



**Course Syllabus**  
**Ethics for Accountants**  
**Special Topics in Accounting**  
**ACNT 1391**

Spring 2015, CRN 46528, West Loop Center

**Instructor & Contact Information:** *William C. Nantz, CPA, CFF, CGMA, MBA, JD*  
Telephone: 713.542.5477  
Email: [bill@nantzlaw.com](mailto:bill@nantzlaw.com)

**Office location and hours:** Please feel free to contact me concerning any problems that you are experiencing in this course. You do not need to wait until you have received a poor grade before asking for my assistance. Your performance in my class is very important to me. I am available to hear your concerns and just to discuss course topics. Feel free to contact me by email, phone or come by my office at the Southwest College located at 5601 West Loop South, Houston, Texas 30 minutes before class or meet with me after class.

**Course Location/Times:** Thursday: 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
West Loop Center

**Course Semester:** Spring 2015

**Credit Hours:** Three (3) hours credit hours, all hours lecture hours

**Total Course Contact Hours:** Forty-eight (48) contact hours

**Type of Instruction:** Lecture

**Course Description:** This course will prepare the accounting student for a variety of ethical situations they will face in the workplace. Students will develop their understanding of and identifying ethical situations and resolving ethical conflict by researching, writing and role-playing in actual cases. This course also helps students develop analytical and communication skills. Students will be encouraged to give reasons and explanations for potential resolutions; in doing this, they will gain a foundation for making ethical judgments in their professional conduct.

**Course Prerequisite:** ACNT 2331 Internal Control & Auditing or its equivalent.

**Assignment Schedule:**

An assignment schedule is attached to this syllabus. This schedule will be followed throughout this course. Any modifications to this schedule will be announced in class.

### **Textbooks and Related Materials, Required for the course:**

*Business & Professional Ethics for Directors, Executives & Accountants, 7th edition*, by Leonard J. Brooks, Thomson-Southwestern 2015, 2012.  
ISBN 10: 1-285-18222-7:

*Ethics for CPAs - Meeting Expectations in Challenging Times*, by Dan M. Guy, D. R. Carmichael, & Linda Lach, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2005. ISBN: 0-471-72073-9.

### **Additional Sources: (Available for Research in the Library and Open Labs)**

*Ethics in the Post-Enron Age*, by Iris Stuart and Bruce Stuart, Thomson-Southwestern 2004.

*The Enron Collapse*, by Gregory J. Jenkins, Prentice Hall 2004.

### **Rules & Regulations for the Accounting Profession:**

*Uniform Accountancy Act:*

<http://www.aicpa.org/ADVOCACY/STATE/STATECONTACTINFO/UAA/Pages/default.aspx>

*Texas State Board of Public Accountancy's, Texas Administrative Code, Rules of Professional Conduct:*

[http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=4&ti=22&pt=22&ch=501](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=22&pt=22&ch=501)

*Texas Public Accountancy Act:*

<http://www.tsbpa.state.tx.us/pdf/files/tsbpaact.pdf>

*PCAOB Ethics Rules:*

[http://pcaobus.org/Rules/PCAOBRules/Pages/Ethics\\_Code.aspx](http://pcaobus.org/Rules/PCAOBRules/Pages/Ethics_Code.aspx)

*AICPA Ethics Rules:*

<http://www.aicpa.org/Research/Standards/CodeofConduct/Pages/default.aspx>

[http://www.cpa2biz.com/content/media/PRODUCER\\_CONTENT/generic\\_template\\_content/IndependenceEthicsGuidance.jsp](http://www.cpa2biz.com/content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/generic_template_content/IndependenceEthicsGuidance.jsp)

*Tax Ethics - Cir 230:*

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/pcir230.pdf>

*PCAOB Auditing Standards:*

<http://pcaobus.org/Standards/Auditing/Pages/default.aspx>

*Tax Payments on Foreign entities, IRS Information:*

<http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/International-Businesses>

### **Examinations:**

There will be a total of four sectional examinations (there will be no make-up examinations). The three highest grades received on these four exams will be used in computing the student's final grade for the course. The lowest score will be dropped. For a missed examination, a student is allowed to drop **one** of the four sectional examinations. There will also be a comprehensive final.

