ACCT 303 Accounting for Decision Making  
Syllabus Fall 2020 Section 007

Course Description
Students will examine accounting functions and the value they bring to a business and the economy overall. Students will develop an understanding of basic accounting functions internal and external to the business including financial, cost, and tax accounting as well as internal and external audit. Students will learn how information generated by those functions can be used to support decision making in the business. Specifically, students will study accounting from the viewpoint of managers and users of accounting information including using financial statement information to make financing, operating, and investing decisions, recognizing how the structure of the tax system and body of tax law impacts business decision making, using managerial accounting information to make operating and compensation decisions, and understanding the importance of internal and external audits to the business and the capital markets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Email:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heather Baker, MBA, CPA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hbaker2@gmu.edu">hbaker2@gmu.edu</a> or Discussion Board on Bb</td>
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<tr>
<th>Class Time:</th>
<th>Class Location:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC 303 007 MW 3:00-4:15 pm</td>
<td>Blackboard Course Room in Collaborate Ultra</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Office Hours:  MW 2:30-3:00 pm; 4:15-5:00PM and by appointment virtually

Safe Return to Campus
All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to take Safe Return to Campus Training prior to visiting campus. Training is available in Blackboard (https://mymason.gmu.edu). Students are required to follow the university’s public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-plan). Similarly, all students in face to face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, or Red email response. Only students who receive a “green” notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

Prerequisite
(ACCT 203 C, U203, 204 C or U204) and (BUS 210 C or U210) and (MATH 108 C, U108, 113 C, U113, 114 C, U114, HNRT 225 C or225). C Requires minimum grade of C.
Non-Degree level students may not enroll. Students with the terminated from BU major attribute may not enroll. ACCT 303 may not be taken for credit if credit for ACCT 330 or ACCT 301 has been earned.

Course Materials and Technology

**Required Text:** Custom Textbook and e-resources available thru Wiley Plus (Please see blackboard for direct purchasing options thru Wiley). Free Subscription to LinkedIn Videos

**Operating System:** Windows Operating System 10 or newer is required. Mac users are required to install a Windows partition on the hard drive to run the Windows operating system.

**Memory:** 8GB (Recommended 10GB or higher).

**Video/audio streaming capability:** Students must have a video camera and microphone that feed or stream audio and video in real time to or through the internet. Instructors may ask students to activate the camera and microphone for class activities.

**Hard drive free space:** at least 120 GB free space (recommend 250 GB free space or higher)

**Network Capability:** wireless capability required (recommend wired network capability also)

Phones of any sort are not acceptable in place of a laptop, and also a keyboard is required. The complete School of Business guidelines can be found here [School of Business Laptop policy](#).

Course Recordings

All of our synchronous meetings in this class will be recorded to provide necessary information for students in this class. Recordings will be stored on Blackboard and will only be accessible to students taking this course during this semester.

Course Materials and Student Privacy

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- Video recordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared
- Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household

Undergraduate Program LEARNING GOALS (those in bold are addressed in this course)

- Our students will be competent in their discipline.
- Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.
- Our students will be effective communicators.
- Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.
Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.
Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions.
Our students will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business.
Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams.
Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business.
Our students will be critical thinkers.

Accounting Department 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 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; and (3) technology and data analysis skills to manage financial and non-financial information.

Course Objectives
ACCT 303 students will be competent in their discipline. More specifically, they will be able to:

- Apply Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to analyze business transactions record them through general journal entries, adjusting entries, and closing entries.
- Gain an understanding of the environment in which a business operates and the role of the accountant and other stakeholders.
- Develop the skill of communicating financial information to users through the preparation of financial statements in accordance with GAAP.
- Gain an understanding of the importance of ethics for accountants and the need for compliance with regulatory standards.
- Record economic transactions using double-entry bookkeeping.
- Construct basic financial statements.
- Use fundamental accounting principles for revenue and expense recognition, inventory, and cost of sales.
- Understand the regulatory environment in which a business operates and the roles of auditors and tax, managerial, and financial accountants in meeting the business’s obligations.
- Explain different types of taxes and taxing jurisdictions, the tax formula, and common business decisions affected by tax considerations.
- Use managerial accounting data to make operating structure decisions for the business. Preparation of budgets.
- Recognize the importance of ethics for accountants and the need for compliance with regulatory standards.
Approach to Learning

The course utilizes a mixture of lecture, breakout groups, online quizzes, projects and exams. Students are expected to read the assigned chapters in advance of class. Student participation in breakout groups is strongly encouraged and expected. A detailed schedule is provided in a separate document.

