



Course Syllabus

FIN 357 Business Finance, Spring 2021

Unique 03380: MW 9:30-11:00 am CST

Unique 03400: MW 11:00-12:30 pm CST

Section 1. Course Modality

This course will be conducted entirely online. There will be no in-person requirements. Lectures will be pre-recorded and will be available for viewing asynchronously (that is, at any time you choose). Online Zoom sessions will occur synchronously, during the scheduled class time. Evening exams will take place online using Canvas and Proctorio.

Section 2. Course Objective

Welcome to Business Finance! FIN 357 introduces concepts and analytical techniques to identify and solve financial management problems. It serves as the basis for all other courses in the area of finance and provides basic tools that every business student will need to be successful in his or her chosen career.

Section 3. Contact Information

Professor: Heidi Toprac

Office: See Canvas for my office hours Zoom link

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 3:30 to 5:00 pm CST, and by appointment

Email: heidi.toprac@mcombs.utexas.edu

TA: See Canvas for details

Feel free to “drop in” unannounced during office hours. You must log into Zoom using the University’s single sign-on (SSO) protocol. For help, visit the Zoom-related McCombs Student Instructional Wiki [here](#).

At other times, email is the best way to reach your TA and me. The federal student privacy law (FERPA) prohibits us from discussing grade-related information via telephone or email.

Section 4. Prerequisites

To remain enrolled in FIN 357, you must have successfully completed STA 309 or 309H, and have completed or registered for ACC 312 or 312H, and B A 324 or 324H. Students lacking these prerequisite will be dropped. Visit the BBA Program Office, CBA 2.400, for assistance.

Section 5. Tools & Materials

- Textbook:** We will be using **Fundamentals of Corporate Finance**, 12th edition, by Ross, Westerfield & Jordan, published by McGraw-Hill Education. The loose-leaf version of the textbook, combined with the required Connect Access Code, is ISBN 9781260700831. It is available at the Co-op.
- Connect:** Connect will be our homework and adaptive reading tool. To get started, go to the FIN 357 page on Canvas and click on the link called “McGraw-Hill Connect.” Detailed instructions are posted in Canvas. For assistance, click on “Help” in the upper-right hand corner of the screen, or call (800) 331-5094.
- Calculator:** You will need a calculator that can perform financial functions (e.g. N, I, PV, PMT and FV). Both the HP 10bII financial calculator and the TI 83-Plus (or higher) graphing calculator are acceptable.
- Piazza:** To ensure that everyone has equal access to information, we will use Piazza for class-related Q&A. Rather than emailing your class-related questions, please post them on Piazza—anonously if you so choose. And if you have an answer, post it, as well! <https://piazza.com/utexas/spring2021/fin357toprac>
- Email:** The [General Information Catalog](#) states: "Electronic mail (e-mail), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students, and the University will expect that e-mail communications will be received and read in a timely manner." You can verify and/or update your email address here: https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all_my_addresses/
- Periodicals:** It is highly recommended that you begin (or continue) the lifelong process of remaining abreast of business impacts of current events. Suggested reading includes *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Financial Times* (both are daily newspapers), and *The Economist*, *Business Week*, and *Fortune* magazines. Instructions for subscribing at reduced student prices will be posted on Canvas.

Section 6. Zoom

- Zoom Sessions:** The synchronous portion of this course will take place on Zoom. To access the Zoom session, use the link on the course Canvas page. Students who find themselves in the “Waiting Room” will not be admitted to class. If you are having difficulty accessing the Zoom session, be sure that you are employing the University’s single sign-on (SSO) protocol. For assistance, visit the Zoom-related McCombs Student Instructional Wiki [here](#).
- Recordings:** Class recordings will be made available on Canvas. Recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes, and are protected under FERPA. The recordings may not be shared in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student will be reported to Student Judicial Services, and will subject the student to academic penalties.

Section 7. Proctorio

All exams will take place on Canvas, using a proctoring application called Proctorio. You must use a desktop or notebook computer to take your exams (not a phone or tablet). In addition, you must use Chrome (with the Proctorio Extension installed) when you log into Canvas. It is highly recommended that you complete the Proctorio Practice Quiz prior to taking your exams, to ensure that your workspace and technology are sufficient for the exam. For additional instructions, visit the Proctorio-related McCombs Student Instructional Wiki [here](#).

If you need help with Proctorio during an exam, contact Proctorio via chat, email or phone (<https://proctorio.com/support#>):

- **Live Chat:** Once you are in the exam, click on the gray shield icon in the top right hand corner of your Chrome browser.
- **Email:** support@proctorio.com
- **Toll Free Number:** (866) 948-9248

Section 8. Study Groups

This course is supported by an online Peer-Led Undergraduate Studying (PLUS) program, coordinated by the Sanger Learning Center. PLUS study groups provide weekly opportunities to collaboratively practice skills and apply knowledge you need for success in this course. Attending study groups regularly is a great way to ensure that you are keeping up with the material so you don't fall behind. Feel free to attend any study group at any time during the semester; details on times and locations will be posted on Canvas and announced in class. More information about PLUS can be found at <https://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc/support/plus>.

