

# RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

## School of Business - Camden

### PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL PLANNING

53:390:541 online FALL 2024

Tuesday to Monday

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#### Key Fall 2024 Dates:

- **Fall 2024 classes begin Tuesday, September 3rd**
- **Last day to withdraw with a "W" Monday, November 11th**
- **Last day of classes Wednesday, December 11th**
- **Final Exam period Monday, December 16th - Saturday, December 21st**

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This advanced graduate course delves into the intricacies of financial planning, blending the fundamental principles from the CFP's core knowledge areas with a deep focus on ethical considerations and critical thinking. Students will navigate topics such as professional conduct, investment strategies, tax implications, retirement and estate planning, and communication techniques. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on maintaining the highest ethical standards while using critical analysis to address contemporary financial challenges. By the end of this course, students will be proficient in creating comprehensive financial strategies that prioritize client goals, societal values, and regulatory standards.

#### REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Altfest, Lewis J., Personal Financial Planning. 2nd Ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2017. ISBN: 1-259-27718-6

#### RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

*NOTE: The following are NOT required but recommended.*

1. The Wall Street Journal (WSJ):

- A leading resource in business and finance, the WSJ provides insights directly relevant to our course topics. Periodic references will be made to its content. Though not required, a subscription is advised. For student discounts, visit the WSJ student rates subscription page.

2. Barron's:

- A premier source for financial planning and investment analysis, Barron's delves into markets, trends, and strategies, offering detailed insights that complement our coursework. It's a must-read for aspiring financial planners.

3. The Economist:

- Enhance your global financial perspective with The Economist. It offers a worldwide view of financial events and trends. Student subscriptions are available for affordability.

4. The Financial Times (FT):

- For a comprehensive international finance overview, the FT is invaluable. Check the Financial Times Education contact page for student rates.

## **COURSE and PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

The finance area at the School of Business – Camden has adopted the following Learning Goals and Objectives for Finance 541. CFP Board Principal Knowledge Topics (PKTs) are denoted next to the relevant learning objective.

### **1. Professional Conduct and Regulation:**

- Analyze the significance and implications of regulatory standards in financial planning.
- Evaluate ethical considerations in professional conduct and demonstrate their application in real-world scenarios.
- Apply critical thinking to assess various financial regulations and the implications for both the professional and the client.

### **2. General Financial Planning Principles, Professional Conduct, and Regulation:**

- Interpret general principles of financial planning and integrate them with ethical considerations.
- Evaluate the need for comprehensive financial planning and the benefits of adhering to a code of ethics.
- Interpret general economic concepts and apply them to financial planning scenarios.

### **3. Risk Management and Insurance Planning:**

- Assess the need for and role of insurance in comprehensive financial planning.
- Examine ethical considerations in recommending insurance products and plans.
- Utilize critical thinking to determine appropriate risk management strategies tailored to individual client needs.

### **4. Investment Planning:**

- Evaluate various investment vehicles and strategies, considering risk and return.
- Incorporate ethical considerations when recommending investment strategies, ensuring alignment with client values and objectives.
- Apply critical thinking to the evaluation of contemporary investment challenges and opportunities.

### **5. Tax Planning:**

- Examine the tax implications of various financial decisions.
- Integrate ethical considerations in tax planning, emphasizing honesty, integrity, and adherence to tax laws.
- Employ critical thinking in developing tax-efficient strategies tailored to clients' financial situations.

### **6. Retirement Savings and Income Planning:**

- Design comprehensive retirement plans that address both savings and income needs.
- Address ethical considerations in retirement planning, particularly concerning long-term viability and client's best interests.
- Engage in critical evaluation of retirement tools and products to ensure an informed recommendation.
- Evaluate the role of qualified and non-qualified annuities in retirement planning, considering their features, benefits, and ethical considerations.

- Analyze the rules and options for qualified and non-qualified plans, assessing their implications for retirement planning.
- Design strategies for optimizing Social Security and Medicare benefits, considering the long-term impact on clients' retirement planning.
- Evaluate the key factors influencing the selection of retirement plans for businesses, considering regulatory, financial, and ethical aspects.

