Course Number: ACCT 5371.001, 7-9:30 pm on Thursday
Course Name: Tax Consulting, Planning and Research, OCNR 240

Instructor: Dr. Valrie Chambers, O’Connor 324, 361-825-6012; Fax 361-825-5609; E-mail: Valrie.chambers@tamucc.edu (email preferred)

Office Hours: MW 3:30 – 5:30 and R 5-7 pm or by appointment or email.


Prerequisites: Accounting foundation courses or their equivalent.

Course Description:
This course is an advanced study of federal tax law to identify tax-saving opportunities for businesses and individuals. Emphasis on sound tax planning and research techniques is applied to case studies.

Relationship to Other Coursework:
This course is appropriate for MBA students, students in the profession, and MAcc students. Subjects overlap with financial and managerial accounting, finance, business strategy and communications.

Instructional Methodology:
Instructional methods include lectures, class discussions and applications, case studies, preparation of client letters, valuations, and the conduct of electronic tax research and policy analysis. The goal of these methods is to guide the student to a technical understanding of tax research and the development of professional judgment in tax matters, including recognition and consideration of the importance of non-tax factors in decision-making.

Performance Evaluation and Grading:
Student performance will be evaluated based on
Tax Consulting, Planning & Research Projects 90%
Independent accounting judgment 10%
Total 100%

Course grades will be assigned on the following scale: A-90% or above, B-80-89%, C-70-79%, D-60-69%, F-59% and below.
Late Work and Make-up Exams:
Tax is an area of accounting that is very deadline-driven. For me to accept late work and
give make-up exams, the excuse has to be really good, verifiable and in writing, or
alternatively arranged in advance. Good luck.

Extra Credit:
Extra credit opportunities arise from time to time, but the amount and frequency of extra-
credit is not predictable in advance. Therefore, I would advise consistent class attendance
(where extra credit is announced or distributed) and heavy studying to reduce the need for
extra credit.

Attendance Policy:
Students are held responsible for class attendance and the material covered in missed
classes; students are advised that excessive absences may adversely affect their grades.
That said, I don’t always take attendance – I’m more concerned with what students know
than that a student came to class on a particular day; for an occasional absence, students
do not need to notify me that they’re missing class on a non-test/non-project day. Lack of
attendance affects students’ grades most when a student needs the benefit of a doubt
because I have little classroom participation from students who miss class to indicate that
a particular student does in fact understand the material; I would hope that there’s no
doubt at all that each student will perform exceptionally well. 😊

Oral and Written Content:
Students are expected to read assigned material prior to class and to contribute to class
discussions. Students will address the appropriate form and content of client letters and
develop agility in communicating complex tax issues in clear and common language.
Students will make professional presentation in the form of client letters, workpapers, and
oral presentations.

Technology Applications:
Students will use electronic research applications during the course. In addition, students
should be comfortable with producing quality word-processed letters and memoranda with
at least one spreadsheet application. Students will use one of the two most widely
adopted research tools in their Internet version, the full-featured versions of RIA’s or
CCH's Internet-based tax research libraries. These libraries include the Internal Revenue
Code and Code history, Treasury Regulations, selected Committee Reports, federal court
cases and Tax Treaties. Lexis-Nexis is also available and its use is strongly encouraged.
The libraries also include the publishers’ tax services with explanations and annotations.
Students will have the opportunity to develop tax research skills using these widely
adopted professional tools. Most of these tools are available for student use at the library,
through the Business Computer Lab, or via their own Internet service from an off campus
location. All students should have a student computer account and access to e-mail.
Students may be required to submit certain assignments via e-mail and e-mail
attachments.
Global Perspectives:
International issues are addressed in a broad way, through an overview of comparative ways of determining income and of collecting tax in the tax systems employed in other major industrial nations. Generally, at least one assignment has international elements.

Ethical Perspectives:
The integrity of our financial and tax systems depends, in part, on the integrity and principled behavior of those who advise clients and report information. This tax course addresses these issues through discussion of Circular 230, which outlines the expectations of governmental authorities with respect to tax preparers, through mention of certain taxpayer and preparer penalties under the law, and through review of the more common issues encountered and addressed by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statements of Responsibilities in Tax Practice.

