

Course	6A:141 – Advanced Tax Topics; Fall 2008 Section 1: TTh 9:30 – 10:45, S107 PBB Section 2: TTh 10:55 – 12:10, C131 PC
Instructor	Professor Sonja Rego, Email: Sonja-Olhof@uiowa.edu ; Office phone: 335-0891
Office Hours	MW 3:00 – 4:00 pm, and by appointment; PBB W278
Required Textbook	West Federal Taxation, Corporations, Partnerships, Estates & Trusts, 2009 Edition
Recommended Textbook	West Federal Taxation, Corporations, Partnerships, Estates & Trusts Study Guide, 2009 Edition
Objective	This course expands on the general concepts presented in the first tax course, Introduction to Federal Taxation. In particular, Advanced Tax Topics examines the federal taxation of C corporations, partnerships, and S corporations, including formation, operation, and liquidation of these business entities, as well as the alternative minimum tax (AMT). Through the completion of homework assignments, tax return projects, and problem-oriented exams, students will be able to identify and evaluate the tax issues associated with business entity choice. Furthermore, this course will enable students to perform basic tax research using CCH Tax Research Network.
Course Web Page on ICON	Students can access the course web page through ICON , using their HawkID and password. I will provide electronic links to lecture notes, projects, grades, and other supplemental documents on ICON. Communication outside of class and office hours should be done via email (sonja-olhof@uiowa.edu).
Homework	This course entails ten homework assignments. However, I will only collect five random assignments throughout the semester. Students should be prepared to solve homework problems in class. I will randomly call on students.
Tax Return Projects	Students must complete two tax return projects. Professor Rego assigns four students to each project group. Project 1 requires the completion of C corporation income tax returns and Project 2 requires the completion of partnership and AMT tax returns. Group members will evaluate each member's contribution to the group. Members that have not sufficiently contributed to the group project will be penalized based on the group evaluations.

Writing Assignments

Three group writing assignments require one- to two-page memorandums that evaluate income tax issues assigned by Professor Rego. Students are required to utilize CCH Tax Research Network to complete their memos. Professor Rego assigns three students to each writing group. Each student will write and rewrite one memo and review two memos. (See Guidelines for Advance Tax Writing Assignments.)

Exams

I have scheduled two midterm exams on Friday evenings (9/26 and 11/7), and the final exam will be on a Friday morning (12/19). University policy requires that students be permitted to make up examinations missed because of illness, mandatory religious obligations, or other unavoidable circumstances or University activities. I will give make-up exams at my discretion and only with appropriate documentation and sufficient notice.

Class Participation

I do not require class attendance, nor do I grade students based upon class participation (see Grading below). However, I *strongly encourage* students to attend class and participate in classroom discussions. The students that excel in my class are those who attend and participate in class! Please do not hesitate to ask questions – for every question that YOU have, OTHER students likely have the same question.

Cell Phones

Please have the courtesy of turning off your cell phone before class starts!

Grading

Homework (5 @ 10 points each)	50 pts	12.5 %
Projects (2 @ 40 points each)	80 pts	20.0 %
Writing Assignments (3 @ 10 points each)	30 pts	7.5 %
Midterm Exams (2 @ 80 points each)	160 pts	40.0 %
Final Exam (80 points)	80 pts	20.0 %
Total (400 points)	400 pts	100 %

*** Homework, projects, and writing assignments are due **at the beginning of class** on the due date. [“Beginning of class” means at 9:30 (section 1) or 10:55 (section 2).] Assignments turned in after 9:30 (section 1) or 10:55 (section 2) will be docked two points for each late calendar day (or part thereof). I will **not accept** a late assignment if the student was in class during the solution presentation for the late assignment.

*** I typically follow a straight grading scale in this course, which means that students with cumulative scores between 90 and 100% earn an A in the course, students with cumulative scores between 80 and 90% earn a B in the course, etc. On occasion, the grading scale will be somewhat lower, depending on the distribution of scores across students.

Now for the fine print...

