



GSBA 510: Accounting Concepts and Financial Reporting
Fall 2021
3.0 Units
Section 15597D: 8:00am to 9:20am Mondays and Wednesdays
Section 15993D: 9:30am to 10:50am Mondays and Wednesdays
JFF LL105

Instructor: Professor Anthony V. Aaron (Tony)
Office: ACC 213
Office Hours: By appointment only, using Zoom Meetings or Teleconference. E-mail to schedule, Mondays and Wednesdays (class days) are preferable.
Phone: (213) 821-4368 (office)
(310) 849-5987 (mobile)
Email: aarona@marshall.usc.edu
Email is the preferable means by which to communicate with me outside of class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed to provide students with a solid grounding in the understanding and interpretation of financial accounting reports. We will explore the basic principles and concepts that underlie accrual-based accounting, with a significant emphasis on applications and real-world examples. The textbook is used to introduce the concepts and the mechanics associated with the accounting topics covered in the course. The material in the text is presented in both a video-based and text-based format. With this as a starting point we then illustrate the effects and implications of the topics using public company annual reports. This is accomplished primarily through the in-class analysis of examples and cases.

The course is, by its nature, demanding. The assigned text readings and cases require a high level of preparation and most students need to devote a reasonable amount of time in order to gain a full understanding of the materials presented and discussed. Homework Assignments should be attempted prior to each class meeting, although they are not collected. Cases assignments should be submitted electronically prior to class. The best way to learn accounting is to work through accounting problems and I encourage you to work in groups in preparing your assignments. Solutions to the Homework problems in the text will be provided to you.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the course are for you to:

1. Understand the goals and objectives of external financial reporting
2. Gain knowledge of the basic principles that underlie accrual-based accounting reports
3. Understand the usefulness of financial accounting for evaluating performance
4. Learn to critically analyze financial accounting information

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook: DeFond, Financial Accounting, Second Edition, Cambridge Business Publishers 2018. If you have a print version of the text, you can access the eLectures through the [myBusinessCourse](#) feature.

Other online Resources and sites:

- Company Websites, particularly the “Investor Relations” tab
- www.FASB.org
- www.SEC.gov
- www.PCAOB.org
- Other sites may be identified through Blackboard as the semester progresses

Blackboard: Any additional materials, including class slide decks, additional case studies and/or classroom exercise materials, homework assignments and/or solutions, quizzes and exams, announcements, etc. will be posted to Blackboard.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grading:

We adhere to the USC Leventhal School of Accounting and Marshall School of Business grading standards for graduate programs. In general, final course grades at the graduate level in a core course average approximately B+ (3.3), but may vary based on class performance. For elective courses, the class average is usually higher--approximating 3.4 to 3.5, which is between a B+ and an A-. GSBA 510 will be graded as a core course. You must receive a C or better to pass a required class, and you must have an *overall* B average (3.0 minimum) from all your courses in order to graduate from USC. **The graded elements of this course are listed below along with information about how they will be evaluated.**

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>
4 Quizzes (Best 4 grades of 5 quizzes)	400	40%
2 Case Assignments (group activity)	200	20%
Final Exam	300	30%
Class Participation and Professionalism	<u>100</u>	<u>10%</u>
Totals	1000	100%

Quizzes

There will be five quizzes, There will be no “Make-up” quizzes. Instead, your aggregate quiz grade will be comprised of your top four scores, of the five quizzes, which will count toward your final grade. The dates for each of these quizzes will be included in the Class Schedule outlined below. The quizzes will generally be in the nature of true/false or multiple choice questions. The quizzes are to be completed by each student on an individual basis, with no collaboration with your fellow students. We will likely use Blackboard to administer the quizzes, even if we are participating in the classroom.

Case Assignments

The two assigned Cases will be posted on Blackboard. The cases are to be prepared in groups and I will assign the groups after classes begin. Submit the two assigned cases via Blackboard before class on the day they are due. A third case (Mondo Bondo) is optional and does not need to be submitted. It is provided to allow you to better understand and practice the application of the effective interest method of amortization. There is also a short Accounting Questionnaire I would like you to complete by the end of the day of the first class session. The information from this questionnaire will be used to assign your groups and to better gauge what level of depth is appropriate for our classroom discussions

Final Exam

The final exam will be a comprehensive assessment of topics covered during course of the semester. As with the quizzes, this final exam is to be completed by each student on an individual basis, with no collaboration with your fellow students.

