

Syllabus

Personal Finance

Course Overview

This one-semester course is intended to help you familiarize yourself with the basic and essential concepts of personal finance. This course has 15 lessons organized into three units. Each unit has a Unit Activity and each lesson contains one or more Lesson Activities.

Additionally, there is one Course Activity that you need to work on throughout the duration of the course. This activity is a long-term project spread over the length of the course. The due date for this activity is to be determined by the course instructor.

This course covers the fundamentals of personal finance, role of consumers in the economic system of the United States, financial planning in personal life, ways to manage finances, and different investment strategies. It also covers various career options available in the field of personal finance.

You will submit the Unit Activity documents and Course Activities to your teacher, and you will grade your work in the Lesson Activities by comparing them with given sample responses. The Unit Activities, Course Activity (submitted to the teacher), and the Lesson Activities (self-checked) are the major components of this course. There are other assessment components, namely the mastery test questions that feature along with the lesson; the pre- and post-test questions that come at the beginning and end of the unit, respectively; and an end-of-semester test. All of these tests are a combination of simple multiple-choice questions and technology-enhanced (TE) questions.

Course Goals

This course will help you meet the following goals:

- Identify the role of the consumer in the economic system of the United States.
- Describe types and services of financial institutions and their role in personal financial planning.
- Describe various career options in personal finance.
- Identify the basics of personal financial planning.
- Manage personal and family incomes and expenses.

Prerequisite Skills

Personal Finance has the following prerequisites:

- basic math knowledge
- ability to visualize and apply creativity and innovation
- familiarity with the writing process and following guidelines
- basic computer skills
- ability to structure and process information

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Perform basic operations on a computer.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Personal Finance is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Excel or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you stay on schedule with your work. Note that your course teacher may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class. Also, the course teacher will determine the due date for the Course Activity, which is a long-term project over the length of the course.

Course Components and Grading Rubric

The table gives a breakdown of the weight for each component in the course. Weight represents the percentage of the total score coming from each activity.

Course Components	Count	Weight
Pretest. <i>Pretests are optional assessments, typically designed for credit recovery use. If a student shows mastery of a lesson's objective, the student may be automatically exempted from that lesson in the upcoming unit. Typically, teachers do not choose to employ exemptive pretests for first-time credit courses. Pretests are not included as a component of the student's final grade.</i>	3	0%
Module. <i>Each module in this course contains an interactive tutorial and an associated mastery test. Tutorials may include one or more Lesson Activities that constitute tasks associated with the tutorial. The module score comes from a student's score on the mastery test.</i>	15	20%
Discussion. <i>Online discussions allow for higher-order thinking about terminal objectives. An online threaded discussion mirrors the educational experience of a classroom discussion. Teachers can initiate a discussion by asking a complex, open-ended question. Students can engage in the discussion by responding both to the question and to the thoughts of others. Each unit in a course has one predefined discussion topic; teachers may add more discussion topics.</i>	3	20%
Unit Activity. <i>Unit Activities are at the end a unit and constitute one or more small tasks. Their purpose is to deepen understanding of key unit concepts and tie them together. Each Unit Activity includes a simple rubric. The teacher versions include both a rubric and modeled sample answers. Unit Activities are teacher graded.</i>	3	15%
Posttest. <i>The posttest appears at the end of the unit and mirrors the pretest in structure, content, and complexity.</i>	3	20%
Course Activity. <i>Course Activities are similar to Unit Activities in scope but may be found at any point in the course, either to prepare the student for new learning or to act as a performance-based activity required for a learning objective. Like Unit Activities, Course Activities include simple rubrics, and sample answers are available for teachers. Course Activities are teacher graded.</i>	1	5%
End of Semester Test. <i>The end of semester test (EOS) appears at the end of the course. Students are delivered a few items from every tutorial in the course in order to assess the major course objectives.</i>	1	20%
Total	29	100%

*Teachers may manually adjust these weights if desired, per district grading requirements.

Unit 1: Consumer Economics and Financial Services

Summary

In this unit, you will examine the role of the consumer in the economic system of the United States. You will also identify key sources of consumer information. You will analyze the economic rights and responsibilities of individuals as consumers. Further, you will learn about the types and services of financial institutions and their role in personal financial planning. Finally, you will explore various career options in personal finance.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
5 days: 2–6	Consumer Economics <i>Describe the role of the consumer in the American economic system and identify national and international issues that affect consumers.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 7–10	Consumer Information: Sources and Effects <i>Identify various sources of consumer information and their effects on consumer decisions.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 11–14	Consumer Rights and Responsibilities <i>Identify the economic rights and responsibilities of individuals as consumers.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 15–18	Financial Institutions <i>Describe the types and services of financial institutions and their role in personal financial planning.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 19–22	Careers in Personal Finance and Consumer Services <i>Describe careers in personal finance and consumer services.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 23	Space Jumble	Game
4 days: 24–27	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 1	Activity/Discussion
1 day: 28	Post-test—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: Personal Financial Management

Summary

In this unit, students will evaluate the need for personal and family financial planning. They will also learn about ways to manage personal and family financial resources. Further, they will explore options to meet financial goals of their lives. Finally, students will examine the basic principles of taxation and how taxes affect consumers and their financial goals.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 29–33	Financial Planning <i>Explain the need for personal and family financial planning and how planning affects consumer decisions.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 34–38	Managing Income and Expenses <i>Describe the skills to manage personal and family income and expenses.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 39–43	Banking <i>Describe services and related costs associated with personal banking.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 44–48	Consumer Credit and Loans <i>Identify various sources of consumer credit and compare their costs and benefits.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 49–53	Financing Education after High School <i>Identify different ways of funding a college education.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 54–58	Planning for Living and Leisure Expenses <i>Create a plan for key items for independent living such as a vehicle, a home, and utilities.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 59–63	Managing Taxes and Legal Documents <i>Explain the basic principles of taxation and how taxes affect consumers.</i>	Lesson
1 day: 64	Para Jumble	Game
4 days: 65–68	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 2	Activity/Discussion
1 day: 69	Post-test—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Securing the Future

Summary

In this unit, you will understand the need for investments and savings. You will also explore different investment and savings options based on the different income and needs of families. Further, you will explore different types of insurance needed by families and individuals to manage financial risks.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 70–73	Saving and Investing <i>Identify reasons for saving and investing as well as different savings and investment options.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 74–77	Choosing the Right Savings and Investment Options <i>Identify methods to plan and implement savings and investment programs for individuals with different incomes and family needs.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 78–82	Buying Insurance <i>Explain how individuals and families can use various types of insurance for managing financial risks.</i>	Lesson
Extended Project	Making a Will	Course Activity
1 day: 83	Thwack-A-Mole	Game
4 days: 84–87	Unit Activity/Threaded Discussion—Unit 3	Activity/Discussion
1 day: 88	Post-test—Unit 3	Assessment
1 day: 89	Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Test	Assessment

Course Map

You will achieve course level objectives by completing each lesson's instruction, assignments, and assessments. For a detailed look at how the materials meet these objectives, review the [course map](#).