An introduction to the new AICPA *Code of Professional Conduct*: cases, problems, and a tutorial to aid students

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ABSTRACT

Several years ago, the AICPA introduced a task force of members of its Professional Ethics Executive Committee (PEEC) to revise the *Code of Professional Conduct*. On April 15, 2013, the PEEC exposed its draft of the newly reformatted *Code*. The exposure period ended August 15, 2013, and on January 28, 2014, the PEEC voted, enacted, and issued the final version of the revised *Code*. Although the revised *Code* has an effective date of December 15, 2014, it may be used now.

Changes from the old *Code* to the newly revised version include an organizational format that is intuitive and more easily and quickly searchable. Previously, the *Code* was organized by rule. If interpretive guidance was issued, a listing of interpretations and ethics rulings appeared in chronological order.

The reformatted *Code* separates guidance by the three common lines of business: (1) public practice, (2) business, and (3) other. Further organization includes (a) topic, (b) subtopics, and (c) sections.

Ellen Goria, Senior Manager – Independence & Special Projects for the AICPA Professional Ethics Division has authored two articles in the *Journal of Accountancy* during the current year (February and June editions). Each article provides a summary of changes to the *Code*. Plus, the June 2014 article introduced the revised *Code* in an online searchable data base format. A brief tutorial is provided including a short example.

This presentation and (future) article will provide examples of how to incorporate the reformatted online *Code* into accounting classrooms. In-depth cases will be offered, (e.g. Colorado Marijuana Laws / Acts Discreditable and Significant Relationships / Independence Impairments). During presentation, ideas for new student cases will be solicited.

Keywords: ethics, accounting ethics, accounting codes of conduct, accounting ethics cases