

THOMMESEN FINC 2400-001 SYLLABUS (part 1)
AUBURN UNIVERSITY 2014 Spring semester

FINANCE 2400: Personal Finance

[11784] Section 001: MWF 9:00 - 9:50 a.m. in auditorium Lowder 125A

INSTRUCTOR: Mr. Sven Thommesen
OFFICE: 317 Lowder Business Building
OFFICE HOURS: MWF 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. or by appointment
OFFICE PHONE: (334) 844-3004
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Teaching Assistant: We have not been assigned a T.A. for this semester.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is intended to be a practically oriented course. It covers plans for managing personal financial problems involving insurance, housing, household budgeting, investments, personal and bank loans, personal credit, and the time value of money. The use of a financial calculator is introduced.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Kapoor, Dlabay, Hughes: *Personal Finance (10/e)*, McGraw/Hill-Irwin, 2012.

The campus bookstore carries a bundle containing a (cheaper) loose-leaf version of the textbook and a Connect Plus access code. You'll want to get that.

REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS:

Handout materials as needed

A basic financial calculator is required. Recommended models are either the HP-10BII+ from Hewlett-Packard or the TI BA-II+ from Texas Instruments. The campus bookstore should carry both. If you want a more advanced model, either the TI BA-II+ Professional or the HP 30b will do (try Amazon for those.) Apps for your cell phone or tablet are also useful, but will not be permitted on the final.

OPTIONAL READING

Instructor's class notes

GENERAL CLASS RULES: read **Part 2 of the Syllabus.**

PREREQUISITES

There are no specific course prerequisites for this class. However, you need to be eligible to take College of Business courses (check with your advisor).

SEMESTER CALENDAR

First day of class:	Wednesday, January 8	
No class:	Monday, January 20	(MLK/REL)
Last day to drop class:	Thursday, February 27	(mid-semester)
No classes:	March 10-14	(Spring Break)
Last day of class:	Friday, April 25	

EXAMS

The plan is to have 4 multiple-choice exams, in the form of online exams administered through Canvas, and one comprehensive in-class final exam. See the Assignment schedule.

SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM (comprehensive)

Monday, April 28, 8:00 - 10:30 a.m. in our regular classroom.

CLASS WEBSITES

Class notes and other class related materials may be found at <http://www.business.auburn.edu/~thommsn/FINC-2400> .

Class work will be conducted online using Auburn's **Canvas** system: <https://auburn.instructure.com/>

We will use McGraw-Hill's **Connect** servers for additional class materials as well as assignments. Your book bundle contains the required access code. The link to our class in Connect is found in Canvas.

Sample exams and other materials can also be found at the textbook website at <http://auth.mhhe.com/irwin/kapoor/web/index.html>
(Click on our textbook, then on "Student Edition" under "Learning Center")

STUDENTS MUST CHECK THE CLASS WEB SITE AND/OR THEIR EMAIL REGULARLY FOR NEWS OR MESSAGES REGARDING THE CLASS.

CHAPTER AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Topic #1(a): Tools for financial planning

Textbook: Chapters 1, 3

Topic #1(b): Cash management

Textbook: Chapter 5

Topic #1(c): Financial math (Time Value of Money)

Textbook: Appendix to Chapter 1
Handout on TVM calculations.
Handout on financial calculator usage.

Topic #2(a): Consumer Credit

Textbook: Chapters 6, 7

Topic #2(b): Consumer Purchases

Textbook: Chapters 8, 9

Topic #3: Insurance

Textbook: Chapters 10, 11, 12

Topic #4(a): Taxes and Investing

Textbook: Chapter 4, 13
Handout on the nature of financial risk.

Topic #4(b): Retirement planning

Textbook: Chapter 18

Topic #5: Career planning

Textbook: Chapter 2

A tentative lecture schedule can be found on the class web site.

GRADING POLICY

(a) Course grades will be assigned on the usual 10-point scale
(A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=0-59%).

(b) Course grades are calculated as follows:

First week setup tasks	4%
14 LearnSmart assignments	20%
14 chapter quizzes	10%
4 exams (in Canvas)	36%
Personal financial plan	10%
Comprehensive Final Exam	20%

Extra credit: up to 5%

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who need special accommodations should make an appointment to discuss their Accommodation Memo with the instructor as soon as possible *during the first week of class*. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need special accommodations, contact The Program for Students with Disabilities in 1244 Haley Center (844-2096). Note that if you ask for extra time on an exam during that exam, without having discussed accommodations previously, the answer will be no.

CHEATING

Please review the Academic Honesty Code in the Tiger Cub. Students are expected to exhibit honesty at all times. You must do all assigned work individually, without giving help or receiving it, and without the use of unauthorized aids of any sort.

Any case of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic dishonesty will be referred to the academic disciplinary committee.

DISCRIMINATION

I do not discriminate for or against anyone on any basis whatsoever. I strive to treat all my students fairly and equally. Your course grade depends strictly on your performance on assignments and tests. If you feel you are not being treated fairly, please raise your concerns with me first. If you still have issues, please contact the department chair or the Dean's office.

