ACCT 520: TAX RESEARCH  
Spring 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Day/Time:</th>
<th>Monday, 9:00am – 11:45am</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Location:</td>
<td>Micron Business &amp; Economics Building (MBEB) 2010 (computer-equipped classroom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Web Page</td>
<td>Blackboard (Bb): <a href="https://blackboard.boisestate.edu/">https://blackboard.boisestate.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>Janet Mosebach, Ph.D., CPA (inactive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office:</td>
<td>Micron Business &amp; Economics Building (MBEB) 3104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Phone:</td>
<td>(208) 426-3411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:janetmosebach@boisestate.edu">janetmosebach@boisestate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Office Hours:        | Monday: 12:00pm – 1:00pm  
                      | Wednesday: 10:00am – 12:00pm  
                      | Other times by advance appointment |

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTANCY MISSION: The mission of the Department of Accountancy is to provide a high-quality educational experience through student-centered teaching, impactful research, and meaningful service that benefits and challenges students, the accounting profession, the business community, and the community at large.

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Instruction in all aspects of tax research including legislative, administrative, and judicial sources; major tax services, internet-based tax research libraries; writing and negotiation skills.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS: The objective of this course is to develop federal tax research competence. This course assumes students are already familiar with the fundamentals of federal tax law at a level typically achieved with the successful completion of an undergraduate federal income tax course.

After the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify sources of legal and ethical standards that guide tax practitioners.
2. Identify, describe, use, and properly cite primary and secondary sources of federal income tax law.
3. Understand and apply the steps involved in the tax research process necessary to locate, interpret, assess applicability of, and apply relevant authorities to specific situations.
4. Demonstrate proficiency with and conduct research using major commercial tax research databases.
5. Communicate tax research results in a properly-formatted written research memorandum.
6. Explain tax administration and procedure.
REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS:


Electronic Databases: As noted in Section V of the Handbook for Graduate Accountancy Students, Boise State University provides access to a variety of online tax research databases. These databases are conveniently grouped together in a Library Research Guide as ‘Accountancy Resources’ and can be accessed directly at: http://guides.boisestate.edu/accountancy. IntelliConnect, BNA, and Tax Notes all require you set up a user profile prior to use. Please be sure to do this during the first week of the course. The course is held in a computer-equipped classroom to facilitate the usage of online resources during class meetings.

Blackboard (Bb): Additional course materials will be available electronically on the course Bb site, which can be accessed using the link provided above, and your Boise State University username and password. You should check Bb daily.

REGISTRATION POLICY: Students whose names do not appear on the University’s official class roster by January 23, 2017, will not be permitted to participate in the course (attend class, take exams, or receive credit).

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Regular, punctual attendance is expected. Accreditation standards require monitoring of class attendance but no points are awarded for merely attending class. The material in this course is cumulative in nature so missing a class means you not only miss the material discussed that day but also the foundation knowledge necessary to understand related topics that are covered later in the course. In addition, any material discussed in class, including material beyond that covered in the textbook, can be included on assignments and exams. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to consult with another student who can brief you on the material you missed.

WITHDRAWALS: According to the Registrar’s Office, the last day a student can withdraw from the course is Friday, March 17, 2017. Students remaining in the course after the withdrawal deadline will receive the grade earned for the course. Consult the Registrar’s Office for procedures related to withdrawal and verification of the last date for withdrawal from the course. Students who withdraw from the course are not permitted to continue attending or participating in the course.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION and ADVANCE PREPARATION: Meaningful class participation is expected and encouraged. It will also help you get the most out of the course. Never be afraid to ask a question. Each student is responsible for reading the assigned material before coming to class. To be successful in this course, you should be prepared to discuss reading assignments and problems, answer questions, and participate in class activities.

ASSIGNMENTS: Below is a description of each type of assignment during the course. Please see the ‘GRADING POLICY’ portion of the syllabus below for the points associated with each type of assignment. In the world of taxation, deadlines are strict and enforced. Due dates of assignments in this course are the same. Due dates will be clearly noted on each assignment and no late assignments are accepted.

