

**GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**Scheller College of Business**

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**Personal Finance, GT4801**

**M. Scott Bryant, MBA**

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**Professor:** M. Scott Bryant

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## **1. Course learning objectives and Description**

A 2017 report by MarketWatch found that half of all households in the U.S. live paycheck to paycheck, while 31% have less than \$500 in emergency savings. The same study found that 49% of Americans are “concerned, anxious, or fearful about their current financial well-being.” The average credit card debt of households is \$16,748.

This course will teach personal financial management skills with a focus on investing at an early age and repaying debt promptly to avoid interest charges. Specific topics that will be covered include: an overview of the financial planning process, goal-setting, cash flow management, income taxes, banking, credit and debt, insurance (all types), the time value of money and compound interest, investing, renting and home buying, and retirement planning.

The course is designed to encourage the application of financial planning concepts. Students will be able to directly apply what they have learned to their future lives in order to become successful financially.

### **Learning objectives:**

- Apply time value of money principles
- Prepare a personal budget and a financial plan
- Plan for their college education and career
- Manage cash and savings
- Use credit wisely
- Select appropriate types of insurance policies
- Plan for home ownership and understand types of mortgages
- Develop an investment plan for the future
- Understand the concepts of risk and return
- Develop a plan to save for retirement while minimizing taxes and investment fees

## 2. Course Materials

There are no required textbooks for the course. However, I highly recommend to books on personal finance:

*The automatic millionaire* by David Bach

*The elements of investing: Easy lessons for every investor* by Burton Malkiel and Charles Ellis

In addition to these books, all course content will be on canvas

I also strongly encourage students to read the *The Wall Street Journal*: <http://student.wsj.com>

3. **Class etiquette:** I ask that you follow some simple courtesy rules during class: arrive on time, do not leave during class, do not use laptops, and make sure cell phones are turned off. I will attempt to learn your name as soon as possible. To help me in this effort, you will need to complete a name tent and bring it to each class.

## 4. Grading:

The course grade is based on six assignments, which are weighted as follows. All course assignments are to be completed individually.

Assignment	% of grade
Monthly Budget and net worth	20%
Lease versus buy	20%
Risk tolerance exercise	20%
Mutual fund prospectus analysis	20%
Weekly reflections exercise	20%
<b>Total</b>	100%

Based on the six assignments, a final letter grade will be based on the following scheme:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
<60	F

## 5. Honor Code:

Georgia Tech has an Honor Code that engages both faculty and students in a pact that they will maintain and uphold the integrity of the academic process. Students in this class are expected to adhere to the Georgia Tech Honor Code. Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please see The Georgia Institute of Technology 2015-2016 Catalog at <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu>. Refer specifically to section 18b entitled "Academic Honor Code" at <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18b.php> for the principles, policies, and procedures governing issues of academic integrity. Georgia Tech Honor Code requires that every instance of academic misconduct be reported to the Office of Student Integrity (OSI). This reporting is required even if a resolution or sanction

has been agreed upon by the professor and student without a hearing with OSI. Please keep this reporting requirement in mind at all times.

6. **Special accommodations:** Students requesting academic accommodations based on a documented disability are required to register with the Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS). Please obtain a form from the ADAPTS office and turn it in to me in the beginning of the semester. The ADAPTS Office is located in the Smithgall Student Services Building, Suite 220. The phone number is 404- 894-2563. <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/index.html>

**Week by Week Calendar:**

Topic	Week	Class session	Topic	Assignment due
5/14/2018	1	1	Course Introduction and time value of money	
5/16/2018		2	Budgeting	
5/21/2018	2	3	Home and auto decisions	Budgeting assignment due
5/23/2018		4	Life and health insurance	Buy versus rent assignment due
5/28/2018	3	5	Student debt and financing a higher degree	
5/30/2018		6	Risk and Return	
6/4/2018	4	7	Retirement accounts	Risk Tolerance exercise due
6/6/2018		8	Choosing mutual funds	
6/11/2018	5	9	Questions to ask your financial advisors	Mutual fund assignment due
6/13/2018		10	Course wrap-up/ Concluding thoughts	