Section 9. Grading

Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on the following:

- Exams: 3 exams @ 21.67% each 65%
- Cases: 4 *Excel*-based cases at 6.25% each 25%
- Connect Homework: The 2 lowest percentage scores will be dropped 5%
- SmartBook Reading: The 2 lowest percentage scores will be dropped 5%
- Course Total 100%

The McCombs grading guidelines recommend a GPA range from 3.0 to 3.2 for undergraduate business core courses. Historically, the cut-off for each letter grade was as shown below:

A	93-100%	B-	80-82%	D+	67-69%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	D	63-66%
B+	87-89%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
B	83-86%	C-	70-72%	F	0-59%

The actual cut-off will depend on overall class performance. There is no extra credit.

Section 10. Exams

All students enrolled in FIN 357 will take common exams on the dates noted in the course schedule. All exams will take place on Canvas, and will be proctored using Proctorio. Exams will begin at 7:00 pm CST and end at 8:30 pm CST. Students outside North and South America may request permission to take the exams from 3:00 am to 4:30 am CST (starting 8 hours after the local Austin start time). The Finance department has confirmed that our exams do not conflict with any other exams on the Dean's master list of undergraduate evening exams.

There will be three exams. All assigned materials, including supplemental readings, are subject to examination. Each exam will be non-comprehensive, but the material will build on itself as we proceed through the semester. Accordingly, the 3rd exam will serve as the final exam.

After they have been graded, exams can be reviewed during my online office hours.

If you have any circumstance other than a medical emergency that will necessitate taking a make-up exam, you must request permission and provide documentation no later than Monday, February 1st. Make-up exams are offered for only the following reasons:

- A conflict with another University course,
- Participation in a University-sponsored event,
- A conflict with a University-recognized religious holy day,
- A medical event (such as illness or injury) documented by [Student Emergency Services](#).

Make-up exams will occur on the following dates:

- Make-up Exam 1: Friday, February 19th
- Make-up Exam 2: Friday, April 2nd
- Make-up Exam 3: Friday, May 7th

Section 11. Connect Homework and SmartBook Reading

Homework: At the end of each chapter of your text, there are a plethora of practice problems. Several of the computational "Questions and Problems" have been assigned as required homework in Connect. The assignments are graded, but you can use the "Check My Work" function before you submit. Your 2 lowest assignment scores will be dropped.

Homework is due in Connect by 10:00 pm CST on the due date. Due dates are provided in the Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus, as well as in Connect. After their due dates, the homework problems will become available to re-work for additional practice.

SmartBook: Connect also provides access to an adaptive learning tool called SmartBook. This tool is an excellent way to approach your first reading of each chapter. Completion of the each SmartBook chapter is due at 10:00 pm CST on the evening prior to the day the material will be discussed during class. Your 2 lowest assignment scores will be dropped.

Section 12. Cases/Quizzes/Other

Four separate cases will enable you to demonstrate your *Excel* modeling skills and your understanding of the course concepts. Detailed information about the cases will be discussed during class. For practice using your *Excel* skills, refer to the prep course on Connect and/or [LinkedIn Learning](#). The highest possible score for a late case is 50%. Details will be posted on Canvas.

Section 13. McCombs Classroom Professionalism Policy

The highest professional standards are expected of members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the McCombs experience hinges on this.

Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects, which means:

- Arrive on time.
- Be fully prepared for each class.
- Plan to be on camera. Turn on video during class.
- Respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance regarding the views of others is unacceptable.

Please let me know right away if the behavior of any member of the McCombs community contravenes these standards.

Section 14. Academic Integrity

All materials in this course are protected by copyright. Uploading copyrighted materials to course sharing websites such as Chegg, CourseHero, GradeBuddy, etc. is not only an academic integrity issue, it is also against the law. All such actions will be reported to Student Judicial Services, and may result in both academic and legal penalties. The minimum academic penalty is a full course grade reduction, e.g. from B- to C-. The legal penalty for copyright infringement is a minimum of \$200 per document, plus all attorney fees and court costs related to the case.

The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the [Policy Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty for the McCombs School of Business](#).

By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe the faculty responsibilities described in that document. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe the student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of that Policy Statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the [Student Judicial Services website](#) or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

Section 15. Diversity and Inclusion

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

Section 16. Religious Holy Days

Many religious and cultural holidays take place during the semester. Be sure to submit your homework early to avoid any conflicts. By University policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, and you have provided proper advance notice, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time before or after the absence.

