



**COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: FIN 301 - Corporate Finance
(45 contact hours, 3 credits)**

This syllabus is informational in nature and is not an express or implied contract. It is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, as a result of any circumstance outside the University's control, or as other needs arise. If, in the University's sole discretion, public health conditions or any other matter affecting the health, safety, upkeep, or well-being of our campus community or operations requires the University to move to remote teaching, alternative assignments may be provided so that the learning objectives for the course, as determined by the faculty and the University, can still be met. The University does not guarantee specific in-person, on-campus classes, activities, opportunities, or services or any other particular format, timing, or location of education, classes, activities, or services.

Mask Policy

Please be advised that the mask policy in this class will follow Sant'Anna Institute requirements. When/if the University enacts a mask policy, all students are expected to adhere to the policy.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a deep dive into the intricate world of corporate finance, providing students with a thorough grounding in its principles, theories, and real-world applications. As a vital component of business education, this course is meticulously designed to bridge the gap between theoretical financial principles and the practical challenges faced by today's financial managers and corporate decision-makers.

Beginning with an exploration of the fundamental concepts of finance, such as the time value of money and the cost of capital, students will learn how these principles underpin all financial decision-making processes. The course emphasizes the importance of understanding risk and return dynamics, guiding students through the complexities of financial markets and instruments.

A significant portion of the curriculum is dedicated to investment decision-making, with detailed examination of capital budgeting techniques such as Net Present Value (NPV), Internal Rate of Return (IRR), and Payback Period. Students will learn to evaluate investment projects, considering not only their potential returns but also the inherent risks and the strategic fit within the company's overall objectives.

Financing decisions form another core component of the course. Students will explore the various sources of finance available to corporations, including debt, equity, and hybrid instruments, and will learn how to structure the optimal capital mix to support corporate strategy while minimizing cost and financial risk. This includes an in-depth look at theories of capital structure, dividend policies, and the impact of leverage on company valuation.

Working capital management is also covered, emphasizing the importance of liquidity and operational efficiency. Students will be introduced to strategies for managing cash, receivables, inventory, and short-term liabilities to enhance a firm's value and ensure its financial stability.

The course further extends into advanced topics such as mergers and acquisitions, corporate restructuring, and international finance. Students will analyze the strategic rationale behind corporate mergers, the valuation of target companies, and the financial engineering involved in structuring complex financial transactions. Additionally, the course addresses the challenges of managing financial operations in an international context, including exchange rate risk, cross-border investment decisions, and global funding strategies.

Pedagogically, the course is designed to encourage active learning through a mix of lectures, case studies, financial modeling exercises, and group discussions. Real-world case studies are a critical component, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge to analyze financial decisions faced by actual companies. This hands-on approach ensures that students not only understand the theoretical aspects of corporate finance but also develop practical skills in financial analysis, strategic thinking, and decision-making.

Upon completing this course, students will possess a comprehensive understanding of corporate finance, equipped with the skills and knowledge to make informed financial decisions and contribute value to their future organizations. This course is indispensable for students aiming for careers in finance, investment banking, financial consultancy, corporate management, and beyond, offering a solid foundation that blends theory with practical insight into the financial mechanisms that drive corporate success.

COURSE OBJECTIVES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complex world of corporate finance, making it an essential foundation for those aspiring to careers in finance, investment banking, financial consultancy, and corporate management.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Understand fundamental concepts:** Grasp the core principles of corporate finance including the time value of money, risk-return tradeoff, and the cost of capital.
2. **Analyze financial statements:** Develop the ability to critically analyze financial statements and use them to assess a company's financial health and make strategic financial decisions.
3. **Make investment decisions:** Apply capital budgeting techniques to evaluate investment opportunities and make decisions that maximize firm value.
4. **Design capital structures:** Understand the factors influencing a company's capital structure and develop skills to design optimal capital structures that balance risk and return.
5. **Manage corporate liquidity:** Evaluate and manage the working capital to ensure the company can meet its short-term obligations and operate efficiently.
6. **Evaluate mergers and acquisitions:** Assess the financial and strategic implications of mergers and acquisitions and understand their role in corporate growth and restructuring.
7. **Apply international finance principles:** Understand the challenges and opportunities presented by international finance, including foreign exchange risk management and cross-border investment evaluation.
8. **Develop financial modeling skills:** Gain hands-on experience in financial modeling and simulation to support financial analysis and decision-making processes.

FORMAT

- The course will include lectures, student-led discussions, and presentations.
- Students will engage in small group work and peer reviews.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Brealey, R. A., Myers, S. C., & Marcus, A. J. (2023). *Fundamentals of corporate finance*. McGraw-Hill.

