Instructor Information:
Gary D. Dittmer, CPA, CMA
Email: gdittmer@gmu.edu
Office: #050 Supporting Faculty offices – Lower level Enterprise
       Wednesday evenings before class
Class Meets: Wednesdays 7:20 PM

Course Prerequisites
ACCT 331 with a grade of C or higher.

Text and Required Materials
South-Western Federal Taxation: Taxation of Business Entities – 2011 Edition

Course Website
Blackboard: https://gmu.blackboard.com

Course Objectives
• The objective of this course is to build a sound conceptual and technical foundation for the study of federal income taxation that provides students with the tools necessary to stay current with the ever-changing tax law. The course will produce managers with sufficient understanding of the tax environment to identify important issues when evaluating business transactions. It will develop a framework of taxpayer activities and taxable-income components to teach the fundamental tax concepts and apply them to a variety of business, investment, employment, and personal transactions. Students learn to weigh tax and nontax costs and benefits in making decisions. Specific topics include business formation and organization; capital expenditures; employee and executive compensation; international and multistate operations; and the financial statement disclosure of tax information.
Specific objectives include:

- Students will gain an understanding of the political, social, and economic framework of the income tax system.
- Students will identify issues and relevant facts.
- Students will apply the tax law to solve compliance and planning problems.
- Students will recognize ethical dilemmas and develop a framework for addressing them.
- Students will develop tax research skills that will allow them to identify facts, issues, and relevant tax law to resolve those issues.
- Students will communicate effectively in written and oral form.
- Students will work effectively in groups.
- Students will use technology to resolve tax problems and communicate results.

Undergraduate program learning goals (those in bold will be addressed in this class):

1. **Our students will be competent in their discipline.**
2. **Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.**
3. **Our students will be effective communicators.**
4. Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.
5. Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.
6. **Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions.**
7. Our students will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business.
8. **Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams.**
9. Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business.
10. **Our students will be critical thinkers.**

Students who are competent in the accounting discipline will meet the following learning goals.

1. **Students will record, analyze, interpret and communicate financial and non-financial information for users of such information in accordance with applicable professional authoritative literature.**

2. Students will assess risks inherent in financial and non-financial information and provide appropriate assurance to users of such information and they will be able to develop, validate, and evaluate processes and controls which serve to ensure the integrity of financial and non-financial information.

3. **Students will understand the environment and role of the accounting profession in the proper functioning of commerce, and in society at large, and the ethical and regulatory responsibilities associated with that environment and role**
4. **Students will possess the following technical competencies:** (1) research skills to access, understand, and apply relevant professional authoritative literature; (2) decision modeling skills to identify issues, analyze alternatives, and implement solutions related to financial and non-financial information; and (3) **technology and data analysis skills to manage financial and non-financial information.**

**Approach to Learning**

Classroom activities are designed to give students the opportunity to solve tax problems and share their understanding of the material with classmates and the instructor. Students should come to class prepared to solve problems related to the assigned topics for that day. Assigned readings are to be completed prior to class meetings. As new material is introduced, individual students may be selected to solve examples. Students also will solve problems in small groups and may be asked to present their solutions to the class.

We will not have time in class to discuss all assigned material. Students are responsible for all material in assigned readings whether or not discussed in class. Students are also responsible for any material covered in class that is not in the assigned readings. In addition, students are responsible for all changes of schedule or assignment announced in class or by any electronic medium. Please check Blackboard for announcements related to change in course schedule or assignments.

**Student Responsibilities**

You are expected to attend all classes and to participate fully. Reading and homework assignments are expected to be completed before coming to class. You are responsible for any material covered during an absence, even if it was supplementary material and not in the textbook. When a class is canceled due to inclement weather, scheduled assignments or tests are re-scheduled for the next time the class meets. Course materials used in class will be posted in Blackboard. Students are required to regularly check the course website for updates. Please note that I will not provide hard copies of course documents in class.

**Course Grading**
Your letter grade will be determined based on the total points you earn in completing the following course requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual tax return</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate tax return</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>81.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretionary</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

- A: 90 - 100
- B: 80 - 89
- C: 70 - 79
- D: 60 - 69
- F: Below 60

If a student’s average score across all exams is less than a "C" (i.e., 70%), the highest grade the student may earn for the course is a “D.” In that case, the course grade will be based completely on the student’s average exam grade. This rule applies regardless of the student’s performance in other areas of the course.

**Exams**
The exams will consist of both conceptual and computational questions. The exams may include multiple-choice, short-answer, or essay questions as well as long problems. You may use one 8.5 x 11 inch sheet (front and back) of notes during exams. Notes will be collected with the exam. Notes may not include text or tables from the textbook, lecture notes, etc. Materials in the notes must be your own. Tax tables and cost recovery tables will be provided.

