

USC Marshall

School of Business

FBE 206 – The Power of Personal Finance

Syllabus – Fall 2024

Day and Time: T 4-5:50 pm – 2 Units

Location: JFF 417

Section 15285

Professor: Ayca Altintig (pronounced – “EYE-CHA”)

Office: HOH 215

Email: altintig@marshall.usc.edu

Office Hours: T-Th 11-12:30, and/or by appointment.

Office hours can be in person, or online via <https://usc.zoom.us/my/altintig> Online office hour zoom sessions will be made available via request only. Please let me know in person or via email if you prefer to meet with me online.

Course Description

Financial literacy can lead to personal financial stability, hence financial freedom. This course will introduce you to personal finance, including goal setting, cash management, credit, insurance, taxes, housing, investment alternatives, and retirement plans. It will provide you with the tools and resources to make wise financial decisions. It will help you develop the necessary habits to reach financial stability and set yourself on the right financial path. You will be encouraged to define your own financial goals and develop your own personal financial plan by applying what you have learned in this class.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic personal finance concepts and tools, and gain an appreciation for financial literacy and how sound financial decisions can increase a person’s standard of living.
2. Apply mathematical/statistical tools and various functions in Excel to quantify financial strength and weakness, and develop budgets for various personal finance situations.
3. Understand compounding, discounting, and the time value of money, and evaluate spending/savings plans, and how these plans can influence long-term planning and growth.
4. Understand major federal income tax features and steps to calculate income taxes.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of credit and effective credit management. Know how credit cards, student loans, consumer loans and mortgage loans work, and how to calculate the costs of these loans.
6. Evaluate savings and investment options to meet short and long-term goals by using mathematical approaches to estimate investment return rates.
7. Understand the risks associated with health, life and properties, know how to measure risk, and analyze choices available to consumers for protection against risk.
8. Gain basic knowledge on retirement planning, and know how to incorporate the uncertainties into the planning process.

These course level objectives align with selected Marshall Program Learning Goals

Required Materials

The required textbook for this course is *Personal Finance: Turning Money into Wealth*, 8th Edition, by Arthur J. Keown.

ISBN: 9780134730363 (Hardcover)

ISBN: 9780136879015 (eText, 12-month access)

Financial Calculator is optional for this class. You can use a financial calculator or Microsoft Excel for your calculations during class and assignments. In class exams will require the use of calculators that can take exponents and fractions – does not have to be a financial calculator. I will use mainly Excel. If you are purchasing a financial calculator, I recommend *Texas Instruments BA II Plus (TI BA II Plus)*. It will be your responsibility to learn the functions of that calculator.

Recommended Additional Reading:

These materials are recommended (**not required**) additional reading for those interested. These are what I call “fun finance reading” and can be found at any book-seller. They are intended for audiences with less financial knowledge but can augment your understanding if you are interested.

- Broke Millennial Series by Erin Lowry
 - Broke Millennial: Stop Scraping By and Get Your Financial Life Together
 - Broke Millennial Takes on Investing: A beginner’s Guide to leveling Up Your Money
 - Broke Millennial Talks Money: Scripts, Stories and Advice to Navigate Awkward Financial Conversations
- Rich Dad Poor Dad by Robert Kiyosaki
- The Total Money Makeover by Dave Ramsey
- Clever Girl Finance by Bola Sokunbi

Prerequisites and/or Recommended Preparation:

High School Algebra and an interest in financial literacy

Course Notes:

We will use Brightspace extensively. Course lecture notes, slides, handouts, supplemental readings/articles, practice problems will be posted on Brightspace. In addition, announcements, solutions and guidance for the cases and other resources will also be posted on Brightspace. If you have any questions or need assistance with Brightspace Course Pages, please contact the Marshall Help Desk at (213) 740-3000, or HelpDesk@marshall.usc.edu.

Grading Policies:

Final grades represent how you perform in the class relative to other students. The final course grade will be assigned based on a weighted average of the following deliverables as well as your class participation.

Three items are considered when assigning final grades:

- Your average weighted score as a percentage of the available points for all assignments.
- The overall average percentage score within the class.
- Your ranking among all students in the class.

GRADING	% of Grade
Quizzes (2)	30%
Final Exam	25%
Assignments	30%
“Personal” Financial Plan Portfolio	10%
Class Participation	5%
TOTAL	100%

Quizzes and Final Exam:

There will be two quizzes and a final exam, which will consist of multiple choice questions. The questions will be both quantitative and qualitative in nature and will be based on material presented in lecture, in your book and in assignments. Quiz 1 will test you on everything we cover until Quiz 1. Quiz 2 will test you on everything we cover after Quiz 1, until you take Quiz 2. The final exam will be comprehensive.

Students with exam accommodations must present verification letters to me *within the first two weeks of class* - see section below on Students with Disabilities (Disability Services and Programs DSP).

The date and time of the final exam is determined by the university. *You are required to be present for all exams. Make-up exams will not be administered.* If an exam is missed due to a legitimate reason such as illness, documentation must be provided. In case of documented medical emergencies, the weight of the missing quiz will be put on the final exam. No make-up will be given for the final exam.

