FINC 3501- PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
Expanded Course Outline
Fall 2014
Mostly Online

Professor: Rong Guo
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Email: rguo@westga.edu
Office: Adamson 216
Office Hrs: TR: 10:00A.M.-11:00 A.M.; 12:30 P.M.-2:00 P.M.; 3:30-5:30 P.M.
F: 10:00A.M.-11:00 A.M.
(You are welcome to “drop-in” whenever I am in my office.)

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. It is recommended that you check in our D2L course site at least three times a week.

I. Catalog Description

A non-technical course of general application stressing personal financial planning, budgeting, savings and investments, preparing taxes, making automobile and housing decisions, health and property insurance, and retirement planning.

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:

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 and 6.
E. Understand how ethical decision making and globalization affect organizations – LG5.

IV. Text and References

A. PFIN3 by Gitman, Joehnk, and Billingsley, Thomson South-Western, 2014.

V. Special or Unique Student Material:

A basic calculator is needed.

VI. Special or Unique University Facilities:

Access to internet connected computer, library resources, and RCOB computer lab.
VII. Expanded Description of the Course and Instructional Method:

A. Expanded Description of the Course: This self-paced course examines the personal financial problems and their feasible solutions. Budgeting techniques and savings are examined as a means of achieving financial independence. This course also covers the basics of tax preparing, credit management, insurance, investments and retirement planning. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to: construct a cash budget and use it to monitor and control spending; prepare a basic tax return using the appropriate tax forms and rate schedules; evaluate the benefits and costs of home ownership and estimate how much you can afford for a home; avoid credit problems; differentiate among the major types of health insurance plans; select the right homeowner’s insurance and personal automobile policy; become familiar with the various measures of performance and use them in placing a value on securities; explain the eligibility requirements and benefits of the Social Security program and choose the right type of annuity for your retirement plan.

B. Instructional Methods:
   a. Internet Materials: Various materials are available on CourseDen.
   b. Outside Assignments: Students are required to complete two critical thinking cases. CourseDen housed quizzes and exams must be completed.

VIII. Methods of Evaluating the Outcomes:

A. Evaluation tools: Grading weights are shown below. All quizzes and exams are taken online. The two lowest scores are dropped before your overall quiz score is calculated. Final exam is not cumulative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADING WEIGHTS</th>
<th>GRADING SCALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (10 highest)</td>
<td>100 points*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Planning Exercise</td>
<td>100 points**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>450-500 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>400-449 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>350-399 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>300-349 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 300 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Each online quiz may be taken up to two times. The highest score is retained for grading purposes. The quizzes change each time they are opened.

**Financial planning exercises will be posted for each chapter on the Bulletin Board. Students are expected to apply what they have learned in the chapter to these real-life scenarios. The deadline to post answers is every Tuesday 11:59pm. The instructor is not going to give any comments on the students’ responses before the deadline. Every student that apply what he/she learned in the exercises and give a reasonable answer will get 1 point for that week, up to 10 points in the whole semester. These financial online exercises accounts for 20% of the overall grade. It is important that all students participate in these activities.

Work submitted for credit in other courses will not be accepted for credit in this course. There is no extra credit in this course beyond that explicitly stated in the course syllabus or announced in CourseDen by the instructor. I reserve the right to “curve” grades, but given the relative ease of this course, you should not expect a “curve.”
B. Administrative Policies

a. Information regarding course grades will not be given over the telephone. Grades will be posted in CourseDen.

b. Requests for quiz and exam score adjustments must be made in writing (email is fine) within ONE WEEK of grade assignment.

c. Attendance Policy and Required Work:
   i. *Attendance* (regular participation in the online classroom) is essential for maintaining the best learning environment. You will be expected to log on to the course site at least three times per week. You are also expected to participate in all assigned activities in the course. **Attendance is measured by completion of course assignments.**
   ii. *Scheduled Quizzes and Exams:* No makeup quizzes will be given unless offered to the entire class. If you miss a quiz you will receive a grade of zero on that quiz. Your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped before overall quiz grade is calculated. Makeup exams are generally not given. You are encouraged to notify me in advance if you know you will be unable to take an exam at the scheduled time. In any event, you must notify me within one week of the missed exam, or you will receive a zero for the missed exam.
   iii. General: You are responsible for knowledge of any administrative announcements (test information, schedule changes, etc.) that are posted in CourseDen or sent to your official UWG email address. You are responsible for keeping up with when assignments and quizzes are due and completing them on time. Please ask questions directly and immediately if you do not understand the instructions or due dates for an assignment or quiz.

d. 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. Please read and adhere to the UWG Honor Code: [http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php](http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php).

e. Student Rights and Responsibilities: Please carefully review the information at the following link: [http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf). The document at this link contains important information pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

f. Credit Hour Policy (3 credit hours): Students in this class will spend 150 minutes per week with faculty instruction (either face-to-face or online). Generally, students can expect to spend about 6 hours of class work outside of the classroom each week. This out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to, readings,
assignments, projects, group work, research, and test preparation. The amount of out of class time required for a given outcome will vary by student.

C. Learning Domains:

IX. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

NOTES:
- All quizzes open when the class begins. Quizzes close at 11:59 pm on the dates shown below.
- Do not attempt quizzes during the period from 10:00 pm on Fridays until 7:00 am on Saturdays due to CourseDen maintenance during this period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Dates:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 12-14</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>Deadline to withdraw with a grade of W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Case (submit in CourseDen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 7-9</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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Week 1                Introduction/Orientation, Chapter 1: Understanding the Financial Planning Process
Online Quiz 1 - Syllabus (closes 9/2)

Week 2                Chapter 2: Developing Your Financial Statements and Plans
Online Quiz 2 – Chapters 1 and 2 (closes 9/9)

Week 3                Chapter 3: Preparing Your Taxes
Online Quiz 3 - Chapter 3 (closes 9/16)

Week 4                Chapter 4: Managing Your Cash and Savings
Online Quiz 4 - Chapter 4 (closes 9/23)

Week 5                Chapter 5: Making Automobile and Housing Decisions
Online Quiz 5 - Chapter 5 (closes 9/30)

Week 6                Chapter 6: Using Credit
Online Quiz 6 - Chapter 6 (closes 10/7)

Week 7                Midterm Exam (closes 10/14 11:59 pm)

Week 8                Chapter 9: Insuring Your Health
Online Quiz 7 – Chapter 9 (closes 10/21)

Week 9                Chapter 10: Protecting Your Property
Online Quiz 8 - Chapter 10 (closes 10/28)

Week 10               Chapter 11: Investment Planning
Online Quiz 9 - Chapter 11 (closes 11/4)

Week 11               Chapter 12: Investing in Stocks and Bonds
Online Quiz 10 - Chapter 12 (closes 11/11)
11/11: Case Due – 11:59 pm (Submit in CourseDen)
Week 12  
**Chapter 13: Investing in Mutual Funds**  
**Online Quiz 11 - Chapter 13 (closes 11/18)**

Week 13  
**Chapter 14: Planning for Retirement**  
**Online Quiz 12 - Chapter 14 (closes 12/2)**

Week 14  
**Thanksgiving Holiday; No Classes**

Week 15  
**Final Exam (closes 12/9 11:59 pm)**

**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.