Texas A & M San Antonio  
College of Business, Accounting ACCT 5308 600 12678  
Accounting Ethics  
Fall 2020/ Professor Dennis Elam

**Professor:** Dennis Elam PhD CPA  
**Office:** CAB D427 B  
**Office Hours:**  
This is an online class. Office hours by appointment on Zoom.

**Office Phone:** 210 784 2322  
**E-Mail Address:** delam@tamusa.edu  
**Class Time and Location:**  
Accounting Ethics ACCT 5308 600 12678  
Saturday 9 00 – 10 45 AM  

**Final Exam:** Dec 7-12  

**Covid Statement**  
The health and safety of our University community remains a top priority. Given the continued growth of the COVID-19 crisis in our community, Texas A&M University-San Antonio is supportive of the [San Antonio-Bexar County Emergency Management Alert](https://www.tamusa.edu/about/campus-info/emergency/) (distributed yesterday evening, June 27).

Although the University is a state agency, we support the local guidance to minimize activity and to stay at home, as practical. Out of an abundance of caution, division vice presidents may exercise the flexibility to have employees continue either working from home or working on campus - whichever is necessary to safely meet University business needs. As you may know, we have delayed the third wave of the return of administrative staff to campus until Aug. 1. The campus will remain open, and those who need work on campus are able to do so, in strict adherence to public health guidelines.
We remind you to wear a face covering, avoid gatherings outside of your household and continue to follow the health guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health agencies. We have a shared responsibility to help our campus remain healthy and to mitigate the spread of the virus. Understandably, the rise in COVID-19 cases and media reports may cause increased anxiety or concern; please seek help if needed through our Employee Assistance Program:

http://www.guidanceresources.com or (800) 697-0353 (866) 301-9623 or TTY: (800) 697-0353.

Please direct your questions to your managers or use the “Ask A Question” feature. We will provide updates as the situation warrants.

Risk Management Group-COVID-19
Community. Safety. Together

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

5308. Accounting Ethics. 3(30)
Application of ethical theory, philosophy and principles including the concepts of ethical reasoning, integrity, objectivity, independence and other core values.

This class has been approved by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy for qualification to sit for the State of Texas CPA exam.

COURSE LAY OUT

I will place other links and reading in the announcements section on BB. It is your responsibility to check this early in the week to prepare for the Saturday class.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

To acquaint the student with theories of ethical behavior
To apply those theories to real world accounting situations
To be able to present ethical situations and analyze them using relevant theory

LECTURE TOPICS

Ethical theories, Justice, Rights, Ego,
Point of View
Transcendental Thought – Emerson and Thoreau
Rule versus Principle Determination
History of US Accounting Regulation
Corporate Governance
Audit Crack Ups
Famous Fraudsters
Why They Do It – Look at White Collar Crime
Who’s the Worst – A Collection of Recent Year by Year Frauds Highlighted in this Class

Textbook: Mintz and Morris, McGraw Hill, *Ethical Obligations and Decision Making in Accounting 5e*
ISBN 978 1 259 96946 0
Printing Your E Book

Students have the option of printing their E-Book through a service offered through CourseSmart. Pricing will vary between publishers. Total cost will be displayed after selection is made.

1. Open Blackboard.
2. Click on Course you are taking
3. Click on E-Book in menu
4. Click on printing option to order book.

ACCT5308 is not the typical debit and credit class. The purpose of this class is to stimulate thoughtful discussion regarding the serious topic of accounting ethics. The following is a reading list used in past classes.

Suggested *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
http://www.amazon.com/How-Win-Friends-Influence-People-ebook/dp/B003WEAI4E/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1420392845&sr=1-1&keywords=how+to+win+friends+and+influence+people

This is the original self help book written in the 1930s. It has sold and still sells thousands of copies. One of the precepts we will study in ethics is the importance of Point of View. This is in fact Carnegie’s entire thesis. Every person believes that he or she is the center of the universe and does no wrong. Until one grasps that one is not
likely to have much success in influencing people. This will be the most important book you will read in college. This can be downloaded in a kindle edition from amazon for a mere $3.20. Please do this and start reading ASAP. Past classes are always amazed at Carnegie's simple revelations.

Carnegie Bio

Why They Do It by Eugene Soltes
https://www.amazon.com/Why-They-Do-White-Collar-Criminal/dp/1610395360/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1482759080&sr=1-1&keywords=why+they+do+it+inside+the+mind+of+the+white-collar+criminal

This is an excellent book for understanding the roots of white collar crime. Its three parts discuss sentencing history of white collar crime, theories of why they do it and reflections of those convicted, and finally interviews with those incarcerated. It an ‘up and close and personal’ look into the mind of the white collar criminal. This professor interviewed numerous white collar criminals including Bernie Madoff.

At this point here is another quote to mull over

I don’t know what it means to be a CPA
But I sure know what it means NOT to be a CPA

Glenn Steinle, 1971
My point here is to link the idea of self-reliance with what should be your longer-term goal of becoming certified.