**Evaluation Requirements:**

4 Sectional Exams (Drop one) (100 pts each)	300 points
Final examination	100 points
Presentations/Case Studies (8 x20)	160 points
Papers (2 papers @ 100 pts each)	200 points
Homework(8 x 20pts each chapter); Class Participation & Attendance (80 pts)	240 points
Total	1,000 points

**Grading Scale:**

90 - 100%	=	A	(900 to 1,000 points)
80 - 89%	=	B	(800 to 899 points)
70 - 79%	=	C	(700 to 799 points)
60 - 69%	=	D	(600 to 699 points)
BELOW 60%	=	F	( 0 to 599 points)

**Homework Assignments:**

All assignments must be typed and turned in without the class name (Ethics for Accountants), meeting day (i.e., Thursday), and the student's name as recorded in the HCC/Student Administration system. If this information is missing, you will receive no credit for the homework.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Each student is to do their own homework and papers. If one student plagiarizes another's work, it is grounds for an "F" or zero credit on the homework and an "F" in the class. Use proper citations such as APA, MLA or other such system as necessary.

Any assignment sent to the professor by email will not be graded.

**Research Component:**

Grades on papers, homework and presentations will be based upon demonstrated research skills and analytical reasoning. Sources will be properly referenced under MLA Rules on a separate Works Cited page or on the face of a power-point screen. These references are to be located through research. HCC's library provides an extensive source of research material including the sites listed above, over 100 databases you may search at <http://library.hccs.edu/atoz> and RIA (Research Institute of America) specifically provided for accounting research. The ability to demonstrate research skills through your written assignments and proper use of a Works Cited page is an important component to demonstrating your ability to properly research material related to this course.

**\*IMPORTANT FOR RESEARCH TOPICS:**

**RIA Checkpoint Education License for RIA's Academic Advantage Program is available in all our open labs and in the libraries. This license includes RIA tax code, FASB Accounting Standards, AICPA Resource – Professional Literature.**

### **Evaluation and Requirements:**

Students are expected to read all assigned chapters, complete and submit all assignments on its specific due date, make presentations in class, and attend all classes. The nature of the course is such that perfect attendance is essential for mastery of the course content. A missed class can never be duplicated.

Accounting is best learned through doing. Therefore, there are always homework assignments to do. This will require a considerable commitment of time and effort from you. Typically, the successful student in college can count on 3 hours of independent study for every hour in the classroom.

Students will develop awareness of ethical issues, will analyze ethical parameters, will evaluate the culture of organizations, will explain ethical thinking and behavior, and will discuss their approach to specific decisions through

1. group and/or individual projects,
2. various assigned readings from textbooks and other sources,
3. in-class discussions, and
4. written responses to questions regarding ethical issues.

This will allow students to effectively explain ethical thinking and behavior, and to discuss different approaches to specific decisions regarding ethical situations.

Your final grade for this course will be based on how well you do in meeting the evaluation requirements listed on your assignment schedule and applying the grading scale which is listed below.

### **HCC Grading Scale:**

A = 100- 90	4 points per semester hour
B = 89 - 80:	3 points per semester hour
C = 79 - 70:	2 points per semester hour
D = 69 - 60:	1 point per semester hour
59 and below = F	0 points per semester hour
IP (In Progress)	0 points per semester hour
W(Withdrawn)	0 points per semester hour
I (Incomplete)	0 points per semester hour
AUD (Audit)	0 points per semester hour

IP (In Progress) is given only in certain developmental courses. The student must re-enroll to receive credit. COM (Completed) is given in non-credit and continuing education courses. To compute grade point average (GPA), divide the total grade points by the total number of semester hours attempted. The grades "IP," "COM" and "I" do not affect GPA.

### **Class Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly. Students are responsible for materials covered during their absences, and there will be no make-up assignments for missed classes without a reason the instructor in his own discretion determines to be appropriate. The instructor has full authority to drop a student for excessive absences.

