

BUS 147: Personal Finance

Welcome to MiraCosta's online offering of BUS 147, Personal Finance. I hope you find the class interesting and enjoyable, and that you learn some valuable lessons and concepts you can apply to current and future personal and business situations. Knowledge of personal finance is helpful in many areas of your life. Be sure to print a hard copy of this Syllabus for easy reference.

Course Description

Financial planning and budgeting topics include: bank accounts and certificates of deposit, credit, credit cards, economics, college funding, taxes, personal residence, property, life and health insurance, stocks/bonds and mutual funds, real estate, marriage and divorce, estate and retirement planning.

Course Details

Semester: Fall 2009: August 24, 2009 thru December 16, 2009

Units: 3; **Prerequisites:** None; **Acceptable for Credit:** CSU

Sections: 1933 and 1945; **Format:** Online Class

Class Web Site: <https://blackboard.miracosta.edu>

Text Student Companion Web Site: link at: http://wps.aw.com/aw_madura_persfin_3 (Open-Access Student Resources: An online study guide, chapter Web links, the Financial Planning Online Exercises, a guide to financial calculators, and the Write Down the Money! Budget Calculator)

Course Objectives & SLO's

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

My goals go beyond having you just learn the subject matter. I hope the course and the activities appeal to a variety of learning styles to keep everyone active and interested. As you proceed through the course, you will:

- Learn the subject matter and remember the key points
- Develop a good overview of personal finance issues
- Be able to apply the concepts to your own business and personal situations
- Communicate through the discussion forums with other students on personal finance and other issues
- Increase your knowledge and improve your technical computer and Internet skills
- Improve your email and written communication skills
- Discover and explore some interesting web sites that will be useful to you

SUBJECT MATTER OBJECTIVES:

The specific subject matter objectives for the course are for you to:

- Develop your own financial plan or learn by helping another as you go
- Create budgets, balance sheets, and cash-flow statements
- Understand and apply present value and future value concepts
- Minimize your tax liability and learn appropriate tax planning techniques
- Choose an appropriate bank and interest-paying investments
- Use credit wisely and choose appropriate loans
- Compare and contrast costs/benefits of renting vs. buying a personal residence
- Understand basic investing concepts with stocks, bonds, and mutual funds
- Apply diversification and asset allocation strategies
- Choose appropriate insurance for property, health, disability, and life risks
- Identify and utilize effective retirement planning techniques
- Choose and implement an estate plan that meets your personal and financial needs

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Prepare personal financial statements and budget proposals that meet individual financial goals.
2. Prepare an investment risk and reward analysis and propose an appropriate asset allocation with rationale.
3. Given a financial scenario, design and support an appropriate retirement plan and/or estate plan.

Instructor Information

Name: Tom Severance; **Background:** Attorney/CPA; JD/MBA: Univ of Minnesota; BS (Bus Admin.): Arizona State Univ
Office: Room 4810 in the Business Department (Oceanside Bldg. 4800) (shared with Christina Hata).

Scheduled Office hours: Monday 3-5pm (unless other obligations interfere). However, I am in the office most other weekdays at various times. Feel free to stop in if you see me in the office at any time, even if outside the normal office hours, or email/call to arrange a meeting if necessary.

E-mail: tseverance@miracosta.edu; **Home Page:** <http://www.miracosta.edu/home/tseverance>

Phone/message: (760) 757-2121 x 6388; **Fax:** (760) 795-6770

Teaching Philosophy: I believe in students taking primary responsibility for their education experience, setting their own goals, being proactive, and making sure they complete all assignments on a timely basis. I also believe in collaboration, creativity, flexibility, and the willingness to continue to learn and grow. This applies to both the students and the instructor.

Course Materials

Required Text: *Personal Finance*, Madura, 3rd edition, Addison Wesley, ISBN 0321409965, which can be viewed at <http://www.aw-bc.com/madura/>. Access to the text is required by the first week of class to complete the assignments. There is a copy of the text on reserve at the Oceanside library if needed. You may purchase the text at various locations and web sites, but if you don't purchase it from the MCC Bookstore, you assume and accept all risks, including return policy, delays in delivery, etc. Choose wisely.

Required Supplies: Calculator to do basic math calculations (A financial calculator is helpful but not necessary.)

Required Hardware: Regular access to an efficient, dependable computer with fast, reliable internet access

Required Software: Adobe Flash Player (for narrated PowerPoint), Adobe Reader (for pdf's)

All of these are free downloads on the Internet.