College	The Tippie College of Business administers this course. Consequently, class policies on matters such as requirements, grading, and sanctions for academic dishonesty are governed by the Tippie College of Business. Students wishing to add or drop this course after the official deadline must receive the approval of the Dean of the Tippie College of Business.
Disabilities	** <i>PLEASE NOTE</i> : If you have a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or any other class requirement, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Similarly, if you have any emergency medical information about which I should know, or if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated, please let me know. Please see me after class hours or during my schedule office hours or schedule an appointment. I would also remind you that the Office of Student Disability Services is available to assist you.
Grievances	If you have concerns regarding this course, please first discuss your concerns with me. If I cannot resolve your concerns, you may contact the DEO of Accounting, Doug DeJong, 319-335-0910, douglas-dejong@uiowa.edu . If you cannot resolve your concerns by speaking with the DEO, you may contact the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program, Beth Ingram, 319-335-1038, beth-ingram@uiowa.edu .
Sexual Harassment	The Tippie College of Business and the University of Iowa are committed to providing students with an environment free from sexual harassment. If you feel that you are being or have been harassed or you are not sure what constitutes sexual harassment, we encourage you to visit the University website http://www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/index.php , and to seek assistance from department chairs, the Dean's office, the University Ombuds Office, and/or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity.
Academic Integrity	<p>All students are subject to the Honor Code for the Tippie College of Business. The Honor Code may be found at http://www.biz.uiowa.edu/honorcode/</p> <p>Given the professional nature of the accounting program at the University of Iowa, it is unlikely that a student in this class would engage in academic misconduct, which includes but is not limited to: plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration of any kind (e.g., assignments not completed solely by the student(s) whose name(s) appears on the assignment or the distribution of solutions to other students).</p> <p>I will punish academic misconduct according to the severity of the infraction. At a minimum, I will give the offending student(s) a zero on the assignment or exam. In some cases, the student(s) involved will NOT pass this course and may be subject to program level discipline. Students can appeal my decision to the College of Business' Judicial Board and then to the appropriate Dean at the Tippie College of Business.</p>

**6A:141 - Advanced Tax Topics
Class Schedule for Fall 2008**

Date	Chapt.	Pages	Material	Assignment Due	Homework Problems
AUG					
26	T	1	17-32; 37-43	Introduction and Sources of Tax Law	
28	Th	1	17-32; 37-43	Sources of Tax Law and CCH Tax Research	
SEPT					
2	T	16	6-27	The IRS and the Audit Process	HW#1 - Chapter 1 31, 32, 40, 51, 54, 57, 58
4	Th	2	1-29	Introduction to C Corporations	
9	T	2	1-29	Taxation of C Corp Operations and M-1	TAX MEMO #1
11	Th	3	1-15	Domestic Production Activities Deduction	
16	T	2	31-34	<i>C Corporation Tax Forms</i>	HW#2 - Chapt. 2 & 3 Ch. 2: 36, 42, 44, 46, 56, 61 and Ch. 3: 30, 31
18	Th	4	1-24	Corporate Formation	
23	T	4	1-24	Corporate Formation and Capital Structure	
25	Th	5	1-20	Earnings and Profits	HW#3 - Chapter 4 26, 30, 36, 38, 44, 49
26	F	Optional		Review session for exam (optional)	2:30 - 3:30 pm, W151
26	F	EXAM		Chapters 1, 16, 2, 3, 4	5:30 - 7:30 pm, W151
29	M			McGladrey National Speaker Series	6:00 - 7:30 pm
30	T	5	1-20	Dividend Distributions	
OCT					
2	Th	5	1-20	Dividend Distributions	PROJECT #1
7	T	6	1-26	Stock Redemptions	HW#4 - Chapter 5 24, 31, 34, 35, 38, 50
9	Th	6	1-26	Liquidations - In General	
14	T	6	1-26	Liquidations - Parent / Subsidiary Situation	TAX MEMO #2
16	Th	8	1-30	Consolidated Tax Returns	
21	T	8	1-30	Consolidated Tax Returns	HW#5 - Chapter 6 36, 40, 43, 53, 57, 60, 62
23	Th	10	1-40	Intro to Partnerships	
28	T	10	1-40	Partnership Formation	HW#6 - Chapter 8 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 37
30	Th	10	1-40	Partnership Operation and Basis	
NOV					
4	T	11	1-25	Partnership Distributions	HW#7 - Chapter 10 17, 20, 21, 24, 28, 33, 36
6	Th	11	1-25	Partnership Transfers and Terminations	
7	F	Optional		Review session for exam (optional)	2:30 - 3:30 pm, W151
7	F	EXAM		Chapters 5, 6, 8, 10	5:30 - 7:30 pm, W10
11	T	11	1-25	Partnership Transfers and Terminations	
13	Th	3	16-24	<i>Partnership Tax Forms</i> and AMT Formula	HW#8 - Chapter 11 16, 17, 23, 27, 28, 33
18	T	3	16-24	AMT Adjustments and Preferences	
20	Th	3	16-24	AMT Credits and Corporate AMT	TAX MEMO #3
DEC					
2	T	12	1-23	<i>AMT Tax Forms</i> and Intro to S Corps	HW#9 - Chapter 3 To Be Distributed!
4	Th	12	1-23	S Corporation Elections	
9	T	12	1-23	S Corp Taxation and Basis	PROJECT #2
11	Th	12	1-23	S Corp Taxation and Basis	HW#10 - Chapter 12 24, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 43
12	F	Optional		Review session for exam (optional)	2:30 - 3:30 pm, W151
19	F	FINAL		Chapters 10, 11, 3, 12	7:30 - 9:30 am, TBA

