

**ACC 288 – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, VITA Practicum – 4 Credits**  
**PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

<b>Description</b>	This course introduces students to concepts and language of IRS and taxation while preparing federal and state taxes within their community for low-income individuals. To start the portfolio process create an account using: <a href="http://myexperiencecounts.mass.edu">myexperiencecounts.mass.edu</a>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define basic tax vocabulary and recognize tax law</li> <li>▪ Learn how to interact effectively with low-income clients</li> <li>▪ Help to educate low-income taxpayers about tax credits to which they are entitled</li> <li>▪ Master basic tax modules</li> <li>▪ Complete IRS exams for certification as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) participant</li> <li>▪ Operate the computer and become proficient with TaxWise software</li> </ul> <p><b>Training Sources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRS Publication 4491 - VITA/TCE Training Guide <a href="https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4491.pdf">https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4491.pdf</a></li> <li>• IRS Publication 4012 - VITA/TCE Volunteer Resource Guide <a href="https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4012.pdf">https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4012.pdf</a></li> <li>• IRS Publication 17 - Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals <a href="https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p17.pdf">https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p17.pdf</a></li> <li>• IRS Publication 6744 - VITA/TCE Volunteer Assistor's Test/Retest <a href="https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f6744.pdf">https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f6744.pdf</a></li> <li>• Link and learn taxes e-learning <a href="https://www.linklearncertification.com/d/">https://www.linklearncertification.com/d/</a></li> </ul>
<b>Student Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ VITA training certification</li> <li>▪ Students must attend site orientation and select a schedule for the tax preparation service at the beginning of the tax season</li> <li>▪ Student must create an account to take exams at <a href="https://www.linklearncertification.com/d/">https://www.linklearncertification.com/d/</a></li> <li>▪ Students must create a "Practicelab Taxslayer" account to resolve exam</li> <li>▪ Complete 36 hours of volunteer time at Main South CDC or other Worcester VITA site</li> <li>▪ Students must pass 3 Certifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Volunteer standards of conduct</li> <li>○ Intake/Interview</li> <li>○ Basic or Advanced Certification</li> <li>○ Student must download volunteer agreement and provide to the VITA site</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Narrative  
/Readings**

**Write a one-page introductory narrative for your portfolio by addressing the following:**

- What did you accomplish?
- Why did you decide to undergo the training and to volunteer?
- How is it related to your personal and career goals
- How does it fit into your discipline?
- How will credit earned be applied to your major?

**Write a five-page narrative which addresses the following:**

Provide at least three specific references to the reading to explain how the readings helped you to understand:

- What are tax Credits?
- What's the difference between a tax credit and a tax deduction?
- What is the difference between refundable and non-refundable credits?
- What are Education Credits?
- What is the child Tax Credit?
- What is the Additional Child Tax Credit?
- What the EITC is?
- Why the Federal government instituted the EITC?
- Who benefits from the EITC initiative?

**Provide at least three references within the learning environment connecting your readings and the tax payers you helped. Please describe this correlation:**

- Other points you think are important between your readings and your experience
- Provide at least two examples of how your analytical skills were put to the test during your studying and/or applications helping taxpayers.
- Were you surprised or dismayed with this experience? Please explain.

	<p><b>Required core readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>How to File Your Income Tax Return</b> <a href="https://www.irs.com/articles/how-to-file-your-income-tax-return">https://www.irs.com/articles/how-to-file-your-income-tax-return</a></li> <li>○ <b>Maximizing the higher education tax credits</b> by Cody Gamboa, CPA, and Travis Wheeler, CPA March 1, 2019 <a href="https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/issues/2019/mar/education-taxcredits.html">https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/issues/2019/mar/education-taxcredits.html</a></li> <li>○ <b>The Impact of Education Tax Benefits on College Completion</b> Author: Elsayed, Mahmoud A.A. Affiliation: Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University, 14 Marietta St, Atlanta, GA 30303 Source: In Economics of Education Review August 2016 53:16-30, Publisher: Elsevier Ltd.</li> <li>○ <b>Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit</b> Source: America. 12/24/2018, Vol. 219 Issue 14, p8-9. 2p. Document Type: Article</li> <li>○ <b>Child tax credit now higher, more widely available</b> Authors: Hetherington, Katherine M. Source: Journal of Accountancy. June 2018, Vol. 225 Issue 5, p56, 2 p. Publisher Information: American Institute of CPA's Publication Year: 2018</li> <li>○ <b>The Role of Refund Expectations in Savings: Evidence from Volunteer Income Tax Preparation Programs in the United States</b> Authors: Porto, Nilton, Collins, J. Michael Source: Journal of Consumer Affairs. Spring2017, Vol. 51 Issue 1, p183-199. 17p. Document Type: Article</li> <li>○ <b>Using the earned income tax credit to stimulate local economies</b> Alan Berube, The Brookings Institute</li> <li>○ <b>Utilization of income tax credits by low-income individuals</b> Academic Journal By: Dickert-Conlin, Stacy; Fitzpatrick, Katie; Hanson, Andrew. In: National Tax Journal. Dec, 2005, Vol. 58, Issue 4, p743, 43 p.; National Tax Association, 2005. Language: English, Database: Gale OneFile: Business <a href="#">Utilization of income tax credits by low-income individuals</a></li> <li>○ <b>From Sociology, A Down to Earth Approach</b>, James M. Henslin, pages 216-239 EITC Q&amp;A's from the IRS website</li> <li>○ <b>Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</b> <a href="https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit">https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit</a></li> </ul> <p>Students must obtain a QCC library account to access readings. <b>QCC's library database</b> - <a href="https://qcc.mass.libguides.com/c.php?g=1315520">https://qcc.mass.libguides.com/c.php?g=1315520</a> Quinsigamond Community College 670 West Boylston St., Worcester, MA 01606 Harrington Learning Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (508)854-4366</p>
<p><b>Portfolio Development Guidelines</b></p>	<p><b>Your portfolio should include the following items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Basic or Advanced Certification</li> <li>○ Volunteer Standards of Conduct Certification</li> <li>○ Intake/Interview Quality Review Certification</li> <li>○ Volunteer agreement</li> <li>○ HOURS VOLUNTEERED verified by program Coordinator where you volunteered</li> <li>○ IRS Recognition Certificate</li> <li>○ Introductory Narrative (1 page)</li> <li>○ Narrative (5 pages)</li> <li>○ Current Resume listing VITA Experience</li> <li>○ Degree Audit of your current major</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cost to students</b></p>	<p>\$75 per credit, payable at time of application. For 4 credits, the cost will be \$300. This is non-refundable. <b>Career Services will forward credit authorization to Registrar's Office once we receive verification of successful evaluation.</b></p>

<b>Transcript Notation</b>	<p>P (pass). Credits are not computed in grade point average. If portfolio does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge, student may be asked to revise it.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: The "P" grade satisfies credit requirements at QCC, but may not transfer to another school. <b><i>If you plan to transfer, make sure you know the transfer policies of the school/s you plan to attend.</i></b></p>
<b>Complete the Process</b>	<p>Please go to the following website and begin an application for Credit for Prior Learning. Once your application has been received you will be asked to upload your portfolio electronically. The portfolio must contain all items in order to be graded.</p> <p><a href="https://myexperiencecounts.mass.edu/home">https://myexperiencecounts.mass.edu/home</a></p>
<b>Questions?</b>	<p>For more information about the VITA program visit: <a href="http://www.qcc.edu/vita">www.qcc.edu/vita</a></p>