

Principles of Taxation (ACC3020)
Point Loma Nazarene University
Spring 2026

Instructor:	Steve Cosentino, CPA, MBA.	Final Exam:	Tuesday, 5/6, 1:30 PM
Classroom, Times:	FSB #104, T/Th, 1:30 - 2:45 PM	Contact s:	stevecosentino@pointloma.edu (619) 849-2625
Office:	Fermanian School of Business Room 121	Office Hours:	Monday - Thursday by appointment (email)

PLNU MISSION - To Teach – To Shape – To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

FSB MISSION - Character – Professionalism – Excellence – Relationships – Commitment - Innovation

As members of a vital Christian community, we strive to provide high quality business programs that equip students to make a positive impact in their workplace and community by connecting purpose to practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of fundamental federal income tax laws as they relate primarily to individuals. Topics include taxable income, allowable deductions, property transactions, and tax determination. Basic concepts related to partnership and corporate taxation, payroll, and sales tax reporting will also be addressed.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following course learning outcomes are aligned with the Fermanian School of Business Program Learning Outcomes. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Exhibit an understanding of federal income tax laws related to individuals. (PLO 1, A1, & AC1).
2. Explain basic concepts surrounding partnership and corporate taxation, payroll, and sales tax reporting. (PLO 1, A1, & AC1).
3. Describe the components of the tax formula for individuals, including gross income, exclusions, standard deductions, itemized deductions, and filing status (PLO 1, A1, & AC1).
4. Calculate the adjusted gross income and taxable income of an individual taxpayer. (PLO 2, A1, & AC1).
5. Prepare an individual tax return, including itemized deductions, business income, and pass-through entities. (PLO 2, A1, & AC1).

TEXT AND OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS

Fundamentals of Taxation, 2026 Edition – Looseleaf Copy Required.
Connect website access code for assignments (bundled with text)
TaxAct tax preparation software (included with text)
Supplemental materials as assigned,
Simple Calculator for exams (no electronic communication/recording devices)

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The approximate available point distribution is as follows:

Midterms	2
Final Exam	1
Special Projects (TBD)	5
Pre-Lecture Assignments	6
Post-Lecture Homework	1
Group Work & Class Participation	4
Total estimated points available	<hr/> 6 <hr/>

Grading: The following represents the general grading policy for this class:

90 to 100% of the total points =	Exceptional Scholarship
80 to 89% of the total points =	Superior Scholarship
70 to 79% of the total points =	Average Scholarship
60 to 69% of the total points =	Passing Grade
00 to 59% of the total points =	

These parameters may be adjusted based on the overall class performance.

Midterms & Final Exam: The exams may include Multiple-Choice, Problems, or Essay questions based on text material, class discussions, and homework assignments. The final exam will be comprehensive. See Tentative Assignment Schedule for Midterm dates. **No makeup exams will be given without prior permission.** Bring standard calculators (no communication devices), pencils, and an eraser to all exams. Make-up exams may be different from the original examination and the points available are 90% of the original points available. **To pass the class, you must pass the final exam.**

Connect Assignments: Quizzes and homework assignments will be completed through the website at Connect. To register for the course, go to <https://connect.mheducation.com/class/s-cosentino-acc3020--sp26-3>

Quizzes: In general, quizzes are due before class on the day of the chapter lecture. Additional quizzes may be given during class time. **There will be no make-up quizzes.** The objective is to encourage you to read the chapters before they are discussed in class. Quiz scores will be 55 points (5 points per chapter).

Homework: Homework assignments consist of questions and problems from the end of each chapter. They will reinforce the most important points in each chapter. This year we will be utilizing **Connect, the publisher’s online tool for homework preparation and evaluation.** If you are not participating in the LomaBooks program, you will be required to purchase the Connect tool and register online. Approved late homework assignments will receive partial credit, and **no homework will be accepted after the exam on the chapter material.** For grading purposes, homework will be 110 points (10 points per chapter).

