NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
Leonard N. Stern School of Business

Required Materials
2. Wall Street Journal; CFO.com.

Objectives
♦ Create a stable, coherent tax policy framework from which all students can make informed decisions as citizen-voters and business professionals. Identify tax policy issues suggested by or underlying particular provisions of the tax law.
♦ Teach sufficient detail about tax laws to provide a basic knowledge for all the students who are future taxpayers and the subset of students who become tax advisors. Apply basic tax rules and regulations to compute the taxable income and federal income tax liability for corporate and pass-through entity taxpayers. Teach the basics of the tax ramifications of business formation, liquidation, operations, mergers, acquisitions, etc.
♦ Expand students’ current knowledge in accounting and finance by using concepts from other courses to learn tax concepts, so that students planning careers specifically in accounting or finance have additional tools. Incorporate tax costs and tax savings into calculations of net present value of cash flows.
♦ Show how taxation affects the economic decisions by multiple parties to a transaction and how taxes affect prices and negotiation, so that all students who plan a career in business will understand how taxes affect business transactions. Recognize the tax planning opportunities or problems inherent in common business and investment transactions.

Teaching Philosophy and Classroom Format
I have done extensive university teaching and corporate training in the U.S. and abroad, and my classroom/corporate approach attempts to not just hand you information, but to get you engaged in the subject matter as though your company’s success depends on how well you understand and utilize the information.

I believe learning requires two-way communication. The success of this learning experience will depend on how you and I operate as a team with regard to questions such as the following: Will I organize and prepare the material in an understandable and stimulating fashion (yes, even tax can be understandable and stimulating)? Will I deliver it with enthusiasm? Will you receive it with enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity? Will you provide me with feedback as to how well you are receiving the material? Will I look for and respond to your feedback?

I will employ a very active, dynamic, and demanding approach to learning in this class. The style and expectations essentially replicate what it is like to go through an intense corporate training program where: (1) you will be evaluated and retained (or not) based on both your performance in the training sessions themselves (2) and on the projects required by the corporate trainer designed to demonstrate that you can actually go back to your office or the boardroom and effectively execute high-level, high pressure, high quality business decisions for which you have just been trained.

Research indicates that adults learn most effectively in a participative setting. Thus, the format of a large portion of our class time will consist of: (1) interactive discussions of pre-assigned readings and assigned discussion questions, etc; (2) mini-lecturettes; (3) solving or discussing related tax problems in groups or as a class.
Course Requirements
I will evaluate your performance through a combination of participation, exams, and other graded assignments, as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class participation, professionalism, assignments, presentations, etc</td>
<td>15%</td>
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- In addition to your participation and preparedness for in-class discussions, your written communication will also be a small but crucial component of this course. If you believe your skills are particularly weak, I recommend *Effective Writing: A Handbook for Accountants*, which can be ordered through www.amazon.com. Your professional reputation depends in part on your command of written English.
- Grading is a subjective exercise, much like Olympic gymnastics judging. I work very hard to be consistent and fair. In the event that you feel I should consider giving you additional points, you will need to submit the request in writing. At that point, you will also need to agree that the entire question, exam, or project will be subject to my re-grading and that your overall score may in fact go down upon re-viewing the “tape” of your entire performance.
- All outside reading and current events discussions are potential exam subject matter.
- I will require that each of you meet with me individually within the first 6 weeks of the course.

Attendance, Participation, etc
I will randomly call on students to discuss WSJ, CFO.com, and assigned homework. You will be graded on the quality of your preparedness/answers, with particular emphasis on your ability to defend your answer with principles from the text or prior classes, etc. I will also ask “what if” and “what’s a counter-opinion” follow-up questions which may either be handled by random selection or by a show of hands. If you are not in attendance, and I call on you, you will receive zero points that day for participation. If I have students turn in anything on a day you are absent you will not receive points for the assignment and it will affect my assessment of your professionalism. Part of your participation grade will also include your contribution of helpful information to the BB Discussion Board.

I will regularly and genuinely solicit your feedback and input. My only requirement is that you provide this to me in a professional manner. The attached schedule is tentative, as I expect feedback from you as the semester progresses with respect to the timing of key projects, exams, etc.

Office Hours
Please come to office hours with your questions only after you have completely read all the assigned material and have attempted to answer/understand these materials on your own or with fellow classmates. Please be aware that my assessment of your professionalism, ethics, and preparedness extends beyond your performance during formal class sessions.

If you miss a class, for any reason, please do not email me or come to office hours to find out what was covered. It is your responsibility to consult BB and your colleagues for this information.

You are welcome to stop by anytime my door is open, AND it does not need to be for course-related reasons. IF my door is closed tightly, it means I cannot see you at that time (or that I’m off looking for another dose of caffeine).

Communication
You will find me easy to talk with and to approach, which means that my expectations about your communicating with me as the class progresses are quite high. Please do not leave concerns or issues or questions about course requirements until the last minute. I will check BB’s Discussion Board and my email a couple of times a day during the week and at least once on the weekends. Serious issues or in-depth questions should ONLY be handled with me in person. You may schedule times with me for this if you cannot make my office hour times.

Corporate Ethics and Professionalism
The academic honor code (which is our equivalent of the corporate codes of ethics that are being widely instituted in the U.S. in the post-Enron business world) will apply to this course. All individual assignments/projects/exams, etc must be completed individually by you without outside assistance. All group members must carry their weight, etc on group assignments. Cheating will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade as well as university administrative actions.

Other
Students with disabilities who wish to request special accommodations are encouraged to contact me during office hours or by appointment. All other students should expect to receive consistent treatment - for example, exams will be a fixed length, deadlines will be strictly enforced, etc. Students who find that something in the schedule conflicts with a religious holiday should notify me immediately.