

Syllabus

1. Course name in Swedish	Aktuella frågor inom finansiering
2. Course name in English	Current topics in Finance
3. Higher Education Credits	3
4. Education level	Undergraduate
5. Main field of study	Business Administration
6. Syllabus valid from (semester)	ST2016
7. Approved by	Board of Education
8. Date of official approval	-
9. Adopted by	Samhällsvetenskapliga fakultetsnämnden
10. Date of adoption	-
11. Date of revision	-
12. Revised by	-

13. Justification for creating a new course

Not necessary to fill in.

14. Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

- 60 ECTS in Business Administration
- Familiarity with the following concepts from finance and statistics will be an advantage: rate of return, compound interest, random variable, expected value

15. Course content

Perhaps the greatest contemporary challenge to the economic well-being of citizens in developed countries is the shifting of responsibility for managing personal savings from governments and employers to households at a time when financial markets are more complex than ever. The course will provide students with basic concepts and tools to navigate this challenge and become more conscious consumers of financial products.

The content of the course can be organized in two main parts.

Lessons within: this part will focus on how personal risk tolerance should shape investment decisions, how to set investment goals and how to identify and protect

oneself from behavioral biases.

Lessons without: this part will discuss key insights from more than 60 years of research on financial markets and how they can be put to practical use in the context of managing personal savings.

16. Learning outcomes

Intended Learning Outcomes

The overall aim is to prepare students to invest in financial markets and develop an intuition for what (likely) works and what does not. Given the quantitative nature of investing, developing some mathematical skills is necessary but will be kept to a minimum. Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

1. Understand what is required to successfully save for retirement, what is the role of financial markets in the process, and what are the pitfalls; Define the following concepts and their implications for investing: risk (tolerance and capacity), active and passive management, market efficiency; Describe main behavioral biases and how they affect decisions

Skills and abilities

2. Calculate and compare the return and risk of different investments over different time periods; Determine the pay-offs of exemplary structured products; Build a simple retirement savings program

Judgement and approach

3. Evaluate different investment solution depending on the specific needs of investor; Discuss the limits of market efficiency and reasons for potential inefficiencies

17. Education

The course consists of a combination of 8 lectures and 4 individual homework assignments. In addition, the course requires a certain portion of self-study on the part of students. Assessment for the course will be continuous and is carried throughout the different activities of the course.

The course workload is 80 hours equivalent to 3 ECTS (40 hours per week equivalent to 1,5 ECTS).

Lectures: 16 hours

Homework: 4 hours

Self-study: 60 hours

The language of instruction is English.

Please note that all teaching and learning activities - such as lectures, seminars, assignments and assessment tasks – are carried out in English.

18. Forms of examination

Assessment for the course will be continuous and is carried throughout the different course activities. Each assessment task is weighted in relation to its importance in the overall assessment of the course. The student's results from the different assessment tasks are added up to a total course score that will then translate into the final grade for the course.

Assessment tasks

The course contains the following weighted assessment tasks:

1. Individual final examination (take-home): assesses intended learning outcomes 1, and 3; constitutes 80% of total course points.
2. Homework: assesses intended learning outcomes 1 and 2; constitutes 20% of total course points (5% for each of the 4 homework assignments).

Grading

After completion of the course, students will receive grades on a scale related to the intended learning outcomes of the course. Passing grades are A, B, C, D and E. Failing grades are Fx and F. A grade Fx can be completed for a grade E.

A course comprises 0–100 course points. Receiving a final passing grade requires at least 50 course points. The scale for the final grade is tied to fixed score intervals: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; E: 50-59; Fx: 45-49; F: less than 45. The grades correspond to the total score points a student obtains (over a total of 100) for all the weighted assessment tasks combined as part of the continuous assessment for the course.

Each assessment task is awarded 0–100 points. The score for a single assessment task is the number of points multiplied by its percentage weight, and the combined total of score points for all weighted assessment tasks for the course are added up to a final score between 0 and 100 which then translates into a corresponding final course grade between A and F.

