

**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.
<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</li> <li>○ IRS Publication 4012 - VITA/TCE Volunteer Resource Guide</li> <li>○ IRS Publication 17 - Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals</li> <li>○ IRS Publication 6744 - VITA/TCE Volunteer Assistor's Test/Retest</li> <li>○ Link and learn taxes e-learning</li> </ul>
<b>Student Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ VITA training certification</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>
<b>Narrative /Readings</b>	<p><b>Write a one-page introductory narrative for your portfolio by addressing the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What did you accomplish?</li> <li>▪ Why did you decide to undergo the training and to volunteer?</li> <li>▪ How is it related to your personal and career goals</li> <li>▪ How does it fit into your discipline?</li> <li>▪ How will credit earned be applied to your major?</li> </ul> <p><b>Write a five-page narrative which addresses the following:</b>  Provide at least three specific references to the reading to explain how the readings helped you to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are tax Credits?</li> <li>▪ What's the difference between a tax credit and a tax deduction?</li> <li>▪ What is the difference between refundable and non-refundable credits?</li> <li>▪ What are Education Credits?</li> <li>▪ What is the child Tax Credit?</li> <li>▪ What is the Additional Child Tax Credit?</li> <li>▪ What the EITC is?</li> <li>▪ Why the Federal government instituted the EITC?</li> <li>▪ Who benefits from the EITC initiative?</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide at least three references within the learning environment connecting your readings and the tax payers you helped. Please describe this correlation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Other points you think are important between your readings and your experience</li> <li>▪ Provide at least two examples of how your analytical skills were put to the test during your studying and/or applications helping taxpayers.</li> <li>▪ Were you surprised or dismayed with this experience? Please explain.</li> </ul>

	<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>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><b>Portfolio Development Guidelines</b></p>	<p><b>Your portfolio should be developed in a loose-leaf binder, which contains the following:</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>\$65 per credit, payable at time of application. For 4 credits, the cost will be \$260. This is non-refundable. <b>Career Services will forward credit authorization to registrar's office once we receive verification of successful evaluation.</b></p>
<p><b>Transcript Notation</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Complete the Process</b></p>	<p>Make appointment with Career Services for in-take, screening, and instruction as to how to develop the portfolio</p>
<p><b>Questions?</b></p>	<p>Contact Career Services (508) 854-4439, Room 272A or Eduardo Rivas, at erivas@qcc.mass.edu, (508) 854-4319</p>