

ACCT. 4300
Federal Income Taxation
Spring 2015

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Text: Concepts in Federal Taxation, Kevin E. Murphy and Mark Higgins (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 2015 Edition)

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Educational Objectives / Motivation

This course is designed to introduce students to the Federal tax system while providing them with a skill set that will enable them to apply the appropriate tax law concepts to various tax situations. After completion of this course, students should maintain knowledge or skills related to:

- The Federal tax system including the different types of taxes and various tax compliance practices and procedures
- Individual taxation: including key concepts as gross income inclusions and exclusions, deductions for adjusted gross income, itemized deductions and the calculation of individual tax liabilities.
- Business taxation: including tax years, acceptable tax accounting methods, book/tax differences, depreciation/amortization methods, and self-employment income and taxation.
- Taxation of business and personal property transactions: including calculation of capital gains/losses, and calculation of business property transactions including those under sections 1231, 1244, 1245 and 1250
- Entity choice including the different methods used to tax different entities.
- Preparation of federal income tax forms for individuals including form 1040 and related schedules.

Assessment Methods:

The course objectives will be measured through exams, RATs, application of homework principles, and tax return preparation. Class discussion is also of importance. I encourage each of you to ask questions when you do not understand a topic. Through questions and discussion I can assess your learning on an on-going basis and adjust the class accordingly.

Time Requirements for This Course

For most of you, this course represents your first exposure to the Federal Tax System. As such, the time requirement to earn an above average grade in this course is extensive. Below is my estimation of the weekly time requirements typically needed for students in this class:

<i>In Class Time:</i>	<i>3 Hours</i>
<i>Chapter Reading & Preparation of End of Chapter Questions/Assignments:</i>	<i>3-8 Hours</i>
<i>Other Homework and Semester Projects (spread throughout the semester)</i>	<i>2-4 Hours</i>

Weekly Estimate of Time for this Class: 8 – 15 hours per week

Caveat: Some of you may be able to achieve an outstanding grade with less effort. However, I have found that I prefer to share these estimates up front so students understand my expectations and can adjust to them early in the semester.

Individual Readiness Assessment Tests:

During the semester there will be readiness assessment tests prior to the discussion of each chapter. These tests are meant to gauge an individual's self-study of the assigned material. The tests will be multiple-choice or T/F questions on the current chapter.

Group Readiness Assessment Tests:

Each student will be randomly assigned to a group. After taking the individual RAT, all groups will meet to prepare and submit an answer to the individual RAT. Each individual in the group will receive a grade earned for the group response.

Appeal:

Groups who feel that their answer to the group readiness assessment test was incorrectly graded may appeal that grade. The appeal process will occur after the group RAT has been completed. An appeal must be made on the day of the test and will not be permitted at a later date. A ruling on the appeal will follow the next class session. The appeal should state the question, the given answer, and the reasons why it is an acceptable answer. Appeals should be in writing and may be submitted by email or in person. Appeals not conforming to this format will not be considered.

Exams:

Four examinations will be given this semester. The tentative dates for each exam are indicated in the attached class schedule.

Class Participation:

My objective is to conduct class in a manner that facilitates discussion about the application of tax laws and tax planning. While my responsibility is to "teach" the class, I believe that learning is the responsibility of everyone in the class. It is far easier to learn through active participation, and I expect everyone to contribute to class discussion. I like class discussions to be interactive and informal. My hope is that by each of us contributing to the class discussions, a high level of understanding of the material may be achieved. Class participation will be gauged on an individual basis.

Homework:

The homework assignments listed on the Course Schedule on the back page of the syllabus will not be picked up for a grade. However, the exams will be based on these homework assignments so it is highly recommended that you complete these assignments prior to the second day of the lecture on each chapter. We will go over select problems during the class lectures. **Please note that I reserve the right to begin picking up homework assignments for a grade if I feel students are coming to class unprepared. This would result in points being added to the total point structure for the class. I will give one class period notice before implementing such a change.**

I will periodically assign problems that are integrative in nature or that involve completing a certain tax return Form or Schedule. These problems will be graded on accuracy.

Tax Return Project:

One tax return project will be assigned during the term. Your assigned group will submit one completed tax return on the date indicated in class. The tax return project will be prepared manually so that you can see how information flows from one tax schedule to another.

Tentative Letter Grade Cutoffs:**Grade**

A	100 % - 90%	D	69.5% - 60%
B	89.5% - 80%	F	59.5% & below
C	79.5% - 70%		

3 Exams	100 points each	300 points
Final Exam		120 points
Individual RATs		150 points
(15 points each * 10 RATs)		
Group RATs (5 points each * 10)		50 points
Tax Return & Research Problems		<u>85 points</u>
Total Points		705 points

Academic Dishonesty:

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to, (1) use or provision of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or examinations or completing tax return assignments; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other tax return assignments; or (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member or staff of the university.

