

**Commerce 3FB3
Security Analysis
Winter 2025 Course Outline**

**Finance and Business Economics Area
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University**

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Section C01: **Tuesday 08:30 – 11:20**

Room: Please check Mosaic

Instructor

Paris Ostad

Ostads@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Assistant

Yasaman Hashemi

zhangl40@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: by appointment

Course website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

COURSE ELEMENTS

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

COURSE INFORMATION

Lectures and Tutorials: 3 hours per week.

Course Delivery Mode: In-person. However, in certain situations it may be necessary to switch to an on-line format. In that case, we will be using Zoom. The link will be subsequently provided.

Course Description: This course focuses on the analysis of marketable securities, with a particular emphasis on common stocks. Key topics include the institutional characteristics and functioning of financial markets, securities analysis and valuation, and investment strategies aimed at maximizing returns.

This course begins with an overview of the investment environment, financial markets, and trading of securities, followed by a more in-depth analysis of key investment topics such as asset allocation, portfolio management, performance measurement, the capital asset pricing model, term structure of interest rates, bonds, derivatives and Behavioral Finance.

Students will engage in a variety of learning activities, including post-lecture quizzes, two assignments, a midterm exam, and a final exam. Numerical examples, and individual assignments will make extensive use of Excel. Also, the Financial Trading System (FTS) is used to simulate a trading environment allowing for practical application. Finally, this course is a useful introduction to the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) curriculum (www.cfainstitute.org).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

- Have a sound understanding of financial markets and instruments.
 - Be able to assess the risks associated with various investment strategies.
 - Be familiar with basic portfolio theory and able to conduct security and portfolio analysis.
 - Understand basic valuation techniques and how to use them to make investment decisions.
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COURSE LEARNING GOALS

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the fundamental elements of security analysis, including financial markets and instruments, investment theory and the valuation of common securities such as bonds, stocks, and derivatives. By the end of the course, students should be able to apply the tools learned in this class to make informed investment decisions and manage portfolios of common stocks and related securities.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Avenue registration for course content, reading materials and slides:

<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

Textbook: 10th Canadian Edition, by Z. Bodie, A. Kane, A.J. Marcus, L.N. Switzer, M. Stapleton, D. Boyko, and C. Panasian; McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2022.

degroote.mcmaster.ca

EVALUATION

You will be evaluated based on five components according to the following weights:

Components and Weights

Components	Weight
Two Individual Assignments (2*15%)	30%
Mid-Term Exam	30%
Final Exam (non-cumulative)	30%
Participation (post-lecture quizzes)	10%
Total	100%

Notes:

- There are two individual assignments, one before and one after the midterm exam. They are designed to help the preparation for exams but also to include active learning. They include Multiple Choice and Numerical problems and are to be submitted electronically through the assignment portal on the course's Avenue page. Students will have approximately one week to do each assignment. The availability and due dates for the assignments appear on the weekly course schedule below.
- The mid-term exam will cover all the material including the week prior to the exam. The exam will consist of multiple choice, numerical and short-answer questions, and will cover material from the assignments, lecture notes, and class discussion. If you miss the exam, no make-up exam is offered. The weight of the mid-term will be transferred to the final exam, so the final will be worth 60% in this case.
- The final exam will cover all the material covered after the midterm. The exam will consist of multiple choice, numerical and short-answer questions, and will cover material from the assignments, lecture notes, and class discussion.
- The exams are closed book and will be completed individually. You will not be allowed to use your own formula sheet; however, you will be provided with all the formulas needed within the exam.
- There will be ten short post-lecture quizzes, five during the first half of the course (lectures 2 to 6) and five during the second half (lectures 7 to 12). The average of your six best scores, specifically, the best three out of five quizzes from the first half and the best three out of five from the second half, will count for 10% of your final grade. A quiz grade is based on attendance as well as the correctness of the answers.
- Attendance is not required. However, it will be difficult to obtain participation credit without regular attendance.

Grade Conversion

I do not use a fixed percentage grading scale. That is, there is no fixed schedule that I use to map marks to letter grades. This means that raw marks are not in themselves very meaningful. Rather, your final grade will depend on how well you do relative to other people in your class.

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students who wish to correspond with the instructor or the TA 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.

In keeping with the University's academic regulations, all students who complete the required assignments and midterm will have received feedback for at least 10% of the final grade prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without failure by default.

Students who have concerns about the course content, evaluation methods, or delivery should first reach out to the course instructor. If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, you may then reach out to the relevant Area Chair for further consideration.

REQUIRED RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "[Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#)" and the link below;
<http://ug.degrootemcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/missed-course-work-policy/>

* Non-Commerce students must follow the Missed Course Work protocols outlined by their home faculty and Program Office.

POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE

From time to time there may be a need to remove/add topics or to change the schedule or the delivery format. If these are necessary, you will be given as much advance notice as possible.

GENERATIVE AI

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course. In alignment with [McMaster academic integrity policy](#), it "shall be an offence knowingly to submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source". This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, "Contract Cheating is the act of "outsourcing of student work to third parties" (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment." Using Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

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, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

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](#).

The following illustrates 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.

ONLINE COURSE COMPONENT

In this course, we may use various on-line tools such as Zoom/MS Teams, Avenue to Learn and e-mail communications. 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, usernames for 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 online 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.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all 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 to 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in Commerce 3FB3 is 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

LECTURE	DATE	CHAPTER	TOPIC & ASSIGNMENT
1	Jan 7	1, 2	The Investment Environment, Financial Markets and Instruments, Interest Rate Preliminaries <i>(No Quiz)</i>
2	Jan 14	2, 14	Money Market securities, Term Structure of Interest Rates; Spot and Forward Interest Rates <i>(Quiz 1)</i>
3	Jan 21	14, 15	Bond Pricing and Yields, Duration, Convexity <i>(Quiz 2)</i>
4	Jan 28	3	How Securities Are Traded <i>(Quiz 3)</i>
5	Feb 4	5, 6	Risk and Return Capital Allocation to Risky Assets <i>(Quiz 4)</i> <i>Assignment 1: posted</i>
6	Feb 11	7	Optimal Risky Portfolios (Portfolio Theory) Midterm Review <i>(Quiz 5)</i> <i>Assignment 1 due Mon, Feb 17 at 11:59 pm</i>
	Feb 18	No Class	Mid-term recess
7	Feb 25	1,2,3,5, 6,7,14,15	Midterm Exam
8	Mar 04	8,9	Index models, The CAPM <i>(Quiz 6)</i>
9	Mar 11	9, 10	The CAPM, The Multifactor Models <i>(Quiz 7)</i>
10	Mar 18	11 12	Market Efficiency Behavioral Finance <i>(Quiz 8)</i>
11	Mar25	22	Derivatives: Forward and futures contracts <i>(Quiz 9)</i> <i>Assignment 2: posted</i>
12	Apr 1	20, 21	Derivatives: Options <i>(Quiz 10)</i> <i>Assignment 2 due Mon, Apr 7 at 11:59 pm</i>
13	April 8		Final Exam Review <i>(No Quiz)</i>
	Final Exam (TBA)	8,9,10,11, 12,21,20, 22	Final Exam (Non-Cumulative)