

**Class Sessions**

<u>Section</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Room</u>
14143R	ACCT 430	M & W	10:00 – 11:50	Leonetti	ACC 310
14144R	ACCT 430	M & W	12:00 – 1:50	Leonetti	ACC 310
14145R	ACCT 430	M & W	2:00 - 3:50	Kling	ACC 303

In addition, all class sections will meet as a combined class on selected Fridays at 12:30-1:50 pm in room HOH EDI. **The Course Schedule outlines the planned Friday sessions; students should reserve the 12:30-1:50 time on all Fridays in the semester to be available for schedule changes that could be required by our guest speakers. Attendance at the Friday sessions and inputting the participation information is required of all students.**

**Professor**

**Greg Kling**

Office: ACC 232B  
 Phone: 213-740-5004  
 Email: [gkling@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:gkling@marshall.usc.edu)  
 Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 11:00 am to 1:45 pm and by appointment

**Jim Leonetti**

Office: ACC 214  
 Email: [leonetti@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:leonetti@marshall.usc.edu)  
 Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm by appointment

**Prerequisites**

None

**Communication**

Blackboard and Marshall email

**Academic Conduct**

Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the University community's standards of behavior as articulated in the [Student Conduct Code](#). 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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. 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>.

**Blackboard Courses**

All students will have two Blackboard (Bb) courses for the Ethics class:

1. The first Bb course is for **all students**: Bb course labeled **20201\_acct\_430\_14147**

This is a single Bb course for all students and professors across all class sessions. This is the Bb course where we will post materials and correspondence *from the professors to the students* - this is where you will find the syllabus, course schedule, assignments, reading materials, discussion and lecture materials, PowerPoint slides, and class announcements.

2. The second Bb course is specific to your individual class section:

Bb course labeled **20191\_acct\_430\_14143** is for students enrolled in Professor Leonetti's class on M & W at 10:00

Bb course labeled **20191\_acct\_430\_14144** is for students enrolled in Professor Leonetti's class on M & W at 12:00

Bb course labeled **20191\_acct\_430\_14145** is for students enrolled in Professor Kling's class on M & W at 2:00

The class-specific Bb course is where you will post materials *from the student to the professor* - this is where students will post reflective journal entries and upload assignments.

### Course Description

This course provides the ethical grounding that accountants need both to identify ethical issues that they might face and to respond effectively to them. Students will be introduced both to the major theoretical ethical reasoning models and the ethical principles included in the Codes of Professional Conduct disseminated by the major accounting organizations, such as the AICPA and the Internal Revenue Service. The course will present a range of ethics-related issues, including the causes of ethical violations and frauds, whistle blowing, and the operation of company compliance and ethics programs. Ethical issues are illustrated in many of the major areas of accounting practice, including financial accounting and reporting, management accounting, audit, taxation, accounting information systems, forensic accounting and accounting-related consulting. This course will also provide strategies in order to effectively communicate when you believe something unethical is taking place.

### Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify ethical issues they might face and how to respond effectively to them.
2. Explain the major theoretical ethical reasoning models.
3. Describe the ethical principles included in the Codes of Professional Conduct disseminated by the major regulatory organizations, such as the AICPA and the Internal Revenue Service.
4. Describe a range of ethics-related issues, including the motivations behind ethical violations and frauds.
5. Analyze the inspiration, risk, benefits and possible outcomes of whistle blowing.
6. Effectively communicate when you believe something unethical is taking place.

## Course Structure

The course will be taught using two distinct structures:

- Class sessions in a small class size setting which will involve professor lectures and active discussions of cases and vignettes designed to illustrate many of the ethical issues and dilemmas that accountants face in practice. These sessions are held on Mondays and Wednesdays (depending on each student's enrolled section).
- In addition, all class sections will meet as a combined class on selected Fridays at 12:30-1:50 pm in room HOH EDI. **The Course Schedule outlines the planned Friday sessions; students should reserve the 12:30-1:50 time on all Fridays in the semester to be available for schedule changes that could be required by our guest speakers. Attendance at the Friday sessions and inputting the participation information is required of all students.**
- See the Course Schedule for date-specific class times and locations.

