



## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

Fall 2022-2023  
Money Matters: Personal Finance  
CHS Room 322

### **Andy Shupe**

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office hours: By Appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will explore basic concepts, techniques, and strategies in personal finance and money management, with the objective of enhancing a student's financial capabilities both as a student and after college. Each student will explore and develop individual plans and options based on their current situation and future goals.

Note(s): This course has been approved to meet the Core Curriculum General Education requirement.

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

There is not a dedicated textbook for this course. We will be using [BusinessJ.org](https://www.businessj.org) as well as instructor developed Curriculum materials which will be posted to Google Classroom throughout the semester.

### **COURSE GOALS**

Upon completion of this course, students will have a fundamental understanding of the different disciplines in the business world as well as the career opportunities in each. Students will evaluate business activities as they relate to economic, strategic, ethical and social factors.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Research and apply for various forms of financing for education such as financial aid, loans, scholarships, etc.
- Prepare weekly, monthly, or annual budgets to track and manage income and expenses
- Evaluate credit terms, conditions, and options for credit cards, auto loans and home mortgages
- Plan for the management of debt, the development of credit, and the building of savings and investment for personal, family, or retirement needs
- Assess insurance needs and options with respect to financial and other risks

### **TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND CLASS STRUCTURE**

Combining instructor moderated discussions, multimedia presentations from business professionals with project-based learning activities and tasks, students will learn to apply the business fundamentals learned in class to authentic situations.

Professors at MCC develop their own course syllabi and class policies. Therefore, rules that apply to one instructor's class may be different from other classes taught by different instructors. At the beginning of the semester, I will review my policies in detail, so students will have a clear understanding of expectations. **Please read this syllabus carefully and keep it for future reference.**

### **COMMUNICATION**

I will be using Google Classroom to provide general course information such as your syllabus and course expectations, as well as all curriculum materials. It is imperative that you regularly review Google Classroom to ensure that you see all current assignments and due dates. As part of this course, it is expected that you have access to and a basic understanding of your student email and Google Apps for education

### **ATTENDANCE/ ABSENCE**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled Google Classroom Meets and/or in person classes. Work will be posted to Google Classroom before the scheduled start time. You should email me in the event you must miss class for an extended



period. Please sign into the Google Meets on time, with your microphone muted and your camera on. All policies regarding attendance in the CHS Student Handbook will be adhered to

**CLASS CANCELLATION DUE TO WEATHER/EMERGENCY**

In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, class may be cancelled or opening may be delayed. Weather related closings and delays will be posted on the school website and broadcast to the community via the all-call system.

**CLASS POLICIES**

Clean up your work area at the end of every class. BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT!!! This class will function much more smoothly if you are prepared to be involved in class discussions. You can teach each other as much as I can teach you.

**PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

I read every student's IEP and 504 plan and implement them. In addition I encourage any Student requiring special accommodations to discuss them with me so that I can provide the ideal learning environment. All discussions will be kept confidential. Additional learning supports are available from your guidance counselor, dean, the CHS Learning Commons and your special education liaison, if applicable.

**SUBMISSION OF WORK**

Your student email and Google Apps accounts must be functional o Emailed work will only be accepted from your student email (Assignments will be submitted through Google Classroom and BusinessU unless otherwise instructed) o Notes and Materials will be housed in the Google Classroom for this class.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All students are responsible for maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity when completing assignments for their courses. Any student found to have committed academic dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism or cheating, will face academic penalties.

**GRADING**

This course uses a total points grading formula.  
Typical points allotted per assignment by type

<b>Chapter Exams – 150-200</b>	<b>In Class Worksheets – 20-50</b>
<b>Discussion Questions – 20-40</b>	<b>Projects – 50-200</b>
<b>Weekly Participation/Employability Grade - 10</b>	

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the academic support programs and services (such as tutoring, reading/writing skills lab, etc.) available to them to help ensure and support success. Information about these services can be found at <https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/studentlife/support.aspx>.

**CREDIT HOUR POLICY**

Middlesex Community College follows the Carnegie Unit for credit. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 45 hours of work for each credit. The most common breakdown for one credit is one hour of class instruction and two hours of homework for 15 weeks each semester. A three-credit course demands nine hours each week. A six-credit class demands eighteen hours each week.



