1. Course Information

**Course Title:** Contemporary Issues in Finance and Accounting  
*This class will be offered in a blended/hybrid format*

**Course number:** 5314  
**Course Section:** N  
**Credit Hours:** 3  
**Semester:** Spring 2018  
**Days & hours:** T Th 5:30 – 6:45

**Prerequisites:** ACCT 5313 Managerial Accounting

**Web page/BlackBoard site:** gregory.stthom.edu (Blackboard)

2. Instructor Information

**Name:** Vinita Ramaswamy  
**Office location:** Welder 222  
**Office phone:** (713) 525 6913  
**Office hours:** T 2 - 5; W 3 – 6  
Th: 11 - 1

**Where to leave assignments:** Turn it into me in class or leave it in the CSB office

**E-mail:** vinitar @ stthom.edu  
**Fax number:** (713) 525 2110

**Emergency contact:** vinitar @ stthom.edu

3. Course Catalog Description

A case and research based examination of accounting concepts and theories with an emphasis on the current status of generally accepted accounting principles.

This is a hybrid/blended class.
4. Program Goals and Objectives:

**MSA Learning Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals: What will our students be?</th>
<th>Objectives: What will our students do?</th>
<th>Traits: How will we know/measure?</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Succeed as accounting practitioners | Demonstrate knowledge of required areas of accounting | • Financial Accounting  
• Auditing  
• Taxation  
• Managerial Accounting  
• Govt. and Not for Profit |
|                                   | Demonstrate ability to identify issues and solve problems in required areas of accounting | • Financial Accounting  
• Auditing  
• Taxation  
• Managerial Accounting  
• Govt. and Not for Profit |
| Professional Communicators        | Conduct professional research in accounting issues | • Identification of issues  
• Identification and appropriateness of relevant authority and methodology |
|                                   | Deliver compelling oral presentations | • Quality of opening statement  
• Organization  
• Relevant content with supporting evidence  
• Well supported conclusion  
• Time management |
|                                   | Create professional documents | • Quality of introduction  
• Organization  
• Relevant content with supporting evidence  
• Well supported conclusion  
• Grammar  
• Spelling |
| Effective when working in teams   | Work collectively towards team objectives | • Team cohesion  
• Communication  
• Goal orientation  
• Planning and task coordination  
• Conflict resolution  
• Shared responsibility |
|                                   | Effectively lead a team in a group project | • Motivation  
• Delegation  
• Conflict resolution |
| Ethical Leaders                  | Identify accounting dilemmas citing | • Recognition of ethical issues  
• Description of ethical |


relevant authority | frameworks
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Applying accounting ethical standards to business situations | • Practical plan of action
| • Plan is effective in meeting objectives

| Technological Awareness | Demonstrate knowledge of the accounting systems environment | • Database concepts
| • Knowledge of accounting software
| • System documentation
| • Internal controls
| • Information systems control

| Demonstrate knowledge of accounting systems | • Business transaction processing
| • Production/human resources/payroll
| • The revenue and expenditure cycle
| • General ledger/financial reporting cycle
| • Computer fraud

| Global Awareness | Demonstrate knowledge of global standard setting | • International regulatory bodies
| • Convergence with GAAP

| Demonstrate knowledge of multinational accounting practices | • Foreign currency transactions
| • Translation of foreign financial statements

5. **Course Learning Objectives** *(and relationship to program goals and objectives)*

This course is an overview of the history of accounting and the development of accounting concepts. We will study the FASB’s conceptual framework, their current projects, limitations of the standard setting process and current research on different issues.

The aim of this class is to encourage the following:

- **Technical knowledge and skills**: an in-depth understanding of the rules and regulations that GAAP is comprised of (Goal 1, Objective 1)
- **Practical application**: to know when and under what circumstances these rules should be applied, and to recognize instances when these rules have not been followed (Goal 1, Objective 2)
- **Critical thinking**: the ability to analyze information and ideas from multiple perspectives in a logical manner, and to think creatively. Specifically, we will be making links to the conceptual framework to see why the current accounting rules
were promulgated and the economic consequences of these rules to the various stakeholders. (Goal 1, Objective 2)

- **Inquiry and information literacy**: the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the methods, resources and technologies available in the fields of accounting and finance. (Goal 2, Objective 1 and 3)

6. **Texts, Readings, Materials**

**Required text citation:**

- Contempory Issues – Custom e-book
- Skills in Accounting Research – Cambridge Publishing