Assessment task 1, the final examination, is assessed on a 100-point scale.

Assessment task 2, each of the 4 homework assignments, is assessed on a 100-point scale in two intervals:

- Completed: 100 points.
- Not completed: 0 points.

The student is responsible for completing the course's assessment tasks: that a sufficient amount of course points is earned and a passing course grade is obtained. The course's final assessment task can be taken twice: 1) during the course's first scheduled occasion; and, if a passing result (at least 50 course points) was not achieved at the first occasion, 2) at the course's second, scheduled occasion. All other assessment tasks are offered once during the course.

A passing grade (A–E) in the course is obtained when a student has achieved at least 50 course points.

A failing grade (Fx or F) in the course is obtained when a student has not achieved at

least 50 course points:

- If 45–49 course points are achieved, a grade Fx is obtained, which can be completed for a grade E within 3 semester weeks after receiving instructions from the course director. If a complementary task is not completed within this time limit, and the course's two final assessment tasks have been accomplished, the course grade Fx is confirmed, implying that the student must re-register for the course and that previously acquired course points are forfeited. Note that first-time registered students have priority access to the seminar groups.
- If less than 45 course points are achieved, a grade F is obtained, implying that the entire course must be retaken and that previously acquired course points are forfeited.

Re-registration implies that:

- first-time registered students have priority access to the course's group registration;
- the final assessment task can be re-assessed without attendance at any of the course's other learning activities and without points from the course's other assessment tasks accredited.

Students receiving a passing grade may not retake the final examination or complete a previously not completed assessment task to attain a higher grade. A passing grade may not be turned into a failing grade upon the request of a student.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are designed as overall assessments, combined qualitative descriptions of what the student is expected to do in order to demonstrate how well the course's learning outcomes are achieved. The assessment criteria are based upon the general abilities as expressed in the degree objectives of the Higher Education Ordinance (appendix 2, System of Qualifications). The list of abilities below is a compilation of these degree objectives. To pass the course (grade E) students should demonstrate general ability to:

- recall, understand and explain course content, the course subject and its scientific basis and methodology;
- apply course content;
- critically analyze course content;
- problematize course content;
- relate course content to current social issues;

The following assessment criteria are used to decide to what extent students have demonstrated these abilities and hence fulfil the course's intended learning outcomes, whereby a grading decision can be made. A higher grade-level presupposes the abilities at lower levels.

A (Excellent)

The student demonstrates ability to evaluate and relate to the content of the course from a comprehensive, critically reflective perspective, as well as to transfer and apply insights in new, meaningful contexts.

B (Very Good)

The student demonstrates ability to, from an overarching and coherent perspective of the field, understand and use concepts to explain how different aspects of the course relate to each other, interconnect and become meaningful.

C (Good)

The student demonstrates ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course from several well-developed but mainly independent perspectives.

D (Satisfactory)

The student demonstrates satisfactory ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that, albeit in-depth and elaborate, is decidedly one-dimensional.

E (Sufficient)

The student demonstrates sufficient ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that is decidedly one-dimensional.

Fx (Fail)

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts.

F (Fail)

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display major flaws, overall or in significant parts.

19. Course literature and other teaching material

Required Reading:

Malkiel, Burton; A Random Walk Down Wall Street: The Time-Tested Strategy for Successful Investing (Eleventh Edition); W.W. Norton & Company; 2015

Recommended Reading:

Kahneman, Daniel; Thinking, Fast and Slow; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2011

Taleb, Nassim; Fooled by Randomness: The Hidden Role of Chance in Life and in the Markets; Random House; 2004

20. Transition arrangements

If the course is discontinued, or its contents are substantially altered, students have the right to be examined according to this syllabus once per semester for three further semesters.

21. Restrictions

This course may not be included in a degree together with a course, taken in Sweden or elsewhere, of identical or partially similar content.

22. Additional information

