THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

PhD Course Syllabus

Course Code/Title: **ACCT6013** Doctoral Accounting Seminar I

Course Description: This doctoral seminar gives an overview of classical empirical accounting research covering the following topics: the impact of financial reporting information on stock prices, firms' reporting incentives and earnings management, voluntary disclosure, market efficiency in processing corporate information, and information spill over among firms in an economy.

Course Objectives:

1. Familiarize you with research concerning the role of accounting in explaining stock prices and returns; earnings management; market efficiency in processing information; disclosure; and inter-firm information transfer.
2. Develop your ability to critically evaluate empirical research;
3. Help you generate innovative research ideas;
4. Develop your skills to design and conduct empirical research.

Pre-requisite: microeconomics, econometrics, finance, and accounting

Assessment: 100% coursework

Remarks: All PhD courses are non-credit-bearing and will be assessed on a letter grade basis.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)	Aligned PLOs*				
	1	2	3	4	5
Gain a solid understanding of classical accounting literature	X	X			
Perform critical evaluation of published papers	X		X		
Develop innovative research topics		X	X	X	X
Demonstrate effective communication skills				X	X

***Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Research Postgraduate Programme:**

1. Demonstrate critical understanding, at an advanced level, of up-to-date knowledge and research methodology of a particular field
2. Implement effective academic and personal strategies for carrying out research projects independently and ethically
3. Contribute original knowledge in response to issues in their specialist area
4. Communicate research findings at a diverse range of levels and through a variety of media
5. Evaluate one's own research in relation to important and latest issues in the field

COURSE DETAILS *(subject to change at instructor's discretion)*

Year/Semester:	2026-27, First Semester
Time:	Friday 14:00 – 18:00 (TBA) **Sept** 4, 11, 18, 25; **Oct** 2, 9, 23, 30
Instructor:	**Prof. ZHANG, Guochang** Email: acgzhang@hku.hk Office: KK1214 (by appointment)

I. Teaching and Learning Activities

In-class and Out-of-class Activities *(e.g. lectures, class discussion, papers reading, proposal writing)*	Expected hour	% of student study effort
1. Lecture	35	17.5
2. Reading, evaluation, and presentation of papers	85	42.5
3. Research proposal	80	40
Total	120	100

II. Assessment

Assessment Components *(e.g. assignments, proposal, presentation, examination)*	Weight	CLOs to be assessed			
		1	2	3	4
Paper presentation	10%	X	X		X
Literature review	20%	X		X	X
Referee report	20%	X	X		X
Research proposal	50%	X	X	X	X
Total	100%				

Students will be assessed based on the following performance standards:

Course Grade	Performance Standard
A+, A, A-	Outstanding performance; demonstrates comprehensive understanding, critical thinking, and originality.
B+, B, B-	Good performance; shows solid understanding and application of key concepts, with some minor errors or omissions.
C+, C, C-	Satisfactory performance; basic understanding is evident, but with notable gaps or inconsistencies.
D+, D	Marginal performance; minimal understanding, with significant errors or misunderstandings.
F	Failing performance; little or no understanding of key concepts.

III. Course Content and Tentative Schedule

Class Date	**Class Time**	**Topic**
Session 1	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	0. Introduction 1a. Earnings response coefficient (ERC) 1b. Value relevance; applications to standard setting
Session 2	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	2a. Earnings management: accruals
Session 3	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	2b. Earnings management: real activities
Session 4	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	3a. Market efficiency and anomalies: PEAD
Session 5	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	3b. Market efficiency and anomalies: Accruals; valuation theory-inspired anomalies
Session 6	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	4a. Disclosure: proprietary costs
Session 7	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	4b. Disclosure: capital market considerations
Session 8	*2:00pm to 6:00pm*	5. Inter-firm information spill over

A reading list for each topic will be separately provided.

V. Course Policy

The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced! Academic dishonesty is behaviour in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types of cases:

a. Plagiarism - The representation of someone else's ideas as if they are their own. Where the arguments, data, designs, etc., of someone else are being used in a paper, report, oral presentation, or similar academic project, this fact must be made explicitly clear by citing the appropriate references. The references must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the project are not one's own work. Paraphrasing of someone else's ideas is still using someone else's ideas, and must be acknowledged. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/

b. Unauthorized Collaboration on Out-of-Class Projects - The representation of work as solely one's own when in fact it is the result of a joint effort.

c. Cheating on In-Class Exams - The covert gathering of information from other students, the use of unauthorized notes, unauthorized aids, etc.

d. Unauthorized Advance Access to an Exam - The representation of materials prepared at leisure, as a result of unauthorized advance access (however obtained), as if it were prepared under the rigors of the exam setting. This misrepresentation is dishonest in itself even if there are not compounding factors, such as unauthorized uses of books or notes.

You are expected to do your own work whenever you are supposed to. Incident(s) of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind would result in an automatic FAIL grade for the course plus strict enforcement of all Faculty and/or University regulations regarding such behaviour.