

ACCT 538 - Individual Income Tax
 Texas A&M University - Commerce
 Department of Accounting, College of Business
 Fall 2014

Instructor:	Jason Chen, PhD	Office Phone:	TBA
Classroom & Time:	eCollege ACCT 538 Website & University Campus Dallas 6:15 to 8:50 pm on Wednesday	Office Hours*:	By appointments
E-mail:	Jason.chen@tamuc.edu	Office	BA229

* **Office Hours: I care very much about your success in this course.** I encourage you to work with me to become as successful as you can for this course. This is an online course. You are welcome to make an appointment to see me in my office at the Commerce campus. Online chat will be scheduled for most Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. central time. You are not required to attend. I will log on and be available for live chat. If no one joins after 10 minutes, I will log off. Questions can be posted to the online forum so that other students may join in answering questions. I will monitor the online forum activities.

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Texts and Other Materials:

- Spilker et al., *Taxation of Individuals and Business Entities*, 2015 Edition. ISBN:9780778622367.
- You make your own decision which edition of the textbook to use. **However, you are responsible for knowing the changes and differences between the 2015 edition and other editions.**

Course Description from 2013-2014 TAMUC Graduate Catalog

ACCT 538 - Individual Income Tax (Three semester hours): A study of income tax laws. Emphasis is given to the impact of the federal income tax on the individual taxpayer. Various research software and tools are utilized to solve practical tax problems.

Course Objectives: A study of income tax laws. Emphasis is given to the impact of the federal income tax on the individual taxpayer. Various research software and tools are utilized to solve practical tax problems.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to (1) examine the political and legal environment of income taxation, the ethical and legal obligations of tax preparers and the sources of tax law and related collection and enforcement procedures, (2) calculate income taxes for an individual, including gross income and deductions and losses for individuals and businesses, and (3) apply general rules related to accounting periods, methods and reporting requirements.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Activities and Assessments

Examinations – All three examinations may include multiple-choice and problem questions base on textbook materials, online lectures & discussions, homework assignments, and quizzes. **See Class Schedule for all exam available dates/time. No makeup exams. All exams will be online with an open-book format. Each student will receive computer generated randomized questions from a large, established test bank. The probability for two students to have identical questions is highly unlikely. Students MUST study and have a true comprehension in order to do well on all exams. Cramming for an exam is strongly discouraged.**

Quizzes - 9 quizzes (one for each chapter) at 8 points (72 points available in total allowing students the potential to receive the full 60 points assigned) for each chapter. The maximum points counted towards a student's final grade are 60. The objective of the quizzes is to assist you in preparing for the exams. **See Class Schedule for available date/time of quizzes. Do not wait until the last minute to take the quizzes. No makeup quizzes regardless of reasons as they are designed with the possibility that a student may miss one of the quizzes.**

Research Projects - (1) One tax research CPE (Continuing Professional Education) online training certificate and (2) one tax return research project (Part I and Part II). **The CPE training allows you to gain one CPE credit counted towards your CPE requirements for a business career and place you ahead of other job applicants.** This credit also can be used for those who are CPAs or who wants to earn the CPA designation to fulfill the ongoing education requirements set for the by the AICPA. The purpose of the entity tax return is to expose you to the basics of corporate tax return compliance and preparation. I divided the return in two parts to ensure that you have sufficient time to learn and also guide you to meet the deadlines set for the two parts. **Five points each day will be deducted from late submission till the assigned points are exhausted. See Class Schedule for due date/time of projects.**

Attendance or viewing the lecture is optional. I do not take attendance. You paid for the education and you determine your own opportunity cost. The lectures are essential tools to help you organize the contents of the chapters and the emphasized learning objectives. However, students who receive Federal financial aids may need to meet certain attendance requirements to maintain aid eligibility. Please contact your financial aid institution for details.

Useful items to succeed in this course are as follows:

- **Preparing for lectures:** Reading assigned chapter material, completing homework, etc.
- **Check the announcements daily in LearningStudio:**
The information in this syllabus is tentative and subject to change. I will announce changes in Pearson LearningStudio as early as possible. It is your responsibility to maintain your schedule and make the changes as necessary. Daily checking of announcement is mandatory. Failure to check for changes and announcements is not an excuse for not keeping your schedule updated.
- **Refrain from complaining** or whining about projects, workload, and due dates. All students will be treated and graded equally and fairly. Your performance determines your final grade. **YOUR FINAL GRADE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ALL OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES (e.g., scholarship eligibility, pending employment offers, etc.), BUT POINTS EARNED IN THE SEMESTER.**
- **Engaging in ethical behavior**, which means you do not ask the professor to make "special exceptions" (i.e., bend the course and university rules) for you.
- **Respect others' time:** Please avoid asking questions which are readily answerable via the course syllabus; it is disrespectful of other students' time. Most students have carefully read the syllabus and do not want to review materials they already know. However, if you have a question about an item on the syllabus, please make an appointment to see me.
- **Meaningful class participation in the discussion forum:** Be prepared to participate in the discussion forum by asking specific questions on which you have worked. It will not be fair to others and does not benefit your learning if you just want the answers given to you. I do not remember all questions. Please make sure you reference the chapter and question number for which you need help. Thus, saving our valuable time together.
- **Courteous forum behavior:** Please make sure cell phones are in a "quiet" mode and use is restricted to emergencies only. If you have to answer a call or answer a text message, please log off and log back on when you are done.

