

ACCT 596: Professional Accounting Experience

Instructor Information

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Prerequisites: Consent of MSA Program Director and approval of employer/supervisor.

Required Textbook: None

Employer-Sponsor and Supervisor: To receive transcript credit, the employer must apply on behalf of the student and provide an activity report at the end of the work experience. The supervisor's title and job description must be commensurate with a position that demands a graduate degree in accounting and/or CPA. You must work **120 hours** at a minimum. The position must be a paid position. The accounting department does not provide temporary or permanent professional accounting positions.

Course Description: Application of an area of accounting (for example, audit or tax) in an organization either working for the organization or its clients under the supervision of a professional in a position to which an MSA student aspires to. The student will provide a written report of their experience. The course earns 3 credit hours.

Course Objectives: Provide students the opportunity to apply knowledge learned during the course of their accounting studies to a real-world environment and also expand their knowledge through encountering new experiences and knowledge while working in the accounting profession.

Requirement for Credit: The Professional Accounting Experience may be taken for 3 hours of credit. Involvement of the employer and supervisor in applying for and reporting on the employment experience is integral to receiving credit. In order to complete 3 credit hours, the employer and supervisor must complete an application and end-of-experience Activity Report indicating that you satisfactorily completed at least **120 hours** on the job as paid intern or employee with the company that is sponsoring or providing your employment. You must provide your own written report on your activity.

How to enroll: After obtaining permanent or temporary employment, you must do the following to enroll:

1. Report Experience in Cougar Jobline for supervisor approval.
2. Request the Internship Approval Form from the Internship Coordinator and submit (either via email or in-person) to the Internship Coordinator.
3. The Internship Approval Form will be reviewed by faculty representatives to ensure compliance with academic program learning outcomes.
4. If approved, the Internship Coordinator will notify student of approval and assist the student to complete the enrollment process.

Administrative Activities

1. Complete Risk Assumption (link in Cougar Jobline)

Grading: This course is a Pass/No Credit course. To Pass the course, you must complete an acceptable paper on your experience (described below) and receive an acceptable evaluation by your supervisor.

Grading Standard and Required Reports/Evaluations

As evidence that the work experience meets the standards of the course, the student will deliver a written report and the supervisor will deliver an activity report directly to the instructor.

WRITTEN REPORT: At the end of employment experience (Fall, Spring, or Summer), you will prepare a written report documenting the learning experience. The report must address the following points and is limited to a **maximum** of **four** double-spaced pages.

Company Information. Begin the paper by giving the name of the firm or company, the name of the department or area, the name and title of your supervisor and their contact information, and the title of the position you held.

Responsibilities and Tasks/Projects. Next, list (preferably in bullet format) the responsibilities and/or tasks and projects that you fulfilled or completed while working. Briefly describe the responsibility, task or responsibility only if the listed item is unusual.

Lessons Learned. Write a narrative discussion of your experience by first writing a brief (one paragraph) overview that highlights important experiences and then writing five sections: (1) describe how aspects of your education were related to your work at both a high level or detailed level and (2) describe aspects of the experience that exposed you to accounting and related skills that were not part of your education, (3) in a list summarize those areas of your accounting education that were helpful, (4) in a separate list summarize those areas of your accounting and related education that you wish would have prepared you better and (5) your honest and succinct self-evaluation of your job performance. Examples:

- (1) High level item related to education: "I was familiar with the idea of the journal and ledger and the importance of access controls to changes in the journal."
- (2) Detail level item related to education: "I worked on individual income taxes and my experience in ACCT421 familiarized me with deductions to AGI", or "ACCT302 helped orient me to my work in the lease accounting generally but I was not familiar with leveraged lease accounting, which was a significant part of my work."
- (3) Example of list items where your education helped:
 - Undergraduate financial accounting concepts about accounting cycle, debits/credits, and journal entries very important.
 - Partnership accounting in ACCT 531 was relevant to my audit of limited partnerships for tax credits

- (4) Example of list items where your education had gaps:
- Spent a lot of time with fair value accounting and not in my SIUE MSA.
 - More tax knowledge, but I haven't taken ACCT557 or ACCT553 yet.
 - Trouble learning how to pull reports from SAP.
- (5) Partial example of self-assessment: "Tax season was harder than any semester at school. I was working every hour I wasn't sleeping or studying. I was constantly learning. I developed a good relationship with co-workers and supervisors and felt that I could count on them for help." Or "As a financial analyst, I worked predictable hours and was constantly learning new ways to assess financial performance. I felt that I was always working to catch up but that I did a decent job."

The report is due on Friday, the week prior to final examinations. The report must be submitted by e-mail or hard copy to the instructor of the course; if you email the report, request confirmation of receipt. Failure to submit the report will result in an Incomplete in the course.

SUPERVISOR EVALUATION: You are responsible for ensuring that your supervisor submits the Employer Evaluation. There are two acceptable ways a supervisor can provide the Instructor their evaluation of your work.

1. By completing the online Employer Evaluation. Student can share this link through Cougar Jobline.
2. By requesting a paper version of the Employer Evaluation from the Internship Coordinator and directly mailing the evaluation form in a sealed envelope bearing company logo. The supervisor must sign the evaluation form. The address is: Business Student Services: Internship Coordinator, Box 1186, School of Business, Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville, Edwardsville, IL 62026

The supervisor evaluation is due on Friday, the week prior to final examinations. Failure to supply this document will result in a grade of incomplete. Students will then have to discuss alternatives with the department chair.

