Office: BB 230
Office Hours: I am in my office on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You also can ask me questions by email.

Email: dspice@memphis.edu
Let me know if you have any questions or concerns. (Please DO NOT email me from within eCourseware. Doing so will create for you an email address in your message that will prevent me from responding to your message.)

Perspective:
It never has been more exciting to be in accounting! We are emerging from a series of accounting scandals that brought to light the key role of accounting in our economy, prompted preventive legislation, and as a sidebar, created a huge demand for accountants. We recently experienced an economic crisis that many blame on accountants and many others expect accountants to help solve. And consider what’s on the horizon.

U.S. GAAP is evolving in concert with International Financial Reporting Standards. A new approach to recognizing revenues promises to alter the amounts and timing of reported earnings. The measurement and classification of investments are changing. Fair values replacing historical costs? No more LIFO? No more extraordinary items? No operating leases? These are some of the evolving and emerging issues that form the backdrop for our course this semester. It should be fun.

Course Resources:
No textbook is required. However, many of our assignments are to be solved electronically within Connect, a web-based assignment and assessment platform. We will use Connect that accompanies Spiceland, et al., Intermediate Accounting, McGraw-Hill, 8th Edition, 2015. Why Intermediate Accounting? Like Connect, ours focuses on financial reporting, but 7120 emphasizes current controversial topics in accounting, impending reporting standards, and IFRS. So our Connect assignments will be beyond the scope of what you likely studied in Intermediate Accounting. Some will be review of topics you studied previously but needed to provide foundation for more advanced study of the same topics. With Connect, I will deliver most of our assignments online. Others will be provided within the individual Modules.

With Connect, you receive an access code you'll need in order to register with Connect. Here are instructions to purchase an access code if you didn’t purchase it from the bookstore or online: Video Instructions, Use the code it provides to register at the site below:

Follow these instructions to register with your section and Connect: Go to the following Web address and click the “register now” button: http://connect.mheducation.com/class/7120-2015

You will be responsible for researching the Internet for many of the information sources you’ll need to solve the problems and cases. The modules will identify information sources and assigned cases and problems to achieve those learning objectives.

Modifications “Flipped Classroom”
In a traditional classroom, the professor lectures in class and students solve assigned homework outside the classroom. In a flipped classroom, this process is reversed; students read the textbook and watch lecture videos outside the class and then work assignments in class, often in group settings. In the flipped classroom model, the lectures become the “homework” and the “homework” is solved during class.

In our class we will achieve many of the benefits of a flipped classroom while retaining benefits of the traditional approach. I still will present course content in class for each chapter, but a large portion of each class period will be devoted to solving problems, usually in group settings. Some of the in-class exercises are “Concept Checks” woven in with the presentation and many are questions that also are assigned to you as “homework” in Connect. Solving them in class, with the help of me and your classmates, means you simply repeat the process by providing the answers to nearly identical versions of the questions in Connect prior to the next class.

Benefits
• Active learning: You must participate in the learning process during each class rather than nodding off during a non-stop lecture.
• Group collaboration. Instead of asking a question to the whole room, you ask the small group of peers with whom you’re working. This dynamic also helps prepare you for the real world, where teamwork is crucial.

Prerequisite: ACCT 3120: Intermediate Accounting II

Course Content:
This course is divided into the following modules. Within each module, you’ll find assignments and related resources. Complete your assignments before the beginning of the class period designated on the assignment schedule. You likely will have errors in some of these assignments. Come to class perplexed and questioning. This is encouraged. It means you read the assigned reading, persevered and completed the assignment even when you were unsure of the answer.

We will clear up your confusion in class. If you come to class without having read the reading and having attempted the assignments, we will not clear up your confusion. Solutions are due at 5:30 pm on the class date following the date indicated in the schedule below.

Aug. 25 Orientation and introduction to the course

Sept. 1 Leases – Current GAAP (U.S. and IFRS)

2 MODULE 1 – Leases – Proposed ASU-Type A Leases

3 MODULE 2 – Debate: The ROU model for accounting for leases is superior to the capital lease/operating lease model.

8 MODULE 4 – Leases – Proposed ASU-Type B Leases

10 MODULE 5 – Leases – Proposed ASU

15 MODULE 6 – Leases – Proposed ASU

17 MODULE 7 – Debate: The dual approach for accounting for lease expense and lease income (2013 ED) and adopted by IFRS for Type A and Type B leases is superior to the single approach proposed in the first (2010) ED.

