

# SYLLABUS

## A+ Tax Educator's 15-Hour Oregon Continuing Education Course

Course Description: A+ Tax Educator's online exam is a practical way to meet your 15-hour annual continuing education requirement for Tax Preparers and Consultants in Oregon. This class introduces preparers to issues involved with returns for filers covered by U.S. income tax treaties. It also gives them advanced practice in figuring charitable contribution deductions and IRA transactions. Course materials address scenarios that relate to innocent spouse relief and examination of returns by the I.R.S. The course also covers benefits for education and adoption, as well as concerns for self-employed taxpayers and those who use their home for business.

### Instructions:

- Download and then read the course materials indicated below.
- When you're ready for the exam, download the test, answer sheet, and course evaluation form that will be e-mailed or sent via U.S. mail to you upon receipt of payment.
- Complete the test, using the course materials when necessary.
- Fax your answers and the course evaluation form to: A+ Tax Educator at 619.374.2902 or mail them to: A+ Tax Educators, 1081 Camino del Rio South, Ste. 213; San Diego, CA 92108. [Note: Your exam cannot be considered complete without the Course Evaluation Form.]
- Your certificate of completion will be mailed to you if you attain a passing score (70% or better) on the Federal Exam. The certificate will allow you to provide proof of your continuing education for the coming tax year. A+ will also notify the Oregon State Board of Tax Practitioners of your successful completion.

Learning Objectives: Learning objectives are identified below with the topics they pertain to.

### **Federal Topics:**

#### U.S. Tax Treaties:

Awareness of treaty provisions regarding employment classifications (ability to identify what types of employment are covered by the treaties, e.g. students, researchers, entertainers, etc.)

Awareness of treaty uses (reciprocity, U.S. foreign service employees)

Limits on usefulness of information found in Publication 901 (i.e., full treaties are not published in this booklet but most pertinent information is)

I.R.S. Examination of Returns, Appeals, and Refund Claims:

Familiarity of issues that cause a return to be examined

Knowledge of who may represent a tax filer (limits of the authority and protection for tax preparers who are not enrolled agents)

Ability to explain common procedures and options for tax examinations (recording interviews, examination by mail, Fast Trak mediation, what to expect during and after a meeting with an I.R.S. agent, etc.)

Knowledge of how and when to make an Offer in Compromise (awareness of procedures for filing and I.R.S. reasons for accepting Offers in Compromise)

Claiming tax refunds: offset priorities, procedures

Charitable Contributions:

Identifying qualified organizations: basic and advanced

Figuring out deductibility of complex contributions: deducting the value of a service received for a contribution to calculate the deductible amount, contributions to universities attached to sporting tickets, students living with taxpayer

Accurately identifying deductions for foster children care

Figuring deductions related to volunteer work: whether or not/how to deduct services and time, mileage, childcare expenses

Identifying deductible travel expenses for work done for a qualified organization

Determine the deductible value of items donated such as used cars, uniforms, clothes, etc.

Review of basic rules for claiming deductions

Innocent Spouse Relief:

Identify candidates eligible for spouse relief

Accurately allocate responsibility for deficiency (determining one spouse's portion of responsibility for understatement of tax on a joint return, practice scenarios)

Equitable relief: definition and eligible candidates

Applying for separation of liability

Individual Retirement Accounts:

Knowledge of limits on contributions for different types of filers

Knowledge of rules for Roth and regular IRAs (contribution and distribution regulations as they relate to federal tax issues such as income, penalty, and excise tax)

Determining spousal limits on contributions

Rules for determining deductible contributions (spousal contributions, covered by retirement plan at work, etc.)

Making conversions

Recharacterizations (figuring basis, rules about)

Correctly identifying prohibited use of IRA funds

Awareness of ramifications of making excess contributions (adjusting by withdraw, recognizing the next year, penalties, etc., practice problems)

Can make assessment about exceptions to the 10% additional tax penalty for early withdraw of IRA funds

Awareness of rules relating to contributions to SIMPLE IRAs (employee and employer issues)

Figuring credit for contributions to retirement plans

Tax Benefits for Education:

Qualified education expenses (review)

Determining taxable portion of scholarship funds

Scholarships versus other type of funding

Hope Credit and Lifetime Learning Credit (differences, limits, reduction for some income brackets, identifying candidates for each)

Prohibited double benefits

Deductible transportation costs

Student Loan Interest deduction (eligibility, how to claim)

Coverdell Educational Savings Accounts (rules for establishing, distribution regulations)

Qualified Tuition Programs

Work-related education (what qualifies)

Self-Employment Tax:

Figuring self-employment tax

Business Use of the Home and Issues for Daycare Providers:

New standard meal and snack rates for daycare providers

Exclusive Use Test exceptions

Deduction limits on business use of home expenses

Tax Benefits for Adoption:

Figuring the credit, eligibility

Course Materials:

For Federal Tax issues, read and then review the following. Use worksheets from the booklets to figure the sample problems as indicated in the exam.

*Publication 17*

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p17.pdf>

“Chapter 18, Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs)”

“Chapter 26, Contributions”

“Chapter 29, Tax Benefits for Work-Related Education”

“Chapter 37, Education Credits”

*Publication 526 Charitable Contributions*

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf>

Self-Employment Tax Topic

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=98846,00.html>

Publication 556 *Examination of Returns, Appeal Rights, and Claims for Refund*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p556.pdf>

Publication 587 *Business Use of Your Home*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p587.pdf>

Publication 590 *Individual Retirement Arrangements*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p590.pdf>

Publication 901 *U.S. Tax Treaties*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p901.pdf>

Tax Benefits for Adoption  
<http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html>

Publication 970 *Tax Benefits for Education*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf>

Publication 971 *Innocent Spouse Relief*  
<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p971.pdf>