FINC 3501- PERSONAL FINANCE
Expanded Course Outline
SUMMER, 2008
( Mostly) Online

Professor: Charles Hodges  Web-page: http://www.westga.edu/~chodges
Phone: (678) 839-4816  Email: chodges@westga.edu
Office: Room 205B – Adamson Hall
Office Hrs: Not Applicable (I am in my office most days. Feel free to “drop-in.”)

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, LG7; LG8.

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

IV. Text and References

A. 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:
   a. 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.
   b. Internet Materials: Various materials are available on the instructor’s homepage and the WebCT course site that supplement video presentations.
   c. Outside Assignments: Students are required to complete personal financial analyses. The projects 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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADING WEIGHTS</th>
<th>GRADING SCALE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBCT Quizzes</td>
<td>Letter Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEBCT Final Exam</td>
<td>Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>A  90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>B  80</td>
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<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>C  70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>D  60</td>
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<td>F  Below 60</td>
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I reserve the right to “curve” grades.

B. Administrative Policies
   a. As this is an (mostly) online course, the primary method of communication will be E-mail. You may use either your westga.edu email address or the WEBCT email associated with the course section. I will send most information via WEBCT email and WEBCT announcements.
b. Grades are posted in WEBCT. 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 WEBCT. Your grade will show as “partial” until handgrading is completed.

c. Requests for exam score adjustments must be made in writing within ONE WEEK of the scores being posted in WEBCT. Only WRITTEN (Email is accepted) requests will be considered.

d. **Attendance Policy:**
   i. **Regular Class Meetings:** This is a (mostly) online class. There are no regularly scheduled class meetings, other than the optional Class Orientation on June 9, 2008. The optional orientation will be held in the Lecture Hall of the RCOB Building at 8 a.m. Required work (quizzes, project, and Final Exam) should be completed by July 3 and must be completed by July 30.
   
   ii. **Scheduled Quizzes and Final Exam:** All quizzes and the Final Exam are available, in WEBCT, during the entire course. 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, and 2) you complete all course work by the end of the Summer Semester. Work not completed by the end of the semester 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.
   
   iii. **General:** You are responsible for knowledge of any administrative announcements (test information, schedule changes, etc.) that are distributed via email, video, or WEBCT announcements. It is recommended that you make a reciprocal agreement with a classmate to share missed notes and other class information.

e. **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.

f. I will be in London, England from June 20 until July 5 on university business. While I am in England, I may have limited Internet access and could be delayed in responding to emails and grading quizzes/projects.

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**C. Learning Domains:**


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**IX. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**
1. Course Introduction
2. Identification (Who am I? Where am I, Where did I come from? Where do I want to be?)
3. Goal Setting*
4. Budgeting*
5. Banking and Use of Credit*
6. Wise Purchasing*
7. Basics of Savings and Investing*
8. Terms of Savings and Investing*
9. Basics of Insurance*
10. Taxes*
11. Transportation*
12. Housing*
13. The Cycle of Life*
14. Who Am I and Goal Setting
15. Final Exam

The ONLINE FINAL EXAM is available after June 23, should be completed by July 3, and must be completed by July 30. There are 11 quizzes; I use scores on your top 10 in computing your quiz average.

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.