Assignments: Various homework assignments are due throughout the course. These assignments may be in-class exercises or something done outside of class time. Assignments may be individual assignments or group assignments, depending on the rules for each particular assignment, and could include a presentation component. Depending the type of assignment, they will either be submitted in class or electronically via Bb. All due dates and assignment rules will be clearly noted on each assignment.
Research Cases: Two research cases are assigned during the course, each requiring the preparation of a research memorandum. These cases are not group projects and you are expected to work independently. A professional work product, free of grammatical and spelling errors, is expected. Research cases will be graded on the use of acceptable style and grammar, thoroughness, quality of analysis, conclusions and recommendations. More detailed information regarding the format, length, etc. of these cases will be provided when they are assigned.

Tax Tidbits: As business advisors, we must keep abreast of current events in the financial news so we can converse intelligently with our peers, subordinates, supervisors and clients. Accordingly, we will start each class meeting with a few bits of current news from the tax, accounting, finance or general business areas. These items can be from the local, national or international news or something you are seeing at work that would be of interest to the class. Each student is charged with providing at least one current news item during the semester. To facilitate this sharing of information, you should be prepared to share an item on the date indicated in the Tax Tidbits Schedule posted on Bb. As time permits, you can always share another item that has come to your attention at another time.

You do not need to prepare a formal write-up or presentation. You are only asked to sit or stand at your seat and verbally summarize an item for the class so that we can all benefit from your knowledge. While you can certainly read portions of an article for emphasis, please do not just bring in an article and proceed to read large portions of it word-for-word or write up your own summary of the article and then proceed to read that word-for-word. If you anticipate being absent on your assigned date, please do your best to arrange to switch dates with another student (be sure to let me know so I can adjust my schedule). As a last resort, you can email me and I will attempt to find a substitute (but only if you notify me at least 24 hours in advance). The failure to contribute to this process by being unprepared on your assigned date will result in a 2.5% reduction in your final exam score.

COURSE MATERIALS: The materials provided or generated in this course, including (but not limited to) handouts, notes, slides, worksheets, homework answer keys, exams, etc., are only for the use of students currently enrolled in the course for purposes associated with this course. You are not to pass them on to others, including future students. To pass these materials on to others would, in some cases, be a violation of copyright laws. More importantly, such materials would have a negative impact on the recipient’s learning process and performance in the course. For these same reasons, you are not to refer to any course materials received from former students or other sources.

EXAMS: There is only one exam, a final exam at the end of the course. This exam will be comprised of short answer and essay questions, and will require the use of electronic research resources. It may be a take-home exam, administered in class, or a combination of both. It can be administered either in hard copy of electronic form. Collaboration with classmates or anyone else on the exam is prohibited and considered cheating.

In-class portions of the exam: If a portion of the exam is administered in class, all exam pages must be returned to the professor prior to leaving the classroom. Failure to return all exam pages to the professor will result in a score of zero for the exam. The use of cell phones or similar electronic devices (other than the computers provided in the classroom) is prohibited and will be considered cheating. You may not use these devices in place of a calculator and/or watch during exams. During exams, you must keep your cell phone and/or other electronic devices turned off or muted, and out of sight in a backpack, handbag, etc.

Take-home portions of the exam: If a portion of the exam is a take-home exam, it must be completed individually. Collaboration with classmates or anyone else on the exam is prohibited and considered cheating.
DISCLOSURE OF IN-CLASS EXAMS: Final exams are kept by the professor for one academic semester following the final exam. If a student wishes to review their final exam, they can consult with the professor during posted office hours the following semester. Final exams are not allowed to be removed from the professor’s office and they may not be copied. Failure to return all exam pages to the professor or removal of the exam from the professor’s office will result in a score of zero for that exam.

GRADING POLICY: A summary of graded components is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research cases</td>
<td>250 (1st = 100 pts; 2nd = 150 pts)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
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While your course grade is based on the points earned on the above items, some consideration will be given to overall participation where a student is on the borderline between grades. The amount of consideration is strictly at the discretion of the professor.

Your course grade is determined using the following grading scale:

- **A+**: 97.00% and above
- **A**: 93.00% to 96.99%
- **A-**: 90.00% to 92.99%
- **B+**: 87.00% to 89.99%
- **B**: 83.00% to 86.99%
- **B-**: 80.00% to 82.99%
- **C**: 73.00% to 76.99%
- **C-**: 70.00% to 72.99%
- **D+**: 67.00% to 69.99%
- **D**: 63.00% to 66.99%
- **D-**: 60.00% to 62.99%
- **F**: Below 60.00%

The professor may curve up (but not down) the above grading scale when deemed necessary. That is, the letter grade listed above is the minimum grade you can expect if your score falls in the corresponding interval.