Section 17. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), 512-471-6259, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are eligible for academic accommodations **you must present your SSD letter during my office hours**, at least two weeks before you wish to employ the accommodation. Deadlines to request SSD accommodations are:

- Exam 1: Monday, February 1st
- Exam 2: Friday, March 12th
- Exam 3: Wednesday, April 21st

Section 18. Campus Safety

To help keep everyone at the University and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](#), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](#).

Section 19. Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. The University of Texas at Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Section 20. Course Schedule

	Day	Date	Topic and/or Activity	Reading	Homework Problems	
January	Wed	20	Introduction to FIN 357 Introduction to Corporate Finance	Syllabus Chapter 1	None	
	Mon	25	Financial Statements, Taxes and Cash Flow	Chapter 2	1, 1E, 2, 3, 3E, 4, 4E, 5, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22	
	Wed	27	Working with Financial Statements	Chapter 3	3, 4, 5, 7, 7E, 9, 10, 11, 11E, 13, 26, 27, 29	
	Sun	31	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 2 & Ch 3			
February	Mon	1	Long-Term Planning and Growth <i>Deadline to request Exam 1 SSD accommodations</i> <i>Deadline to request any make-up exam (1, 2 or 3)</i>	Chapter 4	4, 5, 6, 6E, 7, 7E, 8, 9, 12, 13, 13E, 24	
	Wed	3	The Time Value of Money	Chapter 5	1, 2, 2E, 3, 4, 4E, 5, 5E, 8, 11, 13, 18, 20	
	Sat	6	Case 1 Due			
	Sun	7	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 4 & Ch 5			
	Mon	8	Discounted Cash Flow Valuation	Chapter 6	1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 12E, 17, 20, 20E, 21, 24, 24E, 36, 37, 53	
	Wed	10	Discounted Cash Flow Valuation, continued			
	Sun	14	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 6			
	Mon	15	Review session during class time. Exam 1: 7:00 to 8:30 pm CST			
	Wed	17	Interest Rates and Bond Valuation	Chapter 7	1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22	
	Mon	22	Interest Rates and Bond Valuation, continued			
	Wed	24	Stock Valuation	Chapter 8	1, 4, 5, 5E, 8, 8E, 12, 15, 18, 20, 31, 32	
	Sun	28	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 7			
March	Mon	1	Stock Valuation, continued			
	Wed	3	Net Present Value & Other Investment Rules	Chapter 9	3, 7, 9, 10, 10E, 11, 11E, 15, 15E, 16, 17, 26	
	Sun	7	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 8 & Ch 9			
	Mon	8	Making Capital Investment Decisions	Chapter 10, 27.5 & 27.7	10: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 7E, 9, 9E, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18E, 19, 21, 23. 27: 1	
	Wed	10	Making Capital Investment Decisions, continued			
	Fri	12	<i>Deadline to request Exam 2 SSD accommodations</i>			
	Sat	13	Case 2 Due			
	Sun	14	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 10 & Ch 27			
	Mon	15	<i>Spring Break: No Class Meeting</i>			
	Wed	17	<i>Spring Break: No Class Meeting</i>			
	Mon	22	Project Analysis and Evaluation	Chapter 11	1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 20	
	Wed	24	Lessons from Capital Market History	Chapter 12	1, 2, 2E, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7E, 9, 10, 15, 16, 16E	
	Sun	28	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 11 & Ch 12			
Mon	29	Review session during class time. Exam 2: 7:00 to 8:30 pm CST.				

	Day	Date	Topic and/or Activity	Reading	Homework Problems
Mar	Wed	31	Return, Risk and the Security Market Line	Chapter 13, Supplement A	13a: 1, 1E, 2, 3, 6, 9, 11, 13, 13E, 14, 14E, 17. 13b: 27, 28
	Mon	5	Return, Risk and the Security Market Line, cont'd <i>Note: Q-drop Deadline</i>		
April	Wed	7	Cost of Capital	Chapter 14	1, 2, 2E, 5, 7, 7E, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 15E, 16
	Sun	11	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 13a & Ch 13b		
	Mon	12	Cost of Capital (cont'd)		
	Wed	14	Raising Capital	Chapter 15	None
	Sat	17	Case 3 Due		
	Sun	18	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 14		
	Mon	19	Financial Leverage and Capital Structure Policy	Chapter 16	1, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17
	Wed	21	Financial Leverage and Capital Structure (cont'd) <i>Deadline to request Exam 3 SSD accommodations</i>		
	Sun	25	Homework Due on Connect: Ch 16		
	Mon	26	Mutual Funds	Supplement B	
	Wed	28	Retirement Planning	Supplement C	
May	Mon	3	Case 4 Due (during class time)		
	Wed	5	Review session during class time. Exam 3: 7:00 to 8:30 pm CST.		