A student may be dropped from any course for excessive absences after the student has accumulated absences of 12.5% of the hours of instruction. For example, in a 3 credit hour lecture class meeting 3 hours per week, a student may be dropped after 6

hours of absence. In this class you can be dropped or given a failing grade if you miss more than two days of classroom instruction or class presentations.

The professor of this class may also reduce any student's grade, at his discretion and after all points are accumulated, by the following:

- One letter grade for missing 25% of classroom attendance,
- Two letter grades for missing 50% of classroom attendance, and
- Three letter grades for missing 75% of classroom attendance.

Any test period or final day is not included in the attendance calculation. Grade reduction may be made in lieu of being given a failing grade if you miss more than two days of classroom instruction or class presentations.

**Classroom Behavior:**

As your instructor and as a student in this class, it is our shared responsibility to develop and maintain a positive learning environment for everyone. Your instructor takes this responsibility very seriously and will inform members of the class if their behavior makes it difficult for him/her to carry out this task. As a fellow learner, you are asked to respect the learning needs of your classmates and assist your instructor achieve this critical goal.

**Academic Discipline/CTE Program Learning Outcomes:** The primary purpose of this course is to prepare the student for a variety of ethical situations they will face in the workplace. Students will develop their understanding of and identifying ethical situations and resolving ethical conflict by researching, writing and role-playing in actual cases. This course and the case study approach will help

1. students to develop awareness of ethical issues,
2. students to build ethical parameters into culture of organizations,
3. students to explain ethical thinking and behavior, and
4. students to discuss approach specific decisions.

Students will develop awareness of ethical issues, will build ethical parameters through the analysis of the culture of organizations, will explain ethical thinking and behavior, and will discuss their approach to specific decisions based upon

1. frameworks for governance, risk management, and accountability;
2. perspectives on changing expectations of ethical behavior;
3. discussion and analysis of philosopher's contributions to ethics;
4. review of ethical culture and threats to good governance;
5. analysis of key ethics opportunities and the related ethics risk;
6. research and discussion of effective tools to manage ethical risks; and
7. analysis of the fiduciary role and the public's expectations of the accounting profession.

The accounting profession requires an ethical approach to the decision making process.

The Texas State Board of Public Accountancy (**TSBPA**) has always been very active in policing the accounting profession. Students in this class will become familiar with The Public Accountancy Act, Rules of Professional Conduct, and will make presentations after completing their research on the Texas Administrative Code.

[http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=3&ti=22&pt=22](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=3&ti=22&pt=22)

As students work with their assignments, they will be reminded that there are other codes of conduct created by professional societies that outline accountants' proper working relationships to firms, clients, and the broad public interest. Several of these codes govern accounting practice in the United States, including those published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (**AICPA**), the Institute of Management Accountants (**IMA**), the Institute of Internal Auditors (**IIA**), the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (**PCAOB**), and the Securities and Exchange Commission (**SEC**.)

Additional studies include an update on the Internal Revenue Service and Treasury Department **Circular 230** which covers ethical standards for tax professionals.

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/pcir230.pdf>

In response to recent corporate scandals involving high-profile companies, the Accounting Education Change Commission (**AECC**) supported a curriculum that helps students learn the concepts and principles underlying accounting rules. The cases will help students to recognize ethical dilemmas and moral problems in the world of accounting. As students develop technical knowledge and basic skills of accounting practice, they also "should know and understand the ethics of the profession and be able to make value-based judgments."

**Drops and Withdrawals: It is the responsibility of each student to officially drop or withdraw from a course.** Failure to officially withdraw may result in the student receiving a grade of F in the course. A student may officially withdraw in any of the following ways:

1. Complete an official withdrawal form at any HCCS campus.
2. Withdraw on-line.
3. Send a letter requesting withdrawal to: Registrar Houston Community College System P. O. Box 667517 Houston, TX 77266-7517
The withdrawal will be effective as of the date of the postmark. Withdrawals will NOT be accepted by telephone.

It is the responsibility of each student to officially drop or withdraw from a course. Failure to officially withdraw may result in the student receiving a grade of F in the course. Procedures for withdrawing from a class are found in the Student Handbook.