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Sequence of Topics:**

Module 1 –Planning your Education		
Essential Questions		
	How can I successfully integrate my educational plans with my career plans?	What does it mean to be a lifelong learner? What are the advantages of having this mindset?
	What forms of education and training may be best for me?	What are some methods for managing educational costs? How can I evaluate costs vs. benefits?
Week 1	<p><b><u>Worksheets:</u></b> <i>Costs vs. Benefits</i> <i>Forms of Education</i></p> <p><b><u>Project:</u></b> <i>Where am I going?</i></p>	
Week 2	<p><b><u>Worksheets:</u></b> <i>The FAFSA</i> <i>Comparing Student Loans</i></p> <p><b><u>Exam :</u></b> Module 1 Exam</p>	

Module 2 - Factors of Employment		
Essential Questions		
	What are the different methods companies use to compensate workers? What should I understand about each?	What is a benefits package and how might it impact my choice of employers?
	What is incentive pay, and how can I estimate the true value of this form of pay to me?	How impactful should the work schedule and overall environment be on my choice of jobs?



<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Pay Structures and Calculations</i> <i>Incentives &amp; Benefits</i> <i>Flexible Scheduling</i>
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Project:</b> <i>Evaluating Multiple Job Offers</i> <b>Exam</b> - Module 2 Exam

Module 3 – Basics of Banking		
Essential Questions		
	Why is it important to avoid instant gratification and develop good savings habits?	Why should I have an account separate from my savings for day-to-day living and bill paying?
	What is the Time Value of Money? How will it impact my financial decision making?	When using a debit card linked to a bank account, how do the debit and credit functions of the card differ?
	What are the common options for growing my savings and what are the advantages of each?	How can I use mobile functions of my bank account and other pieces of technology to simplify my financial life?
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Motivations for Saving</i> <i>Evaluate Savings Options</i>  <b>Project:</b> <i>Maximize your Savings</i>	
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Online &amp; Mobile Banking</i> <i>Basic Checking Functions</i>  <b>Exam</b> - Module 3 Exam	



Module 4 –Investing for the Future		
Essential Questions		
	Why invest?	How are risk and return typically related? How should these concepts impact my planning?
	What are the advantages of different forms of investments, such as stocks, bonds, index funds and real estate	Where can I get information or professional help related to investing?
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Why Invest?</i> <i>Types of Equity Ownership</i> <i>Types of Debt Ownership</i> <i>Risk &amp; Reward</i>	
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Project</b> <i>Setup and Student Play - Investopedia.com Stock Market Simulator</i> <b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Stock Research Sheet</i> <i>Portfolio Reflection</i>	
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Active vs. Passively Managed Funds,</i> <i>Option Ownership</i>  <b>Exam</b> - Module 4 Exam  <b>Project:</b> <i>Portfolio Analysis Spreadsheet</i>	

Module 5 – Budgeting and Planning		
Essential Questions		
	What are the positive outcomes expected from maintaining a personal or household budget?	How often should a budget be analyzed? How can I use Financial Ratios to know that my budget needs to be revised?
	What are some common methods used to budget and tools that support these methods? How might these be implemented into my budget plan?	What are the uses for the Statement of Net Worth and Statement of Cash Flows? How can I use Financial Ratios to properly assess my financial health and make plans for the future?



<b>Week 9</b>	<p><b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Budgeting &amp; Goal Setting</i> <i>Needs, Wants, &amp; Net Worth Calculation</i> <i>Revenues, Expenses &amp; Variances</i></p> <p><b>Project:</b> <i>Create a Salary Based Budget</i></p>
<b>Week 10</b>	<p><b>Worksheets</b> <i>Financial Ratios</i></p> <p><b>Exam -</b> <i>Module 5 Exam</i></p> <p><b>Project:</b> <i>Financial Planner for a Day</i></p>

<b>Module 6 – Types and Sources of Credit</b>	
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<b>Essential Questions</b>	
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	What is credit and why do I need it?	What are the major forms of closed ended credit and how should they impact decision making?
	What are the major forms of revolving credit and how should they impact decision making?	What are the pros and cons of credit use?