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. (Source: Code of Conduct and Discipline at the University of North Texas.)

Penalties: If you engage in academic dishonesty related to this class, you will receive a failing grade on the test or assignment and a failing grade in the course. In addition, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action.

Disabling Conditions:

The Department of Accounting, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like to request accommodation, please present your written accommodation request during the first two weeks of classes. My office hours and office number are shown on this syllabus.

Religious Holy Days:

Any student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to make-up an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. Please check your calendars. Notification must be made in writing and delivered in person no later than the 15th class day of the semester.

OTHER ISSUES

This is a very important course for accounting majors. This course lays a foundation upon which you will build in the future. There are two keys to doing well in this course: ***1) Come to class, pay attention, and ask questions; 2) Complete your homework on a timely basis.*** If you fall behind, you should meet with me as soon as possible.

Recognize that I want you to do well in this course. I believe that the quality of instruction in this course and the fairness of the course grading system provide you with every opportunity to do well . . . *if you apply yourself.*

How to Succeed in ACCT 4300

1. Preparation - Before each class, I will assign you a chapter to read. Be sure to read the assigned material in order to be ready to (a) answer questions posed to the class and (b) ask questions regarding any problems that you may have. Your preparation is a key factor in (a) your performance in this class and (b) how much knowledge you will discern from this class.
2. Preparation - Before each class, you should review your class notes from the previous lecture. This review is an important process in determining your level of understanding of the course material. If you are having problems with materials previously covered in class, it is imperative that we resolve any questions that you have as soon as possible. Do not be leery of asking questions. If you do not understand a point made in class, chances are that your neighbor has a similar lack of understanding.
3. Attend class regularly and on time!
4. Rework problems discussed in class and work problems assigned in class. Class discussions are highly representative of the material that I expect you to glean from this course. Further, because class discussions often exceed the difficulty level provided in the text, it is important that you understand this material in preparation for your exams. Throughout the course, I will suggest modifications to problems discussed in class. It is important that you not only understand the problems discussed in class, but also understand the issues well enough to analyze and solve related problems as well as problems that integrate multiple ideas presented in this course.

**Introduction to Tax
Spring 2015 - Course Schedule**

Date	Topic	Readings	Homework
01/20	Introduction		
01/22	Federal Income Taxation	Ch. 1	1,4,10,12,18,20,28,29,36,41,
01/27	Federal Income Taxation	Ch. 1	42,44,45,46,52,54,56,59,63,65,67
01/29	Income Tax Concepts	Ch. 2	8,12,13,16,18,20,22,25, 28,31,33,35,46,49,50,54,61,62,63,
02/03	Income Sources	Ch. 3	3,7,10,11,12,19,20,27,31,42,44,46,
02/05	Income Sources	Ch. 3	47,51,55,60,79,84,
02/10	Income Exclusions	Ch. 4	2,7,17,18,20,27,30,35,40,45,46,48,
02/12	Income Exclusions	Ch. 4	51,55,61
02/17	Midterm Exam I		
02/19	Intro. To Business Expenses	Ch. 5	1,4,21,24,26,27,32,37,41,42,69,
02/24	Intro. To Business Expenses	Ch. 5	
02/26	Intro. To Business Expenses	Ch. 5	18,19,20,51,57,58,
03/03	Business Expenses	Ch. 6	1,7,10,12,22,26,27,29,32,35,38,43,
03/05	Business Expenses	Ch. 6	47,61,63,67,68,70,74,77,78
03/10	Midterm Exam II		
03/12	Losses – Deductions/Limits	Ch. 7	1,2,5,7,15,16,20,23,26,33,35,
03/16-20	Spring Break		
03/24	Losses – Deductions/Limits	Ch. 7	39,43,45,47,50,61,67
03/26	Losses – Deductions/Limits	Ch. 7	
03/31	Taxation of Individuals	Ch. 8	1,3,5,6,7,8,9,28,29,30,31,33,34,35,
04/02	Taxation of Individuals	Ch. 8	36,37,39,43,52,57,68,71,
04/07	Taxation of Individuals	Ch. 8	
04/09	Midterm Exam III		
04/14	Acquisition of Property	Ch. 9	
04/16	Acquisition of Property	Ch. 9	2,6,8,12,20,22,27,30,32,44,
04/21	Acquisition of Property	Ch. 9	47,48,59,
04/23	Cost Recovery	Ch.10	1,2,3,9,13,22,26,37,38,
04/28	Cost Recovery	Ch.10	41,42,47,52,53,60
04/30	Property Dispositions	Ch.11	10,12,14,17,26a-b,29,33,43,44,45,
05/05	Property Dispositions	Ch. 11	47,58,59,60,64,65,70
05/07	Property Dispositions	Ch. 11	
05/12	Exam IV – 1:30-3:30		

**** Please note that the actual dates and coverage may vary from the above schedule. Any changes in assignments or due dates will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of each student to attend class and be aware of such changes. ****