- **Email etiquette:** when corresponding with me via email regarding any questions you may have, it is imperative that you use proper email etiquette. Remember you are preparing yourself for a business career. The earlier you become proficient in business communication etiquette, the better for you to have advantages over other job applicants and future colleagues at work.
- **Netiquette: Communication Courtesy Code:** Students are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. The same rules apply online as they do in person. Be respectful of other students. Foul discourse will not be tolerated. Please take a moment and read the following link concerning "netiquette".
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

GRADING

Evaluation: Total points available are as follows

Course Requirement:	Points	%
Examinations (3 @ 100 points each)	300	50%
Research Projects	240	40%
Quizzes (9 @ 8 points each)	60	10%
Total points available	600	100%

Scale: The following represents the general grading policy for this class. However, I will closely monitor how well you perform relative to the rest of the class. The top performers in the class receive the highest grades (As) and the lowest performers receive the lowest grades. For all graduate courses, a grade of B and above is required to pass.

A	= 90% & above (540 points & above)
B	= 80% to 89.9% (480-539)
C	= 70% to 79.9% (420-479)
D	= 60% to 69.9% (360-419)
F	= 59.9% & below (359 & below)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- To fully participate in online courses, you will need to use a current, Flash enabled browser. For PC users, the suggested browser is Internet Explorer 9.0 or 10. For Mac users, the most current update of Firefox is suggested.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - speakers or headphones.
- Depending on your course, you might also need a:
 - webcam
 - microphone

For courses where interactive tools are used, like VoiceThread or Class Live Pro, headphones are suggested for use with recording and playback. We recommend a webcam with an

integrated microphone, such as the Microsoft LifeCam Cinema. All devices should be installed and configured before class begins.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. Java can be downloaded at: <http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.
- You will need some additional free software for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - Adobe Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.
- For additional information about system requirements, please see: <https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an Pearson LearningStudio Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

Accessing Help from within Your Course: Click on the 'Tech Support' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You will then be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone by calling the Help Desk number noted below.

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, Office Services such as Kinko's, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed?

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at
2. helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
3. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
4. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
5. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the help desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. **ONLY** Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

Internet Access

An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at <https://leo.tamuc.edu>.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

I care very much about your success in this course. I encourage you to work with me to become as successful as you can in this course. This is an online course. You are welcome to make an appointment to see me in my office at the Commerce campus.

Email: Email is appropriate for questions that are personal in nature.

Do Not post any confidential questions on the public class website for all students to view.

Virtual Office: Students should post all general questions pertaining to the course to the Virtual Office located under Course Home menu. This is a public area.

In the Virtual Office all students have access to all posted questions and answers. Students are

welcome to answer other students' questions.

Many of you will have the same questions, and this will reduce the number of times the same answer will have to be given. You should always check the Virtual Office postings to see if your question has already been asked and answered before you post a question.

Discussion Areas: There are discussion areas for each chapter or exam. These are public areas.

In the discussion areas all students have access to all posted questions and answers. Students are welcome to answer other students' questions.

Many of you will have the same questions, and this will reduce the number of times the same answer will have to be given. You should always check the Virtual Office postings to see if your question has already been asked and answered before you post a question.

Schedule Changes

The information in this syllabus is tentative and subject to change. I will announce changes in Pearson LearningStudio as early as possible. It is your responsibility to maintain your schedule and make the changes as necessary. Daily checking of announcement is mandatory. Failure to check for changes and announcements is not an excuse for not keeping your schedule updated.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. I strive to respond to students' questions in a timely manner.
2. It may take up to 48 hours to respond to students' emails and questions.
3. If you receive an automatic response email indicating I am out of the office, I will get back to you when I return, as the Internet accessibility may be limited.
4. I work on weekends for research related assignments by the university. Therefore, it is unlikely that I will check emails on weekends.

LEARNER SUPPORT

Learner Support

Go to the following link [One Stop Shop](#)- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.

Go to the following link [Academic Success Center](#)- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

Library Database Assistance

The library offers a web-based access. You can access this site under Course Home in Pearson Learning Studio or directly at the following address: <http://www.tamuc.edu/library/>

Please take a look – you can access these resources and learn about using basic search skills, selecting the best databases for your needs, and accessing the databases both on-campus and off-campus.

