



Texas A&M University-Commerce
 Instructional Technology & Distance Education - Instructional Design
Finance 304
Introduction to Business Finance
Fall 2012

COURSE INFORMATION

- Sections 01W and 02W (course code: 81000 / 82617) / Introduction to Business Finance
- Fall / 2012
- 3 Credit Hours
- Class meeting – online with optional “ClassLive” sessions (meeting times to be announced)

Professor / Instructor Contact Information

- David J. Nowacki, Adjunct Professor
- Office location: Off campus
- Office phone: 972-385-1769
- Office hours – face to face (by appointment only; generally off campus) and by telephone 8 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.
- David.Nowacki@tamu-commerce.edu;
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Materials – Text, Readings, Supplementary Readings

(Updated: 8/10/2012) Official Textbook is:

Fundamentals of Financial Management, Concise 7th Edition
 Eugene F. Brigham, Joel F. Houston
 [ISBN (Student Edition 10: 0-538-47712-1)
 No Additional support needed (such as online or ‘student package).

- Required materials: Financial Calculator; handheld is fine, however, Excel is recommended!
- Required readings: Additional files will be provided online.

Course Description

This is an undergraduate level course that will focus predominately on an intermediate comprehension of corporate finance and business management. We will start with a review of accounting and basics of time value of money. Next, we analyze financial statements in order to identify a firm’s strengths and weaknesses. We then move to financial leverage and financial forecasting concepts, as well as theories for managing current assets and current liabilities. The second half of the course will be devoted to advanced time value of money concepts and methods companies use to choose acceptable investment projects.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes Assessment:

All of the topics covered in the course are covered with a specific course objective in mind. The course objectives for this course are given below which will be created into a learning outcomes assessment rubric (given below the objectives) to measure student performance in the class. The objectives for this course are:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the advanced concepts of contemporary financial management and the application of its methods.
2. Demonstrate an ability to analyze and apply asset valuation techniques.
3. Demonstrate an understanding and the ability to measure strategic financial decisions in a risk/return context as it relates to today’s dynamic world.

Criteria (Course Objectives)	1 (Unsatisfactory)	2 (Emerging)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Exemplary)
Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts of financial management and the application of its methods.	Student shows limited ability to understand the basic concepts of financial management.	Student shows understanding and the ability to apply only the more basic concepts and methods of financial management.	Student shows understanding and the ability to apply the basic but not advanced concepts and methods of Financial management.	Student shows understanding and the ability to apply the advanced as well as basic concepts and methods of financial management.
Demonstrate an ability to analyze and apply asset Valuation techniques.	Student shows limited ability to analyze or apply the basic techniques of asset valuation.	Student shows the ability to analyze and apply only the basic techniques of asset valuation.	Student shows the ability to analyze and apply the basic but not advanced techniques of asset valuation.	Student shows the ability to analyze and apply the advanced as well as basic techniques of asset valuation.
Demonstrate an understanding and ability to measure strategic financial decisions in a risk/return context.	Student shows limited ability to understand or measure the basic risk/return decision process.	Student shows understanding and the ability to measure only the more basic financial decisions involved in business management.	Student shows understanding and the ability to measure the basic but not advanced decisions of financial management.	Student shows understanding and the ability to measure the advanced as well as basic decisions of financial management.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Include a statement and related information such as the following:

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology in your online courses. The following technology is recommended to be successful in this online course:

- Internet connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)*
- Headset/Microphone (not required; but useful for synchronous chats)*
- Word Processor*

- *Calculator with financial functions; Excel (usually included in most hardware purchases) is RECOMMENDED!*

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

(Instructor's note: I do not want to contradict any technology guidelines. However, I have had great success with the "Firefox" browser and it seems that many problems accessing the system(s) are eliminated if Firefox is the selected mode.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Activities / Assessments

1. The student will access and follow all course instructions found in the session content area of the eCollege course.
2. The student will complete and submit the academic honesty form through the "drop box" feature of the eCollege course. Failure to submit this document in a timely manner will result in a lower grade and the loss of the potential avoidance of the final exam.
3. The student will abide by all points in the academic honest form and specifically access all course materials, including quizzes, support files, lecture notes, project files, through their own individual sign-in or identification long-in process.
4. The student will complete the assigned 'online' quizzes by accessing them in each session area in the eCollege course.
5. The student will access a spreadsheet file covering the project topics and support the results of the project through the project session and the quiz format provided in that session area.
6. A financial calculator is required. You may use a hand-held calculator. Course documents and files will be delivered using Excel as the calculator of choice. Your instructor suggests you learn Excel as soon as possible as no professional in business uses hand-held calculators on a regular basis (all spreadsheets which can be shared).

