

**Business F725
Personal Financial Management
Winter 2025 Course Outline**

**DeGroot School of Business
McMaster University**

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The objective of the course is to provide students with the tools and skills needed to make sound financial decisions throughout their lives. Personal financial planning is the process of managing one's money to achieve personal economic satisfaction. This process involves setting realistic goals and organizing financial activities toward the achievement of the goals. It also depends on the increased control of financial affairs by avoiding excessive debt, building up wealth, and managing financial risk.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. R. Luo
Instructor

Course website: A2L
Office hours: by appointment

COURSE ELEMENTS

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Credit Value: 3 | Leadership: Yes | IT skills: No | Global view: Yes |
| A2L: Yes | Ethics: No | Numeracy: Yes | Written skills: No |
| Participation: Yes | Innovation: Yes | Group work: Yes | Oral skills: Yes |
| Evidence-based: Yes | Experiential: No | Final Exam: No | Guest speaker(s): Yes |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will be taught through in-person lectures. The weekly pop quizzes will be used to assess class participations. There will be a group project for this course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

- Conduct the analysis for the personal financial situations.
 - Build a plan to achieve their financial goals.
 - Build a plan to address their financial contingencies.
 - Build a plan to control their spendings and risk.
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COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required textbook: Personal Finance, 5th Canadian Ed, Jeff Madura and Hardeep Singh Gill; Pearson Publisher. Cost: \$97.99. Feel free to use a second-hand copy of this book.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The following components contribute to the course evaluation. Students' final percentage grades are computed based on all the weights for components.

Components and Weights

| | |
|---|-----|
| Participation (weekly pop quizzes) | 10% |
| Term Test 1 | 30% |
| Term Test 2 | 40% |
| Group Project | 20% |

Total

100%

COURSE DELIVERABLES

The lecture for this course will be delivered **in person** on the weekly basis. The participation in the weekly live lecture is required and will be accounted toward to class participation grade. The lecture slides will be posted on our course website prior to the weekly lecture.

GRADING SCALE

For graduate courses the grade conversion scales are available through the following link:

https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=42&navoid=8734#2.6.1_Averaging_of_Letter_Grades

MBA and Master of Finance Grading Scale:

| Grade | Points | Equivalent Percentages | Pass/Fail |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| A+ | 12 | 90-100 | P+ |
| A | 11 | 85-89 | P |
| A- | 10 | 80-84 | |
| B+ | 9 | 75-79 | |
| B | 8 | 70-74 | |
| B- | 7 | 60-69 | |
| F | 0 | 59 and under | F |

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This

protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Area Administrative Assistants. All students must receive feedback regarding their progress prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without failure by default.

- For Level 1 and Level 2 courses, this feedback must equal a minimum of 20% of the final grade.
- For Level 3 courses and above, this feedback must equal a minimum of 10% of the final grade.

Instructors may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Missed Term Work regulations that our outlined on the Master of Finance website;

<https://mfin.degroot.mcmaster.ca/current-students/missed-term-work/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g., A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make

arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS

All researchers conducting research that involves human participants, their records or their biological material are required to receive approval from one of McMaster's Research Ethics Boards before (a) they can recruit participants and (b) collect or access their data. Failure to comply with relevant policies is a research misconduct matter. Contact these boards for further information about your requirements and the application process.

McMaster Research Ethics Board (General board): <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (Medical board): <http://www.hireb.ca/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in Business 725 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during

lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Week 1: Overview of a financial plan (Readings: Chapter 1)
- Week 2: Applying time value concepts (Readings: Chapter 2)
 Planning with Personal Financial Statements (Readings: Chapter 3)
- Week 3: Using tax concepts for planning (Reading: Chapter 4)
- Week 4: Banking services and managing your money (Readings: Chapter 5)
 Assessing, managing, and securing your credit (Chapter 6)
- Week 5: Purchasing and financing a home (Readings: Chapter 7)
- Week 6: Midterm exam (February 13)
- Week 7: Reading week (no classes)
- Week 8: Auto and homeowner's insurance (Reading: Chapter 8)
 Health and Life Insurance (Reading: Chapter 9)
- Week 9: Investing Fundamentals (Reading: Chapter 10)
 Investing in Stocks (Readings: Chapter 11)
- Week 10: Investing in Bonds (Reading: Chapter 12)
 Investing in Pooled Investment Funds (Readings: Chapter 13)
- Week 11: Retirement Savings Planning (Readings: Chapter 14)
 Retirement Income Planning (Readings: Chapter 15)
- Week 12: Estate Planning (Reading: Chapter 16)
- Week 13: Term Test 2 (April 3)
- Week 14: Group Project Presentations