Special Projects: The primary special project this semester may be participating in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program through Dreams for Change. This program provides free tax preparation

for low to middle income individuals and families. To participate, students will receive material and training and be required to pass VITA exams. If required, a separate syllabus will be provided.

Class Participation & Attendance: You are to be prepared to answer questions and participate in group activities and class discussions. Therefore, attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. You may be dropped from the course if you are absent for more than 10% of the classes. **Be on time to class.** If you are late to class two times, it will be counted as one absence. Laptop computers may be used for class notes and exercises. Students will be excused from class for inappropriate computer and cell phone usage and the class will be counted as an unexcused absence for grading purposes.

Extra Credit: Extra Credit opportunities may be announced throughout the course. Ask if you are interested. Extra-credit is not available to make up for incomplete or late assignments.

Additional Learning Resources: Text bundles purchased through the PLNU Bookstore and online contain codes for accessing additional learning resources, including self-quizzes, flash cards and instructional videos on the publisher's website. The Tutorial Center is also available to students free of charge, however, tutoring opportunities for the tax accounting may be limited. Tutoring is available by appointment only, and appointments must be made at least one day in advance. Appointments may be arranged in person at the Tutorial Center, over the phone at (619) 849-2593, or via email at TutorialServices@pointloma.edu.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site, and included in this syllabus. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU RECORDING NOTIFICATION

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all

student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content may be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

LOMABOOKS INSTRUCTIONS

This course is part of our course material delivery program, LomaBooks. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials. You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: [HERE](#)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are posted on the publisher's website as described above.

	Date	Cha	Topic	Assignments
1	Tues – 1/ 13 Thurs	1	Intro to Taxation, Income Tax Formula, Form 1040	Connect Website
2	Tues – 1/ 20 Thurs	2	Expanded Tax Formula, Form 1040, Basic Concepts	Connect Website
3	Tues – 1/ 27 Thurs	3	Gross Income: Inclusions and Exclusions	Connect Website
4	Tues – 2/ 3 Thurs	4	Adjustments ‘For’ Adjusted Gros Income	Connect Website
5	Tues – 2/ 10 Thurs	5	Itemized Deductions	Connect Website

	Tues – 2/ 17 Thurs	Exam 1	Exam 1 – Chapters 1-5 (Tuesday)	Connect Website	
	Tues – 2/ 24 Thurs	6	Self-Employed Business Income	Connect Website	
	Tues – 3/ 3 Thurs	7	Capital Gains and Other Sales of Property	Connect Website	
	3/9-3/13		Spring Break		
	Tues – 3/ 17 Thurs	8	Rental Property, Royalties, and Flow-Through Entities	Connect Website	
	Tues – 3/ 24 Thurs	9	Tax Credits	Connect Website	
	Tues – 3/ 31 Thurs	10	Payroll Taxes Easter Break	Connect Website	
	Tues – 4/ 7 Thurs	Exam 2	Exam 2 – Chapters 6-10 (Tuesday) Payroll Taxes		
	Tues – 4/ 14 Thurs	14	Partnership Taxation	Connect Website	
14	Tues – 4/ 21 Thurs	15	Corporate Taxation	Connect Website	
15	Tues – 4/ 28 Thurs		Tax Return Preparation & Review		
	Tuesday – 5/ 5	Final	1:30 PM Comprehensive		

To learn this material: READ THE TEXT! Focus your study efforts on understanding the material. Try not to simply memorize. Expect to spend **2-3 hours** in study and homework for each 1 hour of class time. Additional time may be required to prepare for exams. Read each chapter before it is discussed in class and note questions for discussion. The most effective study strategy to prepare for tests is to **thoroughly understand problems worked in class** and assigned in the homework.

Schedule Changes: The information in this syllabus is subject to change. I will announce changes in class early enough to provide adequate time to complete assignments, etc. It is your responsibility to maintain your schedule, making the changes as necessary. I will not consider absence an excuse for not keeping your schedule updated. Check your PLNU email, Connect Account, and Canvas daily. If you miss class, check with a classmate.