

Finance 491ABH & Finance 491BBH: Portfolio Management Seminar (JH 2228)
www.BoringFinance.com is the class website.

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

This is a team-taught seminar. There are two classes that meet together for this seminar. There are two co-instructors. G. Michael Phillips (profmike@profmike.com) will have primary responsibility for overseeing the stock portfolio managed by Fin491ABH students. James T. Chong (jchong@csun.edu) will have primary responsibility for overseeing the ETF portfolio managed by Fin491BBH students.

(Both instructors will oversee the Sustainable Investing Portfolio.)

Office hours for this seminar are by appointment only. The best way to contact the professors is to email them, being sure to put “Portfolio Seminar” as the first words of the subject line in the email. That said, there will be ample time before, after, and often during class to interact with the professors.

WARNING: This seminar is taught as 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. The combined portfolios managed by this seminar are near \$4,000,000.

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. Several of the classes will be conducted independently in groups (for example, when you will be working on finalizing your buylists for the portfolios you are working on). There may be other classes when one or both of the sections won't meet together but will work in groups.

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 website. **The end of the semester assessment includes preparing an updated Report and making a presentation to investment professionals and members of the University community.**

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.

We expect seminar participants 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.** Note that plus/minus grading will not be used. Various assignments will be given on a week to week basis.

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

Fin491ABH has a required text: “The Five Rules for Successful Stock Investing” (Wiley, 2004). We do not necessarily agree with everything in the book but it provides an interesting foundation for discussion. Fin491ABH students should read this as soon as possible. **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.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.BoringFinance.com and “Join” Fin491ABH-Fin491B.

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. You will need to 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. We will also expect that you will have Excel installed on your computer.

Fin491ABH students will also be expected to receive “Bloomberg Certification” during the first three weeks of the semester. To facilitate this, class will not meet at least one day to provide flexible availability for students to use the limited number of Bloomberg terminals in JH2228. More details will be discussed in class.

You will be expected to turn in a weekly “reflection essay” discussing what you did, what you learned, and any additional thoughts or applications from what you did during the past week for this class. **Each reflection essay should be turned in by 5pm on Sunday following the given week's class.** Please note that while each is graded “pass/fail”, the total passed out of the total weeks (e.g., x/15 in a normal semester) is your grade for this assignment. **Also please note that your class grade is the LOWEST of several possible grades including the reflection essays. Therefore, please take them seriously and turn them in on time.**

Other assignments will be given in class as the course proceeds.

We hope you have an enjoyable semester.

The following are various policies and notices that relate to this class.

The University requires that these notices be included in the syllabus.

Please read them carefully.

CSUN Core Values and Ethical Conduct Pledge

The [CSUN Core Values and Ethical Conduct Pledge](#) is a requirement for this course. You will be asked to agree to this statement when you register on the BoringFinance.com website and submit essays. If you don't indicate that you agree to adhere to the statement, then you won't be allowed access to the BoringFinance.com classroom site. (Note that this is where you will turn in your written assignments.)

Bottom line: Don't cheat, don't do unethical things, just do your own work and turn it in.

Please read the Academic (Dis)Honesty Policy below.

Academic (Dis)Honesty Policy

The CSUN policy on academic dishonesty will be enforced. *Anybody found violating the academic dishonesty policy with respect to any aspect of this class will fail not just the assignment but also the entire course and will be reported to University authorities.*

Incomplete Policy

Please note that according to University policy, students must have passing work before an incomplete can be assigned. **Incompletes will NOT be authorized in the final week of classes or later in the semester. IF YOU REQUEST AN INCOMPLETE AND DO NOT ALREADY HAVE ENOUGH POINTS ASSIGNED FOR A PASSING GRADE PRIOR TO THE INITIAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE (generally 2 weeks before the final revision deadline), THE INCOMPLETE WILL NOT BE APPROVED.**