<b>Week 11</b>	<p><b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Do I really need to use credit?</i> <i>Compare Types of Credit</i> <i>Credit Card Terminology</i></p>
<b>Week 12</b> 1	<p><b>Worksheets</b> <i>Secret History of the Credit Card - Video Questions</i> <i>Understanding a Credit Card Agreement</i></p> <p><b>Exam -</b> <i>Module 6 Exam</i></p>

<b>Thanksgiving Week</b>	
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<b>Week 13</b>	<p><b>Activity -</b> <i>Investopedia Stock Market Simulator</i> <i>Update Portfolio Analysis Spreadsheet</i></p>
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Module 7 –Responsible Credit Use		
Essential Questions		
	How do my actions impact my credit score?	What should I do if there is an error in my report?
	What is on my credit reports and what does it mean?	How can I safeguard my identity while using credit?
	How can I establish positive credit behavior?	
<b><u>Week 14</u></b>	<b><u>Worksheets:</u></b> <i>Understanding my Credit History</i> <i>How is my Credit Score determined?</i> <i>Identify positive and negative behaviors</i>	
<b><u>Week 15</u></b>	<b><u>Worksheets</u></b> <i>Identity Theft: Deter, Detect &amp; Defend</i> <i>To Catch an ID Thief - Video Reflection</i>	
<b><u>Week 16</u></b>	<b><u>Exam -</u></b> Module 7 Exam	
	<b><u>Project:</u></b> Credit Educational Brochure Creation	

Week before Winter Break	
<b><u>Week 17</u></b>	<b><u>Activity -</u></b> Investopedia Stock Market Simulator <i>Update Portfolio Analysis Spreadsheet</i>

Module 8 – Insuring Against Risk		
Essential Questions		
	What are different sources of risk, and how can appropriately deal with them?	What are the basic types of insurance available to me?
	What are the basic parts of every insurance policy and how can I evaluate them effectively?	How can I mitigate the costs of insurance?
<b><u>Week 18</u></b>	<b><u>Worksheets:</u></b> <i>Methods of Dealing with Risk</i> <i>Premiums and Out of Pocket Expenses</i>	



	<p><i>Automobile Insurance Basics</i> <i>Health Insurance Basics</i> <i>Home/Renter Insurance Basics</i></p> <p><b>Exam</b> - Module 8 Exam</p>
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Module 9–Housing and Transportation Decisions		
Essential Questions		
	<p>What is the consumer decision making process, and how can I use it to my advantage?</p> <p>What is impulse buying and how can I avoid it?</p>	<p>What is the major difference between buying and leasing a vehicle and how do I know which is better for me?</p> <p>What are the considerations when choosing between a new car and a used car?</p>
	<p>How can I understand buyer behavior to improve my own buying habits?</p>	<p>What are the advantages of being a renter or a homeowner? How can I prepare myself for each?</p>
	<p><b>Worksheets:</b> <i>Basics of Consumer Decision Making</i> <i>Buying vs. Renting a home</i> <i>Should I buy or lease a car? New or Used</i></p> <p><b>Exam</b> - Module 9 Exam</p>	

**Final Exam - Date TBD**

*This syllabus and course outline are subject to change. Students are responsible for attending classes and visiting **Blackboard** to keep updated on any changes that take place.*

*Please refer to the Middlesex Community College Student Handbook and website for additional policies.*





**Proven Tips for Success in College  
Classes**



*Even for the most prepared and meticulous students, college can be a bit of a challenge. While there is no standardized formula to make it through college, we can offer some proven tips for being successful in a college class academically, socially and professionally.*

### **1. COME TO CLASS.**

Teachers pay attention to the level of involvement students demonstrate throughout the semester. These will be the same teachers you will turn to for letters of recommendation and you can't expect them to vouch for you if you've barely set foot in their classes. A big part of college is about establishing connections and working on your abilities to network.

### **2. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Most students overlook the vast network of readily available resources colleges have and go through the semester on the bare minimum – attending classes alone. Make it a rule to frequent the campus libraries, tutoring and writing centers, computer labs and career centers for free, valuable support.

