



**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**  
*Illinois State University*

**Department of Finance, Insurance and Law**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**College of Business Mission**

Through our shared commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service, we prepare students to be skilled and ethical business professionals who will make significant positive contributions to organizations, to communities, and to our larger society.

**Academic Integrity**

Students enrolled in College of Business classes are expected to maintain high standards of ethical conduct when completing assignments, projects, and/or exams. Cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism will not be tolerated. In this course, using AI or browsing the web when taking quizzes or exams, working on quizzes or individual assignments together, or sharing information about exam questions is considered cheating.

**Professional Standards**

You should be familiar with the [College of Business Standards of Professional Behavior and Ethical Conduct](#).

**CLASSES MEET:** Section 3: TR 11:00-12:15 in 022G  
Section 4: TR 12:35-1:50 in 022F

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3  
**PREREQUISITES:** ECO 101 or 105; MQM 100; ACC 131

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Vladimir Kotomin, CFA  
Office: SFHB 309; tel. 309-438-2448; email [vkotomi@ilstu.edu](mailto:vkotomi@ilstu.edu)

**OFFICE HOURS:** TR 10:00-10:50 and 2:30-3:30 on days classes are held;  
by appointment

**REQUIRED:**

*Text: Fundamentals of Finance*, Kotomin; \$75, accessible on Top Hat (you will receive an invitation).

*Financial calculator or another tool with time value of money (TVM) functions:* I recommend Texas Instruments BAI+. Tutorials will be available on Canvas for you to review. I highly recommend Excel.

*Computer access:* You must have access to a computer with internet and Microsoft Office. ISU students have free access to Office 365: Sign in at <https://m365.cloud.microsoft> with your ISU credentials. Copilot will appear as the default landing page. To open any Microsoft applications, select the App icon located in the left-side navigation panel.

*Registration for the Excel Crash Course on [www.wallstreetprep.com](http://www.wallstreetprep.com):* You are required to pass this online course. Use this link to register for \$30 instead of the regular price of \$39:  
<https://gv142.infusionsoft.com/app/manageCart/addProduct?productId=8509>

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

FIL 190 is an introductory finance course for finance majors. It covers major areas of corporate finance and provides training in the analytical tools and concepts that are critical for you as future finance professionals; mastering them will help you in subsequent finance courses as well as in your personal financial lives.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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

1. Extract relevant information from financial statements, compute and interpret financial ratios as part of financial analysis.
2. Apply time value of money concepts in financial decision making.
3. Compute and interpret measures of risk and return and apply them to value bonds and stocks.
4. Compute a firm's cost of capital and evaluate capital budgeting projects by applying basic capital budgeting decision criteria.
5. Evaluate the effects of operating and financial leverage on the firm's earnings sensitivity and risk.
6. Master the basics of Excel.
7. Research career opportunities in the field of finance.

## **INSTRUCTOR'S PHILOSOPHY**

My focus is on your learning. I communicate which topics you need to understand in great depth, which you should understand the basics of, and which are not critical. We will work on examples when covering new material, and weekly assessments will be given to help you master it. You may get stuck once in a while, in which case you should seek my help, sooner rather than later. If you have questions, email me and/or request a meeting (virtual or in-person). I usually reply to emails within a few hours (may take longer on weekends).

We will regularly discuss real-world situations related to the scope of the course. I suggest you stay informed of current events and encourage you to bring up topics that interest you.

Your questions are always encouraged. They allow me to help you, to assess your progress, and to make improvements in explaining the material. Remember, if you don't ask a question, I cannot help you.

## **Student Access and Accommodation Services**

If you need to arrange reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 308 Fell Hall, Office Phone (309) 438-5853, Video Phone (309) 319-7682, website [StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu](http://StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu)

## **Mental Health**

Life at college can get complicated. If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed or are struggling with personal issues, do not hesitate to call or visit Student Counseling Services (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, 309-438-3655.

**GRADED COURSE COMPONENTS**

- 1) Exams may include multiple choice questions, numerical problems, discussion or short answer questions, and Excel problems. There will be four midterm exams and a comprehensive final. Exams must be taken in class as scheduled. No make-up exams will be allowed except for official university activities (must be accompanied by verification) or documented emergencies. Midterms will be split into halves—MC/written and problems—with the lowest half score dropped.
- 2) Quizzes & Activities
  - a. *Weekly Canvas quizzes* will include MC questions and open-ended problems and will come with multiple attempts. Expect spending a significant amount of time and effort on them. While you may be tempted to use AI, doing so to replace rather than to complement your own efforts is likely to result in struggles on exams. These quizzes are designed to serve as exam practice.
  - b. *In-class quizzes*, given at the start of a class, will include problems and short-answer questions on recently covered material. Problems will be similar to those on the instructor’s handouts and Canvas quizzes. Short-answer questions will be similar to practice questions posted on Canvas.
  - c. *In-class activities* will include various low-stakes tasks to be completed in a span of a few minutes.
- 3) Career Choices Assignments & Event Summaries include two self-reflections, the finance designations comparison assignment, and summaries of three professional events you will attend (mostly ISSF meetings). Specific instructions for each assignment and event will be provided.
- 4) Top Hat Questions are in-chapter questions in the textbook housed on Top Hat; due weekly.
- 5) Excel Crash Course on [www.wallstreetprep.com](http://www.wallstreetprep.com) (WSP): Use [this link](#) to get the discounted price of \$30 (note: the registration email from WSP often ends up in the spam folder). You must score a minimum of 80% on the Excel Crash Course exam to earn credit. You will earn the number of points equal to your percentage score on the exam (0 if you score below 80%). You can retake the exam (it requires contacting WSP for every attempt after the second one but no extra \$). You must present evidence of passing the Excel Crash Course (i.e., scoring 80% or higher on the exam) by the end of Monday, March 23. After that, a 2-percentage-point penalty will be assessed for every calendar day it is late. If you present evidence of passing the exam by the end of Monday, February 9, you will earn a 10% bonus (e.g., if you score 100% on the exam, your total will be 110 points; if you score 88%, your total will be 96.8 points; etc.).

