

ECON 387A Financial Economics
Spring 2026
Olin Hall 304
M/W: 1:20 - 2:35PM

Instructor: Matt D'Urso (*he/him*)

Email: mdurso@colgate.edu

Office: Persson Hall 228

Office hours: Mon: 10:30AM - Noon, Fri: 1:30 - 3:00PM, and by appointment

1 Preamble

Textbook: *Corporate Finance, 2025 Edition*, by Ross, Westerfield, Jaffe, Jordan, and Shue. Textbook is recommended, but not required.

Prerequisites: ECON 251, ECON 252, and ECON 375 (ECON 375 may be taken concurrently).

2 Grading

The Econ Dept has collectively decided that the class average will be a B+ (3.3). Standard letter grade margins will likely be sufficient; I will notify you otherwise. I will not curve down.

Any grading disputes must be submitted to me in writing within 1 week of the assignment date. In your dispute, you must: 1) clearly state how your answer compares to the correct answer that I provided, and 2) state exactly how many more points you think you should receive and why. I will then regrade your entire exam with this in mind. *No verbal disputes will be accepted.*

2.1 Midterm Exams: 40% (20% each, x2 exams)

There will be 2 in-class midterm exams that correspond to the first two sections of the course. Make-ups are only allowed for extreme situations, and must be taken *before* the scheduled exam. You are responsible for material covered in lecture, discussion, exercises, problem sets and readings. Tentative midterm dates (depending on how fast we cover material) are:

1. Monday, March 9th
2. Monday, April 13th

2.2 Final Exam: 35%

The *cumulative* final exam will be on [date and place]. You can find the final exam schedule here: [University-wide Final Exam Schedule](#). You are responsible for material covered in lecture, discussion, exercises, problem sets, and readings.

2.3 Group Project: 20%

In groups of 2-4 people you will give a 12-15min presentation in class on a key financing question that we discuss, using evidence from U.S. firms. Further details will be found in the rubric on Moodle. Slides must be emailed to me no later than the day before your presentation. Small edits may still be made after sending them to me.

2.4 Homework: 5%

Homework will be assigned through Moodle and is graded on completion of all questions. However, there will be no extensions or excused homework assignments.

2.5 Extra Credit

There are only two potential sources of extra credit and I will not provide any other opportunities. First, there *may be* an extra credit question on an exam. These are optional questions; you will not lose points for an incorrect answer. The second is on the Group Project. If the slides you present are coded in LaTeX, then along with your slides, send me your source code and if it compiles without issue, you will receive an extra grade percentage point on your project grade. The code does not have to be “elegant” because mine isn’t; it just has to work.

3 Important Information

3.1 Academic Support

If you need help with identifying and managing factors that may enhance your learning you should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You can also reach out to the Center for Learning, Teaching, and Research (cltr@colgate.edu). The CLTR has staff available to work with students on developing strategies and study skills to enhance learning. Their services are available free of charge to all students.

3.2 The Writing & Speaking Center

All writers and speakers benefit from the opportunity to talk about their ideas and to receive constructive feedback on their essays and presentations. I encourage you to make use of [The Writing and Speaking Center](#) in Lathrop Hall 208 (or call: (315) 228-6085), a free resource for all Colgate students that is staffed by friendly, well-qualified Peer Writing and Speaking Consultants from a range of disciplinary and linguistic backgrounds. You may make up to two, 45-minute appointments every week using the Writing and Speaking Center’s online scheduling app. Writing and Speaking Consultants can help you understand assignment expectations; brainstorm genre-appropriate and rhetorically effective topics; develop effective organizational frameworks; summarize, synthesize, and cite sources; implement peer or professor feedback; read for grammar and style concerns; and

build confidence as a writer and speaker. All meetings are private, and you may visit at any stage of your process, from clarifying your initial ideas to polishing a final draft or presentation.

3.3 Accessibility Accommodations or Adjustments:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Colgate University is committed to ensuring comprehensive educational access and adjustments for all registered students seeking to meet course requirements and fully participate in all University programs and activities. Students with documented disabilities or conditions that may in any way interfere with learning are encouraged to request these services by registering with the [Office of Student Disability Services](#). Roughly one third of all students are registered for such adjustments. For information related to these services or to schedule an appointment, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (osds@colgate.edu). Please be aware it is the student's responsibility to schedule accommodations that may be needed and these services book quickly.

3.4 Title IX:

A fundamental part of the Colgate community is the assurance that all members can study, live, and work together in a community characterized by equal opportunity, inclusiveness, safety, and mutual respect. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources here: [Non-Discrimination Response Policy](#).

3.5 Taking Care of Yourself:

Stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns, death, and alcohol and drug use among the top ten health impediments to academic performance. Students experiencing personal problems or situational crises are encouraged to contact: [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) or at (315-228-7385) and pressing #2 when prompted. Half of all students will have used these services at some point during their time here. Walk-in hours are Monday-Friday from 9AM-noon and 1:30-4:30PM. You can schedule a follow-up appointment or request a specific counselor moving forward. If walk-in hours do not fit your schedule, please send a message to the counseling center through their Wellness Portal found on the website. There is also a range of [Health and Wellness](#) services available. Group Therapy sessions are often overlooked by students, despite remaining an effective way to get you where you need to be.

Specific to sexual support, [Haven Services](#) offers a wide range of resources designed to help in any way you may want. All student information is to be treated as confidential, including the fact that the student receives (or previously received) any services through these offices.

3.6 Religious Observance

Students will not be penalized for missing class, assignments, or exams due to religious observance. If you plan to observe a religious holiday that may affect your coursework, please notify me as early as possible, ideally within the first two weeks of the semester, so we can arrange appropriate accommodations. For a list of recognized religious holidays and the university's observance policy, visit: [Colgate Religious Holidays](#). Please contact me if there are any other observances not listed here and I will do my best to make the needed arrangements.

3.7 Academic Dishonesty:

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. I expect that all students have understood the University's [Academic Honor Code](#), and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Colgate University defines academic dishonesty as any attempt to misrepresent one's performance on any academic exercise submitted for evaluation. In any situation where a student questions the appropriateness of representing a work as their own, it is the student's responsibility to raise the question with the instructor. Ignorance of University policy concerning academic dishonesty shall not be a defense in any University Student Conduct Board proceeding. Any form of potential academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the standards established by Colgate University. Students must recognize that failure to follow these established rules and guidelines, including the ones found in this syllabus may constitute academic dishonesty. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the University Disciplinary Officer.

3.7.1 Artificial Intelligence

Generative AI refers to artificial intelligence technologies, such as ChatGPT, that can draw on a large amount of training data to create new written, visual, or audio content. Due to the specificity of content and skills that we seek to develop in this class, you may not use AI tools in this course. Using such tools for any purposes will violate Colgate's academic integrity policy. Please contact me if you have any concerns regarding AI work.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Syllabus subject to change throughout the semester. I will always make an announcement and replace older syllabi with the most up-to-date version.