### **3. VISIT YOUR ADVISOR REGULARLY.**

Make it a habit to meet with your advisor early and often and seek their opinion on which classes to take each semester and how to meet your academic goals. Register as early as possible for your classes – they fill quickly, and you don't want to pile on classes before you graduate. Your advisor can guide you to the best campus resources, inform you of important deadlines, familiarize you with college policies and procedures, and keep you up-to-date with campus events and organizations that could benefit you.

### **4. STAY CONNECTED.**

Check your MCC email every day! – this is your main source of important information. You should pay attention to the student handbook and visit the school website to ensure you don't miss anything. Important dates, deadlines and information are always posted there. Connect with other students in each of your classes and exchange numbers. This can assist you in joining study groups, clarifying information, or catching up after missing a class.

### **5. MAINTAIN BALANCE.**

Missing out on even a couple of classes can set you back a month or more, so you will benefit immensely from spending your time in a sustainable way. When planning out your week, make sure you set aside enough time each day for studying, socializing, extracurricular commitments and taking care of yourself to make sure your brain is rested and alert.

### **6. SET REASONABLE GOALS.**

Try to set achievable and measurable goals each semester. This will keep you motivated, acting as a record of the progress you've made as well as helping you push yourself to continue setting and achieving goals. Don't overwhelm yourself with long-term goals but do plan ahead and think about how you see yourself in the future both personally and professionally. Try to refrain from making grade-related goals; instead try to think about what you hope to get out of each class that will move you further along your career path.

### **7. GET (AND STAY) ORGANIZED.**

Hold on to the syllabi you're handed in the beginning of the semester as they cover course expectations, assignments, due dates, grading and other class policies, as well as professors' contact information and office hours. Compile these into an organizer on your computer or phone and add homework assignments as they are given.

### **8. BE CONSISTENT.**

There is nothing easier than putting off work at the beginning of the semester, only to see it pile up as the semester progresses and cramming before a test is the surest way to overload and fry your brain. Make it a rule to keep up with assignments and study frequently – this way you will reduce the volume of information you need to take in as well as reducing stress and being able to sleep the night before exams and presentations.



**9. TAKE NOTES AND REVIEW THEM OFTEN.**

Notes taken in class are not supposed to lie forgotten on your desk. They are your single most useful tool in figuring out the pattern of teaching of every professor, which in turn will give valuable information regarding exam formats, essay questions and extra credit assignments. Reviewing notes helps you retain up to 80% of the material without any additional studying.

**10. HONE YOUR PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS.**

Courses such as math, physics, chemistry and statistics require good analytical skills, so be sure to spend time at home working on problems. When you get stuck on a problem seek help quickly to make sure you understand what is being asked. This can apply to any class, though. When you have a question or are unclear about something, take the initiative to see if you can find the answer for yourself. Your professors will be impressed by your motivation and resourcefulness.

**11. DEVELOP A REGULAR STUDY ROUTINE.**

Consistency is key in developing a studying routine that will maximize your term results. The rule, typically, is to factor in two hours of study time for every hour you spend in class to allow for the material to sink in. This also helps you develop discipline and structure your day in the most efficient way possible. Research has shown that the more you practice a regular routine, the easier it becomes.

**12. WORK ON YOUR STUDY TECHNIQUES.**

Even successful students often need to revise their studying styles when they get to college. Ideally you want to find a specific system that works for you and develop an approach that leads to the establishment of a routine. Consider joining a study group – peer pressure can be a great way to motivate oneself to get things done. Some colleges offer courses that can help you discover your learning style and build solid study habits – talk to your academic advisor for suggestions. Don't forget to take advantage of the resources available to you (See #2).

**13. STRENGTHEN YOUR WRITING SKILLS.**

Writing is an essential part of the college experience and you can only benefit from working to perfect yours. Enrolling in an introductory composition course is a good idea for any student, especially those who feel they struggle to express themselves in writing. The skills you learn will help you excel in the rest of your classes and being a strong writer will help you throughout your academic and professional career. Most college campuses have writing and tutoring centers that can help you develop your skills (Again, see #2).

**14. DON'T FORGET TO REWARD YOURSELF.**

Motivation is the single most powerful catalyst for positive change, so be sure to take advantage of that. Every goal – small or big – you manage to complete ought to be marked in a way you see fit