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Preface

Brief, Focused, Essential

Student learning styles continue to evolve as we move into the twenty-first century. Students want to learn accounting in the most efficient way possible, balancing coursework with personal schedules. They tend to focus on their studies in short intense segments between jobs, classes, and family commitments. Meanwhile, the accounting industry has endured dramatic shifts since the collapse of Enron and WorldCom, causing a renewed focus on ethical behavior in accounting.

Core Themes

This book is aimed squarely at the new learning styles evident in today's students and addresses accounting industry changes as well. Accordingly, three core themes lie at the foundation of this text:

1. **Focused.** Students want to be as efficient as possible in their learning. This book adopts a concise, jargon-free, and easy-to-understand approach. Key concepts are provided in short segments with bullet points and step-by-step instructions to simplify concepts. A thoughtful, stepwise approach helps students avoid distractions and focuses attention on the big picture.
2. **Reinforcement.** Review Problems at the end of each major section offer practical opportunities for students to apply what they have learned. These Review Problems allow students to immediately reinforce what they have learned and are provided within the body of the chapter along with the solutions.
3. **Relevance.** Students perform better when they can answer the “why” question. Why is managerial accounting important? Meaningful references to companies throughout the chapters help students tie the concepts presented in each chapter to real organizations.

In addition, realistic managerial scenarios present an issue that must be addressed by the management accountant. These pique student interest and are designed to show how issues can be resolved using the concepts presented in the chapter.

Finally, Business in Action features in this text link managerial decision making to real business decisions.

Other Key Features

- **A focus on decision making.** This book focuses on the essential managerial accounting concepts used within organizations for decision-making purposes and covers these concepts in 13 straightforward and concise chapters. Knowing that the majority of students taking managerial accounting at the introductory level are general business majors and will not become accountants, this text was written to help students make informed business decisions using managerial accounting concepts.
- **Thorough end-of-chapter coverage.** The Exercises, Problems, and Cases were developed to give student a wide range of reinforcement at different levels of complexity and to help build critical thinking skills.
- **Ethics coverage.** The importance of ethics is evident from the outset since the book begins with an entire segment on ethical issues facing the accounting industry. This segment includes the Institute of Management Accountants' revised standards of ethical conduct and describes professional codes of conduct provided by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Financial Executives International, and International Federation of Accountants. Ethics questions and cases are included throughout the text.
- **Group projects.** The accounting industry and business in general have made it clear employees must be able to work effectively and efficiently in groups. In addition, studies show students learn concepts more effectively when working in groups. To reinforce this idea, we have included group projects throughout the book.
- **Spreadsheet applications.** Computer Application features and End-of-Chapter Exercises emphasize the importance of using Excel spreadsheets for analytical purposes.