*International Students:* Receiving a **W** in a course may affect the status of your student visa. Once a **W** is given for the course, it will not be changed to an **F** because of visa considerations.

*New Policy:* Students who repeat a course three or more times will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. Please seek tutoring or other assistance prior to considering course withdrawal.

**SCANS – Secretary’s Commission for Achieving Necessary Skills**

The Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) from the U.S. Department of Labor was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and whether our students are capable of meeting those demands. Specifically, the Commission was directed to advise the Secretary on the level of skills required to enter employment. In carrying out this charge, the Commission was asked to do the following:

- Define the skills needed for employment
- Propose acceptable levels of proficiency
- Suggest effective ways to assess proficiency, and
- Develop a dissemination strategy for the nation’s schools, businesses, and homes

SCANS research verifies that what we call *workplace know-how* defines effective job performance today. This know-how has two elements: *competencies* and a *foundation*. This report identifies five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that lie at the heart of job performance. These eight requirements are essential preparation for all students, whether they go directly to work or plan further education. Thus, the competencies and the foundation should be taught and understood in an integrated fashion that reflects the workplace *contexts* in which they are applied.

Workplace Competencies	Foundation Skills
<p><b>Resources:</b> allocating time, money, materials, space, staff</p> <p><b>Interpersonal Skills:</b> working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds</p> <p><b>Information:</b> acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information</p> <p><b>Systems:</b> understanding social, organizational, and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performances, and designing or improving systems</p> <p><b>Technology:</b> selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies</p>	<p><b>Basic Skills:</b> reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking and listening</p> <p><b>Thinking Skills:</b> thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the minds eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning</p> <p><b>Personal Qualities:</b> individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity</p>

**SCANS** workplace competencies and foundation skills have been integrated into Ethics for Accountants, and are exhibited in the SCANS schedule.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is a violation of HCC policy for an employee, agent, or student of the College to engage in sexual harassment as defined in the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission (EEOC) guidelines. Any student who has a complaint concerning this policy has the opportunity to seek resolution of such a complaint in accordance with procedures set forth in the Student Handbook. Report any complaints immediately to College Administration or call the Institutional Equity & Compliance Office 713.718.8271.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) COMPLIANCE**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Support Services Office (DSSO) of their respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodation(s) requested by the DSSO. For information and services at HCC Southwest, contact Dr. Becky Hauri, ADA Counselor, at 713.718.7910.

### **Repeat Course Fee:**

The State of Texas encourages students to complete college without having to repeat failed classes. To increase student success, students who repeat the same course more than twice, are required to pay extra tuition. The purpose of this extra tuition fee is to encourage students to pass their courses and to graduate. Effective fall 2006, HCC will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

### **Use of Camera and/or Recording Devices:**

As a student active in the learning community of this course, it is your responsibility to be respectful of the learning atmosphere in your classroom. To show respect of your fellow students and instructor, you will turn off your phone and other electronic devices, and will not use these devices in the classroom unless you receive permission from the instructor.

Use of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for information regarding reasonable accommodations.

### **Incompletes:**

The grade of "I" (incomplete) is conditional. If you receive an "I," you must arrange with your instructor to complete the course work by the end of the following term (excluding summer). After the deadline, the "I" becomes an "F." See the Student Handbook for more information. My policy for issuing an incomplete is that you must have completed all semester coursework except the final, and have a minimum of a C average.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disabilities Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.



### **Academic Honesty:**

A student who is academically dishonest is, by definition, not showing that the coursework has been learned, and that student is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcement roles. You are expected to be familiar with the University's Policy on Academic Honesty, found in the catalog. What that means is: If you are charged with an offense, pleading ignorance of the rules will not help you. Students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by College System officials against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty. "Scholastic dishonesty": includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating on a test includes:

- Copying from another students' test paper;
- Using materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Collaborating with another student during a test without authorization;
- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test that has not been administered;
- Bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered.

Plagiarism means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit.