If you have any questions or would like to offer some feedback, please contact:

Sarah Northam

Head of Research and Instruction Services

Subject Specialist for the College of Business & Entrepreneurship

Phone: 903/886-5714

Email: Sarah.Northam@tamuc.edu

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance or viewing the lecture is optional. I do not take attendance. The lectures are essential tools to help you organize the chapter contents and emphasized student learning outcomes. However, students who receive Federal financial aids may need to meet certain attendance requirements to maintain aid eligibility. Please contact your financial aid institution for details.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

Dropping or Withdrawal from the course: University policy will be followed in regards to all drops and withdrawals during the semester. **Emailing me your intention to drop does not complete the drop requirement. Your professor cannot drop any students from a course. You have to initiate and complete the drop process. To initiate a course drop, log into your My Leo account and then select the "Drop a Class" link.**

I wish you great success in all your endeavors and look forward to working with you!

Class Schedule, TENTATIVE

Dates	Chapter	Exam, Lecture, Project, & Quiz	Points
Week 1 8/27/2014	1	Introduction to course and course requirements <i>An Introduction to Tax</i> • Quiz 1 - Chapter 1 (Available online till 8 pm on 9/14/14)	8 (___)
Week 2 9/3/2014	2	<i>Tax Compliance, the IRS, and Tax Authorities</i> • Quiz 2 - Chapter 2 (Available online till 8 pm on 9/14/14)	8 (___)
Week 3 9/10/2014	3	<i>Tax Planning Strategies and Related Limitations</i> • Quiz 3 - Chapter 3 (Available online till 8 pm on 9/14/14)	8 (___)
Week 4 9/17/2014	Exam 1	<i>Chapters 1-3 Available online till 8 pm on 9/21/14</i>	100 (___)
Week 5 9/24/2014	Research Project 1	Tax research CPE online training Online CPE certificate submission deadline 8pm 9/28/14	80 (___)
Week 6 10/1/2014	4	<i>Individual Income Tax Overview, Exemptions, and Filing Status</i> • Quiz 4 - Chapter 4 (Available online till 8 pm on 10/19/14)	8 (___)
Week 7 10/8/2014	5	<i>Gross Income and Exclusions</i> • Quiz 5 - Chapter 5 (Available online till 8 pm on 10/19/14)	8 (___)
Week 8 10/15/2014	6	<i>Individual Deductions</i> • Quiz 6 - Chapter 6 (Available online till 8 pm on 10/19/14)	8 (___)
Week 9 10/22/2014	Exam 2	<i>Chapters 4-6 Available online till 8 pm on 10/26/14</i>	100 (___)
Week 10 10/29/2014	Tax Return Part I	Online submission deadline 8pm 11/2/14	80 (___)
Week 11 11/15/2014	7	<i>Individual Income Tax Computation and Tax credits</i> • Quiz 7 - Chapter 7 (Available online till 8 pm on 11/30/14)	8 (___)
Week 12 11/12/2014	8	<i>Business Income, Deductions, and Accounting Methods</i> • Quiz 8 - Chapter 8 (Available online till 8 pm on 11/30/14)	10 (___)
Week 13 11/19/2014	14	<i>Tax Consequences of Home Ownership</i> • Quiz 9 - Chapter 14 (Available online till 8 pm on 11/30/14)	8 (___)
Week 14 11/24-28/2014	Holiday	<i>Thanksgiving Break-No Class</i>	
Week 15 12/3/2014	Exam 3	<i>Chapters 7, 8, & 14 Available online till 8 pm on 12/7/14</i>	100 (___)
Week 16 12/10/2014	Tax Return Part II	Online submission deadline 8pm 12/12/14	80 (___)

August/September 2014							September/October 2014							November 2014							November/December 2014							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	1	2	3	4								1	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	1	2	3	4	5	6	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31					

Dates	Chapter	Suggested Homework Questions & Problems
Week 1 8/25-29/2014	1	Discussion Questions 8, 9, 11, 12 & 15; Problems 26, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35, 40, 41, 45, 48 & 53
Week 2 9/2-5/2014	2	Discussion Questions 5, 8, 10, 13, 25 & 29; Problems 38, 42, 45, 47, 50, 55, 60, 63 & 65
Week 3 9/8-12/2014	3	Discussion Questions 1, 2, 3, 9, 18, 23, 24 & 25; Problems 30, 31, 32, 33, 45, 46 & 52
Week 6 9/29-10/3/2014	4	Discussion Questions 8, 9, 11, 12 & 15; Problems 26, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35, 40, 41, 45, 48 & 53
Week 7 10/6-10/2014	5	Discussion Questions 5, 8, 10, 13, 25 & 29; Problems 38, 42, 45, 47, 50, 55, 60, 63 & 65
Week 8 10/13-17/2014	6	Discussion Questions 2, 4, 9, 22, 29 & 32; Problems 36, 37, 40, 43, 45, 47, 50, 55 & 58
Week 11 11/3-7/2014	7	Problems 49, 50, 54, 56, 60, 66, 69, 74 & 76
Week 12 11/10-14/2014	8	Discussion Questions 6, 16, 20, 22, 26 & 40; Problems 45, 47, 49, 51, 57, 61, 64, 70 & 78
Week 13 11/17-21/2014	14	Problems 38, 40, 41, 45, 47, 50, 55, 64 & 67