Teaching Philosophy

Congratulations on making the choice to continue your education. You have the opportunity to develop skills that will benefit you for the rest of your life. Learning principles and concepts are far superior to memorizing material for a test. Class lectures and assignments will help you learn the concepts, but you are ultimately responsible for your educational career. Work hard to master the concepts in this course so you can enjoy the benefits throughout life.

Prior Accounting Knowledge

This course builds upon ACCT 203 or the equivalent financial and managerial accounting courses accepted via transfer. Thus, students are expected to apply the concepts learned in these prior classes to the material in this course.

Course Repeat Limits

Students must achieve a “C” grade to satisfy School of Business degree requirements. Students are not allowed to make more than three attempts to achieve these requirements. Please visit ENT 008 for any questions regarding this policy.
Student Responsibilities

You are expected to participate fully and engage in the use of all learning resources. You are responsible for any material covered during an absence, even if it was supplementary material and not in the textbook. Students are required to regularly check the course website for updates and announcements. Quizzes and projects will not be accepted late. Quizzes and projects may be turned in early, however.

Student Expectations:

1. Attend class using a computer with webcam and microphone.
2. Use the Read & Study tabs for each module.
3. Complete the pre-lecture/module assignment by due date.
4. Complete homework problems by due date.
5. Complete End Of Chapter (EOC) quizzes by due date.
6. Participate with your peers using video and audio during breakout groups.
7. Ask questions in the virtual office hours and lab and recitation
8. Use available resources from Wiley to help you learn the material, including Ready and Study, Homework assignments PowerPoint presentations.
9. Practice, Practice, Practice
10. Be professional and respectful always.
11. Ensure you are receiving email to your GMU address. I am not responsible if you miss an email!

Attendance

This course covers a lot of material, and the material builds upon itself. Attending class is essential to success in this course. Attendance means logging into class with your full attention.

Professionalism

The classroom should be an environment of mutual respect. Different points-of-view or differences of opinion should be addressed in a respectful manner. Additionally, students should contribute to—rather than detract from—the learning environment. Students are expected to always communicate with the professor and university personnel and other students in a respectful and professional manner (e.g., no “text message” emails). Professionalism also includes taking responsibility for one’s actions. Sending rude, nasty or unwarranted emails is also considered lacking in professionalism. Students who act unprofessionally will receive up to a 4% final grade deduction at the sole discretion of the professor.

Time Commitment

GMU expects students to spend 9 hours outside of class studying for a class of “average” difficulty each week during a normal semester. The university recommends 12 hours of weekly study for a challenging course during a normal semester. Most students who pass this course invest a significant amount of time studying outside of class.

Grading

Letter grades will be assigned based on total points earned by students completing all course requirements as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Project 1</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Project 2</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework &amp; Pre-lecture Assignments</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOC Quizzes</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos/Recitation</td>
<td>Asynchronous</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synchronous</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
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The final grade will be based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>% Earned</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 -100</td>
<td>940-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>900-939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>870-899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 – 86</td>
<td>840-869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>800-839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>770-799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 76</td>
<td>700-769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>600-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>0 -599</td>
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**Blackboard Grading**

Blackboard is a communication tool for grades. The grading found there may not be weighted according to the syllabus for homework, quizzes, participation and exams. Blackboard is a means to quickly communicate to students their **raw unweighted scores** on a variety of assessments. Proper weighting of assignments will be revealed as the assignments are completed throughout the semester.

**End of Chapter Quizzes**

An End of Chapter quiz will be required for all students. Each quiz will be for 10 points. The student will access the quiz online and have only one attempt to complete the assessment. There will be no make ups for quizzes not accessed prior to the due dates. A total of 10 quizzes will be included in the final grade for a total of 100 points from quiz assessments.

