



ACCT 6331: Financial Accounting

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Course Description and Objectives

Financial statements are a key source of information about the economic activities of a firm. This course addresses the construction and interpretation of financial statements. The goal of the course is **NOT** to train you to become an accountant. Rather, the course should equip you to become an informed user of financial statement information. Because annual reports are somewhat formidable, we will study how firms present the information for various accounts in their financial statements, including the footnotes. By the end of the course, you should have a basic understanding of financial statements and the ability to use this understanding to analyze business situations and recommend appropriate actions (MBA learning goal “critical thinking”). Furthermore, we will discuss the subjective nature of accounting choices which will enable you to identify ethical dilemmas in the context of financial information and allow you to recognize and evaluate alternative courses of action (MBA learning goal “ethical reasoning”).

Several features of the course facilitate achieving the course objectives. The textbook provides a conceptual foundation for the course by introducing the accounting framework and by characterizing accounting principles and alternative methods. I also assign several articles from the financial press. These articles will help you to gain further understanding of real-world financial reporting issues. The cases serve as the basis of class discussion and provide a challenging test of your understanding of the topic. They are designed to help illustrate the issues associated with various accounting methods and the manner in which the information is disclosed in corporate financial statements. After graduation, many students report that this course is one of the most valuable courses during their time as an MBA student. My hope is that you will be one of these students.

Course Materials

Thomas R. Dyckman, Robert P. Magee and Glenn M. Pfeiffer. Financial Accounting, 4th Edition, Cambridge Business Publishers, 2014, ISBN-13: 978-1-61853-045-5

All other course materials (e.g., cases, readings) are posted on the course webpage.

Course Details

Grading

Grades for the class will be determined as follows:

Quiz	10%
Exam #1	35%
Exam #2	35%
Cases	10%
Class Participation	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

Quiz

There will be one quiz intended to provide early feedback on your understanding of transaction analysis and the construction of financial statements. Without a solid understanding of this material, the remainder of the course will prove to be very difficult. The quiz is closed book and closed notes.

Exams

There will be two exams based on the annual report of a chosen company. The exams are not cumulative. Both exams are open book and open notes.

Cases

The cases are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due dates outlined in the course schedule. Assignments are to be completed in groups of up to six people. The assignments are designed to give you practice applying the related concepts and tools without grade-related pressure and to prepare you for class discussion and examples. If your assignment write-up reflects careful thought and effort, you will receive full credit; if the assignment is not completed on time, or lacks thought and effort, you will receive no credit (or partial credit at my discretion). In-class discussions are structured to give you feedback and insight into the key issues and “solutions” for each assignment. **Graded copies of the assignment write-ups will not be returned**, so please keep an extra copy to refer to during in-class discussion.

Please submit your assignment with the following standard format at the top of the first page:

ACCT 6331 – Section #
Date: MM-DD-YYYY

Team #

“We acknowledge that we adhered to the Bauer Code of Ethics and that we did not receive any outside assistance on this exam.”

Name of Case (e.g., Sears and Wal-Mart)

Class Participation

I expect professional conduct in the classroom at all times. Each student is expected to come to class on time and to be actively involved in all class discussions, including asking questions and sharing your knowledge and experiences with the rest of the class. I will call on students that volunteer to participate, but will avoid calling on the same students repeatedly. Reward is not given solely for the quantity of comments. Furthermore, there are no penalties for “wrong” answers. It is the attempt to thoughtfully reason through a problem or to ask a pertinent question that is valued and adds to the classroom experience for everyone. Cold calls are fair game.

Preparation for Class

Class sessions will focus on interactive lectures and case discussions in which we will address both mechanical accounting issues and important analytical and strategic issues. Typically, I will not provide detailed lectures that show you how to work problems, and then expect you to work similar problems. Instead, this class utilizes an active learning approach. Students are expected to use the available resources to prepare the assigned material prior to coming to class. I will use class time to help you understand the more complex issues and to highlight the important take-aways from the assigned material. The bottom line is that if you do not adequately prepare for class, you will have trouble following the discussion.

Deadlines

The quiz and all case assignments must be submitted by the start of class on the date indicated for class discussion. No late quizzes or case assignments will be accepted.

Regrade Requests

Regrades will be considered when a typed, written request has been submitted *to me* detailing the specific nature of the issue. Requests must be submitted within 48 hours of the assignment being returned. There will be no regrades for requests failing to meet this deadline. Furthermore, I reserve the right to regrade the entire assignment, not merely to section of contention. This may result in a lower grade being assigned than that originally received.

Miscellaneous Course Policies

Academic Honesty

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy and the Bauer College Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct are strictly enforced by the C.T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of these policies will be tolerated in this course. These policies may be found in the Student Handbook at <http://www.uh.edu/dos/pdf/2010-2011StudentHandbook.pdf> and at <http://www.bauer.uh.edu/centers/bcbe/bauer-code-ethics.asp>, respectively. Bauer College students are expected to be familiar with these policies. The following points provide additional information about my expectations with respect to assignments for this course.

- A student assumes full responsibility for all assignments that are submitted with his/her name attached, regardless of whether the assignment was partially or entirely completed by other group members (in the case of group assignments).
- It is a violation of the academic honesty policy if a student reviews class notes on a case discussion from another source before handing in the assignment. Groups should not discuss the cases with other groups before they are handed in. Furthermore, the quiz and exams

should be completed individually. This means you should not consult with other students when completing the quiz and exams. If you have any questions, please refer them to me.

Attendance

Attendance is a key part of the learning experience. You are expected to attend all class sessions and report to me any sessions that you miss. If you miss more than three sessions during the semester, your grade will be reduced by one third of a point per excess absence on a four point grading scale (e.g., from an A to an A-).

Laptops

Students are required to place their laptop computers in the closed position while class is in session. I may relax this policy in some situations for instructional purposes.

Cell phones

Students are required to turn their cell phones off while class is in session. I may relax this policy in some situations, such as a family member in a serious medical situation. Please see me prior to the start of class if you have a situation that requires you to have your cell phone in “vibrate” mode.

Disability Based Accommodations

The C.T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. To this end, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (Telephone 713-743-5400) and present approved accommodation documentation to me in a timely manner.

Evaluation for Instructors

The C.T. Bauer College of Business has a policy for its instructors to be evaluated by students to provide feedback on how their performance can be improved. I encourage you to participate in the evaluation process. To improve the course I need to hear from you.

Course Schedule

The course schedule is posted on the course webpage.