You must present your student identification card at each examination. Students without identification cards are not allowed to take the examination. You may use a basic, non-programmable calculator if you wish. Students found using a programmable/text entry calculator (this includes graphics calculators) will be in violation of the honor code, and will receive a “Zero.”
Failure to take any exam on the scheduled date and time will result in a grade of “zero” being awarded for that exam.

**Exam Material**
Failure to return the exam to the instructor, both after it is completed and after its distribution in class, is considered an act of academic dishonesty and a violation of the Honor Code. Failure to return the exam will result in a grade of F being awarded for the course and the student being reported to the Honor Committee for additional sanctions.

**Makeup Exams**
You are expected to be present for all examinations unless you have received permission in advance to miss the exam due to a religious holiday, official participation in a university sanctioned event (e.g., student athletes participating in University teams) or unchangeable work conflicts. Make-up exams will be given only if you contact me prior to the test and provide adequate documentation for your absence. An unapproved absence will result in a zero grade on the exam.

**Individual Research and Writing Assignments**
Students will complete one ethics research problem and two tax return assignments during the semester. Assignments will be graded for both content and writing quality. Assignments with excessive typos or misspellings will automatically receive a grade of zero. Proofread your work. If your writing is deemed not competent, you will be required to meet with a writing consultant and revise and resubmit your paper before a grade will be entered. If your writing is deemed competent, you will have the option of meeting with the consultant and revising and resubmitting your work. Only the writing portion of your grade will be revised on resubmission. If you need assistance with your writing, please visit the GMU Writing Center in Enterprise Hall before submitting your work.

**Communication**
Any changes in assignments or schedule will be announced via the course web page or in class. Ignorance of course changes due to failure to access the page or attend class is not an acceptable excuse.

**General Rules**
Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date due. Early submissions will be accepted. All late assignments will be penalized 20% of the possible points for each day late.

**Honor Code Statement**
ACCT 351 has a “zero tolerance” for Honor Code violations. You are expected to understand and follow the Honor Code of the GMU University Catalogue. The hallmarks of the accounting
profession are integrity, objectivity, and independence. Cheating in this class will result in a failing grade, being reported to the Honor Code Committee, and being prevented from graduating or possible expulsion from the school. All work on the examinations and writing assignment is expected to be completed on your own. For more information on GMU’s Honor Code please visit University web site.

**Students with Disabilities**
The Office of Disability Services (located in Room 234 Student Union Building I) provides a wide variety of academic support services to all currently enrolled GMU students who have any type of mental or physical disability or either a temporary or permanent nature. These services include assistance with course accommodations, adaptive equipment, individualized exam administration, taped textbooks, wheelchair repair, library needs, registration, handicapped parking, accessible housing and transportation, as well as many other needs. If you feel that you may need assistance of this nature, call the Center at (703) 993-2474. In addition, you should notify me about any special needs as soon as possible.

**Emergency Information**
The Mason Alert system at GMU works to alert you in the event of an emergency. Please visit the website [https://alert.gmu.edu](https://alert.gmu.edu) to sign up for this service.

**Withdrawal**
The last day to drop is **Friday, February 19**.

**Course Schedule**
The schedule for the course is given below. Please note that this schedule may be changed at the discretion of the instructor during the term. Course materials including powerpoint slides, solutions to homework problems and lecture notes are located on Blackboard. Homework assignments will be listed on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>January 26</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>Chapter 1, IRS Circular 230 and ethics material posted on Blackboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Introduction to Taxation &amp; Ethics</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>February 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Taxation of Individuals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 3</th>
<th>February 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Employees and proprietors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 4</th>
<th>February 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Comparative forms of doing business</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 5</th>
<th>February 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1 is online Classes 1 - 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 6 of 8
Read: Chapter 4  
Topic: Gross Income

Class 6 March 2
Read: Chapter 5
Topic: Business deductions

Class 7 March 9
Read: Chapter 6
Topic: Losses and loss limitations

Class 8 March 16
Spring Break
No Class

Class 9 March 23  
Form 1040 is due
Read: Chapter 7
Topic: Property

Class 10 March 30
Read: Chapter 8
Topic: Property

Class 11 April 6  
Exam 2 in class covers classes 5 – 10

Class 12 April 13
Read: Chapter 9
Topic: Corporations

Class 13 April 20
Read: Chapter 14
Topic: Business tax credits and corporate AMT

Class 14 April 27
Read: Chapter 3
Topic: Taxes on financial statements

Chapter 15 May 4
Review and problem solving

May 11 Final Exam