In this course, students will have access to a wide range of educational materials curated by the instructor to enhance their learning experience. Among these resources, special attention will be given to scientific articles that delve into the latest research and advancements in the field. These articles, selected for their relevance and insight, will serve as a vital component of the course's curriculum. They will not only supplement the lectures and textbook readings but also stimulate critical thinking and discussion among students. By engaging with these scientific articles, students will gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter and stay abreast of the current trends and debates within the academic community. The instructor will guide students through the analysis of these articles, facilitating a richer educational journey that bridges theory with the cutting-edge research shaping the field today.

EXAMS and ASSIGNMENTS

The assessment for this course is designed to evaluate students' understanding and application of the principles of corporate finance through a variety of methods. The assessment components include a midterm exam, a final exam, and class participation in experiential activities.

1. **Mid-term exam:** The mid-term exam will be a written test covering all material presented in the first half of the course. It will consist of a mix of multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and problem-solving exercises. This exam is designed to assess students' foundational knowledge and their ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios.
2. **Final exam:** The final exam, also written, will encompass the entire course content, with a focus on the material covered in the second half of the course. Similar to the mid-term, it will include multiple-choice questions, short-answer sections, and practical problem-solving tasks. The final exam aims to evaluate the comprehensive understanding of corporate finance principles, their application, and critical thinking skills.
3. **Class participation in experiential activities:** Beyond the written exams, students' participation in class is crucial for the whole learning experience. Participation will be evaluated based on engagement in experiential activities conducted during the course. These activities are designed to foster practical understanding, encourage active learning, and facilitate the application of theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios. Active and meaningful participation in these activities will contribute positively to the final grade, reflecting the students' commitment to applying corporate finance principles in practical settings.

Students are encouraged to actively participate, engage with the course materials, and apply themselves in both the written exams and the experiential activities. This comprehensive approach to assessment is intended to cultivate a deep understanding of the subject matter, critical analytical skills, and the ability to apply finance principles effectively in various contexts.

These examination modes generate a score that is expressed in percentage values and with which a grade is associated as a letter grade. Specifically, students who earn a final score as follows.

GRADING SCALE

A	95%-100%
A-	90%-94%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C+	77%-79%
C	73%-76%
C-	70%-72%
D+	67%-69%
D	63%-66%
D-	60%-62%
F	< 60%

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

The course is divided into thematic modules designed to comprehensively cover the key aspects of corporate finance. Each module focuses on specific areas of knowledge and practice, equipping students with the necessary skills to analyze, evaluate, and make informed financial decisions.

- **Module 1: Introduction to corporate finance**
 - **Objectives:** To provide an overview of the role of finance in corporations, introducing basic concepts and the context in which financial managers operate.
 - **Main topics:** Overview of corporate finance, Financial goals of firms, Overview of financial markets.
- **Module 2: Financial valuation**
 - **Objectives:** To introduce the concepts of time value of money, valuation of bonds and stocks, and begin to explore risk and return.
 - **Main topics:** Time value of money, Valuation of bonds and stocks, Fundamentals of risk and return.
- **Module 3: Investment decisions (capital budgeting)**

- **Objectives:** To develop the ability to evaluate investment projects using various capital budgeting methods.
- **Main topics:** Principles of capital budgeting, Investment appraisal methods, Risk analysis in investment decisions.

- **Module 4: Capital structure and dividend policy**
 - **Objectives:** To examine theories and strategies regarding optimal capital structure and dividend policies.
 - **Main topics:** Theories of capital structure, Debt vs. equity financing, Dividend policies and their impact on firm value.

- **Module 5: Working capital management**
 - **Objectives:** To delve into strategies for efficient management of working capital and short-term financial planning.
 - **Main topics:** Inventory management, Management of receivables and payables, Short-term financial planning.

- **Module 6: Mergers, acquisitions, and corporate restructuring**
 - **Objectives:** To analyze the financial and strategic motivations behind mergers and acquisitions and understand corporate restructuring processes.
 - **Main topics:** Valuation of mergers and acquisitions, Corporate restructuring strategies, Financial impacts of extraordinary operations.

- **Module 7: International finance**
 - **Objectives:** To explore the challenges and strategies associated with financial management in an international context.
 - **Main topics:** Exchange rate risk management, Foreign direct investment and international financing, Differences in global financial systems.

Each module includes required readings, case studies, practical exercises, and class discussions to consolidate understanding of the covered topics.

CLASS POLICY

Attendance

You are allowed **ONE** unexcused absence. Documentation for any other absence **MUST** be produced and **APPROVED** by your faculty. For absences due to illness, please provide the faculty with a doctor's note upon returning to class as well as inform them and/or the Office the first day of illness.