Course Delivery

Placed in Doc Sharing is an Excel file outlining course dates, chapters to be covered, graded assignments, and grade weights. For any given session, there will be a LiveClass Pro Video broadcast (usually one hour in length) covering that session's topic(s). Students can participate by asking questions (voice feed (if student has the technology) or through a live chat area). If a student cannot attend, they can access this broadcast, as each and every broadcast through the course will be archived. Preliminary dates are provided; however, these sessions are intended to be flexible in time and day of week. No video session is scheduled for the week containing Spring Break.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

The course is arranged by weeks starting on a Sunday, with the exception of the first week beginning on a Monday. You are to be engaged in the course on a weekly basis (not "weakly"!) and a graded assignment will be due each week with one exception (week 14). Generally, we will cover one chapter per week.

Graded assignments will range from discussion postings, "homework" quizzes, one project and a final exam. Not all assignments carry the same grade weight, even within its own category (that is, quiz grade weights can range from 5% to 9%).

Located within the online course under "Doc Sharing", there is an administrative folder. Within this folder is an Excel file containing the session number, chapters covered for that session, due date for the quiz covering that session and the grade weight for that assessment.

Also within "Doc Share", a pull down window is available where you are provided additional files for under each session. Access through a 'pull down menu', then select a particular session to see what additional files help support that given topic.

Submitting your academic honesty forms will count as 1% toward your final grade.

On a regular basis, your instructor will deliver a live ("two-way") video broadcast lecture. Generally, this will be weekly and scheduled for Monday or Tuesday evenings. Video of the instructor or their computer screen will be broadcast to students and students will be able to ask questions (live). The topics covered will be in support of text materials for the given topics. The times and dates may vary to attract as many students as possible. Furthermore, your instructor reserves the right to change days and times. If you are not able to attend the live version, it will be accessible for later review. The Live Broadcast is archived within the course. If you miss the live version, you may access the recorded portion. If you know you will not be able to attend the live version, you may submit questions to the instructor so that the instructor can answer them in this broadcast.

Students will be required to post original comments and responses to other students' comments in the discussion area. Rules and requirement outlines for these posts are online. 5% of your grade can be earned by submitting (suitable) discussion posts, with 1% resulting from your Academic Honesty submission.

One semester project worth 14% of your course grade requires a practical utilization of topics covered in the earlier part of the course. The project will not be released by the computer (made visible to students) until the topics covered in the project are introduced through the sessions.

The final exam (*), worth 15% of the course grade, is somewhat cumulative. Many topics build in this course and the final exam focuses more on the heart of the material than the basic building blocks of some of the chapters.

Summary:

Academic Honest Form =	1%
7 Quizzes =	48%
“Homework”	17%
Discussion Posting up to	5%
Project	14%
Final Exam (*)	15%

(*) As an incentive to maintain a strong work ethic throughout the course, the final exam might be optional for some. Those students with an “A” or “B” average going into the final can choose to take the final. If you choose to take the final, your grade will be the higher of your pre-final grade or with your final grade added. A “B” student can get an “A” but will not fall below a “B”. Any student at the “C” level or less must take the Final Exam. Additionally, to be eligible for this option, you must have good student “citizenship”. This means that all assignments to date must be completed. For example, if you miss one discussion posting assignment or one quiz, and you have an “A” or a “B” going into the final, you WILL BE REQUIRED to take the final.

Assessment Method: All quizzes, final exam and project are in the form of Multiple Choice with some True/False questions, submitted through the eCollege online course. You access the quiz online and answer the questions; but you must hit “submit” for your selections to be saved. Not hitting “submit” will cause no answers to be evaluated.

Grading

Grades will be determined on the following scale:

Grading Scale	
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 60	F

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Access and Log in Information

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.

How is the Course Organized?

In general, the course is organized on a weekly basis. Many topics build on previous chapters; therefore, quizzes and/or discussions are required every week to keep students engaged. Additionally, frequent quizzes means less chapters per quiz and more grading opportunities for the student.

What Should Students Do First?

It is imperative that a text book be secured before class begins. In addition, week 2/3 introduces math concepts which are incorporated into the rest of the course. Therefore, a financial calculator needs to be secured as soon as possible as well. I HIGHLY recommend using Excel and learning this early in your academic and professional career can only help the student. Last, the student needs to access the course dates (excel file uploading outlining all due dates) and plan their academic activities for the term.

How Should Students Proceed Each Week for Class Activities?