Course Content

Most weeks we will cover either one or two chapters in the text. You will be responsible for reading the chapters, reviewing PowerPoint presentations and other chapter-related documents or web sites, and completing all assignments within that week (week runs Monday morning through Sunday 10pm). The assignments will consist of multiple-choice online quizzes, short answer review questions and financial planning problems, and a discussion board. There will be a Mid-Term and a Final Exam (both multiple-choice questions). Mid-semester and final week papers and peer reviews using <http://www.turnitin.com> will also be assigned. In addition, each week you will complete some personal financial planning questions related to either your own personal financial situation or the Sampsons family described in the text. At the Text Student Companion Web Site, there are study aids and additional information for those interested.

Although the course is entirely online, it is not self-paced. You complete the assignments for each week generally on your own time schedule within that week. You may read ahead, but you will only be able to respond to the discussion board and submit assignments during the current week. Your first priority is to be sure all assignments for each week are completed on time.

Course Grading

GRADING CRITERIA (1010 total points) (No extra credit is available for this online class and there are no makeups since all students have the full week to complete their weekly assignments; strive to complete all assignments on a timely basis.)

- 330 points: Chapter Quizzes (22 chapters x 15 questions per chapter x 1pt each question)
- 264 points: Chapter Review Questions & Financial Planning Problems (22 chapters x 6 questions per chapter x 2 pts each question)
- 075 points: Midterm Exam (Chapters 1-10)
- 075 points: Final Exam (Chapters 11-22)
- 060 points: Written Projects (2 x 30 points each)
- 040 points: Peer Reviews (2 x 20 points each)
- 110 points: Financial Plan or Sampsons (22 chapters x 5 pts per chapter)
- 056 points: Discussion Board Posts (14 weeks x 4 pts) (2 pts for each post; 2 posts per week)

FEEDBACK SCHEDULE

- Chapter Quizzes and Exams will be graded automatically and the score posted by Blackboard.
- Chapter Questions and Problems, Videos, Discussion Board posts, Written Projects, Peer Reviews, and Financial Plan or Sampsons, will be graded and posted the week following the due date by the Instructor.
- Be sure to check the Online Gradebook regularly. Any claimed errors or discrepancies in the grades must be brought to the Instructor's attention within two weeks of the due date. Point postings are final after that.
- Instructor will monitor the Discussion Boards and often post summary comments in an Announcement at the end of the week.
- Instructor will respond to appropriate questions in proper format. For quick and simple questions, email is preferred; for more complex issues that require discussion, please call or visit.

The letter grading will be as follows with the percentage of total possible points. However, the grading curve is subject to minor adjustment (lowering) by the Instructor in his sole discretion at the end of the semester.

- A (Excellent): 90% +
- B (Good) 80-89%
- C (Average) 70-79%
- D (Below Average) 60-69%
- F (Failure) less than 60%

Course Rules & Expectations

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Students are expected to:

- Access their email and the Blackboard class site several times per week (minimum of 3 times per week).
- Complete and submit assignments on a timely basis to the instructor according to the instructions and the syllabus schedule.
- Not ask for exceptions to the rules and not wait until the last minute (or accept the consequences) to submit assignments.
- Share their knowledge, participate with a view to learning and growing, and have a good time.
- On all email submissions to the instructor, always put "BUS147:"section#" (e.g. BUS147:1933 or BUS140:1945 depending on your section) in the Subject Line. Also clearly identify themselves with their full name and email address.
- Take full responsibility for knowing the requirements, rules, deadlines, and activities
- Proactively work through all to make the class a successful experience. If an assignment is missed, if computer or internet problems arise, or if other life activities take precedence, the student accepts it, learns from it, and moves on.
- Maintain a sense of humor and keep things in perspective.
- Submit all writing assignments using Word (.doc or .docx), plain text (.txt), or rich text (.rtf) format. Submissions in WordPerfect (.wpd) format, Works (.wps) format or any other format will receive no credit. No matter what program is used, the document can be saved in .txt or .rtf format.
- Complete and submit original work, and act and behave ethically, honestly, and politely throughout the course.

