

Finance 437BH: Portfolio Management Seminar (JH 2228)

****Enrollment By Permission Only****

Prof. G. Michael Phillips

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This is an honors class. This will be a very intense, hands-on, seminar about portfolio assessment, securities selection, and portfolio creation. There will be numerous projects, class presentations, and writing assignments. The class is being conducted in the Financial Planning and Investment Laboratory and will make extensive use of databases and analytical software. There may also be several guest speakers discussing different industries, different aspects of security selection, different ways to manage portfolios, and/or career opportunities in wealth management.

You will be part of a team that will make real decisions regarding the investment of real money. Over \$2,000,000 of real money.

The class will not meet every week. Some weeks you will have group assignments and should use class time to meet as a group and do your assigned tasks. This may involve extensive library work, Internet research, and spreadsheet analysis.

There will be no formal exams but there will be many opportunities to demonstrate your knowledge either with in-class discussion or formal projects done between classes. You will also need to write a summary memo each week describing what you thought/did/learned that week as well as several “special topic” memos. These are all turned in on the www.BoringFinance.com (or www.ProfMike.com) website.

There will also be an opportunity for your group members to assess your contributions to the various group exercises and this will also contribute significantly to your class participation grade (and vice versa).

Please note that each class begins promptly and that punctual attendance is expected.

I expect honors students to be prepared. There should be no “passive” students. Your grade will not be based on how well your stock selections perform but rather how well you do the various assignments, how prepared you are for class, and how well you participate particularly when there are guest speakers. **Your course grade will be the *lesser* of your grades based on your analysis, your writing, your presentations, and your class participation.**

I expect a high level of performance from the class. I also expect we'll have a lot of fun and learn quite a few things along the way.

Various assignments will be given on a week to week basis. **There is a required text: "The Five Rules for Successful Stock Investing" (Wiley, 2004).** I do not necessarily agree with everything in the book but it provides an interesting foundation for discussion. You should read this as soon as you can. **There will be other handouts and readings provided as PDF or other format files for download on the class website (see below).**

There will be an "online" area for the class at www.profmike.com (or, equivalently, www.BoringFinance.com) which will be used for distributing materials and sometimes for turning in assignments. You'll need to register for a free account at www.profmike.com (or, equivalently, www.BoringFinance.com) and “Join” Fin437BH.

Besides web-browsing, you will be required to use your computer on a regular basis. We will be using the Laboratory computers almost every week. Some of the work you may choose to do outside of class using other computers. I will have you use several bits of software that are designed to work on a Windows platform. If you do not have access to Windows, there might be alternatives but it would likely be better to find access to Windows. I will also expect that you will have Excel installed on your computer.

Normally I'll be on campus before each class, perhaps in my office or perhaps at the coffee shop. Feel free to stop by and chat about finance, investing, life, the universe, and everything. The rest of the time, the best way to contact me is via email. Please put "Fin437BH" in the email subject so that it won't get lost in the middle of all the other hundreds of emails I usually receive each day.