

FINC 3501 – Personal Financial Management
Expanded Course Outline
Fall 2018 – Online

Professor: Ron Best

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Office Hrs: Monday 8:00-11:00 am and by appointment. You are welcome to “drop-in” when I am in my office.

[CourseDen Login Page \(https://westga.view.usg.edu/d2l/login\)](https://westga.view.usg.edu/d2l/login)

Additional Contact Information:

- Please send all email to my UWG account, rbest@westga.edu. I try to reply to email within 24 hours.
- When calling, try my office first, 678-839-4812. Leave a message if I do not answer, and then try calling my cell phone, 678-378-8573. If I do not answer, leave a message. You are also welcome to try my home number: 770-838-9165. Please do not call before 8:00 am or after 9:30 pm.
- You may also send me text messages at 678-378-8573. I may be able to respond more quickly to texts.
- I will send announcements to the class via official UWG email and in CourseDen. The policy of the University of West Georgia is that each student is responsible for checking her/his my.westga.edu e-mail account on a regular basis. Check to be sure that your account has not exceeded its quota and can receive new messages.

Catalog Description:

A nontechnical 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.

Required Background or Experience:

- Prerequisite: None
- General Education (Core) Contribution: The course uses the writing skills developed in English courses, and mathematical methods and critical thinking acquired in mathematics courses.

Learning Goals:

[Goals Link \(www.westga.edu/academics/business/accounting-finance/program_page.php?program_id=18\)](http://www.westga.edu/academics/business/accounting-finance/program_page.php?program_id=18)

- Communicate effectively - LG1 (Learning Goal 1).
- Apply basic quantitative skills to personal finance – LG2.
- Use information technology to research and analyze personal finance problems – LG3.
- Develop ability to use financial information to make informed personal financial decisions – LG4, LG6.
- Understand how ethical decision-making and globalization affect financial decisions – LG5.

Text and References:

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

Special or Unique Student and University Resources:

A basic calculator, access to an internet connected computer, and library reference resources are needed.

Expanded Description of the Course:

Expanded Description of the Course: This course is primarily self-paced and examines 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 preparation, 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.

Instructional Methods:

- Lecture and Problem Solving: Topics in personal financial management are presented in the textbook materials and/or lectures presented by the instructor and other presenters.
- Internet Materials: Various materials are available on the instructor's home page and the CourseDen course site.
- Outside Assignments: Students are required to complete a series of personal financial analysis exercises. CourseDen housed quizzes and exams must be completed.

Methods of Evaluating Outcomes:

Evaluation tools: All quizzes and exams are taken online. The Midterm Exam covers material from the beginning of the course until the Midterm Exam date. The Final Exam covers material starting after the Midterm Exam until the Final Exam date.

GRADING WEIGHTS

Quizzes 1-12 (10 highest)	100 points*
Financial Planning Exercises	100 points**
Midterm Exam	100 points***
Final Exam	100 points***

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Final Grade
A	360 and above points
B	320-359 points
C	280-319 points
D	240-279 points
F	Below 240 points

The Introduction Discussion activity is worth two extra credit points.

***Each of the quizzes may be taken up to four times.** The highest score for each quiz is retained for grading purposes. The quizzes change each time they are opened. Time limits are set at twice the time you are expected to need to complete the quizzes. The two lowest of the 12 quiz scores are dropped.

**Five Financial Planning Exercises will be posted in CourseDen. The assignments will focus on application of the learned material. Each assignment will be worth 20 points. If completed by the due dates, you will receive full credit for your submissions or be told changes that need to be made for you to receive full credit.

*****There are corresponding sample exams in CourseDen for both exams.** Sample exams are provided as study aides. Sample exams can increase your exam scores, but cannot lower your scores. If your highest sample exam score is lower than your actual exam score, you keep your actual exam score. If your highest sample exam score is greater than your actual exam score, your adjusted exam score will be calculated as:

Exam Score = $(1/4)(\text{Sample Exam Score}) + (3/4)(\text{Actual Exam Score})$.

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 class by the instructor. I reserve the right to “curve” grades, but any curve would only increase your score.