Academic Ethics and Conduct

Plagiarism and Cheating: Academic Ethics and rules of conduct still apply to the internship as it is for credit. SIUE takes the matters of academic dishonesty, unethical behavior and student misconduct very seriously. The department reports such cases to the Provost's Office. For information on Plagiarism and Grievance Policies, please see the following links, and ensure familiarity and compliance with the stated policies.

<http://www.siu.edu/policies/3c2.shtml> Student Academic Code - 3C2

<http://www.siu.edu/policies/1i6.shtml> Plagiarism - 1I6

<http://www.siu.edu/policies/3c3.shtml> Student Grievance Code - 3C3

Student Conduct Code: Students will treat everyone in the class/workplace with respect. Students should familiarize themselves with the university policies. A link is provided below: <http://www.siu.edu/policies/toc.shtml>, [Student Rights and Conduct, #1 Student Conduct Code -\(3C1\)](#)

Disability

Typically, the student will make necessary arrangements with the sponsor firm. However, ACCESS, the SIUE unit that helps relevant students, may be able to help. Further information can be found at the link of the unit. (<http://www.siu.edu/access/faculty/syllabus.shtml>)

COVID-19 Pandemic Policies Related to Classroom Instruction (Fall 2020)

Health and Safety

Consistent with the Illinois Board of Higher Education guidance contained in “Safely Launching Academic Year 2020” released on June 23, 2020 and guidelines established by Governor J. B. Pritzker and *Restore Illinois*, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has implemented a new policy to help ensure the safety of all students, faculty and employees during the pandemic. The measures outlined below are required and any student who does not comply may be in violation of the *COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy*, as well as the University’s *Student Code of Conduct*.

The full text of the *COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy* can be found here: <https://www.siu.edu/policies/Covid.shtml>.

Classrooms, Labs, Studios, and Other Academic Spaces

While in the classroom, lab, studio, or other academic spaces, students shall practice social distancing measures by maintaining a distance of at least six feet from others in the classroom and wearing a face covering. Extra care should be taken upon entering and leaving the classroom spaces. Classroom furniture should not be rearranged, and furniture that has been taped off or covered should not be used.

Students who forget to wear a face mask or face shield will be reminded of their obligation to comply with SIUE’s *COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy* and temporarily asked to leave the class until they are able to conform to the policy. Students who forget or lose their face coverings may be able to obtain replacements from a friend, a faculty member, or a nearby departmental office. Face coverings are also available for purchase in the Cougar Store (MUC).

Students who refuse to wear a face covering will be asked to leave the classroom and referred to the Dean of Students for non-compliance with community health and safety protocols. Repeated non-compliance may result in disciplinary actions, including the student being administratively dropped from an on-ground/face-to-face course or courses without refund if no alternative course format is available.

If a student has a documented health condition which makes wearing a face covering medically intolerable, that student should contact ACCESS to explore options with the understanding that ACCESS will not grant accommodations which excuse the need for a face covering while on campus or in the classroom. ACCESS will work with qualifying individuals to find reasonable alternatives, whenever such solutions are available. Please call or contact the ACCESS Office via email to schedule an online appointment to discuss potential alternatives. ACCESS office (Student Success Center, Room 1203, 618-650-3726, and myaccess@siue.edu).

General Health Measures

At all times, students should engage in recommended health and safety measures, which include:

- Conducting a daily health assessment. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, but not yet tested positive, have had COVID-19 close contact exposure, or are COVID-19 diagnosed as presumptive or confirmed positive, stay home and contact your health provider or SIUE Health Service at cougarcare@siue.edu or 618-650-2842. More information is available on the [SIUE COVID-19 website](#).
- Frequent washing or disinfecting of hands.
- Social distancing by maintaining a distance of at least six feet from others.
- Face masks or face coverings that cover the nose and mouth are required in indoor public spaces regardless of the ability to maintain social distance. Indoor public spaces include common spaces or community settings that anyone can access, such as reception areas with walk-in access, restrooms, hallways, classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, as well as common spaces in residence halls, conference rooms, lobbies, and break rooms.
- Adhere to directional signs and traffic flow patterns in buildings and offices. Doors for entering and exiting buildings will be designated. Where multiple doors exist, in and out doors will be marked with “Entrance” and “Exit” signs. Plans that consider traffic flow in and out of buildings, and within buildings (i.e. stairs, hallways, etc. where possible) will be marked.

Academic Integrity

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the Student Academic Code (3C2) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. The full text of the policy can be found here: <https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>.

Recordings of Class Content

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course materials without the express permission of the instructor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University’s Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: <https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c1.shtml>.

Potential for Changes in Course Schedule or Modality

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, there remains a possibility that planned classroom activities will need to be adjusted. Depending on circumstances and following state-issued recommendations, potential changes include changes in course modality (e.g., transition from face-to-face to online) or in course scheduled meetings. These changes would be implemented to ensure the successful completion of the course. In these cases, students will be provided with an addendum to the class syllabus that will supersede the original version.