Class Participation and Professionalism

Subsequent to each class session and while it is very fresh in my mind, I will record my view of each student's participation and professionalism on a numeric scale, with assistance, when available, from our class TA's. I will total these numeric scores at the end of the semester as one input into assigning a final class participation and professionalism grade.

For each in-class session three (3) points will be awarded to a student for significant relevant and meaningful participation, two (2) points for modest contributions to the class, one (1) point for minimal contributions to the class, but for being in attendance and zero (0) points if absent.

I encourage you to take advantage of office hours. I view student participation in office hours as a form of class participation. I am always willing to arrange a Zoom Meeting session or telephone call for office hours. As a safety precaution during the Covid-19 Pandemic, I will not be scheduling "in-person" office hours.

Email is perhaps the predominant form of communication in business so feel free to reach out to me at aarona@marshall.usc.edu. Generally, similar to a business setting, I hope to respond to emails within one business day. I encourage you to ask technical questions via email. I view email interactions related to clarifying technical content covered in class to be a form of class participation. Be aware that I might choose to copy technical Q&A from email interactions with particular students into Blackboard announcements for the benefit of the entire class.

Consistent with the themes touched on as part of the Marshall School Strategic plan, we will seek to advance the level of students' professionalism as part of the class. Similar to a career setting, professional conduct is expected from all students in class. Professional conduct is expected from all students in interactions with the Professor on class related matters, both in class, and outside of class. Class related interactions occurring outside of class hours may include for example: email, telephone, voicemail, or Zoom meeting office hours.

In each circumstance that you need to be physically absent from class, or if you otherwise cannot participate live via Zoom, you are expected to send an email message to me and to our class TA prior to the start of class. Please include in the subject line the course name and section (Example in Subject line: GSBA 510, 9:30 am section). Also, if you plan to participate in class asynchronously, you are also expected to send an email message to me and to our class TA, for each class session where you plan to participate asynchronously prior to the start of that particular class session. Be aware that asynchronous participation may not provide the same experience as that of being in the classroom. See further discussion under the section entitled "Name Tents", below. Keep in mind that an email in advance of class does not "excuse" your absence – it simply shows me that you are taking an appropriate professional stance and responsibility for choosing to do something else during class time.

If you miss a class session, you still need to come to the next class fully prepared. You can access PowerPoint slides for each class and any written announcements that I have made via Blackboard. **If you miss a class, I recommend that you contact a classmate before the next class meeting. Ask them for any announcements, lecture notes, readings, assignments, etc. that have not been otherwise posted to Blackboard.**

Generally, all Zoom meeting class sessions will be recorded. Thus, barring technology "glitches", audio/video recordings of the class lectures will be available for asynchronous viewing. Links to Zoom

recordings can be accessed via Blackboard. Students in class or participating via Zoom should be aware that the recordings are occurring and that all comments will end up being included in the recordings. We may also be recording classes using Panopto. If we are able to utilize the Panopto system, links to those recordings will also be made available.

Of course, if a major illness or emergency arises, I will work with you to accommodate the situation. It may also be appropriate to contact the Dean's office at the Leventhal School or Marshall School when such circumstances arise. As noted above, recordings of the class sessions also may be helpful in such circumstances.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

CLASSROOM POLICIES - FALL 2021

1. Active class participation is important in achieving the learning objectives for this course. Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC OSAS or from Marshall detailing visa or travel restrictions, attendance and active participation is expected in the classroom.
2. Any student with such accommodations should submit their accommodation document to their instructor as soon as possible. Your instructor will then provide regular access to a recording of the class and an opportunity to regularly make up missed in-class participation.
3. Students who are experiencing illness should not attend class in person. Please inform the instructor in advance of the class session to discuss what accommodations will be made to allow for the make-up of missed class work and missed in-class participation. Students will not be penalized for not attending class in person under these circumstances.

eLECTURE VIDEOS

"eLecture" videos are assigned for each class session. These should be viewed prior to class as they will form the basis for our in-class discussions. The eLectures are listed in the Road Map on the first page of each chapter in your text. Each assigned eLecture corresponds to a Learning Objectives (LO) that we will cover in class. If you have an electronic version of the text, the eLectures are accessible within the text. If you have a print version of the text, you can access the eLectures through the [myBusinessCourse](#) feature.

