

Overview of Finance Concentration & Potential Career Paths

What is Finance?

Finance is a functional area of business and economics that deals with raising, allocating, and managing funds by firms, households and individuals. Important sub-areas of finance include corporate finance and investments.

Corporate finance is concerned with optimally raising and allocating funds among competing investment projects, formulating dividend policy, and managing working capital for the purpose of maximizing the firm value. Investment is concerned with (i) how to optimally allocate savings across different financial securities with different risk/return characteristics to maximize the investor's expected utility, and (ii) how securities are priced in equilibrium.

The goal of the finance area is to foster a vibrant intellectual environment in which faculty members produce high quality research and impart excellent instruction to undergraduate students.

Finance Career Opportunities – Please see the document titled “Career in Finance” included in the finance section of this binder or go to <http://www.fma.org/Student/CareersinFinance/CIFIntro.htm>.

- Most finance courses offered in the Scheller College of Business prepare students for Corporate Finance & Investments careers. The average starting salary for finance graduates at the Scheller College of Business is approximately \$55,000

Organizations to join / Habits to get into

- The GT Student Foundation Investments Committee: <http://www.gtsf.gatech.edu/>
 - This club gives students the opportunity to manage a \$1 million dollar equity portfolio. You can join the club as a first year student. Past club members have gone on to jobs at Goldman Sachs, BCG, and Deutsche Bank.
- Undergraduate Financial Management Association: <http://gtfma.wordpress.com/>
- Executive Round Table: <http://www.gtert.org/>
- Begin reading the Wall Street Journal on a daily basis.

Concentration Electives

The order in which finance concentration electives are taken matters due to the quantitative nature of finance interviews.

Group A – 4 required courses for finance concentration

MGT 3076: Investments

MGT 3079: MGT of Financial Institutions - *Recommended to take this course during senior year*

MGT 4070: International Finance

MGT 4067: Financial Markets and Structures - *Recommended to take this course during senior year*

Group B – Select two electives to complete concentration

MGT 3075: Security Valuation* – *Faculty recommend this course for junior year*

MGT 4026: Financial Reporting and Analysis

MGT 4072: Entrepreneurial Finance

MGT 3084: Derivative Securities

MGT 4066: Corporate Restructuring* – *Faculty recommend this course for junior year*

MGT 4068: Fixed Income

MGT 4803: Real Estate Development Fundamentals

***Finance internship and job interviews are knowledge based. It is important to take fundamental finance courses early in the academic program to ensure interview preparation. Students interested in finance should**

take ACCT 2101 fall of sophomore year, MGT 3062 spring of sophomore year, and concentration electives junior and senior year (if not earlier).

**Concentration electives are subject to change. Please go to <http://scheller.gatech.edu> for the most update list of electives.

Specific Career Path Information / Professional Certifications

- Internship Experience
 - Internship experience is a critical step towards earning a fulltime job in finance. Internship experiences should directly relate to career interests. For example, a student planning to pursue a career in investment banking, should seek out an investment banking internship opportunities.
- Networking
 - Network with senior students and faculty.
- Interviewing in Finance
 - Finance interviews for both internships and full-time jobs are knowledge based. The company will ask very specific financial related questions in order to gain insight to the candidate's knowledge of the field. A good resource is *Heard on the Street: Quantitative Questions from Wall Street Job Interviews* by Timothy Falcon Crack.
- Chartered Financial Analysis (CFA): <https://www.cfainstitute.org>
 - As an undergraduate, consider taking the level 1 exams. While additional exams and work experience are required to become a CFA, progress towards completing the program as an undergraduate student will be valuable.
 - It takes around 200 hours to study for the level 1 exam, which should be taken during the senior year. It is recommended that you register for the exam during spring of junior year and plan to take the exam spring of senior year.
 - The CFA Institute offers scholarships for the program:
<http://www.cfainstitute.org/programs/cfaprogram/scholarships/Pages/index.aspx>

Finance, Coursework and Companies

- Math 1501 and MATH 1502 are recommended for all finance concentration students.
- Companies will review transcripts to see grades in other courses such as Computer Science.
- Take advantage of opportunities to take excel courses. While these courses may cost extra, they are cost effective given the value of the skill.

Additional Coursework Opportunities for Finance

- Undergraduate
 - While the finance faculty recommend taking as many finance electives as possible, below are a few other options to compliment your finance concentration.
 - Math Minor – Finance is heavily quantitative. A solid background in Math and Statistics is very important.
 - Computer Science Minor – Certain jobs in the financial sector (portfolio manager, investment banking) require significant programming skills.
 - Certificate in either Accounting, Operations and Supply Chain Management, or Information and Technology Management