Grade Posting: Grades will be posted to Bb. Grades will not be distributed via email or telephone as this violates federal law (specifically the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as FERPA).

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR: If you have questions or concerns that you believe can be handled via email, feel free to contact me that way. I check my email several times each weekday and will make every effort to reply to emails no later than the end of the next business day. Because your questions or concerns are quite often relevant to others in the class, I may simply respond to an email by indicating that I have posted information to the course Bb page. If I cannot adequately respond to your question via email, I will ask you to come to my regular offices hours or make an appointment.

I post information to Bb and/or send Bb email messages to the entire class throughout the semester and you should check your official Boise State University student email account (username@u.boisestate.edu) regularly. If you prefer to use another email address, it is your responsibility to set up the forwarding option in your student email account as I will only use your official Boise State University student email address.

CELL PHONE and ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY: The use of cell phones and other electronic devices in the classroom (other than the computers provided in the classroom) is not allowed. These devices must be turned off or muted during class. You cannot use these devices in place of a calculator and/or watch during exams. During exams, you must keep your cell phone and/or other electronic devices turned off or muted, and out of sight in a backpack, handbag, etc.
ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS: Students with disabilities needing accommodations to fully participate in this course should contact the Educational Access Center (EAC). All accommodations must be approved through the EAC prior to being implemented. To learn more about the accommodation process, visit the EAC’s website at https://eac.boisestate.edu/new-eac-students/. Should you choose to visit the EAC, they are located on the first floor of the Lincoln Parking Garage, on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and University Drive. They can be reached by phone at 208-426-1583 or email at eacinfo@boisestate.edu.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY: Students who believe they have a need for religious accommodation shall notify the professor within the first three weeks of the semester. If it is established that there is a legitimate basis for accommodating a student, reasonable accommodations will be provided where possible. Absences excused for religious holidays or observances do not relieve a student from responsibility for curriculum content during an absence. This policy is intended to allow students to exercise their religious beliefs while still continuing to meet their academic requirements. This policy is not intended to allow students to be granted excessive absences from the curriculum or to be granted significant alterations of the prescribed curriculum, regardless of one’s religious beliefs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic integrity is expected. Your integrity is far more important than your GPA. As a professional, your integrity is your prime asset and in our highly mobile professional atmosphere it is becoming even more critical. I assume you have the highest standards of personal integrity. You should assume the professor is the only person who may help you with graded assignments unless the instructions for a particular assignment provide otherwise.

The most difficult ethical issue any student can face is their responsibility to take action when they know another student is violating ethical standards. Such violations contribute to deception of potential employers and are injurious to the ethical climate of the entire University. The University and the business community take integrity very seriously. You should review and be familiar with the University policy on academic dishonesty located at: https://registrar.boisestate.edu/general-information-and-policies/academic-integrity/.

As a student taking coursework in the College of Business and Economies (College), you have an obligation to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct. This involves avoiding acts of academic dishonesty. The reason for requiring the highest standards of ethical conduct is to ensure fairness, honesty, and integrity in the evaluation of student performance. Evaluation of student performance should not be invalidated by students intending or attempting to misrepresent the skill, achievement, or ability of either themselves or others. To achieve this purpose, the University has enacted a Code of Student Conduct (Code). This Code, referenced in the academic integrity webpage above, can also be accessed directly at: https://deanofstudents.boisestate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf. This Code sets forth specific types of academic misconduct which will not be tolerated. If there is any evidence of any of these types of academic misconduct in this course, the reporting procedures outlined in the Code will be initiated. By your enrollment in this course, you are implicitly indicating to me that you have read, understand, and accept the University’s policies and procedures regarding academic integrity.

The first instance of any form of cheating on any graded component of the course (homework assignment, tax research memo, exam, etc.) will result in a score of 0 points for that graded component. A second instance of any form of cheating will result in a grade of “F” for the course.

