

**FIN4761C Seminars in Finance:**  
**Applied Portfolio Management Techniques**  
**AY2024/25 Semester 1**

**Instructor:** Edmund Choong  
**Office:** BIZ2 #02-19  
**Email:** [edmundchoong@nus.edu.sg](mailto:edmundchoong@nus.edu.sg)  
**Consultation:** By appointment only

**Recommended Textbooks:**

- (1) Benninga, Simon and Tal Mofkadi, 2021, *Financial Modeling* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition), MIT Press (**FM5**).
- (2) CFA Institute, 2021, *Portfolio Management in Practice (Volume 1) – Investment Management*, John Wiley & Sons.
- (3) Kinlaw, William, Mark Kritzman and David Turkington, 2021, *Asset Allocation – From Theory to Practice and Beyond*, John Wiley & Sons.

The textbooks will be supplemented by academic papers and industry research articles in portfolio management.

It is strongly recommended that course participants with little functional expertise in using Excel for financial modeling, particularly the use of array and matrix functions, acquire FM5. Note that students who already have the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Financial Modeling reference book can continue to use it as the scope is largely the same as that of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

**Course Synopsis:** This advanced Seminar in Finance module will serve as a comprehensive real-world examination of the quantitative techniques available and how these might be applied to portfolio management in the investment management industry. Major topics covered include exploring various quantitative tools and models for

- estimating expected returns,
- modeling risks,
- portfolio construction & management,
- style analysis & benchmarking, and
- strategic & tactical asset allocation.

This course is suitable for students interested in a career in security analysis or portfolio management.

**Pre-requisite:** FIN3702 Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management

**Class Attendance:** It is important that students endeavour to attend every class, especially the first three sessions when the foundational “building blocks” are reviewed. Based on experience, students who miss two or more of the early class sessions find it very difficult to catch up subsequently.

**Assessment:**

<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Mid-term Quiz</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Quiz</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Assignments</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Project</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Course Contents:**

- (1) Review of Portfolio Building Blocks:
  - (a) Estimating Expected Returns
  - (b) Estimating the Variance-Covariance Matrix
  - (c) Building an Efficient Frontier
- (2) Portfolio Management Process and the Investment Policy Statement
- (3) Capital Market Expectations
  - (a) Framework and Macro Considerations
  - (b) Forecasting Asset Class Returns
- (4) Asset Allocation
  - (a) Mean-Variance Approach
  - (b) Monte Carlo Simulation
  - (c) Black-Litterman Approach
  - (d) Resampled Mean-Variance Optimization
  - (e) Asset/Liability Management
  - (f) Heuristics and Other Approaches
- (5) Equity Portfolio Management:
  - (a) Passive Equity Investing
  - (b) Active Equity Investing
- (6) Trade Strategy and Execution
- (7) Portfolio Performance Evaluation
  - (a) Performance Attribution
  - (b) Benchmark Selection

## Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. **In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.**

Additional guidance is available at:

<http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/adminpolicy/acceptance.html#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>

Online Module on Plagiarism:

<http://emodule.nus.edu.sg/ac/>