HARASSMENT

The same procedure applies if you have concerns about anything I have said or done in class that might have caused you offense. I do my best to treat all students with respect and courtesy. School policy prohibits harassment on a sexual, religious, or other basis (and that works both ways, of course.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (a) You must familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, lecture schedule, and other information about how the course will be conducted. You must complete assignments by the deadlines given, and you must take exams at the times they are given.
- (b) You must attend class regularly, and keep up with the assigned readings. You should come to class prepared, ready to discuss the day's topic or materials.
- (c) Your instructor must be able to reach you and get information to you. Check your AU email account daily for possible new messages regarding the class. You should also check Canvas daily for new announcements. **Being unaware of announcements or emails from your instructor is not a valid excuse!**
- (d) When emailing your instructor, please indicate which class you are enrolled in!

CLASS ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend class regularly. Experience shows there is a strong correlation between class attendance and grades! On exams you will be responsible both for material in the assigned readings and for topics discussed in class. Participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

You are expected to behave with courtesy and consideration towards you instructor and your fellow students. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Coming to class on time so that your arrival does not disrupt class;
- **Turning off** cell phones and other devices that might interrupt class;
- Not talking over the instructor once class has begun;
- Not checking your email or your caller ID during class;
- Not reading or sending text messages during class.
- If you have to leave early, warn your instructor before class starts, and seat yourself close to an exit, to minimize disruption.
- With the exception of water, the College of Business does not permit food or drink in the classrooms.

You may use a laptop to take notes after clearing this with your instructor, but your laptop should not be used during class to surf the web, play games, check your email, etc.

ABOUT NOTE-TAKING

Note-taking in class: students are encouraged to take whatever notes they deem necessary in class for purposes of enhancing their learning and to study for exams (and for later use). Such notes are for personal use, or (on occasion) to share with a fellow student who was absent from class. Note: if you want to tape-record lectures, you need to ask the instructor's permission first.

Commercial note-taking: Should a student want to take notes in class for an external entity which intends to sell such notes for profit, he or she must first obtain the instructor's permission. Granting such permission is at the instructor's discretion.

Note that University policy prohibits persons who are not registered for a class from attending lectures, whether for note-taking purposes or otherwise.

RULES FOR TAKING IN-CLASS EXAMS

- (a) Exams must be taken at the appointed time and place.
- (b) You must bring a valid student ID to every exam. If you cannot show a valid picture ID, you may not be seated.
- (c) If you arrive late, you will be allowed to take the exam, but will not be given extra time. If you arrive after the first completed exam has been handed in, you may not be seated.
- (d) Cell phones and other communications devices (WiFi, Bluetooth, etc.) must be **turned off** during exams. If you are found to be using such a device during an exam, your exam will be collected at that point whether you are done or not.
- (e) Overly capable devices, such as PDA's, programmable calculators, and calculators with alphanumeric memory, are prohibited. Their use will be taken as evidence of intent to cheat.
- (f) If your accommodations require extended time on exams, you may start an exam early, or finish it late, or take a proctored exam at PSD in Haley Center, after consultation with your instructor.

RULES FOR TAKING ONLINE EXAMS IN CANVAS

- Online exams in Canvas may be taken anywhere, from any computer that has internet access and acceptable software installed, including in University computer labs, in the Library, and from your home. Or for that matter, sitting in a cyber café in Timbuktu.
- The instructor may require the use of the **Respondus Lock-down browser** for taking a test. This browser severely limits what else you can do on your computer while taking a test. Such browsers are already installed on University lab computers, but if you are taking a test from home, you may need to download and install this browser first.
- Canvas will be set up to permit you one or more attempts at an exam during a given time window of availability. So:
 - Make sure you know what the window of availability is. Don't procrastinate so long that you run out the clock and can't take the test!
 - Make sure you know how much time you have available for each attempt, and pace yourself accordingly. Do not run out of time!
 - Try to ensure that you will not be disturbed or interrupted while taking a test. Canvas's timer does not stop while you are otherwise engaged.
- It is always possible when you are taking a test online that you will have computer problems, or internet problems, or suffer a loss of power. Plan for this! Give yourself enough time to deal with such issues (for example, by moving to a different computer) and still take the test. DO NOT wait until the very end of the window of availability to take a test. "The dog ate my computer" is not an acceptable excuse!
- **Online exams are not intended to be open-book.** Just as in the classroom, the exam is between you and (the computer administering) the test, with no aids allowed except those explicitly permitted. If discovered, the use of unauthorized aids will be treated as cheating. Just as in the classroom, the use of PDA's, cell phones, and overly capable calculators is disallowed. In addition, you may not surf the web for answers while taking a test!
- **Online exams are not intended to be group projects.** Getting help from or collaborating with others while taking an exam is cheating and will be treated as such if discovered.

ABSENCES FROM EXAMS

If you are not present at an exam, it is either for a reason known to you in advance, or for some unforeseen reason, such as an emergency. The reason for your absence may or may not constitute a valid excuse under University rules (as set forth in the Tiger Cub).

