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| C:\Users\adrian\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Word\Cardinal USC On White Background.jpg | **ACCT 614 – Accounting For Lawyers** | |
| **Course Syllabus: Spring Semester 2017**  **Section: 03250**  **Class Sessions: Tuesday 3 to 5:40 PM Classroom Gould 130** |
| **Professor: Adrian Stern CPA, CFE** |
| **Office: ACC 107** |
| **Phone/Voicemail: 818-970-0986**  **E-Mail: adrianst@marshall.usc.edu**  **Office Hours: By appointment** |
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**Course Description**

Accounting is essential to the effective functioning of any business organization, both for profit and not for profit organizations. A test of any system, whether in the corporate form, partnership, or sole proprietorship and the aspects of it represented by accounting, ultimately is judged by the results which are produced, and the integrity of management and financial information.

The first third of the course will represent what a lawyer needs to know about basic accounting and financial reporting. The course will cover basic accounting and organizational issues, the basic financial statements and concepts such as cash vs. accrual methods of accounting and financial analysis.

The remaining two-thirds will cover a broad range of topics including:

* Accounting for Law Firms
* Accounting for Businesses with Inventory
* Using the Financial Statement to Calculate Damages in Litigation Matters
* Business Valuations Using Financial Statements
* Using the Financial Statements in Buying and Selling Businesses
* Goodwill: What is it? Why is it important? Where Does it Come From?
* The Difference between For-Profit and Non-Profit Accounting.
* Income Taxes and How They Impact Financial Statements
* Fraud In Financial Statements
* Accounting Software: QuickBooks and Beyond
* The Auditor's Role Involving Financial Statements and the Attorney
* Financial Statements Projections and Forecast
* The Do's and Don'ts of Accounting in Family Law Matters: Where They Hide the Money and Where You Find It

This course is intended for those with limited or no prior business coursework.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

* Demonstrate an understanding of the key principles and assumptions used by accountants when providing information to management and other stakeholders by answering questions and solving problems.
* Explain how management and other stakeholders use key sections of the balance sheet, income statement and statement of cash flows to make decisions by evaluating business transactions, preparing financial statements and analyzing relevant financial statement information.
* Analyze the cost, volume and profit relationships of an organization by calculating the contribution margin, breakeven point and target profits given a variety of business scenarios.
* Analyze the cash impact of business transactions by creating a statement of cash flows from a series of transactions and account balance changes.
* Analyze and identify cost information that is relevant for decision makers by recognizing and applying the relevant elements in a variety of decision making scenarios likely to face professional managers.
* Describe and demonstrate appropriate control and performance evaluation metrics in a multi-product, hierarchical organization by analyzing overall and segment performance using rate-of-return, residual income, and non-financial measures.

**Required Materials**

Kimmel, P.D., Weygandt, J.J., Kieso, D.E. (2013). *Accounting: Tools for Business Decision Making,*

*5th Ed*. (New Jersey: John Wiley) [ISBN: 978-1-118-34276-3].

Charles H. Meyer (2013) *Accounting and Finance for Lawyers*

5th Ed. (WEST) [ISBN. 978—314-28564-5]

Bring the assigned chapter to each class session.

**Prerequisites and Recommended Preparation**

There are no formal prerequisites for this course. Students are expected to be familiar with the U.S., and with American English. Students are required to regularly read about current business developments (e.g., via a general business periodical like the *Wall Street Journal*).

**Course Notes/Materials**

USC's Blackboard learning management system and support information is available at [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu/). Distributed materials and other information will be available on the class’ Blackboard site.

**Grading Policies**

Each student’s course grade will be determined by the student’s relative performance on quizzes, midterms, and a final exam. All of these will be closed-book and closed notes. The format will be multiple choice questions and/or problems. The dates and topics covered are indicated below. Questions and problems will be drawn fairly evenly from the chapters covered.

During the semester, exams will be returned in class no more than one week after being given. Those wishing to contest a score must do so in writing within two weeks after the exam date.

**Students need to bring #2 pencils and erasers to each exam**. Students need not bring blue books or Scantron forms. Answers to problems are to be written on the exams themselves. This can be done in pencil.

The total possible points will be:

Class Participation 10

Exam I Midterm 20

Class Project 10

Final Exam 60

Total 100

The Law School grading system uses both numerical grades and letter grade equivalents. Numerical grades range from 1.9 to 4.4 with letter-grade equivalents ranging from F to A+. The system differs from a typical letter-grade system (in which A=4.0, A-=3.7, and B+=3.3, etc.) in that faculty can assign intermediate numbers, such as 3.4. For example, although both 3.3 and 3.4 are grades of "B+", the 3.4 carries a slightly higher numerical value, and therefore contributes to a higher GPA. This combination of letters and numbers was selected because the letters can be easily understood by all potential employers, while the intermediate numbers allow more gradations and therefore more nuance than a simple system of letters only.

**During the semester, midterm exam will be returned no more than two weeks after it has been given. After each test is returned there is a one-week reflection period and then you will have one week to discuss your grade. After this time, grades on tests become final. All other grades are final once given.**

Preparing for exams involves dedication, and should end only when a student can: 1) identify the relevant issues in each business situation; 2) analyze the data and transform it into information to be used in a comprehensive answer; and 3) explain what was done using techniques demonstrated in class.