#### **7. Estate Planning:**

- Construct strategies for efficient wealth transfer and estate preservation.
- Emphasize ethical considerations in estate planning, focusing on the client's wishes and familial considerations.
- Utilize critical thinking in navigating the complexities of estate tax laws and implications.
- Create comprehensive business succession plans that address the transfer of ownership, continuity of management, and ethical considerations.

#### **8. Communication and Counseling:**

- Demonstrate proficiency in communicating complex financial topics to diverse client populations.
- Recognize the ethical considerations in client communication and ensure transparency and understanding.
- Apply critical thinking to address client concerns, ensuring recommendations align with client goals and values.

#### **9. Education Planning (CFP PKT B13-B15):**

- Formulate strategies for funding education expenses and addressing student loan considerations.
- Address ethical considerations in education planning, prioritizing the long-term interests of the client and potential beneficiaries.
- Implement critical thinking in evaluating education funding options and their implications.

#### **10. Financial Statement Analysis and Cash Flow Planning:**

- Analyze financial statements to determine a client's financial health and future planning considerations.
- Address ethical considerations when interpreting and representing financial data.
- Use critical thinking to develop cash flow strategies that prioritize client goals and financial well-being.
- Develop strategies for effective financing and debt management, integrating ethical considerations and aligning with clients' financial goals.

### **COMMUNICATION AND USE OF CANVAS:**

#### **1. EMAIL- USE YOUR RUTGERS EMAIL ADDRESS**

All communications to students will be done using the Rutgers email address provided to you. Please forward your Rutgers email to your personal email if necessary.

**Not checking your Rutgers email is not an excuse for missing any communications.**

#### **2. CANVAS**

Canvas is the learning management system used for this course. Posted will be the syllabus, resources, Power Point slides, announcements, guides, etc. To access this system, go to <http://canvas.rutgers.edu> log in, and click on the course in the dashboard. For technical support 833-648-4357 or [help@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:help@camden.rutgers.edu).

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

**Make-up Work Policy:** If, for a university-approved reason, you cannot complete a quiz, assignment, or exam during the scheduled time, you must give me written notice via email ([andnikif@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:andnikif@camden.rutgers.edu)) at least one week in advance so that other arrangements can be made. If the situation does not allow for advance notification (e.g., emergency hospitalization), contact me as soon as possible after the missed work and provide written documentation. The ability to make up work for non-university approved reasons is not guaranteed. The professor reserves the right to request written documentation to support your absence (such as a doctor's note, an obituary, or military orders).

**Late Work Policy:** All work must be completed and uploaded to Canvas by the specified due date (with the exception of a university-approved, documented, and professor or Dean of Students verified reason; see Make-up Work Policy above). Any work submitted after the due date and time will receive a reduction of one full letter grade for each day that it is late.

**Incompletes:** "Incompletes" will only be given through prior consultation, under extreme circumstances, and when completion of the course requirements in question would substantially improve your grade. In the rare event when an "incomplete" is given, you must submit all of the agreed-upon work to me by the Rutgers registrar deadline to avoid the "incomplete" converting to an "F": <https://registrar.camden.rutgers.edu/gradeinstruction#incomplete>.

## ASSESSMENTS:

### 1. EXAMS (25%):

There will be one Mid-term exam (10%) and the Final (15%). Both will consist of questions designed to test understanding of the facts and concepts of the course and how they can be applied to practical investment problems. All problems will be based on the assigned required weekly readings, mainly from your textbook.