TEXTBOOK READINGS

Readings are assigned from the textbook for each session. Each assigned reading corresponds to a Learning Objectives (LO) that we will cover. The page numbers for each of the LO's are listed in the Road Map on the first page of each chapter. The textbook readings mirror the assigned eLectures (discussed above) and thus can be used as a reference in support of the material covered in the eLectures.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

The Homework Assignments refer to the problems at the end of each chapter of the textbook. You can use myBusinessCourse in your textbook to have your homework "auto-corrected" online. The homework is for your edification and is not graded and not required to be turned in.

NAME TENTS

"Name tents" and marking pens will be provided on the first day of class, if not otherwise provided by your program. Students should use these materials to write in large block letters, the first name and last name that you used to enroll in the course. First name should be shown first, last name last. In the upper right hand corner, please list the first name that you wish to be called by if different from your enrolled name. It is possible that we will be able to generate pre-printed name tents, bearing your enrolled name, prior to the

commencement of the class session. If this is the case, I would still appreciate it if you would list the first name that you wish to be called by, if different from your enrolled name, in the upper right hand corner of your name tent.

The “name tents,” will be used for all class sessions. These will facilitate an ability to call on students by name, assess participation, and should advance the ability of students to get to know one another. Naturally, it is the responsibility of students to keep the name tent in a visible location in front of them, so that I, and other students, can facilitate student participation.

We are expecting in excess of 70 students per class section for GSBA 510 this semester. Remember that your name is part of your “personal brand.” It makes sense for you to seek to have your name remembered. While I aspire to remember each person’s name, please help me to remember your name and your personal brand, by using name tents.

The name tents will also be used to facilitate recording attendance, and they must be returned to me at the end of each class. I will bring the tents back to the next class for your use again. It is your obligation to pick up the name tent while in attendance to have your attendance recorded. We will separately track those in attendance through Zoom or through asynchronous participation. It is your obligation to return the name tent before your departure from class to enable proper recording of your attendance. There will be no “verbal roll call” but attendance records will be gathered via the name tents.

Think about the process here for using name tents. Common sense (and ethical behavior) indicates that students should not pick up the name tents for others at the beginning of class, nor return the name tents of others. Student failure to obtain their name tent at the beginning of class, or to return the tent at the end of class, may result in their being marked absent. While attendance per se, is not a specific part of your grade, it is the initial measure of participation. Also, as mentioned above in the section entitled “Class Participation and Professionalism”, I expect an email communication informing me of an expected absence as a demonstration of professional behavior.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COURSE EVALUATIONS

The student course evaluations are valuable. This course is continuously improved, based on feedback from students and instructor observations.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, the USC Emergency Information web site (<https://emergency.usc.edu/>) will provide safety and other information, including electronic means by which instructors will conduct class using a combination of USC’s Blackboard learning management system (blackboard.usc.edu), Zoom, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Class #	Date	Topic	Chapter	Readings (eLectures) By Learning Objective	Suggested Homework and Optional Supplemental Readings	Deliverables with Due Dates
1	August 23	Financial Accounting and Business Decisions	1	1 through 5	SE1-12; SE1-14; E1-12A	Accounting Questionnaire – Via Blackboard
2	August 25	Continuation of Chapter 1 Discussion, Accounting Information, Part 1	1, 2	1 through 3	SE2-6; E2-6A; P2-2A	
3	August 30	Accounting Information, Part 2	2	Same	Same	
4	September 1	Accrual Basis of Accounting, Part 1	3	1 through 4	Question 3-10; SE3-12; E3-2A; P3-8A	
Labor Day	September 6	No class – Holiday				
5	September 8	Accrual Basis of Accounting, Part 2	3	Same	Same	
6	September 13	Understanding Accounting Information	4	1, 3, 4	SE4-8; E4-4A; P4-6A	Quiz 1 (Covering Ch. 1-3)
7	September 15	Internal Control and Cash	5	1, 3 through 5	SE5-1; E5-3A; P5-6A	Starbucks Case – Group submission
8	September 20	Receivables, Part 1	6	1, 2, 5	SE6-4; E6-2A	
9	September 22	Receivables, Part 2	6	Same	Same	
10	September 27	Inventory, Part 1	7	2, 3, 5, 6	SE7-4,8,12; E7-8A	Quiz 2 (Covering Ch. 4-6)
11	September 29	Inventory, Part 2	7	Same	Same	
12	October 4	Inventory, Part 3	7	Same	Same	
13	October 6	Accounting for Investments and Consolidated Financial Statements, Part 1	Appendix D	1 through 4	ED-2A; ED-4A; ED-5A; ED-6A Optional Supplemental Readings: FASB ASU 2016-01	