**Exams**

You must take the exams in the platform assigned to your section. You will be allowed a one-hour period to take an exam.

Failure to take any exam in the room/platform assigned to your section will result in a grade of “zero” being awarded for that exam.
Students who miss an exam will receive 0% on that test. However, students who experience a rare emergency outside their control may receive an accommodation if they provide substantial written documentation of the emergency. If such an emergency arises, students must contact me by email before the start of the exam and provide written evidence as soon as possible after the exam. The professor has the final judgment whether an absence is extraordinary and whether to excuse an absence.

*Please note:* For students who miss an exam for an extraordinary reason as described above, the professor reserves the right to administer the student a different exam from their classmates’ exam.

**You must present your student identification card at each examination.** Webcam and Microphone will be used in Respondus lockdown browser, be sure to show your Id Prior to the start of the exam. Students not showing identification cards will be assigned a “zero for the exam.

You may use a basic, non-programmable calculator. 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.”

The use of cell phone during an exam for any purpose is considered a violation of the Honor Code. Students who use the cell phone in any form during the exam will receive a grade of F for the course and be subject to additional Honor Code sanctions.

**Taking pictures** of the exam (including Online exams) at any time either through manual or electronic means is considered an act of academic dishonesty and a violation of the Honor Code. Failure to return the complete 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.

**Honor Code Statement**

ACCT 303 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.

There is an Honor Code exam under the Exams tab for all online sessions. The purpose is for you to set up Respondus lockdown browser with web cam and to affirm your understanding of the honor code. All ACC 303 students must complete this task prior to the first exam.

**Academic Dishonesty**

The accounting profession is based on the foundation of sound honest and ethical principles. Cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Even small acts of dishonesty will be fully punished. Students caught cheating will be referred to the GMU Honor Code Office. Students caught cheating will receive a failing grade in the course. Students who are aware of cheating but fail to report it are in violation of academic honesty policies in this course. These students can expect to receive the same sanctions listed above as the students who cheat.
Emergency Information
The Mason Alert system at GMU works to alert you in the event of an emergency. Please visit the [Mason Alert website](#) to sign up for this service.

Professor Contact
Students should ask questions about class concepts in class or during office hours. The best way to contact me is via email [hbaker2@gmu.edu](mailto:hbaker2@gmu.edu). Most weekdays I will respond within 24 hours. On weekends the response time may be as late as the following business day.

Before contacting the instructor regarding Wiley Plus issues, you must do the following:
1. If experiencing difficulty in Wiley Plus, please ‘troubleshoot’ with your Browser.
2. If you are still having issues (either with accessing an assignment or an error within a question) you MUST contact Technical Support: [https://www.wileyplus.com/support](https://www.wileyplus.com/support)

Student Accommodations and Diversity
Students with disabilities who require special accommodation should contact the Student Disability Resource Center [Office of Disability Services](#) or 703-993-2474 and should inform me of their needs so it can be taken into consideration. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC. Please take care of this during the first week of the module. Mason offers [counseling and psychological services](#) that can provide assistance if you find yourself overwhelmed by life and/or want training in academic or life skills.

Diversity: George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. These goals apply to online learning at George Mason University equally as it does to classroom learning.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

Title IX: Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. You may seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or email cde@gmu.edu. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. The 24-hour Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Crisis Line for Mason is 703-380-1434.

[Mason Student privacy](#) is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of this course.
Copyright: Any audio or visual recording of lectures, reuse or remix of course materials, or further dissemination of course content is not permitted without prior written consent from me and George Mason University unless the recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Disclaimer: Any changes to assignments or course schedule will be announced on Blackboard and/or via e-mail. Inability to access the course webpage or failure to read e-mails cannot be an excuse for late submissions or non-completion of assignments.