## Required Course Materials

1. Gordon Klein, (2016). *Ethics in Accounting - A Decision Making Approach*. Wiley.  
This book is available as a no cost eBook through the USC Libraries. The link for the book is <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/socal/detail.action?docID=4845227>. You may be required to sign into your USC account before book access is permitted.
2. Justin M. Paperny (2010). *Ethics in Motion*. Etika LLC.  
This book can be purchased at a reduced price for either the printed book (\$16.00) or electronic version (\$12.00) using the following link: <http://etikallc.com/books/>.
3. Tony A. Rose (2014). *Five Eyes on the Fence*. Business Expert Press (BEP)  
This book is available as an eBook and will be posted on Bb.
4. M.C. Gentile (2010). *Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right*. Yale University Press. This book is available in the USC Bookstore.
5. B. McLean and J. Nocera (2011). *All the Devils are Here: The Hidden History of the Financial Crisis*. Portfolio.  
This book is available in paperback and Kindle versions from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), in addition to the hardcover version available in the USC Bookstore.
6. Other reading materials will be distributed in class and/or via Blackboard.

## Course Schedule

Please see attached Course Schedule. **This schedule is tentative because we may need to change dates to accommodate guest speakers.** Detailed assignments for each class session will be distributed periodically in class and/or on Blackboard.

**Grading**

	<b>Points</b>
Reflective journal	100
Papers	200
Midterm exam	220
Final exam	330
Friday guest speaker session participation	50
Discussion sections active learning participation and engagement	<u>100</u>
Total available	<u>1,000</u>

*Friday guest speaker sessions*

Attendance and participation at the Friday sessions is mandatory. Failure to attend and participate in the Friday sessions without advance approval by the professor will result in no points being awarded for the unexcused absence. **The only way to earn Friday Session Participation points is to log in to Blackboard and input the unique attendance number with the guest speaker’s last name by Sunday at 11:59 pm. Failure to provide the unique attendance number in Blackboard in a timely manner will result in zero participation points even if you attended the session.**

*Reflective Journals*

Every student is required to keep a Reflective Journal about topics covered in the course. Please take 10 minutes to think about the topic before writing anything, and then write whatever reflections come to mind.

We are looking for only 100-150 words per week. **It is required that you write a minimum of 100 words per week for each journal. Journal entries with less than 100 words will receive zero credit.** We want to encourage *personal reflections* on the topics and issues presented in the course, *not just mere memorization and recitation of course content*.

We will use Bb as the tool for maintaining the Reflective Journals.

**Each week’s Journal must be completed no earlier than Friday at 2:00 pm and no later than Sunday at 11:59 pm.** During the window, you can make a single entry or multiple entries until the time window for that week has closed. **Late submissions (after Sunday at 11:59 pm) will receive no credit.** Journals are a “homework” assignment and should not be written during class time.

*Papers*

Details regarding the paper assignments will be distributed approximately 2 weeks before the due date of the paper. Each paper assignment is an individual effort and assignment.

*Midterm and Final Exams*

Both the midterm and the final exam are open book/open notes examinations. Each student will need a laptop computer for the midterm and the final exams.

The **midterm** exam will be held on **Friday, February 28, 2020** during the regularly scheduled class time from 12:30 pm to 1:50 pm.

The **final** exam will be held on **Wednesday, May 13, 2020 from 8:00 am to 10:00 am** for all sections.

The midterm and final exams must be completed on the scheduled dates (there will not be a make-up exam) and cannot be taken early, except when the exam time conflicts with a student's observance of a religious event. If you have a conflict for either exam date, please discuss with your professor immediately; **any exam date conflicts must be discussed with your professor on or before January 31, 2020 if you want a request to move the exam date/time. Requests after January 31, 2020 will be considered at the sole and absolute discretion of the professor.**

*Discussion Sections Active Learning Participation and Engagement*

Ethics is not a technical, quantitative subject like most accounting courses. There is often not one obviously best solution to an ethical dilemma. Learning ethics requires the development of problem finding and critical thinking skills. Developing these skills is best accomplished through active learning -- student discussions of dilemmas of the type that will be faced in the real world.

We assign a proportion of the grade in this course based on the extent to which students participate actively in the smaller discussion sections and the quality of their contributions to the in-class discussion. We do this both to encourage the building of a healthy "learning community." We think we can learn more about effort and quality of thinking by hearing students share their ideas in a long series of classes than can be done by reading written answers to a few exam questions. Further, active class participation encourages students to be well prepared and thus to become active, rather than passive, learners. Participation provides students with the opportunity to gain from the experiences and talents of everyone in the class. Class participation also helps students improve their oral communication skills, which are vitally important in the working world.

The class sessions (i.e., Monday and Wednesday classes) will incorporate various active learning exercises with deliverables. **You are not able to make up the class activity if you do not attend the class section, except as discussed with and approved by your professor beforehand.**

Participation will be evaluated in each class session based on a near-continuous scale, the end points of which can be described as follows:

**Outstanding Contributor:** This person's contributions reflect exceptional preparation, and the ideas offered are always substantive and provide major insights and direction for the class. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished significantly.

