FINM3008
Portfolio Construction

Portfolio Construction is a capstone elective that draws on previously studied investment principles, theories and techniques. The objective of this course is to enable students to synthesize the acquired financial theories and knowledge in the context of portfolio construction and asset allocation. It focuses on gaps in theory and how they can be managed in practice. Examples include challenges/realities in estimating and implementing portfolio optimization programs, role of liquidity, and importance of plan governance. It covers topics such as types of investors and their objectives; dimensions of risk; asset allocation; the nature and role of various asset classes (equity, fixed income, alternative assets, FX); building multi-manager portfolios, and implementation issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Delivery</th>
<th>On Campus.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prerequisites</td>
<td>FINM2001, FINM2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompatible Courses</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Convener</td>
<td>Dr Anna von Reibnitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>6125 4626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anna.vonreibnitz@anu.edu.au">anna.vonreibnitz@anu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Location</td>
<td>Room 4.39, CBE Building 26C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation hours</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Interests</td>
<td>Funds management; market efficiency; asset pricing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student administrator</td>
<td>Adriana Longhitano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone: (02) 6125 6189</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:adriana.longhitano@anu.edu.au">adriana.longhitano@anu.edu.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutor(s)</td>
<td>Tutor information will be provided on Wattle</td>
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SEMESTER 2
2018
COURSE OVERVIEW

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the requirements for this course, students should have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Understand and implement portfolio construction at the overall plan level, taking into account investor objectives and the practical challenges of implementation;
2. Appreciate the use and limitations of portfolio theory;
3. Describe the main characteristics of key asset classes, and the role they each play within a balanced portfolio;
4. Communicate complex portfolio structures and strategies to a diverse audience; and,
5. Work independently and collaboratively to collect, process, interpret and communicate the outcomes of financial problems.

Assessment Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Date for Return of Assessment</th>
<th>Linked Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mid-Semester Examination (Redeemable)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Week 6 or 7, subject to the schedule of the examination office.</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>LO1, LO2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3.00pm Wednesday 17th October (Week 11)</td>
<td>TBA (before the final exam)</td>
<td>LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Final Examination</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>(or 75% if mid-semester exam is redeemed)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>LO1, LO2, LO3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research-Led Teaching
Students undertaking this course will be taught fundamental skills in Finance that will be applied to many real life applications. The course materials draw on recent concepts, issues and practical information on portfolio construction and asset allocation from various sources, including academic papers, industry research publications and CFA materials. Students are required to read and understand these materials and apply their understanding to tutorial tasks designed to reflect a real life environment.

Feedback Staff
Feedback
Students will be given feedback in the following forms in this course: written feedback and verbal comments.
**Student Feedback**

ANU is committed to the demonstration of educational excellence and regularly seeks feedback from students. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Student Experience of Learning Support (SELS) surveys. The feedback given in these surveys is anonymous and provides the Colleges, University Education Committee and Academic Board with opportunities to recognise excellent teaching, and opportunities for improvement.


**Policies**

ANU has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University’s academic standards, and implement them. You can find the University’s education policies and an explanatory glossary at: [http://policies.anu.edu.au/](http://policies.anu.edu.au/)

Students are expected to have read the Academic Misconduct Rule before the commencement of their course.

Other key policies include:
- Student Assessment (Coursework)
- Student Surveys and Evaluations

**Reading Lists**

The Course Reading List will be provided on Wattle. The list is divided into ‘examinable’ and ‘supplementary’ readings. Examinable readings may be directly tested during the mid-semester or final examinations. Supplementary materials are provided for additional information and/or assistance in preparation of the assignment or tutorials, and will not be directly tested during the mid-semester or final examination beyond the extent covered in the lectures, workshops or tutorials. Additional course readings may be made available during the semester. Students should check Wattle to ensure they are using an up-to-date reading list.