22 MODULE 8 – Postretirement benefit plans-U.S. GAAP Review

24 MODULE 9 – Postretirement benefit plans-U.S. GAAP Review

29 MODULE 10 – Postretirement benefit plans

Oct. 1 MODULE 11 – Postretirement benefit plans

6 MODULE 12 – Debate: All changes in pension assets and obligations should be recognized in net income.

8 MODULE 13 – Long-term financing

10-13 Fall Break

15 MODULE 14 – Long-term financing

20 MODULE 15 – Debate: A change from U.S. GAAP to IFRS is desirable.

22 MODULE 16 – Midterm Exam

29 MODULE 17 – Financial Instruments and comprehensive income

Nov. 3 MODULE 18 – Financial Instruments and comprehensive income

5 MODULE 19 – Share-based compensation

10 MODULE 20 – Share-based compensation and earnings per share

12 MODULE 21 – Share-based compensation and earnings per share

17 MODULE 22 – Debate: Stock options should be reported at fair value

19 MODULE 23 – Revenue recognition

24 MODULE 24 – Revenue recognition: Special issues

26 Thanksgiving


10 Final Exam 5:30-7:00

Grading
Your grade this semester will be determined on the basis of the total points you earn:

Homework assignments 120
Quizzes 65
Midterm 100
Final 100
Debate 65

Total 450 points

Homework Assignments
The 120 point “homework assignment” grade will be determined on the basis of your daily preparation as evidenced by your scores on homework assignments. All Connect assignments will be graded and
Learning by repetition. We will tackle most topics from many directions:
- You read and study the topics prior to class.
- Quizzes encourage preparation.
- If you have conceptual underpinnings and illustrations of the topics in class.
- We assess and reinforce understanding with frequent Concept Checks.
- Group collaboration promotes discovery of weaknesses and strengths.
- Connect assignments reinforce what you learned.
- Exams force you to revisit and solidify your understanding.

Challenges

Pre-class preparation: For this teaching model to work it is essential that everyone comes to class prepared. To encourage this preparation, each module is accompanied by an online "Did You Read Ahead" quiz (in Connect). We also will have periodic in-class quizzes at the beginning of class. For more on these, see Quizzes later in the Syllabus.

Objective and Core Competencies:

The objective of this course is to promote understanding of contemporary accounting issues as related to financial reporting with an emphasis on recent accounting trends and current controversial topics in accounting. This goal is based on the belief that success in business as an investor, a creditor, a manager, or a CPA requires an appreciation of the interaction between a company's corporate strategy and its financial reporting policies and practices. To develop that appreciation, we will seek an understanding of current financial reporting practices, explore ways to strategically analyze financial reports to identify the economic realities of the reporting company, and consider the consequences of corporate accounting information for those who depend on its credibility. We'll often discuss financial reporting issues in terms of their effects on assessments of a firm's profitability and risk. Because accounting revolves around information access and dissemination we will utilize a major force in information access and dissemination - the Internet - as a key component of the structure for the course.

You should strive to achieve these core competencies:
- Understand the conceptual issues regarding financial reporting issues.
- Be able to discuss financial reporting as it relates to a variety of controversial accounting issues.
- Compare and contrast GAAP and IFRS with theoretically appropriate alternatives.
- Understand and demonstrate how financial reporting choices affect the transparency of financial statements and user perspectives of profitability and risk.
- Be aware of how and why companies try to "manage" earnings.
- Appreciate the consequences of unethical business practice or misleading financial reporting.
- Be able to research a company's financial statements, press releases and news reports.
- Understand how managers use accounting information internally to make decisions.
- Communicate your convictions and persuade others regarding the reporting issues we discuss.

Importance of Independent Research

A full 90 percent of all the data in the world has been generated over the last two years. We must loosen our tendency to rely on learning existing information and move more toward learning how and where to locate and assimilate new information. This is particularly crucial in accounting, which is synonymous with information dissemination.

My role as instructor is to guide, focus, and critique your learning experience. I do this by developing readings and assignment material that direct your attention to specific accounting issues identified in the Modules in the right-side panel. Specific questions within the modules focus your attention on key points.

Networking and Career Development

Beta Alpha Psi

As the premier professional accounting and business information fraternity, Beta Alpha Psi recognizes academic excellence and complements members' formal education by providing interaction between students, faculty, and professionals, as well as fostering lifelong growth, service and ethical conduct. The accounting honorary fraternity is Beta Alpha Psi.

Our local Beta Alpha Psi chapter has been deemed a "superior chapter" for 14 straight years.

Internships

counted as 100 points. Your assignments are due at 5:30 on class day after the date designated on the assignment schedule above. I will grade 6 of the other assignments chosen semi-randomly, grading on a 4-point basis. The remaining 20 points of your grade will be the total of your 5 best scores. Counting only your best 5 will allow for occasional "bad days", etc. Therefore, there will be no late homework accepted for any reason.

Quizzes

1. In Connect (linked within eCourseware): Some modules are accompanied by an online quiz (in Connect). These are designed as "Did You Read Ahead" quizzes, so the completion time is at class time (5:30) on the first class day for the module. These quizzes are designed to assess a very basic understanding of key topics. Answers should be relatively easy if you have read the assigned readings; otherwise not so much. Resist the urge to just look up the answers. You might win the battle, but you'll lose the war. Be sure to pay attention to the schedule because when class begins for the module, the quiz will close and will not be reopened. No exceptions. Incorrect answers are listed after the quiz is submitted, and full feedback is provided after the due date. Each of the 8 quizzes counts 5 points each. Another 20 points will come from the in-class quizzes described next.

