Instructor: Mike Braswell, Ph.D.

Email: braswelljm@cofc.edu
Email is the best way to communicate with me. Please include “ACCT 520” in the subject field of any email that you send me so that I do not accidentally overlook your message.

Office Location: Beatty Center 406

Course Dates & Location: July 12th – August 10th (online meetings between student and professor will occur throughout the term).

Prerequisites: Graduate Student Standing

Course Overview:
This independent study course will focus on the unique financial reporting, regulatory, assurance and tax environment faced by captive insurance industry.

Required Course Resources:
The independent study will rely primarily on academic research articles and a case study, all of which can be obtained through the CoFC library website https://library.cofc.edu/. A list of required readings has been provided at the bottom of this syllabus.

Software Requirements: You are required to have computer technology that supports the use of Adobe, Word and a reliable internet connection that permits access to and utilization of Oaks and Zoom.

IT Support: Given that online courses inherently rely on technological resources, it’s important that you immediately resolve any issues you may accessing or using the resources discussed above. Please contact the College’s IT support staff if you are experiencing technological difficulties: https://chat.help.cofc.edu/

Course Outline:
The course will be comprised of five distinct modules for each week of the course. After investigating each module topic and writing bibliographical abstracts of the required readings, the student will complete a comprehensive paper that reflects the information compiled throughout the course.

Module 1: (Week 1) Insurance Industry Analysis
- Historical Development of Insurance Industry in the United States
- Industry Composition & Structure

Module 2: (Week 2) Statutory Accounting Procedures
- Statutory Accounting Procedures vs. GAAP
- Regulatory Compliance Issues Unique to Insurance Companies

Module 3: (Week 3) Audit Practices in the Insurance Industry
- Audit & Other Assurance Practices in the Insurance Industry
- Market analysis of CPA Firms Specializing in the Insurance Industry

Module 4: (Week 4) Financial Reporting and Fraud by Insurance Companies
- Analysis of Securities and Exchange Commission Cases
- Analysis of Fraud Cases and Related Criminal Proceeding
Module 5: (Week 5)
- Purpose and Structure of Captive Insurance Companies
- Captive Insurance vs. Self-insurance
- Tax Issues Unique to Captive Insurance Companies
- Financial Reporting and Regulatory Compliance Issues Unique to Captive Insurance Companies
- Unique Audit and Assurance Techniques Employed During Captive Insurance Company Engagements

Grade Components:

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<tr>
<td>Essay Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bibliographical Abstracts of Required Readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
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*Exams:* An essay exam will be administered during the latter part of the course. It will include a series of essay questions designed to test the student’s understanding of the topics addressed in the modules and required readings. The exam will be closed book and proctored by the faculty member during a Zoom meeting.

*Research Paper:* You will be required to write a research paper relating to financial reporting, regulatory, assurance and tax environment faced by captive insurance industry. The paper should be no more than 25 pages in total. More details will be provided once the course is underway.

*Bibliographical Abstracts:* Throughout the term, you will be required to write bibliographical abstracts of the required readings. Three bibliographical abstracts will be due each week and feedback will be provided as necessary.

*Overview of Instructional Approach, Dates and Deadlines:* Textbook resources will be provided along with case studies and other resources on Oaks. We will communicate weekly over the term to discuss related material and to answer any questions you may have. Since this is an independent study, you are expected to work a pace that is suitable to you.

*All deliverables will be due by Monday, August 10th. The essay exam will be conducted on Zoom on Wednesday, July 27th.*

*Grading Scale:* I will follow the plus-minus grading system whereby course letter grades correspond to the following numerical course averages:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 70%</td>
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*Accountancy Graduate Program Learning Objectives:* The course relates to the accountancy graduate program learning objective of **Effective Communication** by requiring written analysis of technical subject matter. The course is designed to develop **Specialized Technical Skills and Knowledge** within the areas of taxation.
**School of Business Learning Objective:**
To stimulate *Effective Communication*, students will prepare written documents that are technically correct and consistent with professional writing practices. *Problem-solving Abilities* by identifying and analyzing unique implications for taxing crypto-currency.

**Administrative Issues & Course Policies:**
*Academic Integrity*- Cheating or plagiarism in any form will result in a failing grade for the course. Each student must adhere to the *College of Charleston Honor Code and Code of Student Conduct*. This includes signing the role for other students. Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

*Attendance Policy*- You are expected to meet via Zoom at the agreed upon times throughout the semester to provide the professor with an update on your progress on various assignments and to review material that on which you will be tested.

*Other Policies:*
- Per policy, this course consists of me, the professor, and you, the student(s). It is not legal for me to discuss your performance in this course with anyone other than you. To be clear, I will not be responding to your parents’ concerns about your performance in class as College of Charleston policies and state laws prohibit me from doing so.
- *Audio and visual recording* media are forbidden during the course. Under no circumstance is it permissible to record my lectures or distribute recorded lectures or files to anyone.
- Students must complete all assigned material prior to the related due dates. The professor reserves the right to not address questions or comments by those not doing the assigned work prior to class. This is consistent with the College of Charleston Classroom Code of Conduct (see Student Handbook, page 51).
- *Online etiquette*- Participants in this course are expected to treat one another with respect and refrain from threatening or condescending behavior. Only the faculty member has the right to record Zoom sessions, although it is not the professor’s intention to record any group Zoom session.
- *Collaboration with students and others*: You are not allowed to share questions or answers to any online exam or homework assignments with anyone. You are to work on each assignment independently unless I say otherwise.
- *Religious Accommodations*- If you have religious celebrations or events that conflict with a due date or exam deadline, please let me know in advance so that I can make reasonable accommodations for you.
- *By remaining enrolled in this course, you are consenting to the rules and policies of this course.*
- *This syllabus and any exam dates and deadlines established throughout the semester may be amended by the Professor as needed.*

**Disability Accommodation**: The College of Charleston complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation, please see me during the first week of class. The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should register at the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsibility for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before an accommodation is needed.

**Please be aware of other support services that are available to you:**

*Center for Student Learning*: The Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services provide assistance in study strategies, speaking and writing skills, and course content. Services include tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843) 953 - 5635.

*Mental & Physical Wellbeing*: At the college, we take every students’ mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events,
sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at http://counseling.cofc.edu or 843.953.5640 3rd Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

Food & Housing Resources: Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php). Also, you can go to http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need.

Covid-19: The following link will provide you with the College’s updated information regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Please consult this site if you are experiencing any issues related to Covid-19 in order to learn which resources are available to you. https://cofc.edu/back-on-the-bricks/

Required Readings:


