



MACQUARIE
University

ACCG 399: Accounting in Context

Accounting's Positivistic Tendencies: Overlaying a Social Science with Pure Scientific Rationale

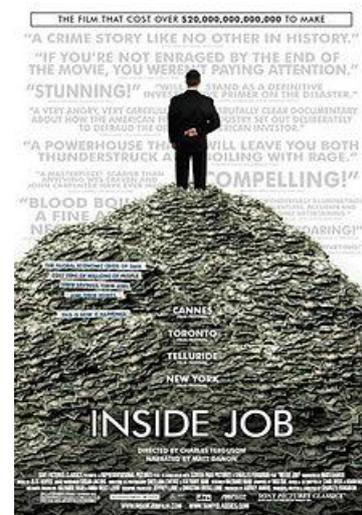
Tutorial 5 - Week 6

This written Comprehensive Professional Portfolio is comprised of individual and group tasks which are to be completed within tutorials and will require further work and writing up outside of the classroom. These set of tutorial activities extending till the end of the session, are intended to take you through a learning journey of exploration and development. They have been specifically designed to incorporate not only a real-life perspective to your university learning but also to further enhance graduate capabilities such as your ability to engage in critical, analytical and integrative thinking, problem solving and research capability, socially and environmentally active and responsible citizens and the ability to exercise professional and personal judgement and initiative, into your final year experience. It is with this in mind that we hope you will be equipped with the skills necessary for higher level study and effective professional performance.

Thought Activity

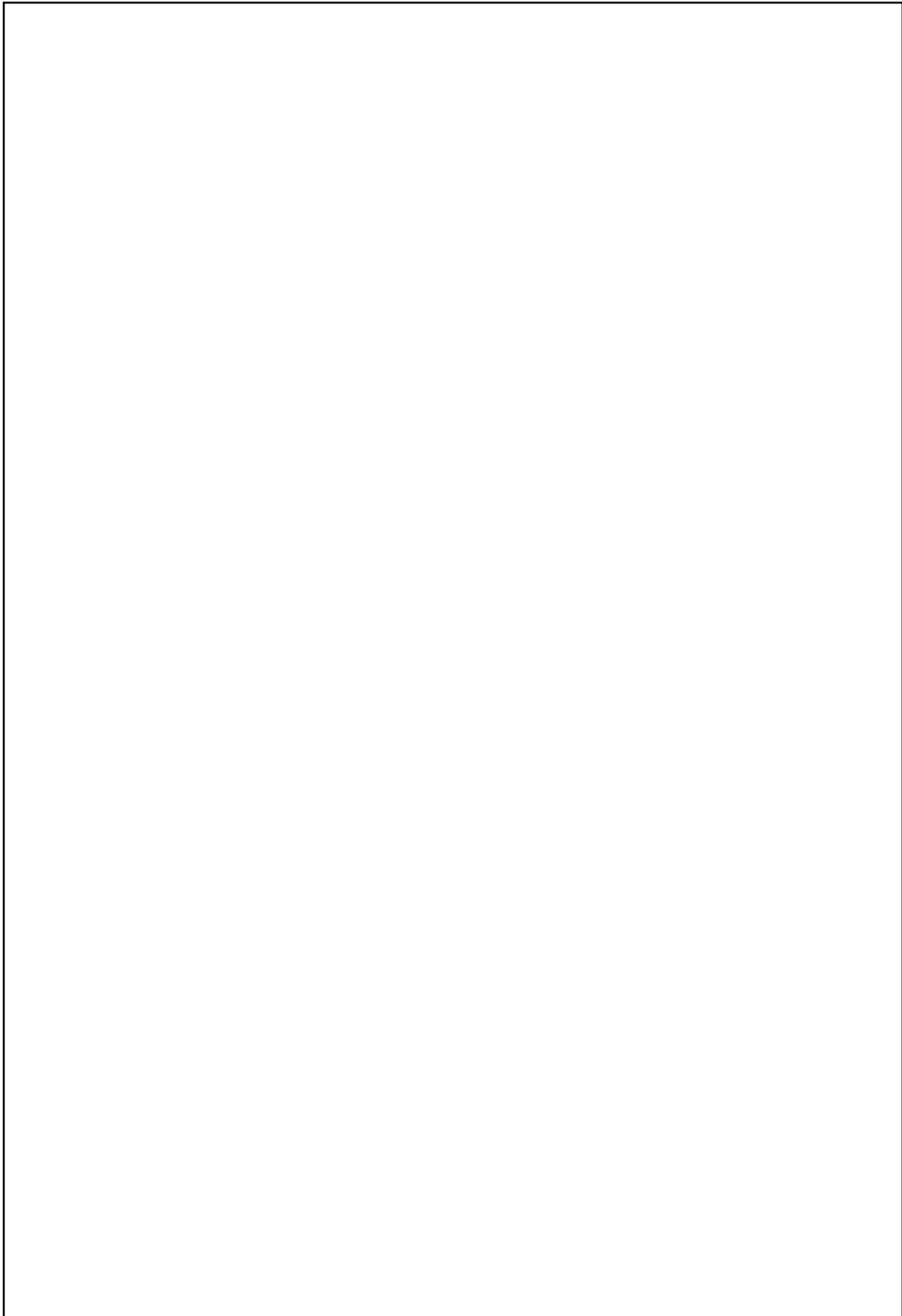
We would like you to take some time between your 'Positivistic tendencies: Human nature or scientific necessity' class and your tutorial the following week to complete the activity outlined below.

Find yourself (or with a group of friends from ACCG 399) a copy of the *Inside Job* documentary film - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1645089/>. You should be able to find this film to hire in most rental stores around Sydney and may also be able to locate in some public libraries. You will need to watch this film. During your viewing of the film you should write brief notes on key individuals (or groups) identified in the film and their roles. You should also be constantly thinking of the links this film has towards Positive Accounting theory and its underlying assumptions.



Directly after, write a description of your reactions and feelings towards the film and its contents in the space provided below.

Write a reflective entry on this here (if you need more space please expand further):



You will need to bring your written thought activity with you to your tutorial.

Tutorial Engagement Activity

During your tutorial in week 6 you are required to engage in group discussion. You should form small groups of between 3 and 4 (these can be your group team members for the discussion forum) or you may like to discuss with other peers.

Activity One (15 mins)

With your group members for the first 10 mins, share your reactions and thoughts of this film outlined above in the thought activity. Your tutor will then facilitate a 5 min discussion as a tutorial group calling on your thoughts and ideas for inspiration and discussion.

Activity Two (20 mins)

1. Within your groups construct a conceptual mind map (using the paper your tutor provides you with) of key individuals identified in the film – you should include within your mind map the ‘political’ and ‘regulatory’ relationships between such individuals that are discussed in the film.
2. *“Well, remember that what an ideology is, is a conceptual framework with the way people deal with reality. Everyone has one. You have to -- to exist, you need an ideology. The question is whether it is accurate or not.” - Congressional Testimony of Alan Greenspan, October 2008*

Using the basic premise of Positive Accounting Theory provide a brief explanation underneath each individual (group) as to the ‘ideology’/perspective they were operating from.

3. The resulting Global Financial Crisis has had an immense impact on the banking industry through asset write-downs, tighter funding and increased market volatility. Kern and McGuigan in their article “Banking Better?” (2009, The Chartered Accountants Journal, p. 44) state *“Only when specific goals, achievements and their relation to the overall sustainability agenda are disclosed in a consistent and continuous manner, will real social and responsible banking practice occur.”*

Using positive accounting theory as a lens in which to view the world, discuss why it might not be in the best interests of the banking industry to do so?

Activity Three (15 mins)

Your tutor will then facilitate a 15 min discussion as a tutorial group where you may be called to present your groups mind-map and discussion to the rest of the class.

Post-Thought Activity

In the next couple of days after your tutorial, begin to think about your own education, your role as a student and how this may be changing (or has changed over time), the role of your peers and how you respond to the environment in which you find yourself. Briefly describe your feelings and thoughts towards this (including whether you have previously thought about this).

Now start to think about how your education has been constructed. You may find the following prompts useful in stimulating your thought process:

- Begin to think about how the university is constructed. What is the political context in which it operates? Who provides funding of the university and what do they expect in return?
- Investigate the role the professional accounting bodies have in your education. How much influence do they have over the construction of accounting education programmes and curriculum design. What does it mean to be accredited? You may like to discuss this with one of your lecturers/tutors or you may find it useful to review the ICAA or CPA websites for further information.
- Does IFAC or IASB play a role in an accountant's educational outcomes?
- What role does accounting firms play in shaping educational outcomes?
- How might professional accounting bodies, accounting firms and international accounting bodies such as IFAC or IASB's aims be related?
- What is it that they appear to be aiming for in an accounting workforce?
- Could this be explained through positive accounting theory?
- How might this be explained through political capture theory?

Write a summary (500 words maximum) of your awareness of the education process in accounting and your feelings towards this.

What are you required to Submit?

You are required to submit to your tutor **during your next tutorial - the following week (week 7)** a collated neatly presented folio of work containing:

1. A completed written description to the thought activity.
2. A reflective description of a key aspect in your learning that occurred for you during the completion of your tutorial activities one, two and/or three.
3. A completed written description (500 words max) of the post-thought activity described above. This should be formulated in an appropriately designed and logical structure.

Your tutor will collect this from you and keep a record of each of your submissions. These are sent through to the Unit Convenor along with a tutorial participation grading each week for record keeping throughout the session. Please remember a failure to submit this piece of work on time will result in a forfeiture of 2% of your overall Comprehensive Professional Portfolio mark. It is a requirement of this unit that you achieve a passing grade in your Comprehensive Professional Portfolio to receive a passing grade or higher in this unit overall.