1. The Excel File containing due dates will provide the appropriate chapters being covered for that week. Reading and reviewing the information in the chapter(s) is recommended.
2. The student will access and follow all course instructions found in the weekly/unit content area of the eCollege course. The weekly/unit content area of our course is found on the left navigation bar. Hints, outlines, and expected learning topics will be listed. Additionally, your text's PowerPoint slides have been uploaded. These can be reviewed. Warning: these slides are good supplements to the text, not vice versa. These slides are not a substitute for the actual material of the chapter and do not, necessarily, cover all topics or even the important topics targeted by your instructor.
3. The student will listen to all or join in the online lectures provided in the ClassLive area. These are weekly lectures provided 'live' by your instructor.
4. The student will complete the assignments for the week, provided in unit/content area. This can be a graded discussion for that week and/or a quiz. There is one "project" toward the end of the course.

5. The student will respond to posted online course discussion questions using the eCollege discussion tool. Two areas are provide: each unit has a discussion area for that unit's academic topics. This area is not grade, but is a public forum. There are other 'graded discussion' areas with topics provided. In order to receive a grade, a student must post in this area.
6. The student will complete and submit electronically the academic honest form. Each course requires such a form. Part of your grade is this submission and you must also submit this to satisfy your 'good citizenship' toward the optional final exam.
7. The student will complete an on-going semester project in accordance with the instructions given in this syllabus and the online course. Submission will be in the form of a quiz with Multiple Choice questions; the questions can be found on an Excel file uploaded to the course, available in Doc Sharing.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

- *Email is to be used for any private communication needed with the instructor*
- *Virtual Office is an area targeting macro course issues, general questions, or any administrative issue/concern. This is a public forum and questions might be asked here that affect all students. This is not an area for private issues however.*
- *ClassLive Pro is a weekly 'lecture' giving the students a chance to interact with the instructor real time. Topics will focus on the weekly assignments/chapters.*
- *Announcements are utilized to highlight changes or issues that have arisen. Note that some announcements might also be, but not necessarily, a duplicate of an 'all class e-mail' sent to students.*

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I attempt to respond to virtual office and discussion postings within a 24 to 48 policy. I am active on weekends but not at consistent times from weekend to weekend. Furthermore, there is a course system that highlights postings such that I can monitor when someone added a comment; however, I have found this is not always accurate.

You may also contact me via e-mail (My Leo account) or my personal email (David.n.Dallas@gmail.com). In the recent past, my habit is to check my personal account a few times per day but my Leo e-mail account about once per day.

Student Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Course Policies

1. Course Coverage: This course utilizes the textbook as well as topics covered in the "Lecture" or "Discussion" area and introductions into the section to be covered. Various files are uploaded (or will be throughout the course) and placed in the "Doc Sharing" area. In these areas, the instructor has placed various real world topics, applications, and examples, which may be helpful in studying chapter topics. In addition, please note that if the instructor takes time to "supplement" the text, the topic may be part of the quiz context. Students are

encouraged to place comments to the instructor and other students in an exchange of ideas, questions, concerns and answers.

2. Quizzes: (The term quiz and exam will be considered synonymous throughout the course). Quizzes are open book. Quizzes will be released before the week's topic is undertaken. Release refers to the process by which a quiz is usually inactive (cannot be viewed by the student) then becomes active and students can access them. Once accessed, the student can submit answers to the quiz. The quiz can be accessed multiple times. You submit answers by selecting the appropriate response (T/F or Multiple Choice). (Note: Select the most appropriate response meaning "all of the above" trumps any individual correct answer). **YOU MUST "SUBMIT" YOUR QUIZ!! Be very careful in this process of both selecting answer and ensuring those answers are still selected why you SUBMIT.** (It is possible to use your mouse to "scroll down" the test page but you are really 'scrolling down' the answer selections!) Upon submission, **YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION THAT YOU HAVE SUBMITTED YOUR ANSWERS!!!** This is due, in part, to the nature that after your submission, you can re-enter and change your answers until the cut-off time.

A due date is provided without a specific cut-off time (usually it is between 11:30 pm and midnight, but don't take that for granted). Please be aware that it takes time to log on, answer questions and submit. Once the due date has passed, answers cannot be submitted. If you fail to take the quiz, you lose your opportunity. **Count on technical difficulties;** so don't wait to the last minute to take the quiz or submit. All grading will be submitted via the quiz format, including the semester project. Most quizzes will cover two chapters, one will cover three chapters and one quiz covers a single chapter. The semester project is delivered via an Excel Workbook. The Workbook has several sheets, which has problems and questions. You should download the workbook and use it to answer the problems; submit your multiple-choice answers via the normal quiz format. It is extremely rare that the University's computer system 'goes down'! **IMPORTANT:** your local service provider (ISP) may have time limits; for example, if you remain inactive on a page (your test) for 30 minutes, 'they' might log you out automatically.