**Required readings**: Please check Blackboard under “Course Documents”

Class Notes
Articles to be read
Practice Problems
Practice Exams

**Supplementary readings**: *The Wall Street Journal, BusinessWeek.*

Please check Blackboard under “Course Documents” for a detailed list of reading

**Suggestions for further study**: Intermediate Accounting by Kieso and Weygandt is a valuable resource. *If you need extra problems for practice, I will be happy to provide them.*
7. **Instructional methods:** (lecture, group discussion, class problem solving, case methods, team projects, etc.)
   - Class problem solving
   - Lecture
   - Group discussions
   - Research projects
   - Team Projects
   - Case studies
   - Presentations

8. **Technology**

   Please identify IT assignments that utilize any of the following five types:

   1) **Online data retrieval and/or research:** Term paper, case studies, group work

   2) **Online communication or collaboration:** Homework, group projects

   3) **Use of general productivity software (e.g., Microsoft Office) to complete assignment:** Excel, Word, Powerpoint

   4) **Use of specialized software to complete assignment:** ASC, Mergent, Business Source Complete, Lexis Nexus

   5) **Use of BlackBoard learning platform:** Notes, Assignments, Practice Exams, Solutions Manual

   6) **IT itself is the subject matter of assignment (in contrast to #1-4 above where IT is used as a tool in learning about non-IT subject matter):** None
9. Course Tentative Schedule:

Every class will discuss a combination of the following topics:
- GAAP
- IFRS
- Accounting Standards Codification
- Academic/Trade Journal publications
- Financial Statement Analysis and databases
- Accounting Simulations
- A continuing case
- Current issues in Accounting
- Working with Excel

Please check Blackboard under “Course Documents” for a detailed list.

The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of circumstances beyond the instructor's control.

10. Course Policies

- Attendance/lateness: Regular attendance is highly encouraged for a proper learning experience. An university excused, documented absence will not reduce points for attendance. If you are unable to attend class, you will be required to individually make up the group projects assigned in class that day. You will lose half the points for the group project because you were not present to contribute to the group.
- Class Participation: Questions and discussion on the lectures and problems are encouraged. Participation will be taken into account while assigning grades for the Group Projects, attendance and case studies.
- Make-up Exams: Six quizzes will be given. There is no make up for a missed or late quiz.
- Missed Assignments: At the end of most chapters, group assignments or individual projects will be given to the class. The homework needs to be turned in the next class day. Late homework carries a penalty of 10%.
- Requirements for the class:
  - Short Research Essays
  - Critical thinking cases
  - Company Analysis
  - Oral Communication
  - Quizzes
- Extra credit opportunities: None.

- Cell phones, electronic media
  - During lectures: No cell phones. If there is an emergency that requires you to be on call, please inform me before class. Laptops will be allowed for taking notes during class. Web surfing while class is in session will result in negative marking on examinations.
11. Available Support Services:

Library resources, learning center, computer center, tutoring services

I will be available during office hours to help you with any questions you may have. You may also contact me by email and I will respond as quickly as I can.

1. Resources available on Blackboard sites. (For Math, Written Communications, and Presentations, etc.)
   a. For graduate students: CSB Resource Site for Graduate Students.

2. Tutorial Services:
   Students are encouraged to consult with tutors at the Tutorial Services Center when completing assignments for this course. Based on the instructor’s assessment of the student’s work, the student may be required to work with the tutors at the Center to improve the student’s skills.
The Cameron School of Business at University of St. Thomas

MISSION STATEMENT

The Cameron School of Business will serve students of diverse backgrounds, providing them the necessary professional skills for a changing global economy, and instilling in them a deep appreciation for ethical behavior as the hallmark of a successful and fulfilling business career. The Cameron School will provide its students a timely and comprehensive business curriculum, with opportunities for specialized study in major business fields. The faculty will provide quality teaching, as this is the core of our mission. As an extension of our teaching mission, the faculty will engage in scholarly activity and service to the University, the profession, and the community.

Academic Honesty Ethical conduct is essential to a community of scholars and students searching for truth. Anything less than total commitment to honesty and honorable conduct undermines the efforts of the entire community. Academic integrity lies at the very heart of any institution of higher learning. In the Cameron School of Business, students and faculty are expected to commit to a code that exemplifies each individual's honor and integrity. Any conduct that violates this standard and betrays the respect of others is a matter of grave concern and, accordingly, is deemed unacceptable.

Accommodations The University of St. Thomas abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap." If you have a documented disability that may impact your performance in this class and for which you may require accommodations, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to Counseling and Disability Services which is located on the second floor of Crooker Center. Contact Debby Jones or Rose Signorello at 713-525-6953 or 713-525-3162.