



Ethics for Accounting Professionals

ACCT 320

Southwestern College Professional Studies

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. Course Catalog Description

Ethical conduct is a core value for the accounting profession and requirement for accounting professionals. Increasingly, an accounting specific course in ethics is required by states in order to sit for the CPA exam. Learners examine the American Institute of Certified Public Accountant's Code of Professional Conduct, the Kansas Board of Accountancy expectations, and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act requirements. Learners evaluate case studies of some of the most famous accounting scandals and develop an understanding of the ethical issues surrounding those scandals as well as other ethical situations that Accounting Professionals may encounter.

II. Required and Supplementary Instructional Materials

No textbook required. (Note: a separate course fee paid at the time of registration covers the cost of the required Harvard Business Review Case Studies used in Unit 6. Your instructor will provide a link to those materials at the start of the session.)

III. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that learners gain as the result of a particular learning experience. Southwestern College Professional Studies has learning outcomes specific to each program of study that are in line with the institutional outcomes of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, leadership, communication, and career preparation. Course outcomes support program outcomes and are listed below.

Upon successfully completing this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Evaluate the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and apply the code to decisions being made as an Accountant and as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
2. Apply the Kansas Administrative Code or any other State Board of Accountancy Code of Conduct and Administrative Code in the practicing as a licensed CPA
3. Analyze historic and recent accounting scandals and identify codes that may have been violated and laws that may have been affected by such violations.
4. Discuss and question personal ethical values in regards to accounting ethical situations
5. Be able to apply professional skepticism in situations that may require a CPA's professional judgment.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the inner workings of the Kansas Board of Accountancy – which can apply to any other states or US territories
7. Outline the AICPA's stance regarding issues that may confront an accountant and explain how an accountant may solve those issues based on the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct.
8. Review and explain the importance of recent accounting issues that have changed the accounting profession.

At the end of the course, learners may vary in their ability to achieve these outcomes. You are more likely to achieve these outcomes only if you attend class and/or online activities as required by the syllabus, complete the requirements for all assignments to the best of your ability, participate actively in class activities and group work as directed, and study diligently for exams.

IV. Course Policies

Students are expected to read and abide by the course policies found in the instructor-specific syllabus located in the Blackboard course.

V. Course Requirements:

Requirements	Number of Assignments	Points Possible	Percent of Grade
Introductions Discussion	1	5	0.5%
Discussions	12	420	42%
Unit 1 Short Response Essay	1	35	3.5%
Unit 1 Short Response Paper	1	50	5%
Case Studies	5	300	30%
Memo	1	50	5%
Research Essay	1	90	9%
Unit 6 Assignment Questions	1	50	5%
Total		1000	100%

VI. Course at a Glance:

Unit	Reading & Preparation Activities	Graded Work Due
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Slides on AICPA Code of Professional Conduct AICPA Code of Professional Conduct Pg. 26 – 32 – Use Page Numbers in the Document “Accounting Professionalism – They Just Don’t Get It!” Kansas Accountants Law, Kansas Rules and Regulations, and PowerPoint Slides on the Kansas Administrative Code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1 Short Response Essay Unit 1 Short Response Paper Introductions Discussion Unit 1.1 Discussion Unit 1.2 Discussion
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AICPA Code of Professional Conduct - 1.100 Integrity and Objectivity - Pg. 32 – 40 AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.200 Independence – Pg. 41 – 105 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 2 Case Study Unit 2 Memo Unit 2.1 Discussion Unit 2.2 Discussion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.300 – General Standards Pg. 105 – 109 “CA: Computer Associates or Creative Accounting? How corporate culture can influence unethical behavior.” AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.400 – Acts Discreditable Pg. 110 – 116 AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.500 – Fees and Other Types of Remuneration Pg. 116 – 122 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 3.1 Case Study Unit 3.2 Case Study Unit 3.1 Discussion Unit 3.2 Discussion
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.600 – Advertising and Other Forms of Solicitation – Pg. 122 – 127 AICPA Code of Professional Conduct – 1.700 – Confidential Information Pg. 127 - 123 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 4 Case Study Unit 4.1 Discussion Unit 4.2 Discussion
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sarbanes-Oxley Review Sheet “Small and Large Firm Regulatory Costs” “Is Sarbanes-Oxley Still Working” “Sarbanes-Oxley Act at 10” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 5 Case Study Unit 5 Research Essay Unit 5.1 Discussion Unit 5.2 Discussion

Unit	Reading & Preparation Activities	Graded Work Due
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "An Analysis of Accounting Frauds and the Timing of Analyst Coverage Decisions and Recommendation Revisions: Evidence from the US" • "Forensic Accounting a Multidimensional Approach to Investigating Frauds and Scams." • "Did the Waste Management Audit Failures Signal Lower Firm-Wide Audit Quality at Arthur Andersen?" • "Waste Management, Inc." • "AICPA Proposal Raises the Ethical Bar" • "Developing Ethical Leaders for the Accounting Profession" • "The State of Ethics in Business and the Accounting Profession" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 6 Assignment Questions • Unit 6.1 Discussion • Unit 6.2 Discussion • Unit 6.3 Discussion

VII. Other Policies and Requirements

Follow this link to the Southwestern College Professional Studies [Standard Syllabus](#) in Blackboard. You may be required to log in.