ACCT 313-01 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance II

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Instructional Syllabus
ACCT 313-01: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance II
Spring 2015

Instructor: David Randolph
Course time: 6:00 – 9:30 p.m., Tuesday’s, January 13 through February 10
Course location: SMH 247
Course time: 6:00 – 9:30 p.m., Monday’s February 16 through April 20
Course location: Cintas Center Banquet Rooms 1 & 2
Office Phone: 513-745-1088 Fax: 513-745-4383
E-mail address: randolphd1@xavier.edu
Office: 237 Smith Hall
Office Hours: Mon 10:00—11:00 a.m., 12:45—2:45 p.m., 4:30—5:30 p.m.
Wed 10:00—11:00 a.m., 12:45—2:45 p.m.
Other times by appointment, drop-ins welcome.

Textbook: Course materials will be provided.

Prerequisite for ACCT 313: Successful completion of ACCT 312

COURSE OBJECTIVE:
The IRS’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) has been in existence for many years as a means of assisting lower income taxpayers with answers to their tax questions and in preparing their income tax returns. This course will provide a review of the basic tax rules that were covered in Accounting 311 as well as supplementing that topical coverage with state income tax issues and technical aspects of individual tax preparation and compliance, including electronic filing. The student will have the opportunity to increase his/her communication skills and teamwork skills through the experience of reviewing fellow student prepared tax returns and keeping a journal of his/her experiences. Students will gain exposure to a broad cross-section of the local population as well as acquire knowledge of the general population’s understanding of the tax laws and the problems that they face in complying with its provisions. The course is designed to give students an experiential learning experience while providing a valuable service to the community consistent with the Jesuit tradition of service.
LEARNING GOALS:
  - Critical Thinking

Learning Goal: WCB graduates will be able to think logically, reason quantitatively, and utilize appropriate analytical techniques and technology when evaluating and making decisions.

Corresponding Objectives:
  1. WCB students will collect, evaluate and synthesize information in order to accurately prepare tax returns
  2. WCB students will evaluate and communicate this information to the taxpayers
  3. WCB students will work on these returns both individually and in teams.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
The first class meetings will be training sessions. Students must receive a passing grade on all test materials as provided by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the State of Ohio Department of Taxation. If you fail the federal and/or state tests you may take a retest but your maximum grade on a retest will be 70% of possible points. If you fail the retest, you will be disqualified from participating in the VITA program and the remainder of this class.

Students must perform a minimum of 21 hours of service in tax return preparation and/or review, in addition to marketing activities, and administration. This will require that you be on-site at the tax preparation room, engaged in tax return preparation, review, or administration of the program, at least seven of the eight scheduled meetings. Evidence of marketing activities must be submitted. Students will keep a daily journal of experiences at the VITA site. A reflection paper will be due at the final class meeting, April 20, 2015. This reflection paper (not just a summary of number of people assisted and types of returns prepared) should contain your comments and thoughts on what you may have learned, problems encountered, things you would do differently, mistakes you realized you made, insights about people’s attitudes on the tax law and the IRS. The journal will summarize your work on individual days, while the paper should discuss how the overall VITA experience affected you.

Determination of Grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRS Tests</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Test</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-file Test</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax return assignments</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax return preparation</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity and administration</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection paper</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>700</td>
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</tbody>
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Grades will be assigned based on the percentage of total points earned:

- 630 - 700 points: A
- 560 - 629: B
- 490 - 559: C
- 420 - 489: D
- Less than 420: F
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| JAN 12 | What’s New: Pub 4012, pages 11-14  
Form 1040 review – Pub 4491, Parts 2 – 7 (in and outside of class)  
Practice with TaxWise software:  
  - Beringer return (in class)  
  - Webster return (in class)  
  - Washington return (outside of class) |
| 19 | No class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day |
| 26 | DUE – Washington Form 1040  
DUE – Volunteer Standards of Conduct Exam (IRS certification)  
DUE – Marketing Plan  
Q&A re: Pub 4491, Parts 2-7  
State tax returns  
Practice with TaxWise software:  
  - Austin and Fleming, Forms 1040 plus OH (in class)  
  - Graham and Sterling, Forms 1040 plus OH (outside of class) |
| FEB 2 | DUE – Basic Exam (IRS certification)  
DUE – Graham, Form 1040 and Ohio state return  
Publication 4491, Parts 6 – 9  
Affordable Care Act: Publication 5157  
Tax return assembly process |
| 9 | DUE – Advanced Exam (IRS certification)  
DUE – Health Savings Accounts Exam (IRS certification)  
DUE – Marketing Evidence  
DUE – Sterling, Form 1040 and Ohio state return  
TaxWise test returns done in class  
Review tax return assembly process & instruction sheets |
| 16 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| 23 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| MAR 2 | No class – Spring Break |
| 9 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| 16 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| 23 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| 30 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| APR 6 | *Meet in classroom |
| 13 | Meet in Cintas Center |
| 20 | DUE – Reflection paper and journal. Meet in classroom |

1 All dates and assignments in this syllabus are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Instructor. Verbal notification during any regularly scheduled class period, or email, will be considered sufficient notification to effect such change under this syllabus.