**Unsatisfactory Contributor:** This person may be absent from class or someone who rarely participates in class. Alternatively, this person's contribution in class reflects inadequate preparation and/or understanding. Ideas offered are not substantive and provide few, if any, insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective arguments are absent. Class comments are either obvious, isolated from the main discussion, or confusing to the class.

**Discussion section participation is required to earn Discussion Section Participation points during the semester. Unsatisfactory contributors will earn minimal to no points even if they regularly attend class sections.**

### **Grading Policy**

Final grades represent how you perform in the class relative to other students. Historically, the average grade for this class is approximately (B+) 3.3. Three items are considered when assigning final grades: (1) Your average weighted score as a percentage of the available points for all assignments (the points you receive divided by the number of points possible); (2) The overall average percentage score within the class; (3) Your ranking among all students in the class.

### **Retention of Papers**

According to the Guidelines on Documents Retention, University policy requires that “final exams and all other grade work which affected the course grade” be kept for one year. Other papers or work that instructors hand back but that students fail to pick up will be held for one month.

### **Technology Policy**

Laptop and Internet usage is not permitted during academic or professional sessions unless otherwise stated by the respective professor and/or staff. Use of other personal communication devices, such as cell phones, is considered unprofessional and is not permitted during academic or professional sessions. ANY e-devices (cell phones, iPads, other texting devices, laptops, I-pods) must be completely turned off during class time, except as stated by the professor. Upon request, you must comply and put your device on the table in off mode and FACE DOWN. You might also be asked to deposit your devices in a designated area in the classroom. Videotaping faculty lectures is not permitted due to copyright infringement regulations. Audiotaping may be permitted if approved by the professor in advance. Use of any recorded or distributed material is reserved exclusively for the USC students registered in this class. Exceptions to this policy may be granted to individual students with appropriate documentation on a case-by-case basis.

### **Undergraduate Accounting Program Student Learning Objectives**

The five Student Learning Objectives developed for this program by the USC Leventhal faculty and administration and filed with the AACSB, the accrediting body for accounting and business schools, are shown below.

This course will deal primarily with Learning Objective 3, *Ethical Decision Making* (course emphasis: High). To a lesser extent, this course will also touch on three of the other Learning Objectives: Objective 1, *Technical Knowledge* (course emphasis: Moderate), Objective 4, *Communication* (course emphasis: Moderate), and Objective 2, *Research, Analysis and Critical Thinking* (course emphasis: Moderate).

#### *Undergraduate Accounting Program Learning Objectives*

##### **1. Technical Knowledge**

Students will demonstrate technical proficiency in the accounting discipline, including the use of technical accounting knowledge to help solve problems and make decisions.

**2. Research, Analysis and Critical Thinking**

Students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information for decision making in the local, regional and global business environment.

**3. Ethical Decision Making**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of ethics, ethical behavior and ethical decision making.

**4. Communication**

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate ideas both orally and in writing in a clear, organized and persuasive manner.

**5. Leadership, Collaboration and Professionalism**

Students will demonstrate leadership skills and the ability to work cooperatively and productively to accomplish established goals.

**Academic Conduct**

Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the University community's standards of behavior as articulated in the [Student Conduct Code](#).

**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 Standards <https://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/>.

**Class Notes Policy**

Notes or recordings made by students on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student's membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings. **This violation includes uploading any course materials to a public or private file sharing website.**

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, PowerPoint slides, prior exams, answer keys, and all

supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in class whether or not posted on Blackboard or otherwise. **They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all public and private file sharing websites.** Exceptions are made for students who have made prior arrangements with DSP and with the professor.

### Support Systems

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Campus Support & Intervention (CSI) - (213) 740-0411*  
<https://campussupport.usc.edu/>

A team of professionals here to assist students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues. Whether you are here seeking support for yourself or someone else, we are available to help you problem solve, understand options, and connect with resources. Please note that we are not an emergency resource and are not available 24/7.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710*

[uscsa.usc.edu](http://uscsa.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

### **Students with Disabilities**

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services and Programs ([www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)). DSP provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. Email: [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

### **Emergency Preparedness / Course Continuity**

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 technologies.