*(Note 1: If you lose points on the WSP Excel Crash Course exam due to formatting issues such as missing/extra commas or symbols, let me know, and I will give you credit.*

*Note 2: The time commitment is 10-20 hours. Do **NOT** wait till the last moment to review WSP course material and take the exam. You want some extra time in case you do not achieve 80% on the first attempt. Save your WSP username and password, as well as evidence of passing the Excel Crash Course exam for the future. If professors in higher-level courses require it, you would present evidence of passing. E.g., Dr. Tamm in FIL 349 has required it in the past. It is also a good idea to put it on your resume.)*

|  |                   |             |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| Midterm Exams (45*8 halves, lowest half dropped) | 315 pts.          | 31.5%       |
| Comprehensive Final Exam                         | 160 pts.          | 16%         |
| Quizzes & Activities                             | 180 pts.          | 18%         |
| Career Choices Assignments & Event Summaries     | 100 pts.          | 10%         |
| Top Hat Questions                                | 145 pts.          | 14.5%       |
| Wall Street Prep Excel Crash Course              | <u>100 pts.</u>   | <u>10%</u>  |
| <i>TOTAL</i>                                     | <i>1,000 pts.</i> | <i>100%</i> |

The grading scale is a simple 90-80-70-60 scale.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE †**

| <b>DATES</b>                         | <b>TOPICS and ACTIVITIES*</b>                                     | <b>CHAPTERS</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Jan 13                               | Overview  | 1               |
| Jan 15                               | Financial Statements  | 2               |
| Jan 20                               | Fin. Statements; Fin. Analysis and Ratios; <i>in-class Quiz 1</i> | 2, 3            |
| Jan 22                               | Fin. Analysis and Ratios  | 3               |
| Jan 27                               | Fin. Analysis and Ratios; Time Value of Money (TVM)               | 3, 4            |
| Jan 29                               | TVM; <i>in-class Quiz 2</i>                                       | 4               |
| Feb 3                                | TVM; Review   | 4               |
| <b>Feb 5</b>                         | <b>Exam 1</b>   | <b>1-4</b>      |
| <i>Mon, Feb 9</i>                    | <i>WSP Excel Crash Course Exam Bonus Deadline</i>                 |                 |
| Feb 10                               | TVM   | 4               |
| Feb 12                               | TVM   | 4               |
| Feb 17                               | TVM; <i>in-class Quiz 3</i>                                       | 4               |
| Feb 19                               | Risk & Return (R&R)   | 5               |
| Feb 24                               | R&R; <i>in-class Quiz 4</i>                                       | 5               |
| Feb 26                               | Bond Valuation  | 6               |
| Mar 3                                | Bond Valuation; Review  | 6               |
| <b>Mar 5</b>                         | <b>Exam 2</b>   | <b>4-6</b>      |
| <b>Mar 11 &amp; 13</b>               | <b>Spring Break – no class</b>                                    |                 |
| Mar 17                               | Stock Valuation   | 7               |
| Mar 19                               | Stock Valuation   | 7               |
| <i>Mon, Mar 23</i>                   | <i>Evidence of passing WSP Excel Crash Course Exam due</i>        |                 |
| Mar 24                               | Cost of Capital; <i>in-class Quiz 5</i>                           | 8               |
| Mar 26                               | Capital Budgeting Decision Criteria                               | 9               |
| Mar 31                               | Capital Budgeting Decision Criteria; <i>in-class Quiz 6</i>       | 9               |
| Apr 2                                | Capital Budgeting Decision Criteria; review                       | 9               |
| <b>Apr 7</b>                         | <b>Exam 3</b>   | <b>7-9</b>      |
| Apr 9                                | Capital Budgeting Cash Flows                                      | 10              |
| Apr 14                               | Capital Budgeting Cash Flows; <i>in-class Quiz 7</i>              | 10              |
| Apr 16                               | Capital Budgeting Cash Flows; Capital Structure and Leverage      | 10, 11          |
| Apr 21                               | Capital Structure and Leverage; <i>in-class Quiz 8</i>            | 11              |
| Apr 23                               | Capital Structure and Leverage                                    | 11              |
| <b>Apr 28</b>                        | <b>Exam 4</b>   | <b>10-11</b>    |
| <i>Apr 30</i>                        | <i>Review</i>   | <i>All</i>      |
| <b>Mon, May 4,<br/>2:20-4:20 PM</b>  | <b>Comprehensive Final Exam, Section 03 (TR 11-12:15)</b>         | <i>All</i>      |
| <b>Thur, May 7,<br/>2:20-4:20 PM</b> | <b>Comprehensive Final Exam, Section 04 (TR 12:35-1:50)</b>       | <i>All</i>      |

† We may not have meetings on every single date in the schedule above. Announcements will be made and activities assigned in advance if there is no meeting.

\* Subject to change on short notice. It is your responsibility to keep up with the changes.