### 2. BI-WEEKLY DISCUSSIONS (25%):

Active participation in class discussions is a crucial component of this course. You are expected to contribute regularly to online forum discussions, demonstrating your engagement with the assigned course material through thoughtful and well-informed comments. Throughout the semester, you will work on hands-on projects that might span multiple weeks. These projects are designed to simulate complex, real-world scenarios in Financial Planning. Due to their complexity and scope, the use of Large Language Model (LLM) chatbots is strongly recommended. While you may use any LLM chatbot, I strongly recommend using flagship models from top providers such as:

- GPT-4-O from OpenAI
- Claude 3 Sonnet from Anthropic
- Gemini Pro 1.5 or higher from Google

As part of these projects, you will be required to post your intermediate steps, findings, and reflections as bi-weekly discussion posts. This will allow you to share your progress, seek feedback, and collaborate with your peers. You must include a brief description of how you utilized LLM

chatbots in your process, including any particularly helpful prompts or strategies you developed. In addition to posting your own updates, you are encouraged to engage with your classmates by replying to at least two other students' posts per discussion. Use these opportunities to ask for advice, offer solutions, or provide helpful resources. Collaboration and mutual support are key to the success of these multi-week projects. Your discussion posts and replies will be assessed based on their relevance, depth of understanding, the value they add to the overall class discussion, and your effective use of LLM chatbots to enhance your work. Strive to create a supportive and engaging learning environment where everyone can benefit from shared knowledge, experiences, and innovative use of AI tools.

### 3. WEEKLY QUIZZES (50%):

Quizzes are difficult and are based exclusively on the content of the required assigned readings. You should carefully read the assigned materials before attempting to take the quiz.

### COURSE GRADING:

For the assignment of final grades, the course requirements will be weighted approximately as follows:

Mid-Term exam .....	10%
Final exam .....	15%
Weekly Quizzes.....	50%
Bi-Weekly Discussions (Projects)....	25%

### EXAM GRADE RANGES:

90-100% .....	A
85-89% .....	B+
80-84% .....	B
75-79% .....	C+
70-74% .....	C
Less than 70% .....	F

### DISABILITY SERVICES/ACCOMMODATIONS:

The University is committed to supporting the learning of all students and faculty will provide accommodations as indicated in a Letter of Accommodation issued by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). If you have already registered with ODS and have your letter of accommodations, please share this with me early in the course. If you have or think you have a disability (learning, sensory, physical, chronic health, mental health or attentional), please contact <https://success.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>.

Accommodations will be provided only for students with a letter of accommodation from ODS. Their services are free and confidential. Letters only provide information about the accommodation, not about the disability or diagnosis.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Academic Integrity policy can be found at <https://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/processes/university-code-student-conduct>

Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and abiding by them in all aspects of their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to help educate fellow students

about academic integrity and to bring all alleged violations of academic integrity they encounter to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Academic Integrity means that you (the student) must:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others,
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work,
- make sure that all work submitted as your own in a course activity is your own and not from someone else
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately
- treat all other students fairly with no encouragement of academic dishonesty

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that:

- everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments
- all student work is fairly evaluated, and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered
- the reputation of the University for integrity is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE**

The use of AI, particularly Large Language Model (LLM) chatbots, is an integral part of this course.

Here's our policy on AI use:

### **Suggested Use:**

- For Bi-Weekly Discussions (Projects): The use of LLM chatbots is strongly recommended. These tools are essential for tackling the complex, real-world scenarios presented in these assignments.

### **Permitted Use:**

- Brainstorming and refining ideas
- Fine-tuning research questions
- Finding and summarizing information on course-related topics
- Drafting outlines to organize thoughts
- Checking grammar and style
- Explaining complex concepts
- Providing coding assistance for course-related programming tasks

### **Prohibited Use:**

- Completing quizzes or exams
- Submitting AI-generated content as your own without substantial modification and critical evaluation

### **Best Practices:**

1. Always critically evaluate the information provided by AI tools.
2. Cite your use of AI tools in your work, including any particularly useful prompts or strategies.
3. Use AI as a collaborative tool to enhance your learning, not as a replacement for your own critical thinking and analysis.

You are responsible for all information you submit, including ensuring it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation. Any use of AI tools must be properly documented to comply with academic honesty policies.

If you're unsure about appropriate AI use in any situation, please ask for clarification.

## **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

Rutgers University-Camden seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community, including in classroom space.

As a student at the University, you are expected adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

To review the code, go to the Office of Community Standards:

<https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/student-conduct>

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."