Participation grants the student one point for each lesson they attend. Unjustified absences result in 0 points. Participation in **field-trips**, if any, awards 2 points, while non-participation results in a loss of 2 points.

Late

Assignments not submitted by the due date will receive a penalty of 10% for the first 24 hours, 20%

submissions:

for a 48-hour delay. No submissions will be accepted more than 3 days after the deadline, unless arrangements have been made with the instructor (for extensions under exceptional circumstances, apply to the course instructor).

Personal

Please turn cell phones off during class. You can use laptops to take notes, however social networking, e-mailing, surfing the Internet, playing games, etc. are forbidden during class. Any student caught using their laptop/cell phones inappropriately during class will be asked to turn them off. Repeated violations of this rule after the first warning will result in the student being marked absent for the day and permanently losing their laptop privileges. Please be respectful and limit your use of personal electronic devices during class to academic purposes.

Technology:

Contesting

a

grade:

If students wish to contest a grade, they must make an appointment to do so in person. The student should contact the instructor with any concerns within ONE week of receiving the grade. The student must also demonstrate that they have read the comments accompanying the grade by presenting a brief written statement specifying why the grade does not reflect the quality of the work. It is at the discretion of the instructor to decide whether the work and the student's request warrant any increase or decrease in the grade. Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments and feedback (in case of loss) and should also retain all of their marked assignments.

Recommended behavior:

- Class begins promptly at the beginning of the class period. It is advisable that you be in your seat and ready to start participating in class at that time.
- Always bring the required supplies and be ready to be actively engaged in the learning process. This communicates preparedness and interest.
- Turn your cell phone off or to vibrate mode before the start of class;
- It is fine to bring a drink or a snack to class, as long as it is not distracting. In conjunction with this, please pick up your trash when you leave the room.
- Your professor expects your full attention for the entire class period. If you know that you'll need to leave before the class is over, try to sit as close to the door as possible so as not to disrupt others. Similarly, if you arrive in class late, just slip in as quietly as possible and take the first available seat you come to.
- Do not sleep in class! Laying your head on the desk or sleeping in class is rude, and it is distracting to others. Turn in assignments on time.
- When you have a question or comment, please raise your hand first as a courtesy to your classmates and the professor. Remember, your questions are NOT an imposition – they are welcome. So, ask questions! You'll learn more, it makes the class more interesting, and you are helping others learn as well.
- If an emergency arises that requires an absence from a session, it is your responsibility to get the notes and all other information that was covered in class from a colleague you trust.

Secular and religious holidays:

Sant'Anna Institute recognizes that there are several secular and religious holidays - not included in the Italian calendar - that affect large numbers of its community members. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday. Students who wish to observe such holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity.

Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. For this reason it is desirable that faculty inform students of all examination dates at the start of each semester.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

“Members of the Jacksonville University community are expected to foster and uphold the highest standards of honesty and integrity, which are foundations for the intellectual endeavors we engage in.

To underscore the importance of truth, honesty, and accountability, students and instructors should adhere to the following standard:

“On my honor as a student of Jacksonville University, I promise to uphold the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all my dealings with faculty, staff, and students.”

Academic misconduct occurs when a student engages in an action that is deceitful, fraudulent, or dishonest regarding any type of academic assignment that is intended to or results in an unfair academic advantage. In this context, the term “assignment” refers to any type of graded or ungraded work that is submitted for evaluation for any course. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, collusion, falsification, misrepresentation, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, copying another student’s work, using or providing unauthorized notes or materials, turning in work not produced by the individual, attempting to get credit for a single instance of work submitted for more than one course, and plagiarism. Furthermore, providing deceitful, fraudulent, or dishonest information during discussions of an academic matter with faculty are also examples of academic misconduct.” (Jacksonville University Academic Integrity [Policy](#)).

Throughout this course we will be reading and reporting about the work of others. All information that is not original to the student must be appropriately attributed in both presentations and written work. All students are expected to do their own work and give appropriate credit for all sources used in the process of preparing papers, presentations, and homework assignments. Group assignments will be graded based on the product of the work, although some adjustment may be made for participation. [If you have a question about whether or not collaboration is allowed, or how to cite a reference, please ask. It is always better to check than to be accused of an unintended violation of the academic honesty policy]. Violations of the academic honesty policy will be dealt with in

accordance to university policies [Refer to current Academic Catalog “Academic Integrity and Misconduct”].

Course Level Penalties: A first offense may result in a failing grade for the assignment. Second offenses may result in failure in the course. Significantly egregious violations may result in expulsion from the university. When in doubt give credit for all information that did not come directly out of your head!

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Students with a documented disability requesting classroom accommodations or modifications, either permanent or temporary, resulting from the disability are encouraged to inform the faculty in the first week of the program.