Introduction to Finance

Credits: 0.5

Course Overview and Goals

This one-semester course is intended to help you familiarize yourself with the basic and essential concepts of finance. This course has twenty-one lessons organized into five units. Each unit has a Unit Activity, and each lesson contains one or more Lesson Activities.

This course will cover the fundamental concepts of finance, including the importance of finances and financial planning in personal life and business, ways to manage finances, different investment strategies, and various career options available in the field of finance.

You will submit the Unit Activities to your teacher, and you will grade your work on the Lesson Activities by comparing them with the given sample responses. The Unit Activities (submitted to the teacher) and the Lesson Activities (self-checked) are the major components of this course. There are other assessment components, namely the mastery test questions that feature along with the lesson; the pre- and post-test questions that come at the beginning and end of the unit, respectively; and an end-of-semester test. All of these tests are a combination of simple multiple-choice questions and technology enhanced (TE) questions.

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Explain key economic concepts such as scarcity, supply, demand, opportunity costs, unemployment, and inflation, and their various roles in the world of finance.
- Identify different types of economic systems and market structures.
- Describe global trade and how it influences economies.
- Explain investment strategies, budgeting and loan creation, and business insurance.
- Interpret financial statements and financial ratios to evaluate an enterprise's financial position.
- Identify the basics of personal financial planning.
- Describe various social and psychological factors that affect financial decisions.
- Explain why soft skills are important in the world of finance.
- Identify career options in the world of finance.

Course Components and Grading Rubric

The table gives a breakdown of the weight for each component in the course. Weight represents the percentage of the total score coming from each activity.

Course Components	Count	Weight*
Pretest. *A pretest is an optional assessment, typically designed for credit recovery. If a student shows mastery of a lesson objective, the student may be automatically exempted from the upcoming activities associated with the mastered objective. Pretests are not included as a component of the student's final grade.*	5	0%
Module. *Each module in this course contains an interactive tutorial or study and an associated mastery test. Tutorials and studies combine instruction and practice to prepare students for the mastery test, which is a computer-scored lesson-level summative assessment. The module score comes from a student's score on the mastery test.*	21	20%
Discussion. *A discussion activity is an opportunity for students to collaborate with their peers. An online threaded discussion mirrors the educational experience of a classroom discussion initiated when a teacher asks a complex, open-ended question. Students can engage in the discussion by responding both to the question and to the thoughts of others allowing for higher-order thinking about terminal objectives.*	5	20%
Unit Activity. *A Unit Activity is at the end of a unit and constitutes one or more small tasks. Its purpose is to deepen understanding of key unit concepts and tie them together. Each Unit Activity includes a simple rubric. The teacher versions include both a rubric and modeled sample answers. Unit Activities are teacher graded.*	5	20%
Posttest. *A posttest appears at the end of each unit.*	5	20%
End-of-Semester Test. *An end-of-semester test (EOS) appears at the end of each course.*	1	20%
Total	**42**	**100%**

Weight Teachers may manually adjust these weights if desired, per district grading requirements.*

Scope and Sequence

UNIT 1: FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF MONEY AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

In this unit, you will learn about money as the medium of exchange across the world and its contribution to different economies. You will familiarize yourself with the fundamentals of macro- and microeconomics and the application of these concepts in the world of finance. You will also learn about the concept of global trade; its scope, drivers, and constraints; and its effects on the national economy.

Activity	Activity Objective
Syllabus	• Review the Course Syllabus at the beginning of the course.
Defining Money	• Discuss how money and its various forms work and contribute to the economy.
Fundamental Economics	• Explain the role of fundamental economic concepts in the world of finance.
Economic Systems	• Discuss how enterprises operate within various market structures.
Economic Indicators	• Discuss how key economic indicators such as interest rates, unemployment, inflation, and cyclicity have a bearing on economic activity.
Government Policy	• Explain how government action affects enterprises, especially in decisions on fiscal and monetary policy.
Global Trade	• Describe the working of, and influencing factors within, global trade.
Unit Activity: Fundamental Principles of Money and Economic Systems	• Discuss the fundamentals of a market economy.

UNIT 2: PERSONAL FINANCE AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN FINANCE

In this unit, you will learn about various methods to manage personal finances. These include creating budgets based on realistic financial goals and interpreting different financial statements. You will further analyze the sociological and psychological factors that influence decisions in finance.

Activity	Activity Objective
Setting Goals in Personal Finance	• Discuss how to create realistic financial budgets and goals.
Personal Finance Statements	• Discuss how to apply processes, forms, and financial entities to track one's personal financial history.
Sociological Factors in Finance	• Discuss sociological factors that are likely to influence decisions in finance.
Psychology for Finance	• Discuss psychological factors that are likely to influence decisions in finance.
Unit Activity: Personal Finance and Human Behavior in Finance	• Explain the content and purpose of common tax forms used in the United States.

UNIT 3: FINANCIAL MARKET AND RESOURCES

In this unit, you will learn about the importance and basic operations of the various types of financial markets and financial institutions. You will understand the different ways to manage personal and business capital using various forecasting and budgeting techniques. You will also learn to interpret financial statements to evaluate an enterprise's position and prospects. Finally, you will learn about the various investment strategies that help an enterprise meet its business objectives.

Activity	Activity Objective
Assets and Securities	• Discuss how assets and securities operate within financial markets.
Managing Money	• Analyze the use of sales forecasting and budgeting techniques to project revenues and profit.
Interpreting Financial Statements	• Apply ratio analysis and trend analysis techniques to evaluate an enterprise's position and prospects.
Investment Strategies	• Describe how informed and responsible investment helps an enterprise meet its objectives.
Unit Activity: Financial Market and Resources	• Demonstrate knowledge of planning for future expenses and investments.

UNIT 4: CREDIT MANAGEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

In this unit, you will learn about different options available to finance a company and the processes, benefits, and risks associated with each option. You will also learn about the importance of insuring a business and the processes involved in buying and claiming insurance.

Activity	Activity Objective
Capital Structures	• Explain how debt and equity capital play a role in financing a company's operations, and the benefits and risks of each.
Obtaining Credit	• Discuss the importance of credit, and risks, methods, and processes associated with credit.
Insurance for Business	• Describe the importance of insuring a business.

Activity	Activity Objective
Unit Activity: Credit Management and Risk Management	• Demonstrate knowledge of credit and loan functions.

UNIT 5: CAREERS IN FINANCE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

In this unit, you will learn about the various career options available in personal and corporate finance as well as the various licensing and certification programs required for these careers. You will examine the personal traits and interpersonal skills required to be successful in a workplace. You will also learn about the computer and information technology related skills required for a successful career in this field.

Activity	Activity Objective
Careers in Finance	• Discuss career paths in personal and corporate finance.
Personal Qualities and Interpersonal Skills	• Describe the personal traits and interpersonal skills expected in the workplace.
Computer Skills	• Describe the computer skills essential in the workplace.
Information Technology Skills	• Describe the information technology skills essential in the workplace.
Unit Activity: Careers in Finance and Financial Planning	• Discuss different career paths and the certifications, skills, and questions associated with these careers.

Course Map

You will achieve course level objectives by completing each lesson's instruction, assignments, and assessments. For a detailed look at how the materials meet these objectives, review the course map.