Assignments:

There will be 6-8 assignments throughout the semester. The assignments, with additional guidelines and due dates will be posted on Brightspace, under the section “Assignments”. Assignments will require the use of calculators and/or spreadsheets in detail.

“Personal” Financial Plan Portfolio:

This is a personal reflective exercise, which will allow you to practice all the concepts you learn in this class on your own personal finances. You will develop a comprehensive Personal Financial Plan throughout the semester based on what you learn in this course. You will be given instructions for parts of your portfolio throughout the semester. Components of your personal financial plan will include short and long term financial assessments & goals, financial analysis and advise for achieving these goals. Your portfolio will be evaluated based on the debt of your analysis and the level of application of the material discussed in this course. Guidelines will be provided under “Assignments” on Brightspace. This portfolio will be *due on the last day of class.*

It is of course meaningful to apply what you learned to your own life, but if you find this too personal to share with me, you can prepare this portfolio for a hypothetical person (or yourself in the future) or family (say family of four). It will still illustrate your ability to apply what you have learned, and that is what is important.

Class participation

Class participation is an extremely important part of the learning experience in this course as the richness of the learning experience will be largely dependent upon the degree of preparation by *all* students prior to each class session. The material in this class applies to everyone’s personal life, so participation will increase the applicability of the material covered.

Students are expected to come to class having read the book and the lecture notes. Classes will be more in the shape of discussion and application of the week’s topics to real life situations.

In-class participation is also a critical part of this course's learning experience. Cold calling will take place to encourage active participation and to gain multiple perspectives and points of view, thus lending itself to the richness of the learning experience. In-class participation grading will be based on students' demonstrated willingness to participate and the quality of the comments expressed, rather than quantity. While some students are far more comfortable than others with class participation, *all* students should make an effort to contribute meaningfully in *every* class.

What is "high quality" participation? It can come in many forms such as asking a seemingly simple question that was also on the mind of other students, lucidly explaining the answer to some problem we are trying to solve, giving an alternative perspective to a comment made by another student, or anything else that makes most of your classmates glad that you spoke up. It's not always about giving a brilliant answer. It's also about keeping a conversation moving in a positive direction or helping to get a conversation back on track when it has begun to stray.

Collaboration policy (for non-quiz/exam assignments).

Students are permitted and encouraged to discuss with others their ideas for completing assignments; however, once a student begins writing the deliverable, all work must be individual and independent. Students may not seek help from anyone outside the class, including but not limited to former students of this course, friends and family, tutors, and online forums. Students may consult course materials and web resources. Students may not post anything related to the assignments online. Failure to abide by the above guidelines may constitute a case of suspected plagiarism or cheating, which will be reported and investigated. Please see the "Academic Integrity and Conduct" section below for further details. For more information about unauthorized collaboration, visit <https://libraries.usc.edu/tutorial/academic-dishonesty> or http://lib-php.usc.edu/tutorials/academic-dishonesty/story_html5.html.

Assignment Submission Policy:

Your assignments will be turned in as a written deliverable (PDF with supporting excel in exhibits). Assignments must be turned in on the due date/time electronically via Brightspace. Any assignment turned in late, will receive a grade deduction. In case of Brightspace system breakdowns or issues, please email me your submissions. I will not accept any zip files or condensed files, so please make sure everything you submit is in a Brightspace readable/renderable format (MS Office documents, pdfs, jpg, jpeg...etc). Also links to shared documents like google docs will not be accepted.

USC Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Students with Disabilities

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Student Accessibility Services (<https://dsp.usc.edu>). OSAS provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with the Office of Student Accessibility

Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for OSAS is (213) 740-0776. Email: ability@usc.edu.

COURSE CALENDAR

	Topics	Readings
Week 1 8/29	The Financial Planning Process	Chapter 1.1-1.3
Week 2 9/5	Measuring Your Financial Health and Making a Plan	Chapter 2.1-2.5
Week 3 9/12	Measuring Your Financial Health – Understanding Time Value of Money	Chapter 3 <i>Assignment 1 Due</i>
Week 4 9/13	Taxes	Chapter 4.1-4.3 <i>Assignment 2 Due</i>
Week 5 9/19	Quiz 1 Cash or Liquidity Assets	Chapter 5.1 – 5.5
Week 6 9/26	Using Credit Cards	Chapter 6
Week 7 10/3	Consumer Loans Amortized Loans	Chapter 7 <i>Assignment 3 Due</i>
Week 8 10/10	Fall Break – No Class	
Week 9 10/17	Insurance Professor Travel – Class to be held Online	
Week 10 10/24	Investing Basics	Chapter 11 <i>Assignment 4 Due</i>
Week 11 10/31	Quiz 2 Investing in Stocks	Chapter 12
Week 12 11/7	Investing in Stocks Cont'd Investing in Bonds	Chapter 13
Week 13 11/14	Investing in ETF and Mutual Funds	Chapter 14 <i>Assignment 5 Due</i>
Week 14 11/21	Retirement Planning	Chapter 15
Week 15 11/28	Thanksgiving – No Class	
Week 16 12/5	Putting it all Together - Review	<i>Assignment 6 Due</i> <i>Personal Financial</i> <i>Portfolio Due</i>
FINAL	Monday 12/11 10am – 12 noon	

Please note that this schedule is always subject to change.