**Important Dates for the Semester**

Jan 13	First day of classes
Jan 20	USC Holiday – Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday
Jan 31	Last day to register and add classes Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance
Feb 17	USC Holiday – Presidents’ Day
Feb 28	Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W”
March 16 – 22	Spring Break
Apr 3	Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W”
May 1	Last day of classes
May 2 – 5	Study days
May 13	Final examinations [the final exam for this class will be held on <b>Wednesday, May 13, 2020</b> at <b>8:00 am-10:00 am</b> for all sections]
May 15	Commencement

**Emergency Information**

Emergency Information Line	213-740-9233
USC Emergencies Information	213-740-4321
USC Info Line	tune into KUSC Radio at 91.5 (FM)
USC Public Safety - Non Emergencies	213-740-2311
	213-740-6000

### **Tentative Course Schedule**

**This schedule is tentative because we may need to change dates to accommodate guest speakers.**

Detailed assignments for each class session will be distributed periodically in class and/or on Blackboard.

Friday sessions will be held at 12:30-1:50 pm in room HOH EDI. Students should reserve the 12:30-1:50 time on all Fridays in the semester to be available for schedule changes that could be required by our guest speakers. Attendance at the Friday sessions is mandatory. Failure to attend the Friday sessions and input the participation information without advance approval by the professor will result in no points being awarded for the unexcused absence.

Spring 2020 Course Schedule

UPDATED as of January 6, 2020  
 \*\*\*\*\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\*\*\*\*

Day	Date	Class #	Topic
Mon	Jan 13	1	Ethics in a Profession, Like Accounting; Divergent Ethical Systems
Wed	Jan 15	2	People Think Differently About Ethics
Fri	Jan 17		
Mon	Jan 20		**UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**
Wed	Jan 22	3	Normative Ethical Reasoning Models and Decision Making Processes
Fri	Jan 24	4	Personal Capital and Ethical Values
Mon	Jan 27	5	Accountants' Professional Standards I
Wed	Jan 29	6	Accountants' Professional Standards II
Fri	Jan 31	7	Ethics In Application I
Mon	Feb 3		
Wed	Feb 5	8	Accountants' Professional Standards III
Fri	Feb 7	9	Ethics in Practice I
Mon	Feb 10	10	Accountants' Professional Standards IV
Wed	Feb 12	11	Why Do People Do Bad Things I?
Fri	Feb 14		<b>** PAPER 1 IS DUE BY 5:00 pm **</b>
Mon	Feb 17		**UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**
Wed	Feb 19	12	Cognitive Biases and Ethical Judgements; System 1 & 2 Thinking

Spring 2020 Course Schedule

UPDATED as of January 6, 2020  
 \*\*\*\*\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\*\*\*\*

Day	Date	Class #	Topic
Fri	Feb 21	13	Ethics in Application II
Mon	Feb 24	14	Why Do People Do Bad Things II?
Wed	Feb 26	15	Ethics in Practice II
Fri	Feb 28	16	<b>** MID TERM EXAM **</b>
Mon	Mar 2	17	Ethics in Practice III
Wed	Mar 4	18	Ethics in Industry
Fri	Mar 6		
Mon	Mar 9		
Wed	Mar 11		<b>** PAPER 2 IS DUE BY 5:00 PM ** (ACCT 430 ONLY)</b>
Fri	Mar 13		
Mon	Mar 16		
Wed	Mar 18		<b>** SPRING BREAK **</b>
Fri	Mar 20		
Mon	Mar 23		
Wed	Mar 25	19	They had a world class ethics program, but... Part I
Fri	Mar 27	20	They had a world class ethics program, but... Part II
Mon	Mar 30		
Wed	Apr 1	21	What to do when you know what's right - Giving Voice to Values I
Fri	Apr 3	22	Why Do People Do Bad Things III?

Spring 2020 Course Schedule

UPDATED as of January 6, 2020  
 \*\*\*\*\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE \*\*\*\*\*

Day	Date	Class #	Topic
Mon	Apr 6		
Wed	Apr 8	23	Giving Voice to Values II
Fri	Apr 10	24	Why Do People Do Bad Things IV?
Mon	Apr 13		
Wed	Apr 15	25	Giving Voice to Values III
Fri	Apr 17	26	Why Do People Do Bad Things V?
Mon	Apr 20		
Wed	Apr 22	27	Whistleblowing
Fri	Apr 24	28	Ethics Wrap Up
Mon	Apr 27		
Wed	Apr 29	29	Anticipating the Future
Fri	May 1		
Wed	May 13	30	ACCT 430: 8:00 am to 10:00 am ** FINAL EXAM **
Wed	May 13	30	ACCT 530: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm ** FINAL EXAM **