

University of Missouri-St. Louis School of Business Administration  
Course Syllabus

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Finance 3563  
Retirement Planning and Employee  
Benefits  
Fall 2012

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Prerequisites: 2.8 GPA; BA 3500 or Consent of Instructor & Area Administrator

Course Materials: Allen, Melone, Rosenbloom, Mahoney, *Pension Planning: Pension, Profit Sharing, and Other Deferred Compensation Plans*, McGraw-Hill, Irwin, 10th Edition, 2008.

mygateway.umsl.edu. Students need to regularly check the course MyGateway site for announcements, assignments, grades and course materials. A working knowledge of this site as well as Microsoft Office Products: Word, Excel and PowerPoint will be necessary for successful completion of the Course.

Course Objectives:

1. To introduce students to the variety of retirement vehicles available in the marketplace;
2. To provide an integrated framework for the analysis of needs and the fulfillment of goals in the workplace relative to benefit plans in general and retirement plans specifically;
3. To provide insight into the workings of the various plans within the confines of law and regulation;
4. To provide students with the tools to understand the need for and the personal ability to perform competent retirement planning for themselves and others, and
5. To provide coursework for qualification to take the CFP, ChFC, CLU and Similar Examinations (Please check with the Professor about the availability of such credit if this is your primary reason for taking this course, as such qualification is not controlled by the professor, but rather by external agencies).

## Grading Policy

1.	Class Participation	100
2.	Examinations/Quizzes	225
	a. Appendix 1 (OASDI)	75
	b. WIKI	100
	c. Final Exam	50
3.	Group Project	250
4.	Discussion Board	150
	a. WSJ (75)	
	b. CEF (25)	
	c. Project Pages (50)	
5.	Chapter Presentation	75
6.	How Much Do I Need to Retire	100
7.	Dollar Cost Averaging	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,000</b>

### Participation:

A functional learning environment requires students interested in their education. While lecture cannot be avoided in this class, every effort will be made to have meaningful discussion and alternative learning modules. While attendance is not required, lack of attendance will result in loss of participation points. Attendance is encouraged, as it will help all of us create a positive learning environment. Your class participation grade will be judged upon your daily attendance, attention and participation.

1. If you are having a problem getting to class that day, call me in advance to discuss the problem
2. If you have a contagious or communicable illness or disease, call me prior to class so that I am aware of the reason for your absence. I will award full participation points, but it is your responsibility to get class notes or assignments from another **student**.
3. Turn off all cell phones and beepers, or clear their usage with me prior to class (granted only in extreme cases)
4. Tardiness and early departure will not be tolerated for anything except a medical emergency or death in your immediate family, and only if I am previously notified. Such activity, even if cleared in advance, may result in a proportionate loss of points. Unexcused tardiness or early classroom departure will result in a proportionate loss of points.

5. I expect civil and professional conduct of all students. Please consult the Student Code for further details.

**Exam Policy:**

Dates of Exams will be agreed to in class. The OASDI and the WIKI are take-home examinations for which you are expected to work independently of one another. While I encourage working together and studying together, for these projects I desire individual performance and assessment. Deviation from these expectations might constitute Academic Dishonesty on the part of all persons involved; doing your own work is critical to your individual development. The Final Exam is designed as an in-class exercise, but the instructor reserves the right to modify this examination to fit the educational and assessment needs of the course.

**Class Schedule**

Attached hereto is a TENTATIVE class schedule. Everything on this schedule is subject to modification or alteration to accomplish the learning needs of the class. It is the responsibility of each student to check with classmates to determine what modifications, if any, have been made to the schedule. Do not expect that a modified schedule will be posted each time a change is made, or that an announcement will be placed in MyGateway. This is another reason that regular class attendance is important, because you may have an influence upon schedule modifications to better accommodate your schedule.

**Work Submission**

All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Assignments requiring the use of a spreadsheet must be submitted in Excel. All compositions will be evaluated for grammar, diction, style, neatness, punctuation and organization. Your work should reflect serious thought upon the project befitting a course designed for seniors. The writing lab, on the 4th floor of the SSB, may be able to assist you, but they cannot proofread nor write your papers. You may want to find a classmate, friend or acquaintance to go over all of your work prior to submission.

Assignments are due on specific dates as set forth on the attached schedule, but that schedule is subject to modification. If the schedule is modified, the assignment is due upon the modified date. If work is received after the due date, it is subject to a late penalty. **If a project is due in a MyGateway Assignments or Learning Unit format, it will only be accepted in that format unless prior arrangements are made.** Late assignments are subject to a reduction of 1/14 per day late of 20% against the grade earned. Thus if your work justified an 80, but you turned it in two weeks late, your final grade on that assignment could be as low as a 64. I try to be flexible in these arrangements, but *I will not accept*

*work that is more than two weeks late.* If you believe that the deadline will not work for your schedule, address this with me prior to that deadline date. **Work will not be accepted after 12:01 pm, 1201 Hours, December 07, 2012, unless arrangements are made prior to that date.**

#### Rewrites

After years of teaching I have come to the conclusion that do-overs are ill-suited for any learning environment other than the Kindergarten playground. Do your best to get it right the first time; I do not accept rewrites.

#### Academic Honesty

UMSL and the University of Missouri have an Academic Code which will be upheld at all times. This can be found in the Student Conduct Code. Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to zero points on an assignment, failure on an assignment, a failing grade in the class, and dismissal from the University. I have in the past had the unpleasant opportunity to refer students to the appropriate authorities at the University for further action upon Academic Dishonesty matters; I would prefer to cease this activity on my part, but I will not hesitate to act as needed should the actions or omissions to act of the student place me in this unpleasant position. Honor yourself by proper citation to sound sources, and be certain to do your own work that you may hold your head up high on the date you receive your diploma, as well as thereafter.

#### **Access, Disability, Communication:**

- Students requiring special accommodations should meet with me during office hours so that we can discuss how to meet your needs this semester. Prior to our meeting be sure you have met with someone in Disability Access Services (MSC 144).
- If you have difficulty communicating in English with the instructor of this course, contact the chairperson of the Finance Department, Professor Edward Lawrence, 11th Floor of the Tower, 314.516.6148.

#### **General Comments**

It is in your best interest to discuss with the instructor any problems that you are having or that you foresee prior the date of crisis. There are a number of helping agencies at the University, and I may be able to steer you to the one that will best help you. I want you to enjoy your time in my classroom, and to feel welcome at all times to discuss your academic experience. I will be in the office most Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the semester. Together we can fashion a rewarding learning experience, but this must be a cooperative endeavor between all of us. One of my favorite administrative assistants had a little sign on her desk: "Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my

This course requires your continued diligence and effort throughout the semester. I will do my best to post Grades on the MyGateway system as soon as I can. You should check this throughout the semester to assure that you have received the points to which you are entitled. I attempt to post Class Participation grades right after class, so be sure to track these carefully as I may be able to explain to you why you are not receiving full points that you may accordingly modify your actions. I do not give extra credit assignments. There is enough work in the semester for you to get the grade you deserve. It is incumbent upon you to do all of the work in a timely fashion. This is rather like a tortoise walk. Just do it.

**Letter Grades**

I utilize A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F, and I grade on a curve because I look for clusters at or near these breakpoints so that you will be placed in appropriate proximity to peers. It generally takes 940 or more points to get an A, >900 for A-, > 880 for B+, > 820 for B and > 800 for a B-. Grades by letter designation tend to cluster when I plot them, but these numbers have been very close to the ultimate barriers in >97% of the semesters in which I have taught. Do your work well throughout the semester and you should get a good grade.