

INSTRUCTOR DOCUMENT · PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING

Case 00: Campus Pulse Events

*Setting up and running the case*Faculty onboarding · Revised September 2026 · acechemicalscase.com

Read this first if you read nothing else. The case cannot be paused. Expected time on task is sixty to ninety minutes. Do not schedule it inside a class period shorter than that, and tell students in writing not to start it on a computer they will not return to. This is the single largest source of student email.

Before you assign it

Question	Answer
Time on task	Sixty to ninety minutes, in one sitting.
Prerequisites	None beyond the accounting equation and the idea of debits and credits. The in-case boot camp re-teaches both before anything is graded.
Entity type	A corporation. Students see Common Stock and Dividends, not a single owner's capital account.
Accounting period	September 1 to September 30; the business's first month. There are no closing entries.
Grading weight	Your call. It is built as graded homework or a lab, not an exam, which is why the balancing screens allow unlimited attempts.
Marking	Entirely automatic. There is no hand-marking step and nothing for you to fill in.
AI involvement	None. No language model is used anywhere in this case, and no student text leaves the platform.
Access password	Issued by the author on request, by email, within two working days. Request it before you plan the week you will teach it.

Everything in that table is stated to students on their first screen too, so you are not the only one who has been told.

Run it yourself once, first

Take fifteen minutes and do three things a student will do: complete a few transactions and get one deliberately wrong; close the tab partway through and try to resume; submit, then sign back in under the same name.

You will then have met each of those behaviors before a student emails you about them, and you will know what the case actually says rather than what this document says it says.

Setting up a cohort

1. Go to the Faculty Portal and sign in with your access password.
2. On the Setup Cohort tab, choose “Case 00: Campus Pulse Events (Principles)” from the case list. This matters: a class code is bound to one case, and a student entering a code registered for a different case is refused with an explanation rather than dropped into the wrong engagement.
3. Fill in your name, institution, email and expected number of students, then press Provision New Class Tracker.
4. You are given a six-character class code. Distribute it however you distribute anything else; it is not a secret, and it is not a password.
5. Students go to the case, enter the class code and their real name, and begin. No account is created and no password is set.

Students must use the name you will recognize on a roster. The platform identifies them by name and class code, and that pair also seeds their figures. “Jamie” and “Jamie Okafor” are two different students to the platform, with different numbers.

Getting an access password

Administrative access is issued by the author on request, by email. Expect a reply within two working days. If you have not heard back after that, assume the message went astray and send it again rather than waiting. Ask as soon as you are considering the case rather than in the week you intend to teach it: this is the only setup step that depends on somebody else answering, and it is therefore the step most likely to disrupt a teaching schedule.

What students actually do

Phase	What happens	Scored
Boot camp	A guided warm-up on the account types, the accounting equation and the debit and credit rules. Ends with a practice journal entry the student must get right before continuing, unlimited attempts, no marks.	No
The smartphone	Eighteen items arrive as messages, receipts, invoices and bank alerts. For each: record a journal entry, or select “no journal entry required”.	36
Check your work	Build the unadjusted trial balance, then approve or reject another person’s journal entry.	4 + 5
Month-end review	Six adjusting entries, then the adjusted trial balance.	12 + 4
Board presentation	Income statement, statement of retained earnings and balance sheet, in that order. Each must be right before the next unlocks.	20
Final challenge	Three entries typed from memory with no dropdowns, then a nine-question concept check. Then submit.	10 + 9

Support fades deliberately, twice. The first five transactions come with a full step-by-step checklist, the next five with partial guidance, and the last eight with none. The month-end adjustments then reintroduce a brief scaffold for the first two, because that phase is a student’s first encounter with accruals and deferrals and should not begin at the difficulty the smartphone phase ended on.

Getting the grades

1. Faculty Portal → Extract Logs.
2. Enter your class code and pull the cohort.
3. Each submission carries a total out of one hundred, a breakdown by component, and a per-item list showing what the student entered and why it scored what it did.

The transcript is written for a human. Answering “why did I lose a mark on number four” does not require reading a data structure — each item is listed with the accounts the student chose and a verdict in words, including whether they had the right two accounts the wrong way round. The machine-readable payload sits below that for the dashboard.

One row per student. A resubmission updates the existing record rather than adding a second one, so a student who retried after a timeout does not appear twice in your export.

What students will email you about

“I closed the tab and lost everything.”

This is real and it is the known limitation. Their completed phases were saved to you as they went, so you can see how far they got and what they had recorded, but the case cannot resume, and they would have to start again with the same figures. Warn them in advance; it is the reason the warning is on the first screen.

“It says my name is already registered.”

Two different students in one cohort with the same name. Ask the second to add a middle initial or the last four digits of their student ID. A student returning after submitting is recognized and will not see this.

“The trial balance will not balance and I cannot tell why.”

After two failed attempts the case tells them how many accounts are on the wrong side — a count, never which ones. Attempts there are unlimited and only the first-attempt points are at stake, so they are not stuck; point them at the rule that an account belongs in the column of its own normal balance.

“I got it right but it marked me wrong.”

Worth taking seriously, and easy to check: the transcript records exactly what they entered. The commonest genuine cause is the two accounts reversed, which now earns a quarter rather than nothing and says so on screen. The second commonest is answering for the wrong item after reopening the case, since the order is shuffled per student.

“Can I have a different set of numbers?”

No, and this is by design: the figures are derived from their name and your class code, so they are stable across reloads and reproducible if you ever need to check a grade by hand.

Honest limits

- No pilot data exists. The sixty-to-ninety-minute estimate is derived from the content, not measured. Your first cohort is better evidence than this document.
- The case cannot be paused, and this is an accommodation gap: a student entitled to breaks has no safe stopping point. If you have such a student, the practical workaround today is to let them run it in a single supervised session, or to accept the phase records the platform sent you as evidence of partial completion.
- The trial-balance component measures whether a student knows each account’s normal side. It does not measure posting; the board they classify is built from the correct ledger regardless of what they recorded. Do not describe it as assessing the ledger.
- The student never computes an adjustment amount; every adjustment states its own figure.
- Nine concept-check questions are drawn from twenty in a fixed difficulty mix, so two students answer different questions. Treat those nine points as a check on understanding rather than a precise comparison.

If you adopt this case and something in this document turns out to be wrong, that is worth an email. The document is generated from the same source the platform marks against, so a mismatch is a real defect rather than a wording preference.