Collusion mean the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit. Possible punishments for academic dishonesty may include a grade of 0 or F in the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the College System. (See the Student Handbook)

### **HCCS Website:**

Our website is: <http://www.hccs.edu>

### **Instructor Website:**

From the HCCS homepage, choose Southwest College, choose "The Learning Web," choose Faculty, type in your instructor's name. Your instructor will have a copy of the syllabus and other pertinent information for you at the website:

<http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/william.nantz>

### **The Learning Web:**

Your course syllabus and other information can be found on The Learning Web. From the HCCS homepage, click Southwest, click "The Learning Web," click Faculty, type in Instructor's name, choose the course.

## ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Class	Date	Chapter	Topic	Homework Assignment
1	1/22	1	<b>Ethics Expectations (Brooks Book)</b> Readings: Managing for Organizational Integrity; The Whistle-Blower Orientation: ACNT Certificate Program Review CPA Exam Qualifications Review TSBPA requirements	Study “Guy” Book
2	1/29	1  1	<b>Ethics Expectations (Brooks Book)</b>  <u>Case Studies</u> : as assigned.	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?
3	2/5		<b>Develop Writing &amp; Research Skills</b> <b>Review Research Databases</b>  Review Internal Revenue Service and Treasury Department <b>Circular 230</b> , which covers ethical standards for tax professionals.  Review AICPA Ethics Decision Tree	Review use of database research in accounting work and writing skills. Print: Cir 230 from: <a href="http://www.irs.gov">www.irs.gov</a>  Print: AICPA Ethics Decision Tree from HCC Learning Web
4	2/12	2  2	<b>Ethics &amp; Governance Scandals (Brooks Book)</b>  <u>Case Studies</u> : as assigned.  Exam 1 Review	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?
5	2/19		<b>Exam 1</b>	Due: Chapter 1 & 2 Homework
6	2/26	3  3	<b>Ethical Behavior – Philosopher’s Contributions (Brooks Book)</b>  <u>Case Studies</u> : as assigned.	Study “Guy” Book rules and authorities.  Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?
7	3/5	  4  4	<b>Discussion of Rules for the Accounting Profession, Texas Administrative Code, and The Public Accountancy Act</b>  <b>Review PCAOB, SEC and AICPA rules and authorities.</b>  <b>Practical Ethical Decision Making (Brooks Book)</b>  <u>Case Studies</u> : as assigned.  <b>Review Writing &amp; Research Skills</b>	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?

8	3/12	4	<u>Remaining Case Studies:</u> as assigned <b>Exam 2 Review</b>  <b>Exam 2</b>	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?  <b>DUE:</b> Paper # 1 Chapt 1 & 2 Homework
9	3/19		<b>Spring Break</b>	Campus Closed
10	3/26	5	<b>Corporate Ethical Governance &amp; Accountability (Brooks Book)</b>  <b>Review Research Skills</b>  5 <u>Case Studies:</u> as assigned	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?
11	4/2		<b>Spring Holiday/Easter</b>	Campus Closed PM
12	4/9	6	<b>Professional Accounting in the Public Interest, post Enron (Brooks Book)</b>  6 <u>Case Studies:</u> as assigned  <b>Exam 3 Review</b>	Using Guy Book as guidance, what accounting rules and authorities would be applied and were not applied with case studies?  <b>DUE:</b> Paper #2
13	4/16		<b>Exam 3</b>	Due: Chapter 5 & 6 Homework
14	4/23	7	<b>Managing Ethics Risks and Opportunities (Brooks Book)</b>  <u>Case Studies:</u> to be assigned  <b>Exam 4 Review</b>	Study Guy Book what Authority & Rules were not applied with case studies?
15	4/30	8	<b>Subprime Lending Fiasco – Ethics Issues</b>  <u>Case Studies:</u> to be assigned	Study Guy Book what Authority & Rules were not applied with case studies?
16	5/7		<b>Exam 4 Review</b>  <b>Exam 4 &amp; Final Exam Review</b>	Due: Chapter 7 & 8 Homework
17	5/14		<b>Final Exam</b> (comprehensive and mandatory)	