2. In-class quizzes: As additional encouragement for pre-class preparation, we will have periodic in-class quizzes at the beginning of class. I'll count the best 5 of the quizzes we have. Don't be late for class or you will miss the quiz. Counting only your best 5 will allow for occasional late arrivals, etc. No make-ups or delay of the start of class.

Discussion Board

Click on the Discussions tab in eCourseware. We have two forums there. In one, let's introduce ourselves to each other. In the second forum, entitled Study Hall, I encourage you to share information with each other about homework assignments and study topics.

Midterm and Final Exams

The two exams during the semester will test your knowledge and understanding of the core competencies pertaining to case assignments, problems, debates, and assigned readings in the modules preceding each exam. These exams will consist primarily of problems and essay questions similar in nature to those in the problems and case assignments.

Debates

A major component of this course and your performance evaluation will be your performance in a debate concerning one of the central course topics. We will have six formal debates. I will assign debate topics after dividing the class into 12 teams. Familiarize yourself with the rules of debate. The debate will be evaluated on a variety of quality criteria to include depth and quality of analysis, organization, creativity, and presentation. It is critical that you plan, organize, research, and practice thoroughly AS A TEAM. Your performance will be evaluated by other teams, by your team, and by me.

Those not involved in a debate are still a part of the discussion. In fact, your preparation should be as in depth as that of the panel. Remember, you will be allowed to answer exam questions on issues debated by others, not on issues your team debates. Come to class with at least two written arguments in support of each side of the debate. I don't plan to collect them for a grade; they are for your use in the class discussion, but I will survey the classroom to see that you have them.

Team Approach

Group collaboration is a critical element of success in most career settings. It also is a critical element of success in this course. The class is divided into 12 teams for purposes of the debates and problem solving exercises. Outside problem and case assignments will be prepared individually rather than by teams although I recommend that you form study groups or partnerships and take advantage of the online Study Hall within eCourseware.

Your teams are here.

Academic Integrity

I encourage you to collaborate on homework assignments and on preparing for exams. In fact, I have set up a Study Hall within eCourseware to assist you in that collaboration. On the other hand, collaboration, the use of electronic devices, or any other form of cheating on Connect quizzes, in-class quizzes, or exams will not be
Many Memphis-area CPA firms and corporations seek our students for internships. Internships provide (a) relevant experience, (b) course credit, (c) financial remuneration, and (d) a “foot in the door” toward a career. Learn about the possibilities at the college Internship Office.

Professional Organizations

Several professional organizations with local chapters have reduced-fee student memberships, and joining is an excellent way to establish relationships with potential employers and future colleagues. Organizations with local chapters include:

- The Institute of Internal Auditors
- Tennessee Society of CPAs

Professional Development Program

Through the support of Avron B. Fogelman, a Professional Development Program has been implemented to help students develop a competitive edge in today's dynamic workplace. These programs are designed to complete the academic program that students earn in the classroom and help them make the transition into the business world.

Particularly useful for accounting students is Accounting Careers of Tomorrow. I highly recommend you take advantage. Visit: memphis.edu/professional

School of Accountancy Facebook Page

I strongly encourage you to join our School of Accountancy Facebook page. There you will see internship, employment, and networking opportunities as well as important announcements. Please also post your professional accomplishments, new employment, opportunities for others, etc.

Join now. (Choose “Ask to join”)

School of Accountancy Scholarships

See the possibilities here.

Financial Assistance

Click here.

tolerated. Likewise, obtaining, sharing, or using published solutions to Connect assignments is unacceptable.

Each of you is preparing to enter the accounting profession. That’s right. Unlike marketing, management, finance and other business disciplines, accounting is, in fact, a profession. Moreover, unlike other professions like law, accounting relies on unquestionable integrity and honesty. As an accounting professional, your career success and even your ability to be existent in the profession will depend, not only on your absolute honesty, but the lack of even an appearance of dishonesty. Enough said!

SETE Evaluations

SETE evaluations are now to be completed online. Please go to Spectrum, the University of Memphis portal, at http://spectrum.memphis.edu/. I take your comments seriously. Please provide written comments in addition to numerical responses.

AACSB Accreditation

The Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business provides internationally recognized, specialized accreditation for business and accounting programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level. The Fogelman College of Business and Economics is accredited by the AACSB. The School of Accountancy has separate AACSB accreditation at all three levels. An important element of accreditation is “Learning Assessment.” We assess learning based on the following five goals at the Master’s level. The first four of these are assessed in this course:

- Goal 1: The student will be knowledgeable in accounting and its functional support of organizations.
- Goal 2: The student will be an effective communicator and team member.
- Goal 3: The student will be a critical thinker and a problem solver.
- Goal 4: The student will be aware of ethical ramifications and global business implications of decisions.
- Goal 5: The student will be aware of ethical ramifications and global business implications of decisions.