Demographic Diversity Perspectives:
An example of a demographic issue in tax law is the "marriage penalty" that imposes higher taxes on two individuals that file as one married couple than would be imposed if the two individuals had never married and filed as single individuals. Such issues extend throughout the study of individual taxation and raise interesting policy and design questions. Some of these questions are raised and may be addressed by students in the context of case discussions and sample return projects. Class discussion of proposals for reforming the U.S. tax system also raise interesting questions about who should bear the burden of taxation and of what and who should be, or should not be, taxed.

Political, Social, Legal, Regulatory, and Environmental Perspectives:
Throughout the history of the United States, tax laws have been used to encourage or to discourage certain types of activities or investments. In addition, taxes may ultimately not be born by those on whom the tax is imposed, but may be passed along to others. Case studies and other sources of class discussion address the social, political, and regulatory agendas advanced by various aspects of the tax law.

Academic Honesty:
This course, and all other courses offered by the College of Business (COB), requires all of its students to abide by the COB Student Code of Ethics (available online at www.cob.tamucc.edu). Provisions and stipulations in the code are applicable to all students taking COB courses regardless of whether or not they are pursuing a degree awarded by the COB.

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.)

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage and Classroom/professional Behavior:
Be respectful. Be discreet.
Dropping This Class:
Recall that the State of Texas may have stiff penalties if too many classes have been dropped. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before deciding to drop this course to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, a student must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in a student being dropped from the class April 12, 2013 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeals
As stated in university Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grad Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

American with Disabilities Act Compliance:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Corpus Christi Hall (CCH) 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Learning Objectives:
1. Identify, describe, and apply sources of legal and ethical standards and federal tax law common to tax practice.
2. Delineate, elaborate on and apply the steps of the tax research process to actual federal research problems.
3. Advise hypothetical clients as to audit selection factors and probable litigation success, and construct taxpayer defenses.
4. Illustrate effective tax planning.
5. Identify penalties that may be applied to tax practitioners who fail to perform responsibly.
## Summary of Topical Coverage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Tax Research</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to tax services</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying tax issues</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locating tax authority</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Citators</td>
<td>1 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading, interpreting and evaluating the Code, Regulations, and landmark court cases</td>
<td>6 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conducting electronic tax research</td>
<td>10 hrs.</td>
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<td><strong>II. Tax Planning</strong></td>
<td>8 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>III. Tax Practice and Procedure (includes ethics)</strong></td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Tax Consulting (e-commerce, business valuations, litigation support, and jurisdictional problems)</strong></td>
<td>8 hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>45 hrs.</td>
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- **I. Tax Research**
  - Introduction to tax services: 3 hrs.
  - Identifying tax issues: 3 hrs.
  - Locating tax authority: 3 hrs.
  - Using Citators: 1 hr.
  - Reading, interpreting and evaluating the Code, Regulations, and landmark court cases: 6 hrs.
  - Conducting electronic tax research: 10 hrs.

- **II. Tax Planning**: 8 hrs.
- **III. Tax Practice and Procedure (includes ethics)**: 3 hrs.
- **IV. Tax Consulting (e-commerce, business valuations, litigation support, and jurisdictional problems)**: 8 hrs.
- **Total**: 45 hrs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ch.</th>
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<th>In-Class Problems</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>RC 46-55</td>
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<td>RC 41-43; 45-46; 48</td>
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<td>RC 41-46; Shepardizing</td>
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<td>RC 41-46; Form 9465; 911.</td>
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<td>RC 31-32; 35-40;</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>RC 37, 39-42; Andy Barker, PI on hulu.com</td>
<td>Case 6 due</td>
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<td>48,51,52,53,54,58</td>
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<td>55-58</td>
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<td>7,8 scan</td>
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Notes: In-Class Problems (Discussion Questions = Q, Exercises = Ex, Problem = P, Research Case = RC)