Note, before we go any further

You might also reflect on the pass rates on the CPA exam.

https://www.tsbpa.state.tx.us/statistics/university-statistics.html

The results are only available on a section by section basis rather than an overall pass rate but....did you know the CPA exam has the highest failure rate of all professional examinations? As you will discern, the pass rate is about 50% but only because A & M and UT Austin have 60% pass rates. And I learned that all A & M College Station grads have Becker CPA Review paid for by their CPA employers while they take two other classes the last semester. Were it not for these two schools the overall average would be much worse. Do not be naïve about your chances.

Writing Assignment

A written paper in proper APA style must be submitted to pass this course. While the points are about 12%, one cannot pass without a submission.

My research interest regards socionomics. This is a field of thought which explains that social events are a result of changes in social
mood. I will display past papers from both our school and the other schools we are competing with. The prize is a $1,000 scholarship paid directly to TAMUSA. We are in competition with William and Mary, established 1693

https://www.wm.edu/

University of Delaware established 1743

https://www.udel.edu/

The idea is to pick an ethical topic and examine how social mood has altered attitudes toward that subject. I urge you to examine the papers the Socionomic Institute has published to get an idea of their point of view.

TAMUSA was the first University recipient of the Socionomic collection of DVDs and books which the Institute has published. In addition we have several years of back issues of the monthly magazine, Socionomist.

https://libguides.tamusa.edu/socionomist

Or go to Library on the main TAMUSA page

Then click on Research Help

Then click on Accounting

Then Socionomics

Socionomics
Learn more about at www.socionomics.net

The Socionomics Institute interviewed me at this link.

http://www.tamus.edu/news/2015/06/elam-podcast.html

Socionomic Institute Donation to TAMUSA


Summary

1. There will be quizzes and exams over the textbook material. Expect these to be online.
2. Please understand that class participation is an important part of ACCT 5308. This is not a debit and credit class, it is a class about human behavior. To ensure that ALL participate, each of you will pick a topic for a written paper. You will make a short presentation in class. I will have many links on BB for you to consider.
3. As this is a Hybrid class, we will have a writing assignment on Blackboard just about every week. After teaching this class for ten years, I have found students are much more interested in contemporary topics. The writings of Emerson have proven to be
popular. I ask that you post a short essay, at least 250 words, on the topic. This will require reading and hopefully a bit of research on your part.

1. Websites for this class
   Textbook site – Oddly this useful site no longer exists with anything but links to the cases.

2. We will use Blackboard via
   http://www.tamusa.tamus.edu/blackboard

   http://www.themarketperspective.com

   I maintain www.professorelam as a link to the business world. I link to articles that reflect on what we are studying in class. You can post comments to these articles. The market perspective blog is not particularly relevant to this class but would be of interest to those of you that want to learn more about markets and trading.

   Readers can search ethical posts by going down the left hand column and clicking on ethics.

4. A student subscription to the Wall Street Journal is a mere $1 a week, less than a starbucks latte and a lot better for you. I will be referring to articles in the WSJ and as an accounting professional this is a must read. And now it comes on your iPad or laptop as well. I also find the tv show on Saturdays at 1 PM and Sundays at 2 PM on Fox of interest.
5. McGraw Hill Connect


800 331 50940

Grading Matrix – Quiz numbers are an estimate

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Prior classes have been characterized by four or five people dominating the entire conversation. The rest of the class exhibited
little interest or participation. Such lack of activity will preclude an A in this class.

On Line Component

You will post all essays on Blackboard and comment on your fellow students’ posts. The purpose of posting is to ensure that high writing standards of grammar and style are maintained. In addition the purpose of the class is to stimulate discussion on ethical issues. You are expected to write a meaningful post. The reason for this requirement is to discourage posts that do not reflect constructive thinking such as ‘great post’ or ‘I never thought of it that way.’

Paper

I will establish a blog post for each of you to post your Idea for your paper

Versions of the paper as we progress to the final product.

Policies

Attendance

Attendance at all class meetings is required for any realistic hope of success. Your active constructive participation is expected.

DROP DATES
These are located in the Academic Calendar, see link above. It is up to you to drop a class.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services for the coordination of services. DSS is located in CAB 210. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY:** Students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic Dishonesty for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submission, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, violating known safety requirements and ethical misconduct. This includes holding other students to same standards and reporting any incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic department head. All students are responsible for being familiar with the Academic Dishonesty Policy which may be found in the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.
Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s words, ideas, data, or opinions without giving them proper credit. Proper credit in the Department of Business means the correct use of the American Psychological Association (APA) criteria for referencing, including in text reference citations and end of text reference lists. All resources cited in the text must be included in the reference list and all items in the reference list must be cited in the text. Proper credit also means that when using some else’s words, ideas, data, or opinions there must be correct use of paraphrasing and quotations. The Department of Business regards plagiarism as serious academic dishonesty and claims of not knowing how to give proper credit using APA formatting will not excuse students from disciplinary action. Please be aware that the University subscribes to the Turnitin plagiarism detection service. Your paper may be submitted to this service at the discretion of the instructor.

NONACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY: The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class and the inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under nonacademic procedures.
We will have all do a class presentation. And I will assign other cases and readings appropriate to the class.

Assignments

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