1. It is expected that you will make every effort to avoid scheduling other activities at times that will conflict with known exam times. If you have to attend a scheduled event such as a court appearance, a job interview, a family ceremony, or a religious event, you must notify the instructor **at least 3 days in advance**. If the event is not a valid University excuse, the instructor may grant permission to take a makeup test on a case by case basis.

If you fail to abide by the 3-day limit you will be assessed a grade penalty.

2. In case of absences due to unexpected or emergency reasons, you must provide documentation for the reason for the absence, and you must notify the instructor promptly, **no later than 2 days (48 hours) after the exam**.

a. In the case of unexpected medical issues (illnesses, accidents, visits to the doctor) you must provide documentation from the professional treating you stating that you were unable to attend school on the day of the exam. **Such documentation will be verified.** NOTE: If I am unable to verify your excuse, you will receive a score of zero on your makeup.

Note: if we are using online exams administered in Canvas, the written excuse would need to state that you were unable to attend school during the whole window of availability for the exam in question!

b. In the case of a family emergency, such as a death or illness in your immediate family, you must go to your Associate Dean to obtain a letter that verifies your emergency. (If you need a leave or an extension for a family emergency, do not hesitate to see your dean about your situation.)

If you fail to abide by the 48-hour limit, you will be assessed a grade penalty.

If I do not hear from you **within 7 days** of a missed exam, you will receive a score of zero on that exam (and that exam will count as part of your grade.)

3. If you have arranged to take a makeup exam, and then fail to show for the makeup at the appointed time and place, you will be assessed a grade penalty.

In each of the above cases, the assessed grade penalty is the deduction of 10 points (one full letter grade) from your course grade.

EXAMS: OPTION C (Use of Canvas for some or all exams)

We will have 4 online tests, each covering 3 or 4 specified chapters or topics. Exams may consist of multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, essay questions, calculation problems, or diagram analysis.

The tests will be administered by Canvas thus:

- (a) Each test will be available to you for 3 days [see the exam schedule];
- (b) During that time you will be allowed 2 attempts to take the test;
- (c) Blackboard will count your best score as your score for that test;
- (d) You will have 60 minutes to complete each test attempt;
- (e) Online tests may be taken on campus (in the labs), or from any computer which has internet access and the appropriate web browser software installed.
- (f) We will use the “Lockdown” browser to access tests in Canvas.

Extra credit may be awarded at the discretion of the instructor for class participation, for assigned homework, or for pop quizzes. Note: there will be no make-up pop quizzes!

USING THE CANVAS WEBSITE

We will be using the University Canvas website in this class, primarily for taking online tests and quizzes. Class materials may be found in Canvas, or at my external web site, listed on part 1 of the syllabus.

To access the course you must go to Auburn’s Canvas web site:

<https://auburn.instructure.com/>

Log in with your University login and password. You should find one shell for each class or section you are registered for this term. Click on the line for this class.

You should check this website often -- at least once a day. Any new Announcements will be obvious as soon as you log in.

Note: If this is the first time you use Canvas, please make sure you are running the right browser (Instructure recommends Firefox) and that your copy of Flash is up to date. (The need for Flash means you will not be able to access Canvas from Android devices.)

GRADING POLICY (Canvas exams)

- (a) Course grades will be assigned on the usual 10-point scale (A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=0-59%).
- (b) Course grades are calculated according to the rules found in Part 1 of the syllabus.
- (c) The final exam is **comprehensive**. It is also **not optional**. (If you skip the final exam you get a grade of F for the course.)
- (d) You are required to take every online chapter test, since each exam covers different material.
- (e) If you are absent from a test or an exam without a valid excuse, you will earn a score of zero on that exam.
- (f) If you miss an exam due to illness or some other valid reason recognized by the University (see the Tiger Cub for clarification) or as permitted by the instructor, you may ask for a **makeup exam**. The time and place for makeup exams (or the availability of the makeup on Canvas) will be set by the instructor.
- (g) In order to take a makeup exam you must provide proper **written documentation** for your absence. For tests administered in Canvas, your excuse must cover the whole time that the exam in question was available for the class to take. You can expect your instructor to verify such documentation. If your excuse cannot be verified, you will get a score of zero on that makeup exam.

USING MCGRAW-HILL CONNECT

A link to the Connect web site will be provided in Canvas. You should access Connect using this link to ensure that scores from Connect are correctly passed to the Canvas grade book.

The first time you go there, you will need to register: you need to provide your Auburn email address, a password you make up, and the access code that came with your textbook. (If you do not have an access code, you can purchase one with a credit card at the time of registration.)

Connect contains additional helpful materials for your study needs; check around. You will also find an eBook-version of the textbook, which you can read on any computer anywhere.

Note: if you are waiting for your financial aid before buying your books, you can get access to Connect by choosing "Free Trial" during registration. This gives you access to all features of Connect, including the eBook, for 3 weeks. If you do this, make sure you provide Connect with a valid access code before the trial period runs out!

We will be using the LearnSmart feature in Connect: leading up to each exam I will assign the relevant chapters in LearnSmart. Going through the LearnSmart exercises should be helpful to you in mastering the material.