The best bet for success involves several steps. First, is doing the advanced preparation for each class session. Second is working problems done in class, and trying other problems. Third is asking questions in a real-time manner to solidify understanding of the material as the class progresses, rather than trying to ‘get it’ right before an exam. Remember, on exams students are required to perform all work (e.g., problem setup, solution generation, and answer presentation) on their own.

The Law School of policy is exams and quizzes should not be missed unless there is a very serious emergency which is properly documented, otherwise a score of zero results. Also, to the extent possible, students must inform the instructor of the emergency prior to the exam (it is understood this is not always possible). In the case of a properly documented serious emergency, rather than a make-up exam a substitute grade will be calculated based on the student’s score on next exam.

The final exam must be taken at the scheduled time unless an incomplete contract has previously been approved per Law School guidelines.

**Add/Drop Process**

During the first week of classes, students add classes on their own via web registration. After the first week, students must get permission to add from the instructor. Request permission in an e-mail which shows your name, student id number, the course name & number, as well as the course meeting times (for example, M,W 4 pm).

**Retention of Graded Coursework**

Graded work that was not returned will be retained for one year after the end of the semester.

**Technology Policy**

Laptop and Internet usage is not permitted during class sessions unless otherwise stated by the professor. Use of other personal communication devices, such as cell phones, is considered unprofessional and is not permitted during class sessions, except in emergencies or as specified by USC’s Disability Services and Programs. Upon request, all electronic devices in student’s possession (for example, phones, tablets, laptops) must be completely turned off and/or put face down on the desk in front of the student. In addition, at certain times (for example, during exams), students might also be asked to deposit such devices in a designated area in the classroom.

**Recordings**

No student may record any lecture, class discussion, or meeting with the professor without the professor’s prior express written permission. The word “record” or the act of recording includes, but is not limited to, any and all means by which sound or visual images can be stored, duplicated or retransmitted whether by an electro-mechanical, analog, digital, wire, electronic or other device or any other means of signal encoding. The professor reserves all rights, including copyright, to lectures, course syllabi and related materials, including summaries, PowerPoints, prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in this class whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise.

These may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites. Exceptions are made for students who have made prior arrangements with USC’s Disability Services and Programs and the professor.

**Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. For more information visit [www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability).

DSP determines all accommodations. These are specified in the DSP’s Letter of Verification, which must be presented to the instructor as early in the semester as possible.

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Students enrolled in any class offered by the Law School are expected to uphold and adhere to the standards of academic integrity established by the Law School Student Honor Code.  Students are responsible for obtaining, reading, and understanding the Honor Code System handbook.  Students who are found to have violated the Code will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the handbook.  For more specific information, please refer to the Student Honor Code System handbook, available in class or from the receptionist in ACC 101.

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standardshttps://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us.

This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

**Support Systems**

Several USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

As noted above, USC’s Office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP)

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

As noted below, if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

For additional information, students may use any of the following:

**USC Emergency – (213) 740-4321**

**USC Emergency Information – (213) 740-9233**

**USC Information – (213) 740-2311**

**KUSC Radio – 91.5 FM**

Schedule of Class Sessions

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| Date | Topic | Reading for Session | Homework to be done **before** this Session |
| 1/10 | Introduction to Financial Statements  A Further Look at Financial Statements | CH 1  CH 2 | Find the Disney Company’s Latest Annual Report  *Do it!*1-3, E1-8, E1-10  *Do it!*2-4 E2-8, P2-3A |
| 1/17 | The Accounting Information System  Accrual Accounting Concepts | CH 3  CH 4 | E3-2, E3-8, P3-4A, P3-5A  E4-6, E4-10, P4-2A  Review Sample Financial Statements |
| 1/24 | Merchandizing & Multi-step Income Statements  Internal Control, Fraud & Cash | CH 5  CH 7 | E5-1, E5-3, E5-9, E5-10  E7-3, E7-9(a), E7-14 |
| 2/7 | Receivables & Provisions  Long Lived Assets  Liabilities | CH 8  CH 9  CH 10 | E8-3, E8-4, P8-5, P8-8A  E9-3, E9-6, E9-8, P9-4A  BE10-14, E10-19,  P10-6A, BYP 10-5 |
| 2/14 | Owner’s Equity  Statement of Cash Flows  Financial Analysis: The Big Picture | CH 11  CH 12  CH 13 | E11-2, E11-14, P11-3A, P11-8A  E12-5, P12-3A, P12-7A, P12-11A  E13-2, P13-5A, BYP13-7 |
| 2/21 | Mid Term Exam (In Class)  Accounting For Law Firms | None | None  Readings |
| 2/28 | Inventory  Accounting For Income Taxes  Review Mid-term  Finish Accounting For Lawyers | CH 6  None | Readings & Deloitte PDF  Accounting For Income taxes PDF |
| 3/7 | Damages |  | Readings and Sample Report |
| 3/14 | **Spring Break** |  |  |
| 3/21 | Business Valuation |  | Readings and Sample Report |
| 3/28 | Assign Class Project  Business Models |  | Review Final Project Material In Blackboard |
| 4/4 | Family Law Issues  Fraud in Financial Statements |  |  |
| 4/11 | Attorney Letters to Auditors  Non-Profit Accounting |  |  |
| 4/18 | Work on Final Project In class |  | None |
| 4/25 | Final Project Paper due and review for final exam |  |  |
|  | Final Exam TBA |  |  |