Guidelines for 6A:141 Advanced Tax Writing Assignments

Writing Grader: Kristin Kelly

Email: Kristin-Kelly@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: T 8:30 – 10:30 am in W279

W: 6:00 – 8:00 pm in W279

Writing Consultant: Pam Bourjaily

Email: Pamela-Bourjaily@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: M 10:30 – 1:30 in W279

W: 12:30 – 2:00 in W279

Th: 10:30 – 12:30 in W279

Overview

Throughout the semester, writing groups (composed of three students per group) must turn in one- to two-page memorandums that evaluate income tax issues assigned by Professor Rego. The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: 1) To further develop students' writing skills, and 2) To introduce students to CCH Tax Research Network and the basics of tax research. For each of the three writing assignments, I will provide a list of tax issues that students may choose from. The writer of each assignment will then utilize CCH Tax Research Network (available on the Tippie College of Business Library web page) to research their chosen topic. The writer will then describe and evaluate their tax issue in a one- to two-page memorandum. The following list describes how the writing assignments should proceed:

- 1) Throughout the semester, each group member must write and rewrite one memo.
- 2) For each assignment, one group member will write the memo and then distribute it to the other group members, either via email or using the 'Group' function on ICON.
- 3) The other group members must edit the memo for errors and return it with comments to the writer AND to Professor Rego by noon the day before the memo is due. This deadline ensures that writers have sufficient time to make corrections before the memo is due. Reviewers should use the electronic 'Drop Box' on ICON to send their comments to Professor Rego.
- 4) Reviewers who do not provide their comments by the noon deadline will receive only half-credit for the assignment. Reviewers who do not provide any comments to the writer will receive zero credit.
- 5) The writer should submit the following "bound" documents to Professor Rego on the assignment due date: (1) the revised memo, (2) the suggested revisions by each reviewer, and (3) relevant tax research from CCH. ["Bound" means that the documents are held together via staple, binder clip, or folder.]
- 6) The writing grader will then evaluate and grade each memo based on the guidelines on the following page.
- 7) When the assignment is returned to the group, the writer of the graded memo should rewrite the memo, based on the writing grader's comments and suggestions.
- 8) The writing grader will then grade the memo a second time, potentially increasing the original grade for the memo.

I highly recommend that reviewers use the editing tool in Microsoft Word to edit the memos. TOOLS/TRACK CHANGES will keep track of all revisions to your document. This way, all memos can be transferred electronically.