Administrative Information:

- Information regarding course grades will not be given over the telephone. Grades will be posted in CourseDen.
- Requests for quiz, exam, and assignment score adjustments must be made in writing (email is fine) within ONE WEEK of grade assignment.
- Attendance Policy:
 - Class Meetings: This class is entirely online and has no required face-to-face attendance.
 - Scheduled 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 lowest quiz grade will be dropped before the quiz average is calculated. If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero unless your reason for missing the exam is deemed valid by the instructor. You must contact your instructor regarding your excuse for missing an exam within one week of the closing time of the exam or you will receive a zero on the exam.
 - General: You are responsible for knowledge of administrative announcements (test information, schedule changes, etc.) that are posted in CourseDen or sent to your official UWG email address.
- 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 which is found at the following link: [UWG Honor Code \(www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php\)](http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php).
- Student Rights and Responsibilities: Review information at: [Common Language for Course Syllabi \(www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php\)](http://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php). Documents at this link contain 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.
- Campus Carry at UWG: Information concerning Georgia House Bill 280 may be found at: [Campus Carry \(www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php\)](http://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php) .
- Credit Hour Policy (3 credit hours): Students in this class will spend around 150 minutes per week with faculty instruction (either face-to-face or online). Generally, students can expect to spend at least an additional 300 minutes per week beyond instruction. This additional work may include, but is not limited to, readings, assignments, projects, group work, research, and test preparation.

- Learning Domains:
 - Cognitive: Knowledge, Comprehension, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation.
 - Affective: Receiving, Responding, Valuing, Organization, and Characterization.

Course Schedule:

- Basic Information
 - **All quizzes and exams open when the class starts. Quizzes, exams, and assignments close at 11:59 pm on the due dates listed below.**
 - **Do not attempt quizzes and exams during the period from 10:00 pm on Fridays until 7:00 am on Saturdays due to CourseDen maintenance during this period.**
 - The schedule may require modification as the semester progresses. Any changes will be noted in CourseDen.
- Important Due Dates

○ August 15	Introduction Discussion
○ September 19	Financial Planning Exercise 1
○ October 3	Financial Planning Exercise 2
○ October 8	Quizzes 1 through 6; AND Midterm Exam
○ October 8	Last day to withdraw with a grade of W.
○ October 17	Financial Planning Exercise 3
○ November 14	Financial Planning Exercise 4
○ December 5	Financial Planning Exercise 5
○ December 12	Quizzes 7 through 12; AND Final Exam
- Suggested Weekly Schedule
 - Week of 8/15
 - Introduction/Orientation
 - **Introduction Discussion Activity**
 - Week of 8/20
 - Chapter 1 – Understanding the Financial Planning Process
 - **Quiz 1** – Chapter 1
 - Week of 8/27
 - Chapter 2 – Using Financial Statements and Budgets
 - **Quiz 2** – Chapter 2
 - Week of 9/3
 - Labor Day Holiday – Monday, September 3
 - Chapter 3 – Preparing Your Taxes
 - **Quiz 3** – Covers Chapter 3
 - Week of 9/10
 - Chapter 4 – Managing Your Cash and Savings
 - **Quiz 4** – Covers Chapter 4
 - Week of 9/17
 - Chapter 5
 - **Quiz 5** – Covers Chapter 5
 - **Financial Planning Exercise 1** – Due 9/19
 - Week of 9/24
 - Chapters 6 & 7 – Using Credit and Using Consumer Loans
 - Week of 10/1
 - Chapters 6 & 7 continued

- **Financial Planning Exercise 2** – Due 10/3
 - **Quiz 6** – Covers Chapters 6 & 7
- Week of 10/8
 - **Last day to withdraw with a grade of W is Monday, 10/8**
 - **Quizzes 1 through 6 and the Midterm Exam** are due by 11:59 pm on Monday, 10/8
 - **Midterm Exam** – Covers Chapters 1 through 7
- Week of 10/15
 - Chapter 8
 - **Financial Planning Exercise 3** – Due 10/17
 - **Quiz 7** – Covers Chapter 8
- Week of 10/22
 - Chapter 9
 - **Quiz 8** – Covers Chapter 9
- Week of 10/29
 - Chapter 10
 - **Quiz 9** – Covers Chapter 10
- Week of 11/5
 - Chapter 11
 - **Quiz 10** – Covers Chapter 11
- Week of 11/12
 - Chapter 12
 - **Financial Planning Exercise 4** – Due 11/14
 - **Quiz 11** – Covers Chapter 12
- Week of 11/19
 - Thanksgiving Holiday
- Week of 11/26
 - Chapter 13
- Week of 12/3
 - Chapter 14
 - **Financial Planning Exercise 5** – Due 12/5
 - **Quiz 12** – Covers Chapters 13 & 14
- Week of 12/10
 - **Quizzes 7 through 12 and the Final Exam** are due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, 12/12
 - **Final Exam** – Covers Chapters 8 through 14