3. Course Dates: Located within the course under "Doc Share" is a spreadsheet listing all quizzes, their respective release dates, and the due dates, including the dates for the project and Final Exam. An attempt was made to release the quizzes as early as possible and space out the due dates of the quizzes incorporating weekends and holiday times. Use these pre-set dates to plan your other academic and personal commitments. At times and later in a given semester, due dates may be pushed back due to the instructor's availability and ability to answer, in a timely manner, questions or comments concerning a particular quiz.

4. Course TIME FRAME: You may want to go at a steady pace or a few focused time frames. You may submit quizzes anytime before the due date. Releasing quizzes earlier than listed is easy to do; however, delayed submission is not permissible. **TIME MANAGEMENT IS CRUCIAL IF YOU WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS COURSE.**

5. Quiz Answer / Grading: Grading is only released after the due date. Most quizzes have scrambled questions and take a certain number of questions from a pool of questions; your question #3 may not be another student's question #3. **Therefore, you are required to give me the question should you communicate with me.**

6. Final Exam: The Final Exam is optional for students earning an “A” or “B” average to that date. However, only an e-mail at the end of the course which explains your position is the official notification. The instructor reserves the right to require a final exam of all students, especially if you missed a session quiz or have conducted yourself in what may appear to be an inappropriate manner. “B” students will be allowed to take the Final at their option. If a “B” student takes the Final, their grade will only count if they improve their standing. That is, a “B” student will not receive anything lower than a “B” but can improve to get an “A” in the course. All students below “A” or “B” are required to take the Final Exam. The percentage grade breakout for the entire point structure is applied to the grades earned to date before the final to determine your grade at that point.

Academic Honesty Policy

7. Academic Misconduct: Cheating will not be tolerated in this class. Giving someone answers helps neither you nor them. Do not give the appearance that you are cheating. You are required to perform your own work and **I will use all the available technology** at hand to determine if you have or appeared to have cheated. If I catch someone cheating, I will do my best to get that person suspended or expelled from the university. Each student is required to access chapter information, PowerPoint slides, background data, semester project and other support materials FROM THEIR COMPUTERS AND THEIR COURSE ID'S. Anyone who submits answers to quizzes without accessing site information for that particular quiz will have a reduction in grades and/or a grade of “0” for that particular event/quiz.

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

<http://www.plagiarism.org/> or <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>
or <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

8. Student Responsibilities:

- Monitor the e-mail assigned to you from this course. Changes, updates and class communication will come in this manner.
- Upon entering the site, the student should review any announcements posted. Any changes or alterations will be provided here along with the time when such change was announced.
- You may post course administrative or session specific questions, topics or other discussions in the “virtual office area” or session-specific discussion area. Of course, you may also e-mail me questions at any time. I may, from time to time, post discussions (even student e-mail questions) in these discussion areas if the answer aids all students in the course.
- Students may communicate through these discussion areas as you see fit. There is some relief when a student finds out that others are in the same position. I monitor

these for correctness and provide some input as well. Students are not required to educate other students nor are you required to participate at all.

- The student should read each chapter and other material.
- The student then completes quizzes, project and the final exam in a timely manner.
There are not make-ups, no extra credit.

Late Work

- **There are not make-ups, no extra credit.**

Drop a Course

You may choose to include the following, "A student may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled 'Drop a class' from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page."

Incompletes

Incompletes are a rare event in this course and require extreme circumstances for them to be granted.

Graduate/Undergraduate Online Course Attendance Policy

You have no grade associated with attendance. However, assignments are frequent enough that major grade loss will occur if you miss even a week in the course. Students should additionally note the online system can measure how often and for what length a student may log-on.

University Policies**ADA Statement****Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
studentdisability@tamc.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

BIBLIOGRAPHY**PROFESSOR CONTACT**

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David.n.Dallas@gmail.com

I have been lecturing graduate and undergraduate finance courses for 12 years on an adjunct basis (face to face and online delivery). My professional background includes being Merrill Lynch's first derivatives specialist in Texas, trading fixed income securities for a major bank in Dallas, Tx, creator of a mutual fund family and M&A consulting to local and regional private and publicly traded companies. I have also served as an expert witness in financial valuation cases.

Additional information**Additional Topics:**

Financial calculator

- For the course, a computer spreadsheet or software (MS Excel, Lotus, Quatro, or equivalent) **should be utilized**. Expertise in using such spreadsheet programs is essential in the corporate world and attaining expertise in this type of software is recommended. Your instructor will use Excel exclusively and the answers will be based on this software.
- Handheld; any handheld calculator that has financial functions may be used. Financial functions means that **specific buttons** like “n”, “i”, “PV”, “Pmt”, “FV” or similar are on the calculator’s face. It is the student’s responsibility to understand their own technology as different manufacturers may require different data inputs (for example: 10% is inputted as “0.10” on some calculators while others require “10” as the keying sequence.).