CLASS WITHDRAWAL RULES:

Students are responsible to complete all necessary paperwork if they decide to withdraw from class. The Instructor must take strong steps to insure all students are "attending" in an online class and active. Therefore, the Instructor retains complete discretion to process a Withdrawal (Drop) for students without additional notice for any of the following (unless discussed with Instructor and approved in advance)

- Failure to input all required information on the Blackboard class web site by the end of the FIRST week of the semester.
- Failure to complete any assignment during the first two weeks of the semester
- Failure to complete 2 consecutive or 4 total Discussion Boards
- Failure to complete 2 consecutive or 4 total Assignments of any type

ONLINE CLASS CONSIDERATIONS:

You must be proactive to succeed in an online course. Postings in the Assignments and Announcements sections will keep you updated as much as possible; however, do not rely on being reminded of upcoming events and due dates by the instructor. You are responsible for all activities and deadlines listed in this syllabus. Read it thoroughly and make note of important dates and deadlines. Make sure you have a backup plan if your computer or Internet has problems. Do not wait till the last minute to submit assignments. Remember Murphy's Law: Anything that can go wrong will go wrong. Take responsibility and plan accordingly.

Remember also, that, although you have likely chosen an online class format for the time and location advantages, there are clearly disadvantages and limitations in online classes. They aren't for everyone and some aspects of a live in-person class cannot be duplicated. Specifically:

- You need regular access to an efficient computer with substantially fast online access and reliability.
- There will be no extended class discussions on topics
- There will be limited opportunity to clarify instructions; you are expected to timely and carefully read the syllabus, class documents, and all Announcements.
- There will be limited opportunity to discuss personal legal issues and current legal events.
- If you need further assistance or clarification from the instructor, you need to promptly email, call, or visit and be very clear with your questions and comments.

- There will be minimal instructor participation in discussion boards; students will discuss and learn from other students; summary comments by the instructor will be made at the end of the week.
- You will not have the student-student camaraderie that can develop in an on-campus class.
- You need to be technologically proficient and need to take full responsibility for completing online submissions timely.
- There will not be constant, ongoing reminders; you need to know all rules and deadlines and be skilled at time management.

College Policies & Services

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **August 29, 2009** (Saturday): Last day to ADD classes.
- **September 5, 2009** (Saturday); Last day to DROP classes with no grade and no "W".
- **September 25, 2009** (Friday): Last day to file Petition for Degree/Certificate and to file for Pass/No Pass. Consider this option if you do not need a letter grade.
- **November 20, 2009** (Thursday): Last day to Drop class with "W" grade; Drops after that receive a letter grade (generally an "F"). If you discover this course is not for you, or your class performance is not satisfactory, make sure to drop by this date.

INCOMPLETE GRADE:

Students seeking an "Incomplete" grade must consult with the instructor in person no later than the week prior to finals. Incompletes will only be considered for emergency or other unforeseeable justifiable reasons at the end of the term, and only upon agreement of clear conditions for completing coursework. Incompletes are rarely granted and only if the emergency or other unforeseeable justifiable reason occurs after the date for dropping the class. Work, vacation, family concerns, class schedules, time management problems, and other normal issues all students deal with do not qualify.

PASS/NO PASS GRADING OPTION (for graded classes):

You have the option to choose Pass/No Pass grading for this class. If you choose this option, you must submit a Petition for Pass/No Pass to Admissions & Records before 30% of the class has elapsed. This option for grading is nonreversible once selected. The petition form is available online, or from Admissions & Records. Students planning to transfer should consult with a counselor before opting for Pass/No Pass to ensure this option is accepted by their intended transfer institutions. Check the MiraCosta College catalog or schedule for more detailed information.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with disabilities, whether physical, learning, or psychological, who believe that they may need accommodations in this class, are encouraged to contact Disabled Students Programs & Services as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. Their phone number is (760) 795-6658 and they are located on the Oceanside campus in Building 3000-Student Services, Room 3009, adjacent to Parking lot 3C.

LIBRARY RESOURCES:

The MiraCosta College faculty librarians assist students with their research questions, whether academic or personal. Students may obtain assistance from librarians either one-on-one at the reference desk, through class orientations, group workshops, individual appointments, or online. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of library resources. More information regarding the library may be found at their webpage: <http://www.miracosta.edu/library>.

COLLEGE SUPPORT SERVICES:

The Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) and the Writing Center (WC) assist students by providing individual and group tutoring, WC drop-ins, learning communities, self-help materials, and student success workshops. Services are free and available to all students during day and evening hours at all MiraCosta College campuses. Take advantage of these academic support services. For more specific information, please call (760) 795-6682.

PLAGIARISM AND ETHICS POLICY:

Each student agrees to the following statements of student behavior:

- I agree that I, and only I, will be the one completing and submitting class materials (homework, quizzes, exams, written projects, etc.) in my name.
- I agree that I will not directly copy or plagiarize material from books, publications, the Internet, other students' work, or any other source. I am familiar with, and I agree not to violate, copyright laws. If small amounts of material from other sources are used as part of any class assignment, I agree to clearly indicate such and properly cite the source.
- I agree that any projects submitted for this class have been prepared for this class only and have not been, and never will be, submitted for any other class at MiraCosta or any other school.

