

COURSE: **FIN 4380 Financial Modeling and Decision Making Fall 2013**
INSTRUCTOR: Neil Walter email: walter@dixie.edu
OFFICE: Hazy #344 Office: 652-7887
Cell: 229-1205
CREDIT: 3 Semester Hours
CLASS SCHEDULE: Thursdays at 5:15
TEXT: The Psychology of Investing 4th Edition, the Excel Bible (2010)

CORRESPONDANCE: Expect to receive correspondence via Canvas. In the event there is a syllabus change or an announcement that needs to be sent to the class, it will be posted to Canvas. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call or send me an e-mail. I usually check my e-mail each day, but sometimes when I am not on campus for a couple of days, I may be slow to get to all of my email. The office number is for my office here on campus. To contact me via phone, call my cell. If I don't answer, if you don't leave a message, I won't return your call. I am fine with text messages—just make sure you tell me who you are.

PLEASE NOTE: The syllabus includes objectives and a schedule for the course. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted to Canvas or announced in class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course applies economic theories to solve various problems in financial management and investments using a hands-on approach in building financial spreadsheet models in Microsoft Excel. Topics will range from using excel to “program” the model to applying financial statement analysis and valuation metrics. While participating students should have a background in finance, and accounting, the course work is designed to leverage these courses, not teach them.

OFFICE VISITS:

Feel free to contact me at any time via phone or e-mail with questions regarding the class. I will return your call or e-mail as soon as possible. Office hours will posted on my office door, although I can be available right after class on most days.

OBJECTIVES:

When the student successfully completes this course he/she will be able to:

1. Appreciate appropriate model architecture and explain why the way one builds a model influences the decision making process.
2. Understand how to build a flexible model using Excel functions that is auditable (someone else can follow and check for errors).
3. Build dynamic pro-forma financial statements that can be used for analysis and valuation purposes.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular Attendance is required for this course. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to contact a fellow student or me to find out what you missed. Attendance will be taken in class. Even if you know you will be absent for institutional absences, you must make arrangements for the materials covered.

University approved absences: Dixie State University Policy explains in detail what needs to happen if you anticipate being absent from class because of a university-sponsored activity (athletic events, club activities, field trips for other classes, etc). Please read this information and follow the instructions carefully! The policy can be found at: <http://www.dixie.edu/humanres/policy/sec5/523.html>

ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading: In order to remain current with class progress and discussion, there will be some assigned reading. The Excel Bible is a reference book you will use mostly on your own. I expect you to come prepared for class. This will enable you to learn the material much better, contribute more to class discussion, and prepare you to meet the objectives of the course. There may be quizzes on the assigned reading. If quizzes are included, they will be weighted the same as assignments and graded 1 point for each question.

Assignments: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date scheduled. Assignments are to be completed individually and will be scored individually. Unless noted otherwise, assignments **must be typed**. Late assignments will receive no more than ½ credit. If you are going to be absent/late for a any reason on the day an assignment is scheduled, please make arrangements to turn in the article **prior** to when it is due. All work must be your own. Plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in no credit.

Projects

There are projects due in this class. They will be announced in class and the due dates will be posted on Canvas. If projects require teams, no more than two people may work together in a team. Each project requires preparation of a written summary and an excel file that will be turned in for a grade. As a group, you may need to be prepared for class to make a presentation of your findings and recommendations if requested as part of the project. The respective assignments will outline the requirements for that particular situation.

Grading will come from three components:

- 1) Assignments and projects: Each written summary **must be typed** and will be scored from 0 to 10 where a 10 will be given for a complete assignment meeting all of the objectives. Late assignments earn ½ of the score they would have earned if they were turned in on time. No credit is given where minimal effort is made or no written summary is turned in.
- 2) Presentations: Presentations for this course are TBD. Each group should come prepared to present their findings to the class when requested. If presentations are required, they will be incorporated into your project score.
- 3) The third component is your exam. We will have a midterm exam. The final exam will be a project.

Again, if you are going to be absent/late for any reason on the day a case is scheduled, make you're your group will be represented. All work must be your own. Plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in no credit for the assignment and may result in no credit for the class.

EXAMS:

The Mid-term exam will be an evaluation of your ability to apply the Excel formulas and principles covered during the first half of the class. The final Exam will be a due on the day Final Exams are due. It will test your

knowledge and ability to apply the techniques and principles learned in this class. Details will be announced toward the end of the semester.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring reasonable academic adjustment, accommodations, or auxiliary aids to be successful in this class will need to contact the Disability Resource Center Coordinator (Baako Wahabu) for eligibility determination. Proper documentation of impairment is required in order to receive services or accommodations. DRC is located in the North Plaza Building. Visit or call 652-7516 to schedule appointment to discuss the process. DRC Coordinator determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

DMAIL EMAIL ACCOUNTS:

Important class and university information will be sent to your Dmail account. This information includes your DSU bill, financial aid/scholarship notices, notification of dropped classes, reminders of important dates and events, and other information critical to your success in this class and at DSU. All DSU students are automatically assigned a Dmail account. If you don't know your user name and password, go to www.dixie.edu and select "Dmail," for complete instructions. You will be held responsible for information sent to your Dmail email, so please check it often.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:

It is the responsibility of an instructor to manage the classroom environment to ensure a good learning climate for all students. This means not talking when the teacher is talking, following instructions, and speaking and acting respectfully to the professor and fellow students. For more details, please see the disruptive behavior policy at: <http://www.dixie.edu/humanres/policy/sec3/334.html>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to, refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, falsification, misrepresentation, and/or inappropriately colluding or collaborating. The University shall consistently hold students accountable for instances of academic dishonesty and apply appropriate consequences. For more information, see the Student Academic Misconduct section of DSU policy at <http://www.dixie.edu/humanres/policy/sec5/533.html#appeals>.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

If you need help understanding the content of your courses, go to the Tutoring Center located on the 4th floor of the Holland Centennial Commons in Room 431. You can visit them online at <http://www.dixie.edu/tutoring/>

If you need help writing papers, essays, etc go to the Writing Center on the fourth floor of the Holland Centennial Commons in room 421. You can also visit them online at <http://dixiewritingcenter.com/>

If you need to use a computer to do schoolwork on campus, go to the Smith Computer Center or the Holland Centennial Commons on the second, mezzanine, or third floors.

If you are assigned to take a test in the Testing Center, go to the North Plaza. You can get information on their website at <http://www.dixie.edu/testing/>

The Library has all kinds of information and resources. Visit the Dixie State University Library on the 2nd, and 3rd floors of the Holland Centennial Commons, or go to the library website at <http://library.dixie.edu/>

If you need help with dispute resolution with other students, faculty or staff, the Ombuds Office provides assistance in resolving problems and conflicts. It is an independent, impartial, informal, and confidential resource available to all members of the Dixie State University community. More information is available at <http://www.dixie.edu/ombuds/>

If you need computer assistance, please contact the IT Helpdesk at 435-879-4357.

GRADING:

Please keep all graded tests and homework assignments until you complete the course and receive a final grade. If I make a mistake in your grade, your graded work will be required to make corrections. Grades are for percentages greater than or equal to the percentage shown and are calculated using the weightings below.

Assignments	25%
Psychology of Investing	15%
Projects	30%
Exams	30%
Total	100%

Percent	93%	90%	87%	83%	80%	77%	73%	70%	67%	63%	60%	0%
Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

Class	Topic	Assignments
1	Formulas: Dates, Lookup, Reference, Data Analysis Walkenbach Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14	
2	Formulas: Dates, Lookup, Reference, Data Analysis Walkenbach Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14	PSY 1 Questions
3	Model Purpose and Description, Influence Diagrams Walkenbach Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14	Assignment 1/PSY 2 Questions
4	Logical Functions and Range Names Walkenbach Chapter 4	Assignment 2/PSY 3 Questions
5	Data Validation/Programming Income Statement Walkenbach Chapters 20, 25	Assignment 3/PSY 4 Questions
6	Charts, Pivot Tables, Autofilter/Project Summary Page Walkenbach Chapters 18, 19, 21, 42	Assignment 4/PSY 5 Questions
7	Project 1 Review and feedback/Midterm Prep	Project 1/PSY 6 Questions
8	Mid Term	Mid Term
9	Build custom DCF Model Walkenbach Chapter 32, 34, 35	Project 2/PSY 7 Questions
10	Lease Versus Buy	PSY 8 Questions
11	Lease vs Buy Project	Project 3/Psy 9 Questions
12	Make up Day	PSY 10 Due
13	Final Project Preparation	Psy 11 Due
14	Final Project Presentations	Final Projects Due
	Final Exam in Class	