Readings will come from a range of sources, including journal and industry articles, websites and a textbook (purchase optional). With the exception of the textbook, all readings will be provided on Wattle. Examinable readings from the textbook will be made available on Wattle. For supplementary readings from the textbook, copies of the book will be available for short-term loan at Chifley library, for those students who choose not to purchase the textbook. The textbook is Stewart, S., Piros, C. and Heisler, J., *Running Money: Professional Portfolio Management*, McGraw Hill, 2009 [denoted ‘SPH’].

**Technology, software and equipment**

The tutorial exercises are designed using Microsoft Excel. Students are expected to have a good command of Excel formulas, data manipulation and analysis tools in the context of portfolio construction at the end of the course.
Examination material or equipment

The mid-semester exam will be closed book with no formula sheet. Students will be allowed a one-sided A4 page of notes. The final exam will be closed book with no formula sheet. Students will be allowed a two-sided A4 page of notes. Further details will be available on Wattle closer to the exam dates.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Workshop Topic*</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course introduction</td>
<td>No workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overview of portfolio management</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Excel functions and formulas; arithmetic vs geometric returns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dimensions of risk</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Asset allocation: Theory and practice Mean-variance model</td>
<td>Excel “solver”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Asset allocation: Asset assumptions</td>
<td>Asset assumptions continued</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Asset allocation: Additional methods Alpha and Beta</td>
<td>Mid-semesterm exam preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Traditional assets: Equities</td>
<td>No workshop: lecturer will be available during workshop hours for exam consultation</td>
<td>Target for mid-semester exam (week 6 or 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Traditional assets: Fixed income</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Alternative assets: Overview</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Property Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Alternative assets: Hedge funds</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Private equity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Commodities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Global investing and currency hedging</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Portfolio structure within asset classes:</td>
<td>Investment applications</td>
<td>Assignment to be submitted by 3.00pm on Wednesday 17th October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment process and style</td>
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<td>Building portfolios of managers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Active versus passive</td>
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ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

The ANU is using Turnitin to enhance student citation and referencing techniques, and to assess assignment submissions as a component of the University’s approach to managing Academic Integrity. For additional information regarding Turnitin please visit the ANU Online website.

Students may choose not to submit assessment items through Turnitin. In this instance you will be required to submit, alongside the assessment item itself, copies of all references included in the assessment item.

As a further academic integrity control, students may be selected for a 15 minute individual oral examination of their written assessment submissions.

Any student identified, either during the current semester or in retrospect, as having used ghost writing services will be investigated under the University’s Academic Misconduct Rule.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment Task 1: Mid-Semester Exam
Details of task:
- This exam is redeemable for students.
- The exam will be closed book with no formula sheet. Students will be allowed a one-sided A4 page of notes.
- Students will need to review and revise material covered in Weeks 1 to 5 (inclusive).
- A mixture of theory and practical questions will be asked.
- More details regarding the exam will be provided as the exam approaches.
- Value: The mid-semestar exam is redeemable, and therefore will count towards either 0% or 25% of a student’s overall course grade.

Assessment Task 2: Assignment
Details of task:
- The assignment will involve writing a report that provides portfolio construction advice. The current intention is that the assignment will be completed in groups of 4-6 students, although this is not final. All students must be in the
same class cohort (i.e. FINM3008 or FINM8016) The assignment details will be outlined during the semester, with the plan being to do so by week 5.

- **Assessment Rubric:** The assignment will be graded out of 25 marks. All students in the one team will be awarded the same assignment grade, with no adjustments. Further details will be made available when the assignment is outlined, with the plan being to do so by week 5.
  - **Value:** 25%
  - **Estimated return date:** prior to the final exam

**Assessment Tasks: Examinations**

**Mid-Semester Exam:**

See information provided under “**Assessment Task 1: Mid-Semester Exam**” above.
**Final Exam:**
The final exam will be closed book with no formula sheet. Students will be allowed a two-sided A4 page of notes. The final examination is worth 50% (or 75% if the mid-semester exam is redeemed) of the overall course grade. A mixture of theory and practical questions will be asked. Students will need to review and revise all examinable material pertaining to the course. More details will be provided as the exam approaches.