The following page provides a table of suggested and required due dates for each writing assignment. The suggested due dates provide group members ample time to complete their responsibilities.

Memo	Original Memo Sent to Reviewers (Suggested)	Reviewers' Memos Returned to Writer and Professor Rego (Suggested)	Reviewers' Memos Returned to Writer and Professor Rego (Required)	Assignment Due in Class (Required)
#1	Tuesday, Sept. 2 nd	Friday, Sept. 5 th	Monday, Sept. 8 th	Tuesday, Sept. 9 th
#2	Tuesday, Oct. 7 th	Friday, Oct. 10 th	Monday, Oct. 13 th	Tuesday, Oct. 14 th
#3	Thursday, Nov. 13 th	Sunday, Nov. 16 th	Wed., Nov. 19 th	Thursday, Nov. 20 th

Writing Points

Each final memo is worth 10 points and will be graded in a manner consistent with other accounting department writing assignments. In particular, the writing grader will evaluate each writing assignment based upon (1) mechanical errors, (2) correct English, (3) clarity, and (4) style. (See the sample grading sheet below.) Use the accounting department's writing website (<http://www.biz.uiowa.edu/accounting/writing>) to avoid common writing errors.

Sample Grading Sheet:

1. Mechanical	2. Correct English	3. Clarity	4. Style
Spelling	Run-on sentences or fragments	Clear theme	Graceful transitions
Correct word	Subject/verb or tense agreements	Organizing facts	Strong beginning and ending
Quotations	Adverbs vs. Adjectives	Logical paragraph breaks	Interesting word choice
Plurals vs. possessives	Pronoun agreement	Avoiding long or awkward sentences	Varied sentence structure
Commas	Parallel structures	Awareness of audience	Use of active voice
Other	Other: unclear antecedent	Other	Other: omit needless words

The writing grader will score each initial writing assignment according to the department's standard 20-point writing scale, with deductions made for each writing error. *Thus, your score can be reduced to zero.* Some portion of the lost points may be restored depending on the corrections made in the rewritten memo. Professor Rego will convert the writing grader's final score to a 10-point scale, as specified on page 2 of this syllabus.

Reviewers, it is in your best interest to thoroughly review and criticize each writer's initial memorandum!!! Your score is based upon the quality of THEIR memo!

Writers, I highly recommend you take advantage of the writing grader's expertise and office hours and meet with her prior to the assignment due date!

USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT:

MEMO #: _____

TO: _____

FROM: Group #___ / Writer: _____ / Reviewers: _____

SUBJECT: _____

SOURCES: List IRC Sections, Regulation Sections, etc.

Describe the tax issue(s) in one or two paragraphs. Be careful not to plagiarize from the source article. Instead, try to discuss the issue(s) in your own words. It is generally better to describe the issue(s) in clear and concise terms, rather than be overly elaborate in your description(s).

You should evaluate the tax issue(s) in the following paragraph(s). For example, if the tax issue concerns provisions in the Pension Protection Act of 2006, you could explain several provisions in the Act, and then evaluate whether the provisions are beneficial for various groups of U.S. taxpayers. Remember to use topic sentences and to include at least three sentences in each paragraph. Include a bibliography that lists your sources.

Writing 'Basics' to Keep in Mind:

1. Double-space the text.
2. Indent the paragraphs.
3. Use one-inch margins.
4. Use topic sentences.
5. Paragraphs must have at least three sentences.
6. Keep sentences short. If a sentence goes over two lines, check to see if you can use two sentences in place of one. Resist wordiness.
7. Use the 'Spelling and Grammar' tool available on Microsoft Word! Note that a spelling error occurs even if the word is spelled correctly, but the word usage is incorrect (e.g. *there* instead of *their*).
8. Do not use contractions.
9. Focus on subject/verb agreement when using terms such as 'Congress', 'Internal Revenue Service', and 'Treasury Department'. (These terms are singular, not plural!)
10. Write '12 percent' instead of '12%' or 'twelve %'.
11. Limit usage of the passive voice.