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY STATEMENT OF SHARED VALUES: All members of the campus community are expected to exhibit behavior that reflects Boise State University’s Statement of Shared Values. The common values are Academic Excellence, Caring, Citizenship, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Trustworthiness. You can view the entire Statement at: http://deanofstudents.boisestate.edu/statement-of-shared-values/.
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES: Boise State University offers a variety of academic and student support services that can help you succeed.

Technology Services for Students: A complete listing and description of these resources is available at: https://oit.boisestate.edu/students/. Below is a sample of the types of resources available:

- General computer technical support is available through the Office of Information Technology Help Desk at 208-426-4357 (HELP), helpdesk@boisestate.edu, or at various locations around campus as noted at: https://oit.boisestate.edu/zone/find-us-on-campus/.
- If you need assistance with Bb, you can find additional resources at: https://oit.boisestate.edu/learning/learning-technologies/blackboard-learn/student-help/.

Albertsons Library: The Albertsons Library is your gateway to information at Boise State, connecting you with the resources you need for education and research. More information about the services they offer can be obtained by visiting https://library.boisestate.edu/ or calling 208-426-3301. In addition, a link to electronic resources specific to accountancy is available in the course Bb site. This specific accountancy webpage is also noted above under Required Text and Materials.

Writing Center: The Writing Center (Liberal Arts Building, room 200) provides free, face-to-face and online tutoring for writers in all disciplines. More information about the services they offer can be obtained by calling 208-426-1298 or visiting https://writingcenter.boisestate.edu/.

Advising and Academic Enhancement (AAE) Services for Students: A complete listing and description of these resources is available at: https://aae.boisestate.edu/.

The College of Business and Economics (COBE) offers a variety of support resources for students, including its own separate advising services specifically tailored for business students. COBE Advising Services is located in MBEB 1213 and can be reached at 208-426-3859. COBE Career Services is now located in MBEB 1120 and can be reached at 208-426-3862. More detailed information about both of these services is available at: https://cobe.boisestate.edu/studentadvising/.

The Department of Accountancy offers a variety of resources for accounting students. A listing and description of these resources is available at: https://cobe.boisestate.edu/accountancy/student-resources/.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS: When selecting a professor to write a letter of reference or recommendation, you should select professors that can write a good letter based on how well they know you and your performance in their course. If you wish to use my name as a reference for purposes of applying for scholarships, internships, employment opportunities, etc., please secure my permission in advance. I must receive the following items before I can determine if I can write a recommendation letter for you: copy of your resume, your current overall GPA, your current accounting GPA, and GMAT score (if needed; scores on both parts). I typically do not give my permission unless I have known a student for at least an entire semester so I have a basis on which to evaluate them and their academic performance. I do not write letters of reference or recommendations for students unless they participated in class and received a grade of B or better in my class. I do not write letters of reference or recommendations for students who are repeating the course for a better grade.

If you want me to be able to disclose information about your performance in class, either in a letter of recommendation or during interactions with perspective employers, I must have a written statement to that effect signed by you prior to any disclosure. Absent this written statement, I cannot even confirm that you are enrolled in my class, let alone discuss your academic performance and qualifications. This written statement is required by federal law (FERPA) and is meant to protect your privacy.
CLASS SCHEDULE: A tentative class schedule containing information regarding the topics to be covered each week is posted separately on Bb to help you plan your work. Every effort is made to make the class schedule as accurate and complete as possible. However, there may be occasions when changes become necessary. The professor reserves the right to make any such changes and all attempts will be made to notify students well in advance of any such changes. Topics to be discussed, applicable readings, and assignments for the first few class meetings are included on the partial schedule below for your convenience.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Changes in class content and/or scheduling may be made as the course progresses and will be announced on the Bb course page. You are responsible for announcements of such changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date/Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings (to be completed in ADVANCE of this session)</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1     | 1/9 M    | • Overview of the Course  
• Administrative Matters  
• Intro to Tax Practice & Ethics | Course Syllabus  
Chapter 1 | Student Information Sheet  
(Download from Bb, complete & bring to class to submit.) |
|       | 1/16 M   | NO CLASS – DR. MLK/IDAHO HUMAN RIGHTS DAY | | |
| 2     | 1/23 M   | • Tax Research Methodology  
• Electronic Tax Research Databases Demonstration – Business Librarian | Chapter 2 | |
| 3     | 1/30 M   | For all additional class schedule info, see the separate class schedule available on the course Bb site. | | |