

FINC 3501- PERSONAL FINANCE
Expanded Course Outline
SUMMER, 2015-Online

Professor: Charles Hodges

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Office: Room 205B – Adamson Hall

Office Hours: Tues-Thurs: 1:00-3:00 PM during Session 1 only (*I am in my office most days. Call me to verify I am in.*)

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I. Catalog Description

A non-technical course of general application stressing personal financial planning, budgeting, savings and investments, small business ownership, estate planning, and retirement income.

II. Required Background or Experience

A. Prerequisite: None

B. General Education (Core) Contribution: The course uses the writing skills developed in English courses, oral skills developed in speech courses, mathematical methods and critical thinking acquired in mathematics courses.

III. Expected Outcomes: (www.westga.edu/~accfin/outcomes.htm)

A. Communicate effectively in writing - LG1 (Learning Goal 1).

B. Apply basic quantitative skills to personal finance problems – LG2.

C. Use computer resources to research and analyze personal finance problems – LG3.

D. Understand the financial planning process from college to retirement – LG4, LG6.

E. Have an understanding of legal and ethical considerations that affect financial decision-making – LG5.

IV. Text and References

No text required. Various handouts and Internet links will be used.

V. Special or Unique Student Material:

A basic calculator is needed.

VI. Special or Unique University Facilities:

None. However, access to an Internet connected computer is required to complete the course.

VII. Expanded Description of the Course and Instructional Method:

- A. Expanded Description of the Course: This self-paced course examines the financial problems and feasible solutions over the student's life time. The life time cycle approach begins with graduation from college and ends with preparation for retirement and after. Budgeting techniques and savings are examined as a means of achieving financial independence. This course covers the basics of investments, retirement planning, insurance, and estate planning.
- B. Instructional Methods:
- Video Lectures and Problem Solving: Topics in personal financial management are discussed in lectures presented by the instructor. Students then apply these topics via the course project, quizzes, and Final Exam.
 - Internet Materials: Various materials are available on the instructor's home page and the CourseDen course site that supplement video presentations.
 - Outside Assignments: Students are required to complete a personal financial plan. The assignments are intended to introduce students to various sources of financial data. A substantial portion of the data and analysis must be completed using computer programs and Internet.

VIII. Methods of Evaluating the Outcomes:

- A. Evaluation tools: Your overall grade is based on online quizzes, online Final Exam and a large, multi-part project. Weights are shown below. (See Scheduled Exams policy.)

GRADING WEIGHTS

CourseDen Quizzes	33%
CourseDen Final Exam	34%
Project	33%

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Final Grade
A	90
B	80
C	70
D	60
F	Below 60

I reserve the right to "curve" grades.

- B. Administrative Policies
- As this is an online course, the primary method of communication will be E-mail. You may use either your westga.edu email address or the CourseDen email associated with the course section. I will send most information via CourseDen email and CourseDen announcements.
 - Grades are posted in CourseDen. As much of the project and quizzes must be hand graded, there may be a several day delay between your submission of work and the recording of your grades in CourseDen.
 - I am revising many aspects of the course. As such, it is possible that the study modules, including project and quizzes, may differ depending upon when you complete the module. Students completed the original version of a module will not be required to complete the revised version of a module.
 - Requests for exam score adjustments must be made in writing within ONE WEEK of the scores being posted in CourseDen. Only WRITTEN (Email is accepted) requests will be considered.

e. **Attendance Policy and Required Work:**

- i. **Regular Class Meetings:** This is an online class. There are no regularly scheduled class meetings. On May 4, I will be in 205B Adamson Hall between 1 pm and 5 pm. You must complete the Course Introduction by May 18. You must complete Modules 2, 3, and 4 by June 23. The remainder of the required work (quizzes, project) must be completed by July 17. The Final Exam must be completed by 11 pm on July 20. Any item not submitted by the appropriate deadline will receive a grade of 0.
 - ii. **Scheduled Quizzes and Final Exam:** All modules and quizzes are available in CourseDen. You must complete the Course Syllabus Quiz (Module 1) by May 18. Modules 2-4, which includes three quizzes and three parts of the class project, must be completed by June 23. The Final Exam is available from May 18 until July 20. It is up to you to decide when to complete the quizzes and Final Exam. The only requirements are that: 1) you complete all quizzes before taking the Final Exam, 2) you complete the first four modules by June 23, 3) you complete all other course work by the 11 pm on July 17, and 4) you complete the Final Exam by July 20. Work not completed by the relevant due date will receive a grade of 0. You are allowed one attempt on the Final Exam. You are allowed one attempt on each quiz. You may use any resource (books, internet, etc.), except direct human assistance, for quizzes and exams. There are 13 quizzes; I use all 13 scores in computing your quiz average. There are 8 segments to the course project; I use all 8 segments in computing your project score.
 - iii. **General:** You are responsible for knowledge of any administrative announcements (test information, schedule changes, etc.) that are distributed via email, video, or CourseDen announcements. It is recommended that you make a reciprocal agreement with a classmate to share missed notes and other class information.
- f. Code of Conduct: Honesty and integrity are necessary to the academic and professional functions of business. Dishonesty undermines the foundation of the academic environment. Improper academic conduct shall be interpreted to mean the obtaining and using of information during an examination by means other than those permitted by the instructor, including supplying such information to other students. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of academic records are subject to disciplinary action.

C. Please carefully review the information at the following link:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf.

The document at this link contains important information pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

D. Credit Hour Policy (3 credit hours): Students in this class will spend 3 hours (160 minutes) per day with faculty instruction (online). Generally, students can expect to spend about six hours of class work outside of the classroom each day. This out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to, quizzes, reading the chapters before a topic is covered in class, assignments, individual project, research, and test preparation. The amount of out of class time required for a given outcome will vary by student.

- E. Learning Domains:
 - a. Cognitive: Knowledge, Comprehension, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation.
 - b. Affective: Receiving, Responding, Valuing, Organization, Characterization.

IX. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1. Course Introduction, (Quiz due) complete by May 18
2. Self-Identification (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by June 23
3. Goal Setting (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by June 23
4. Budgeting (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by June 23
5. Banking and Use of Credit (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by July 17
6. Wise Purchasing (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by July 17
7. Basics of Savings and Investing (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by July 17
8. Terms of Savings and Investing (Quiz due) complete by July 17
9. Basics of Insurance (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by July 17
10. Taxes (Quiz due) complete by July 17
11. Transportation (Quiz due) complete by July 17
12. Housing (Quiz due) complete by July 17
13. The Cycle of Life (Project Segment and Quiz due) complete by July 17
14. Review Your Plan (Project Segment due) complete by July 17
15. Online Final Exam (available May 18 to July 20)

The ONLINE FINAL EXAM is available after May 18. There are 13 quizzes; I use all 13 scores in computing your quiz average. There are 8 segments to the course project; I use all 8 segments in computing your project score.

NOTE 1: This course covers the following AACSB perspectives: influence of legal and regulatory issues; ethical issues; written and oral communication; and social issues

NOTE 2: This course covers the following teaching objectives: developing oral communication skills; developing analytical/critical thinking; and encouraging social responsibility.

Addendum to Course Syllabi for the Dept. of Accounting & Finance

MY.WESTGA.EDU

The policy of the University of West Georgia is that each student is responsible for checking his/her my.westga.edu e-mail account on a regular basis.

EXTRA CREDIT

There is no extra credit in this course beyond that explicitly stated in the course syllabus.

WORK FROM OTHER COURSES

Work submitted for credit in other courses will not be accepted for credit in this course.