- I agree that, unless approved by the instructor, I will not share answers to homework assignments, quizzes, exams, or any other course material with fellow classmates.
- I acknowledge that failure to comply with any of the above statements may result in failure of an assignment, removal from the course, failure in the course, and discipline action deemed appropriate by the instructor in his sole discretion and/or policies and procedures set forth by the Board of Trustees of the MiraCosta Community College District, fully described in the College Catalog.

Weekly Schedule

WEEKLY SCHEDULE RULES AND OVERVIEW:

Each week goes from Monday morning 8am to Sunday evening 10pm. Plan your schedule to complete all in a timely manner and leave room for computer issues or family or work issues so you don't run in to last-minute problems. Make sure to regularly view the Blackboard Announcements for more details and any changes.

Weeks 1 through 7: For each week, complete: online quiz for each chapter, Review Questions and Financial Planning Questions for each chapter, and the discussion board. Note: "RETURN" is always expressed as a PERCENT.

Week 8: Midterm Exam, Written Project #1, and the submission of either your Personal Financial Plan OR the Sampsons for chapters 1-10 will be due

Week 9: Peer Review #1 will be due; also, complete: online quiz for each chapter, Review Questions and Financial Planning Questions for each chapter, and the discussion board

Weeks 10 through 15: For each week, complete: online quiz for each chapter, Review Questions and Financial Planning Questions for each chapter, and the discussion board. Note: "RETURN" is always expressed as a PERCENT.

Week 16: Written Project #2 and Peer Review #2 and the submission of either your Personal Financial Plan OR the Sampsons for chapters 11-22 will be due

Week 17: Final Exam will be due

WEEK	MONDAY	ASSIGNMENTS	Chapter Review Questions	Chapter Financial Planning Questions
1	Aug 24	Chapter 1: Overview of a Financial Plan	2,4,13	1,3,5
2	Aug 31	Chapter 2: Personal Financial Statements	1,13,19	2,7,9
3	Sept 7	Chapter 3: Applying Time Value Concepts	1,9,10	1,4,12
4	Sept 14	Chapter 4: Using Tax Concepts	5,13,14	2,5,14
5	Sept 21	Chapter 5: Banking and Interest Rates Chapter 6: Managing Your Money	2,5,12 6,8,15	1,2,7 4,9,11
6	Sept 28	Chapter 7: Assessing & Securing Credit Chapter 8: Managing Your Credit	1,3,5,7,9,14 4,13,18	None 2,3,6
7	Oct 5	Chapter 9: Personal Loans Chapter 10: Purchase & Finance Home	9,18,22 4,9,15	1,5,7 3,5,8
8	Oct 12	Mid-Term Exam for Ch 1-10, Written Project #1, and submission of Personal Financial Plan OR Sampsons Ch 1-10		
		SPRING BREAK		
9	Oct 19	Peer Review #1 Chapter 11: Auto and Homeowner's Ins	4,6,8,9,14,19	none
10	Oct 26	Chapter 12: Health and Disability Ins Chapter 13: Life Insurance	6,10,11 2,9,13	1,2,3 1,3,6
11	Nov 2	Chapter 14: Investing Fundamentals Chapter 15: Stock Analysis & Valuation	1,5,20 7,16,17	1,8,10 1,3,8
12	Nov 9	Chapter 16: Investing in Stocks Chapter 17: Investing in Bonds	5,8,10 1,7,13	1,3,5 2,5,8
13	Nov 16	Chapter 18: Investing in Mutual Funds	6,10,16	1,2,3
14	Nov 23	Chapter 19: Asset Allocation Chapter 20: Retirement Planning	1,6,9 2,13,14	1,2,3 5,10,11
15	Nov 30	Chapter 21: Estate Planning Chapter 22: Integrating the Components Appendix A: Your Career	2,3,8,12,15,19 6,9,11	None 1,2,3
16	Dec 7	Written Project #2 and Peer Review #2, and submission of Personal Financial Plan OR Sampsons Ch 11-22		
17	Dec 14	Final Exam for Ch 11-22		

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the instructor; notice will be given to the students by email or with an announcement on the class Blackboard site. It is the student's responsibility to maintain a current email address in the Blackboard system and to check their email and the Blackboard site regularly.