibited and will subject the student or group of students to disciplinary action.

An instructor may deny a student access to participate in class activity for up to two individual classes (or course related activity periods) for behavior that is disruptive to the learning or teaching environment. Individuals so denied may be immediately referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for additional disciplinary intervention including withdrawal from the course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you feel you may have a disability that requires accommodations, contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services Office (CASS) at 747-5148; go to room 106 E. Union, or email: cass@utep.edu.

NOTICE ABOUT COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT:

Copying a textbook is a violation of U. S. copyright law. Violation of U. S. copyright law can result in civil damages up to \$100,000 for each work copied. Copying of textbooks is not "fair use" under the Copyright Act. The "fair use doctrine" only permits non-commercial copying of part (in general, not more than 10%) of a copyrighted work. Please do not bring a copied textbook to this class. Your cooperation is expected.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASS ROOM:

Cell phones should be turned off during class time. Texting and surfing the web on laptops is disruptive to fellow students and the class in general. Please turn off your computers and silence all cell phones prior to class.

READING & ASSIGNMENT GUIDE DATES SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION BY PROFESSOR:

Below is a "best estimate" schedule for the class. Unexpected scheduling problems and interesting class discussions may result in rearrangement of the schedule. Current events may also cause the elimination or substitution of other material that may become more relevant. You may rely on this schedule as a BASIC outline for the course. The schedule is not a contractual agreement and is subject to change.

Students will receive guidance concerning alterations to the schedule below in class.

Also, early class discussions often necessitate student initiative in "looking ahead" to information presented in greater detail in later chapters. Check the index for terminology used in lectures, articles and the text for further explanation. As the semester progresses, detail in those areas will be covered either in class discussions or projects, etc. As a result, it is essential that the student keep up on the reading material.

All chapters listed on the syllabus are "fair game" for graded materials and the exams. **Regardless of the ordering of material covered in lectures, stay up with the scheduled reading below and the quiz open periods.** Because of the nature of the material and texts, lectures and projects are designed to aid in developing an **integrated understanding of the material for the full semester in mind.** Class lectures are designed with the assumption that you have read relative materials prior to coming to class.

Calendar

Day	Date	Class Schedule	Chapters	Assignments/ Due Dates
Wed	Jan 22	Class Orientation Introduction to Taxation	Blackboard	
Mon	27	An Introduction to Tax	Chapter 1	QCH1
Wed	29	Tax Compliance, the IRS, and Tax Authorities	Chapter 2	QCH2
Mon	Feb 3	RIA/CCH Research Census Day	Meet in the library	Assign Research Memo and Client Letter
Wed	5		Chapter 2	
Mon	10	Individual Income Tax Overview	Chapter 4	QCH4
Wed	12		Chapter 4	
Mon	17	Exam 1	Chapters 1, 2, & 4	
Wed	19	Gross Income and Exclusions	Chapter 5	QCH5
Mon	24		Chapter 5	Research Memo and Client Letter Due
Wed	26		Chapter 5	
Mon	Mar 3	Individual Deductions	Chapter 6	QCH6
Wed	5		Chapter 6	
Mon	10	Spring Break – No Class		
Wed	12	Spring Break – No Class		
Mon	17	Individual Income Tax Computation and Tax Credits	Chapter 7	Tax Return I Due; QCH7
Wed	19		Chapter 7	
Mon	24	Exam 2	Chapters 5, 6, & 7	
Wed	26	Business Income, Deductions, and Accounting Methods	Chapter 8	QCH8
Mon	31	Cesar Chavez Day – No Class		
Wed	Apr 2		Chapter 8	
Friday	Apr 4	Deadline to drop with a “W”		
Mon	7	Property Acquisition and Cost Recovery	Chapter 9	QCH9
Wed	9		Chapter 9	Tax Return II Due
Mon	14		Chapter 9	
Wed	16	Exam 3	Chapters 8 & 9	
Mon	21	Property Dispositions	Chapter 10	QCH10
Wed	23		Chapter 10	
Mon	28		Chapter 10	
Wed	30	Investments	Chapter 11	QCH11
Mon	5		Chapter 11	Tax Return III Due
Wed	7	Exam 4	Chapters 10 & 11	
Fri	9	Dead Day		