Fundamentals of Financial Planning: Fin 530

Professor: Nathan Harness, Ph.D.
Class Time: online
Place: online
Office Hours: by appointment
Phone: 903.886.5673
E-mail: nathan.harness@tamuc.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS:


Financial Calculator: TI BA-II or comparable (not alpha programmable). I will only be teaching from the BA-II. For free guidebook see: http://education.ti.com/guidebooks/financial/baiipluspro/BAIIPLUSPROGuidebook_EN.pdf

Supplemental texts may be used during the lectures. To be able to pass the quizzes and exams I highly suggest regular viewing of lectures and adequate notes.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an overview of financial planning that teaches students how to synthesize complex interactions between each of the financial planning areas. These areas include insurance, investment, income tax, business, retirement, and estate planning. It is through some exposure to all of these sub-fields and discussion of how the planner facilitates effective planning in each of them that students will gain a more complete perspective of the field of financial planning and the requirements of being an effective financial planner.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. General comprehension of the skills required to become a financial planner and ability to synthesize client information relevant to creating a comprehensive plan and how to properly communicate this with a client.
2. Analyze and interpret personal financial statements and ratio analysis and how they apply to personal financial health.
3. Understand and apply the holistic techniques used by financial planners to manage the complex interactions between time value of money, education funding, insurance and risk management, life health and disability, personal property, social insurance, investments and estate planning.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

Attendance is encouraged, but not required since this is an online course. If there is a need to curve the final grades, I will consider attendance and class participation, which I can monitor even online. Given the difficulty of this material, you will NOT pass this class without regular reading (prior to class), watching the lectures, and preparing through practice questions.
TEACHING PROCEDURES:

The class will be conducted in an online format. The lectures will be recorded with an occasional live lecture as needed. I have adopted this model because it seems to best meet the needs of student demand. This will require you to be disciplined enough to listen to the recorded lectures based on the schedule below and attend live lectures when we have them (I will always email you in advance if we are going to have a live lecture). It is OK if you cannot attend the live lectures because these are recorded for you to listen to after the lecture has closed. I encourage you to attend any live lectures and live exam reviews when you can because this will be your best opportunity to interact with me and ask questions as you have them. Many of the issues covered in the readings will be discussed in class, however; all the areas covered in the readings will not be part of class discussion. You are encouraged to participate in class when possible.

EXAMS:

There will be TWO regular exams and a final. You will be responsible for information from class discussion, required readings, and homework. You will know before the class ever starts when the exam dates will be. These exams will be administered online so you can take them anywhere you have an internet connection. As such, no makeup exams will be given unless for a University allowed excused absence. For an excused absence, the make-up exam will be administered prior to the scheduled exam. If you need to miss an exam for an excused absence let me know IN ADVANCE so we can make arrangements. Anyone missing an exam (unexcused) will replace this missed exam with the final. Anyone missing two exams will automatically fail the class.

It is very important that you understand the exam policy. In short:

1. Don’t miss an exam without an excused absence or pay the penalty of a double weighted final
2. It is not necessary to notify me when you miss an exam as it will automatically be replaced with the final unless it is a University excused absence as discussed below under “POLICY ON LATE WORK”.
3. Don’t miss two exams or you will fail the course.

ASSIGNMENTS/QUIZZES:

You will receive quizzes/assignments during the semester. The number of quizzes/assignments is not set so your total point value will be an average of all assignments and quizzes. These assignments and quizzes will include text questions and/or supplemental activities. All of these assignments and quizzes will be administered online with specific due dates. There will be no make ups for quizzes or assignments, however; I will drop the lowest quiz/assignment grade. This will allow anyone to miss one quiz/assignment without penalty. If you don’t miss any quizzes/assignments I will drop your lowest score instead. This will reward those who complete all quizzes and assignments.

PARTICIPATION:

This course is based on the belief that mastery of the subject matter occurs through taking an active role in the learning process. Students are expected to “attend” class regularly through listening to the prerecorded lectures or coming to any live lectures/listening to the archived lectures. Lectures will be most beneficial when you complete assigned readings before topics are discussed in class. Assigned reading must be read prior to the appropriate class meeting.
**GRADING INFORMATION:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>POINT VALUE</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments/Quizzes</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>See schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>See schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>See schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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Final Grades will be determined by the following schedule:

- **A:** 900 – 1000 points
- **B:** 800 – 899 points
- **C:** 700 – 799 points
- **D:** 600 – 699 points
- **F:** 0 - 599 points

Grades of "I" (incomplete) will not be given to students who merely do not come to class, have failed to satisfactorily complete the course, or who beg, bother, or otherwise pester this instructor. Refer to the University's policy regarding incompletes for further information.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM:**

All academic work must meet the standards contained in A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures on Academic Honest. Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards and for observing the University Honor Code. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work that is not his or her own. This includes copying from printed materials, websites, or from other people. All students are expected to turn in work that has been completed individually, unless otherwise informed by the instructor. Any assignment containing plagiarized material will automatically be graded as zero. The instructor will use the available technology at hand to determine if you have or appeared to have cheated. You are required to access all data and lectures available to you during the semester.

**ADA:**

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
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
POLICY ON LATE WORK:

Late work WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED without a university excused absence as defined by Texas A&M – Commerce Rules and Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01. Note: keep a copy of your work - this protects you in the event of questions about missing assignments.

Excused absences include and are limited to:
- Pre-authorized religious holidays
- Participation in a required/authorized university activity
- Voting on Election Day
- Obligation of student at legal proceedings in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen
- Documented death in a student's immediate family
- Verified illness – Resulting in Hospitalization or Long-Term Illness

COURSE OUTLINE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Subject Material</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13th</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction to FP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20th</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Time Value of Money</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27th</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>TVM Part II</td>
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<td>Feb 3rd</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Interpersonal Communication</td>
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<td>Feb 10th</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Feb 17th</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Personal Fin Statements</td>
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<td>Feb 24th</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Risk Management</td>
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<td>Mar 3rd</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Education Funding</td>
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<td>Mar 10th</td>
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<td>Spring break week</td>
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<td>Mar 17th</td>
<td>Exam II</td>
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<td>Mar 24th</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Investments</td>
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<td>Mar 31st</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Retirement Planning</td>
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<td>Apr 7th</td>
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<td>Apr 14th</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>Income Tax Planning</td>
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<td>Apr 21st</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Estate Planning</td>
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<td>Apr 28th</td>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
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<td>May 5th</td>
<td>Finals week</td>
<td>Final Exam Date TBA</td>
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NOTE: THE COURSE SYLLABUS IS A GENERAL PLAN FOR THE COURSE. DEVIATIONS ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS BY THE INSTRUCTOR MAY BE NECESSARY