**Assignment submission**
Assignments should be submitted by 3.00pm on Wednesday 17th October.

**Online Submission:** Assignments are submitted using the course Wattle site. Hard copy or email submission is only acceptable by the approval of the lecturer before the assignment is due on a case by case basis. Only one submission is required from each group. Please keep a copy of the assignment for your records.

**Important:** to correctly record assignment marks in the Gradebook, each student must sign up for a Group on Wattle, including one-person groups.

**Extensions and penalties**
*Extensions:* Extensions and late submission of assessment pieces are covered by the Student Assessment (Coursework) Policy and Procedure.

The Course Convener may grant extensions for assessment pieces that are not examinations or take-home examinations. If you need an extension, you must request it in writing on or before the due date. If you have documented and appropriate medical evidence that demonstrates you were not able to request an extension on or before the due date, you may be able to request it after the due date. Assignment extensions will only be granted if the following conditions are satisfied:
1. A student is unable to complete the assignment by the due time as a result of unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.
2. Evidence is provided to this effect.

*Penalties:* No submission of assessment tasks without an extension after the due date will be permitted. If an assessment task is not submitted by the due date, a mark of 0 will be awarded.

**Returning assignments**
Feedback on the assignment will be returned via Wattle, before the final exam.

**Resubmission of assignments**
No resubmission of assignments is accepted.

**Referencing requirements**
References must be acknowledged and included in a reference list where information or opinions provided by others are used or relied upon. Consistent Harvard referencing style is required.
Scaling
Your final mark for the course will be based on the raw marks allocated for each of your assessment items. However, your final mark may not be the same number as produced by that formula, as marks may be scaled. Any scaling applied will preserve the rank order of raw marks (i.e. if your raw mark exceeds that of another student, then your scaled mark will exceed or be the same as the scaled mark of that student), and may be either up or down.

Privacy Notice
The ANU has made a number of third party, online, databases available for students to use. Use of each online database is conditional on student end users first agreeing to the database licensor’s terms of service and/or privacy policy. Students should read these carefully.

In some cases student end users will be required to register an account with the database licensor and submit personal information, including their: first name; last name; ANU email address; and other information.

In cases where student end users are asked to submit ‘content’ to a database, such as an assignment or short answers, the database licensor may only use the student’s ‘content’ in accordance with the terms of service – including any (copyright) licence the student grants to the database licensor.

Any personal information or content a student submits may be stored by the licensor, potentially offshore, and will be used to process the database service in accordance with the licensors terms of service and/or privacy policy.

If any student chooses not to agree to the database licensor’s terms of service or privacy policy, the student will not be able to access and use the database. In these circumstances students should contact their lecturer to enquire about alternative arrangements that are available.

Tutorial Registration
Tutorial signup for this course will be done via the Wattle website. Detailed information about signup times will be provided on Wattle or during your first lecture. When tutorials are available for enrolment, follow these steps:

1. Log on to Wattle, and go to the course site.
2. Click on the link “Tutorial enrolment”.
3. On the right of the screen, click on the tab “Become Member of ……” for the tutorial class you wish to enter.
4. Confirm your choice.

If you need to change your enrolment, you will be able to do so by clicking on the tab “Leave group…” and then re-enrol in another group. You will not be able to enrol in groups that have reached their maximum number. Please note that enrolment in ISIS must be finalised for you to have access to Wattle.
**Important note:** on-campus tutorials will be held *fortnightly*, with students registering to attend tutorials in one of:

- Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10; or
- Weeks 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11

These tutorials will be linked to a series of weekly online videos designed to guide students through excel analysis, in which the topics discussed in the course are put into practice using real data. Students are therefore also expected to watch these online videos and complete the associated excel analysis in the weeks in which they are provided.

**SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

The University offers a number of support services for students. Information on these is available online from [http://students.anu.edu.au/studentlife/](http://students.anu.edu.au/studentlife/)