Other Important Dates
First day of classes Monday Aug 24, 2020
The last day to Add Monday Aug 31, 2020
Final Drop Deadline with no tuition penalty Tuesday, Sept 15, 2020
Unrestricted Withdrawal Period - Sept 16-Sept 28, 2020
Selective Withdrawal Period Sept 29-Oct 28
Fall Break Monday, Oct 12 Monday classes meet on Tuesday Oct 13, 2020
Thanksgiving Break – Wednesday, Nov 25- Sunday, Nov 29
Reading Days Monday December 7- Tuesday December 8, 2020
Final Exams Wed December 9- Wed December 16, 2020
Appendix 1: ACCT 303 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What do students need to do to pass this course?
Success in the business world is based on outcomes, and this class is designed to help students succeed in the “real world.” **This class is hard**, and there are no shortcuts to earning a passing grade. Studying many hours for this course outside of the classroom is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to earn a “C” grade or higher. Students should spend 9-12 hours outside of the classroom preparing for this course. Asynchronous students should expect to spend at least 15 hours per week. However, please note that final grades are assigned based on competency and performance on exams and not effort.

What information will be on the exams?
Exams will cover material from class lectures, videos, the textbook, homework assignments, and class and recitation activities. Please be aware that many exam questions will be conceptual in nature. Students must apply concepts discussed in class to test questions of various types. Questions test concepts, and students who master concepts do very well on the exams. Students who try to memorize multiple-choice questions usually struggle with the exams.

What is the penalty for cheating in this course?
Cheating penalties range from failing the course (minimum) up to permanent expulsion from GMU.

How do students and the professor communicate in this course?
Please email the professor with administrative questions, but do not email through Blackboard. Remember that all communication should be professional. Students who have questions about course material should ask those questions in class or during office hours.

What happens if a student has an emergency during the semester?
Please contact the professor immediately. Students must always provide written documentation of emergencies outside their control for any accommodation considerations.

What should a student do if they miss class?
Ask a classmate what was discussed that day in class and go to Blackboard to review class material.

Is there a study guide for this course?
Study materials for this class include your textbook, the PowerPoint slides on the publisher’s website, the notes you take, the feedback you receive from the Connect activities, etc.

Is there extra credit?
No. Students are expected to master the course concepts, and extra credit will not be offered to compensate low test performance.
Appendix 2: Required use of LockDown Browser and webcam

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser and a webcam for online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer (internal webcam) or can be the type of webcam that plugs in with a USB cable (external webcam). Watch this short video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature. A Quick Start Guide for Students is also available.

- You will need the following system requirements for online exams:
  - Windows: 10, 8, 7
  - Mac: OS X 10.10 or higher
  - iOS: 10.0+ (iPad only). Must have a compatible LMS integration [Details].
  - Web camera (internal or external) & microphone
  - A reliable internet connection
  - Prior to your first exam, you must install LockDown Browser following the step-by-step instructions.

- To ensure LockDown Browser and the webcam are set up properly, do the following:
  - Start LockDown Browser, log into Blackboard and select this course.
  - Locate and select the Help Center button on the LockDown Browser toolbar.
  - Run the Webcam Check and, if necessary, resolve any issues or permissions your computer prompts.
  - Run the System & Network Check. If a problem is indicated, see if a solution is provided in the Knowledge Base. Further troubleshooting is available through the ITS Support Center.
  - Exit the Help Center and locate the practice quiz named [NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: Create a brief practice quiz and insert name/location of quiz].
  - Upon completing and submitting the practice quiz, exit LockDown Browser.

- When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:
  - Ensure you’re in a location where you won’t be interrupted
  - Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers) and place them outside of your reach
  - Clear your desk of all external materials not permitted — books, papers, phones, other devices
  - Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and that you’ve allotted sufficient time to complete it
  - Remain at your computer for the duration of the test Make sure that your computer is plugged into a power source, or that battery is fully-charged.
  - If the computer or networking environment is different than what was used previously with the Webcam Check and System & Network Check in LockDown Browser, run the checks again prior to starting the test

- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
  - Do not wear a baseball cap or hat with a brim that obscures your face
  - Ensure your computer or tablet is on a firm surface (a desk or table). Do NOT have the computer on your lap, a bed, or any other surface where the device (or you) are likely to move
  - If using a built-in (internal) webcam, avoid tilting the screen after the webcam setup is complete
  - Take the exam in a well-lit room and avoid backlighting, such as sitting with your back to a window
  - Remember that LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted