The University of Texas at Tyler  
College of Business & Technology  

FINA 3315: Personal Finance  
Spring 2016  
Sections 060 (Full Distance Learning/Online)  

Instructor: Dr. Chen (Ken) Wu  
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Email: cwu@uttyler.edu (Best contact method)  
Telephone: (903) 566-7354  
Office Hours: Mondays from 5-6 pm and Tuesdays-Fridays, 10-11 AM except for holidays or posted otherwise on blackboard. Please email for appointments outside these posted hours. 

Communications with the Instructor  

I check email often on weekdays and will frequently be in my office. If you want to meet me for any reason outside of office hours shown above, please email for an appointment. For all email communications, you can expect a response within 24 hours except for those sent on holidays or between 5 pm on Friday and midnight on Sunday, when you can expect a response within 48 hours.  

Email policy: As mandated by the University, I will only send emails to your Patriot email accounts. Emails from non-Patriot email accounts will NOT be answered. 

Course Objective  

This is a survey course in personal finance and is designed to provide students with a foundation in personal finance and it assumes no prior knowledge of finance. Accordingly, the course will begin with a general overview of financial planning and budgeting and then go into depth on topics including cash management, retirement planning, investments in stocks and bonds, buying a house or renting an apartment, insurance, and income tax matters.  

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:  
• Perform personal budgeting and cash management. 
• Understand process and cost of purchasing a house and renting an apartment. 
• Explain purpose and types of insurance. 
• Explain the basics of investments. 
• Explain the basics of retirement planning. 
• Explain the basics of tax planning. 

Course Structure
The course begins with a general overview of personal financial planning and how to manage cash. Then, it introduces investments in stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Next, it examines the decision to purchase a house or rent an apartment and how to purchase the right kind and amount of insurance. Finally, it reveals some strategies to manage your income tax situation. To achieve these goals, students will be required to:

1. Watch Tegrity lectures and read Powerpoint course slides and textbook chapters.
2. Visit course Blackboard regularly.
3. Take every module quiz.

**Required Textbook and Internet Access**


**NOTE:** Some of the figures in the textbooks, especially numbers regarding income tax brackets and retirement contributions, which are subject to annual changes are slightly out of date. So when there is a conflict between information presented in the textbooks and the Powerpoint slides on a module quiz, rely on the slides because they have been updated more recently than the textbooks have been.

- Students should have basic Internet, word-processing, spreadsheet, and email skills. Frequent checking of Blackboard announcements and postings is strongly encouraged.
- Some class materials have embedded Word, Powerpoint and pdf files as attachments. Students can download Word Viewer or Powerpoint Viewer if they do not have Microsoft Word or Powerpoint installed on their computer.
Adobe Acrobat Reader is needed to read pdf files.

**Blackboard Access**

All class materials, course grades, and class announcements will be posted by Blackboard. Your account on Blackboard has already been created automatically by the Blackboard administrator. The Blackboard user name and password combination is the one you use for UT Tyler student email. For more detailed information, please visit UT Tyler’s homepage and click on the link for “Current Students” and follow the link to Blackboard. Please contact the Blackboard administrator if you have any problem accessing Blackboard. Students are required to maintain their current e-mail address with Blackboard as it uses this address to send course-related electronic communications.
If you have issues with Blackboard access that may hinder your completion of module quizzes, you must inform the instructor by email immediately. If the issue cannot be resolved by the instructor, he will ask you to contact UT Tyler’s IT Support staff immediately (even on weekends) for further assistance and get a ticket number. You must do so BEFORE noon (central daylight savings time) on Friday, May 6, 2016, the due date for all module quizzes. Claims of Blackboard access problems reported to the instructor after the passing of this deadline or without a ticket number from UT Tyler’s IT Support staff when you have been asked to obtain one will be immediately dismissed. All Blackboard-related issues are regarded as personal-level access issues except for cases of system-wide Blackboard issues reported by the university and you must get them resolved without letting them interfere with your coursework.

Ten Module Quizzes

A quiz will be given for each module that covers related topics. Each quiz will contain 20 multiple choice and/or true-or-false questions worth five points each and you will have 60 minutes (1 hour) to complete it. You are only required to complete any eight of the ten module quizzes. In particular, eight of the modules will be based on the required Kobliner book while the other two will be based on the (recommended) Edelman book. You may take more than eight module quizzes if you wish and the points earned this way will be counted as extra credit. Note there will be no other quizzes, exams or assignments in this course. You will complete the material in each module at your own pace and may take each module quiz at any time between noon (central standard time) on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 and noon (central daylight savings time) on Friday, May 6, 2016. You may do so from any place with a secure and stable internet connection. You may also take the quizzes in any order although it is recommended you follow the sequence of modules shown in the course calendar at the end of this syllabus. Note as May 6, 2016 is the last day of finals for the Spring 2016 semester, no extension of the deadline to complete module quizzes can be given. You are strongly advised to complete all module quizzes you wish to take at least three days before the noon (central daylight savings time) May 6, 2016 deadline. Please make sure you study the module material thoroughly before you begin and can devote sufficient time to complete the quiz because you must finish each quiz in one sitting so you will not be able to save a quiz and resume it later. Note that only one question will be shown at a time and you cannot go back and change the answer of a previous question. You will be able to see the answers you provided at the end of the quiz.

You are allowed two attempts for each module quiz. However, keep in mind that if you take a quiz more than once, the score used to compute your course grade will be the higher of the two scores. As an example, if you received scores of 80 and 70, respectively on the two attempts for a module quiz, then the quiz score used to compute the course grade will be 80. Also remember that the questions on the two attempts will be different because each time you try to take a quiz, Blackboard will randomly select the questions for your quiz from a pool of questions the instructor uploaded for that particular module. No one will be allowed to take any of the module quizzes more than twice for any reason except for cases of Blackboard system-wide outage as reported and documented by the University’s IT Support staff affecting both of the first two quiz attempts. Only then will a third
attempt be allowed by the instructor, on a case-by-case basis, by clearing one of the first two attempts. All other requests to clear module quiz attempts will be rejected.

All material covered in readings, Powerpoint slides and Tegrity classes are considered fair game for module quizzes. You are advised to begin each module by watching the brief Tegrity class introducing the topic and then read the Powerpoint slides and the assigned chapter(s) in course text for a more in-depth understanding of the topic. But Tegrity classes and Powerpoint slides are no substitute for reading the text. In fact, **every module quiz will consist of questions randomly selected from a pool of questions primarily based on the reading of the textbooks so it is crucial you read the chapter(s) assigned very carefully and study accordingly.** Note that because students take module quizzes at different times, each student will face a different set of questions drawn randomly from the pool of quiz questions created for each module. Note that the extra credit modules from the Edelman book are strictly based on only the assigned chapters from that book so there is no other material in the form of Powerpoint slides or Tegrity classes for these modules.

When seeking email assistance from the instructor on a module quiz for any reason, you must clearly state (1) the course/section you are enrolled in, (2) the module quiz where you encountered difficulties and (3) a brief description of the difficulty. Any email missing any of the three items listed above will be ignored. You will be asked to provide the missing information by the instructor and no action will be taken until it is received.

See the section below titled “Appeal” to understand how to appeal when you suspect a grading error has taken place or when you seek explanations of questions you missed on a quiz.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Course Information Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800</td>
<td>Module Quizzes (Only eight are required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>825</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90.00% or above  → A  
80.00% to 89.99%   → B  
70.00% to 79.99%   → C  
60.00% to 69.99%   → D  
59.99% or below    → F  

Your course grade is computed using the following procedure (so you can use it to monitor your performance in the course at any time): (1) Points earned from Course Information Quiz (see below) and all module quizzes (including extra credit ones) taken will be summed, (2) The total number of points earned as computed in previous step will be
divided by 825 to obtain a percentage. (3) The percentage obtained in previous step will be converted into a letter grade according to the grading scale shown above.

Course Information Quiz

This is a 15-minute multiple-choice quiz designed to test your knowledge of the course requirements as explained in the syllabus. As an example, you may be asked how many module quizzes are available and how many points they are worth as well as other course policies. It will be given via blackboard only between noon (central standard time) Tuesday, January 19, 2016 and noon (central standard time) Tuesday, January 26, 2016. You may earn up to 50 points on this quiz and anything above 25 is counted as extra credit.

All module quiz policies as described above apply to the Course Information Quiz. In particular, you are only allowed two attempts and the higher of the two scores (if you choose to take it more than once) will count. Third attempts will only be allowed if system-wide Blackboard issues interrupted both quiz attempts.

Extra Credit

Students may be given opportunities to earn extra credit beyond extra module quizzes at the instructor’s discretion. Some possible sources of extra credit include online activities as well as other personal finance-related extracurricular activities to be announced on blackboard.

WARNING: Since you will be given ample opportunities to earn extra credit throughout the course, attempts to change your grade at the end of the semester by asking the instructor to “round up” or by asking for further extra credit will be ignored.

College of Business Statement of Ethics

The ethical problems facing local, national and global business communities are an ever-increasing challenge. It is essential the College of Business and Technology help students prepare for lives of personal integrity, responsible citizenship, and public service. In order to accomplish these goals, both students and faculty of the College of Business and Technology at The University of Texas at Tyler will:

- Ensure honesty in all behavior, never cheating or knowingly giving false information.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect for all students and faculty regardless of race, creed, gender, age or religion.
- Develop an environment conducive to learning.
- Encourage and support student organizations and activities.
- Protect property and personal information from theft, damage and misuse.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner both on and off campus.

Academic Dishonesty Statement
The faculty expects from students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment of the award of a degree, and/or the submission, as one’s own work of material that is not one’s own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

University regulations require the instructor to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. In the event disciplinary measures are imposed on the student, it becomes part of the students’ official school records. Also, please note that the handbook obligates you to report all observed cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor.

**Appeal**

Quizzes can only be reviewed with the instructor in his office by appointment. You may request to see the correct answers of questions you missed on quizzes by email only if coming to the instructor’s office poses a hardship. This is to ensure the integrity of the quizzes since quiz questions for all students are drawn from a common pool and to prevent sharing of answers by students who took quizzes earlier than others.

**Students Rights and Responsibilities**

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: [http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php](http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php)

**Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at [http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar](http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar).

Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are
eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

**State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

**Disability Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.

**Student Absence due to Religious Observance**
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

**Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**Social Security and FERPA Statement**

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

**Syllabus Revisions**

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement via blackboard with adequate time for students to make the necessary coursework adjustments.
# Tentative Fin 3315 Course Calendar

**Spring 2016**

Note: K refers to the required course textbook by Kobliner and E refers to the recommended course textbook by Edelman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Key Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/18</td>
<td>Syllabus/Course Info Quiz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Info Quiz (1/19 - 1/26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overview of Personal Finance</td>
<td>K Ch. 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Debt Management</td>
<td>K Ch. 3</td>
<td>Census Date (2/1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Debt Management</td>
<td>K Ch. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cash Management/Banking</td>
<td>K Ch. 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Investing</td>
<td>K Ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Investing</td>
<td>K Ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Retirement Planning</td>
<td>K Ch. 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Retirement Planning</td>
<td>K Ch. 6</td>
<td>Last Day to Withdraw (3/21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Buying House/Renting Apt.</td>
<td>K Ch. 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>K Ch. 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>K Ch. 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Income Tax</td>
<td>K Ch. 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4/25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Packaged Investment Products</td>
<td>E Chs. 20-28</td>
<td>Deadline for all Module Quizzes: Noon (5/6/16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Best Financial Strategies</td>
<td>E Chs. 47,51,52,54,55</td>
<td>Noon (5/6/16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: All module quizzes must be taken between noon (1/19/16) and noon (5/6/16)

Note 2: All times are Central Standard or Central Daylight Savings Time