FINC 3501- PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
Expanded Course Outline
Spring 2017
Mostly Online

Professor: Rong Guo
Phone: (678) 839-5301  Email: rguo@westga.edu
Office: Adamson Hall 216
Office Hrs: M: 8:00-11:30 A.M.; TR: 8:00-9:30 A.M.; 12:15-2:00 P.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. Have an understanding of legal and ethical considerations that affect financial decision-
making in corporations – LG5.

IV. Text and References

A. PFIN5 by Gitman, Joehnk, and Billingsley, Cengage Learning, 2016.

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 a critical thinking case. CourseDen housed quizzes and exams must be completed.

VIII. Methods of Evaluating the Outcomes:

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

*Each online quiz may be taken up to four 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 11:59 pm. The instructor is not going to give any comments on the students’ responses before the deadline. Every student that apply what he/she has learned to the exercises and give a reasonable answer will get 10 point for that week, up to 100 points in the whole semester. These financial planning 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 on 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 on 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 are 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 the 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/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

e. Student Rights and Responsibilities: Please carefully review the information at the following link: http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php. 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>Week</th>
<th>Important Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction/Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction/Orientation, Chapter 1: Understanding the Financial Planning Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 1 – Chapter 1 (closes 1/24)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chapter 2: Using Financial Statements and Budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 2 – Chapter 2 (closes 1/31)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chapter 3: Preparing Your Taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 3 - Chapter 3 (closes 2/7)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chapter 4: Managing Your Cash and Savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 4 - Chapter 4 (closes 2/14)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Making Automobile and Housing Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 5 - Chapter 5 (closes 2/21)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Using Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 6 - Chapter 6 (closes 2/28)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Midterm Exam (closes 3/7 11:59 pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chapter 9: Insuring Your Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Online Quiz 7 – Chapter 9 (closes 3/14)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 10  Chapter 10: Protecting Your Property  
Online Quiz 8 - Chapter 10 (closes 3/28)

Week 11  **Spring Break; No Classes**

Week 12  Chapter 11: Investment Planning  
**Online Quiz 9 - Chapter 11 (closes 4/4)**

Week 13  Chapter 12: Investing in Stocks and Bonds  
**Online Quiz 10 - Chapter 12 (closes 4/11)**  
4/11: **Case Due – 11:59 pm (Submit in CourseDen)**

Week 14  Chapter 13: Investing in Mutual Funds, ETFs, and Real Estate  
**Online Quiz 11 - Chapter 13 (closes 4/18)**

Week 15  Chapter 14: Planning for Retirement  
**Online Quiz 12 - Chapter 14 (closes 4/25)**

Week 16  **Final Exam (closes 5/2 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.