

GSM 421A Managerial Accounting

Spring 2008

Professor Susan Hass

Mondays and Wednesdays: 1:00-3:00pm
(except as noted in the schedule)

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Office Hours: Mondays, 11:45am-12:45pm and Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30pm, or by appointment

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Introduction

This course provides an introduction to cost management and management control. It is concerned with the generation, use and interpretation of management and cost information and related data by managers under various organizational systems. This information is used for planning and control, decision-making, performance evaluation, and reporting purposes. The course also examines the impact of quantitative information on motivation and organizational communication. This class presupposes some basic knowledge of financial reporting, economics and organizational behavior. Management accounting is a dynamic field and reflects many of the changes seen in business today. We will often use product-based companies to initially discuss a topic, and then expand our discussions to the service and not-for-profit sectors.

Financial accounting is externally oriented and governed by fundamental concepts of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). In contrast, managerial accounting is internally oriented. Managerial accounting is very context driven.

Management accounting is more intuitively understandable than financial accounting. However, the material cannot be learned by 'thinking'. You must work through the mini-cases, cases and problems, which are assigned for each class. The concepts and techniques must be used to see how they are developed and applied. Discussion in each class assumes you understand the material covered in prior sessions. Therefore, you must not allow yourself to fall behind. If you are not keeping up with the assignments, this was reflected in class discussion.

Course preparation time for this course should be between 2 and 4 hours for each class session. Spending significantly more preparation time is usually ineffective. If you find yourself spending significantly more time preparing for class, contact me for study or preparation strategies.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Correctly use the concepts and vocabulary of cost classification and cost management.
- Organize, use and communicate accounting information effectively for planning and control, decision-making, performance evaluation, and reporting purposes.
- Employ these management accounting concepts to enhance organizational operations and strategies.

General Topics

The course is organized into the following broad sections. However, learning in most areas is enhanced by discussions of related topics.

- Introduction and Essential Concepts
- Product and Service Costing
- Cost Analysis for Short-Term Decisions
- Profitability Planning and Analysis
- Performance Measurement Tools and Evaluation

Course Materials

Required:

- Managerial Accounting, Garrison, Noreen & Brewer, 12th edition, McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Various Harvard Business Review (HBR) articles (linked to course schedule).
- Other articles, problems, and cases as assigned in the syllabus or during the course.

Recommended:

Workbook/Study Guide to accompany Managerial Accounting, 12th edition, McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Class Operations

Several types of activities shape the daily class sessions:

- Analysis: Analysis classes establish underlying concepts, present procedures, and provide examples. These sessions usually begin the study of a specific subject.
- Workshop: Workshop classes focus on problem solving, case discussion, and the synthesis of overall concepts through the discussion of specific questions. A set of study suggestions will proceed each workshop session.

Grading

Course grades are based on examinations, class contributions, and written case briefs that have the following point values:

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Focus of Activity</i>
Class Contributions	100	Discussion of Cost Management Concepts
Case Analysis	100	Analysis of Cost Management Concepts for Profit Planning and Performance Evaluation in an Organizational Setting
Midterm Examination	150	Synthesis of Cost Management Techniques, Concepts, and Issues
Final Examination	<u>150</u>	
Total Course Points	<u>500</u>	

This course includes two examinations consisting of short essays, problems, and mini-cases that relate to the assignments and class activities. Class contributions are evaluated based on demonstrated student performance. The written assignment consists of one case analysis. The directions for this written assignment will be discussed in class. If this case must be purchased, you will receive information from the MBA Office about how to do this.

These evaluation activities take place in a variety of environments:

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Closed Book and Closed Notes Activity</i>	<i>Open Book and Open Notes Activity</i>
Individual Activity	Midterm Examination Final Examination	Class Contributions Case Analysis

Like Financial Reporting and Analysis, this course is an underlying discipline for other management courses, and is, in itself, a cumulative learning process. Heavy emphasis is placed on your continuing class preparation and class participation. In this regard, please familiarize yourself with the Simmons policy on class attendance (GSM Academic Policy). Notification should be given if you are unable to attend class. Turning in the completed

assignment due for a missed class prior to that class will be considered your participation grade for that class. Regardless, if you miss 25 % or more of our class meetings, your course grade will be reduced one full grade.

Class contributions come in a variety of ways:

- case/problem analysis
- a good question based on the assigned material
- answering a question asked by the professor or another student
- helping to move the class discussion ahead
- appropriate comments related to the reading assignment, case/problem analysis or the class discussion
- repetition of case facts or previous discussion points is usually not a constructive means of participation

Should you have difficulty participating in class, please see me early in the semester for help and/or strategies. Class contributions are evaluated based on demonstrated student performance.

Honor Code

I expect you to adhere to the highest standards of honesty and integrity—in your dealings with me and with one another. Please read and take to heart the sections on the honor system in the Simmons College Student Handbook. You are expected to comply with all provision of the Simmons College Honor Code—violations will not be tolerated.

A student is not expected to collaborate with another student on a graded assignment in this class unless the assignment specifically indicates collaboration is permissible. Otherwise, all graded assignments are to be a student's individual work. Homework assignments are not to be turned-in and can and should be discussed with classmates prior to coming to class.

Students Needing Special Accommodation

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and anticipate that you will need a reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact the Center for Academic Achievement early in the semester. Call Ext. 2474, or stop by the center in the Palace Road building, Suite 304A. Students with disabilities receiving accommodations are also encouraged to contact their instructor within the first week or two of the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.

I hope you enjoy Managerial Accounting. I am looking forward to a good semester.