					FASB ASC Topics 320 and 321	
14	October 11	Accounting for Investments and Consolidated Financial Statements, Part 2	Appendix D	Same	Same	
15	October 13	Accounting for Investments and Consolidated Financial Statements, Part 3	Appendix D	Same	Same	
16	October 18	Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets, Part 1	8	1 through 6	SE8-2; P8-4A, 8A Optional Supplemental Readings: FASB ASC Topics 350 and 360	Quiz 3 (Covering Ch. 7 and Appendix D)
17	October 20	Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets, Part 2	8	Same	Same	
18	October 25	Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets, Part 3	8	Same	Same	
19	October 27	Liabilities, Part 1	9	1 through 6	SE9-2, 10; E9-8A; E9-14A	
20	November 1	Liabilities, Part 2	9	Same	Same	Optional – No submission required – Mondo Bondo Case
21	November 3	Liabilities, Part 3	9	Same	Same	
22	November 8	Statement of Cash Flows, Part 1	11	1 through 3	Questions 4, 11, 12, SE11-8; SE113A, P11-3A	Quiz 4 (Covering Ch. 8 and 9)
23	November 10	Statement of Cash Flows, Part 2	11	Same	Same	
24	November 15	Statement of Cash Flows, Part 3	11	Same	Same	
25	November 17	Stockholders' Equity	10	1 through 9	Question 10-12; E10-2A	
26	November 22	Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements	12	1 through 5	SE12-4,6,8; P12-8A	Walmart Case – Group Submission
Thanks-giving Break	November 24	No class – Holiday				

27	November 29	The Language of Accountants: Debits and Credits	Appendix C	1 through 4	SEC-1; EC-1A; PC2-A	Quiz 5 (Covering Ch. 10-12)
28	December 1	Comprehensive Review for Final	All Chapters	Review prior eLectures as needed	Review prior suggested homework assignments as needed.	
Final	December 8 8:00am to 10:00am	8:00am Section 15597D JFF LL105				Comprehensive Final Assessment
Final	December 8 8:00am to 10:00am	9:30am Section 15993D JKP 110				Comprehensive Final Assessment

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 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 therein.

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.

No personal audio or video recording is permitted without consent of the faculty and class.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Academic Conduct:

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" 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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
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

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 Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, 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.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

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

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.

Appendix I. MARSHALL GRADUATE PROGRAMS LEARNING GOALS

How GSBA 510 Contributes to Marshall Graduate Program Learning Goals

Marshall Graduate Program Learning Goals	GSBA 510 Objectives that support this goal	Assessment Method*
<p><i>Learning Goal #1: Develop Personal Strengths.</i> Our graduates will develop a global and entrepreneurial mindset, lead with integrity, purpose and ethical perspective, and draw value from diversity and inclusion.</p>		
1.1 Possess personal integrity and a commitment to an organization’s purpose and core values.		
1.2 Expand awareness with a global and entrepreneurial mindset, drawing value from diversity and inclusion.		
1.3 Exhibit awareness of ethical dimensions and professional standards in decision making.		
<p><i>Learning Goal #2: Gain Knowledge and Skills.</i> Our graduates will develop a deep understanding of the key functions of business enterprises and will be able to identify and take advantage of opportunities in a complex, uncertain and dynamic business environment using critical and analytical thinking skills.</p>		
2.1 Gain knowledge of the key functions of business enterprises.	1-4	Quizzes, Cases, Final Examination
2.2 Acquire advanced skills to understand and analyze significant business opportunities, which can be complex, uncertain and dynamic.	1-4	Quizzes, Cases, Final Examination
2.3 Use critical and analytical thinking to identify viable options that can create short-term and long-term value for organizations and their stakeholders.		
<p><i>Learning Goal #3: Motivate and Build High Performing Teams.</i> Our graduates will achieve results by fostering collaboration, communication and adaptability on individual, team, and organization levels.</p>		
3.1 Motivate and work with colleagues, partners, and other stakeholders to achieve organizational purposes.		
3.2 Help build and sustain high-performing teams by infusing teams with a variety of perspectives, talents, and skills and aligning individual success with team success and with overall organizational success.		
3.3 Foster collaboration, communication and adaptability in helping organizations excel in a changing business landscape.		

