

Course Overview

Course Title: 15.403 Introduction to the Practice of Finance

Course Number: 15.403

Semester: Fall 2021

Instructor: Telis Bertsekas, telis@mit.edu

Teaching Assistant: Attie Schubauer, eschubau@mit.edu

Course Assistant: Susanna Bishop, sbishop@mit.edu

Finance Track Coordinator: Rianna Allen-Charles, rallen@mit.edu

Lecture: Day/Time Location: Monday from 4-5:30 pm, E62-262

Office Hours: Mondays 10-3 pm, alternate dates by appointments only

Welcome/Course Intro:

Please read the information below carefully as it will help you prepare for the first class on **Wednesday, September 8th:**

- **Track teams:** As part of your track registration, you will be divided into what we call “Track Teams.” There are **five track teams; Asset/Investment Management, VC/FinTech, Impact Investing, Investment Banking, and Private Equity**. You will choose one of these teams, and throughout the semester, I will ask you to view the readings, discussions, and speakers through the lens of that career. We will ask that you sit together during class and will assign breakout groups that will occasionally be used during the term. This will allow you to identify and interact with your peers with common interests and also to hopefully set up more lively discussions and questions for our speakers. We understand that you may still be deciding which career path is right for you, but for the purposes of this class, just choose the one that most interests you now – you can always switch teams later.
- **Preparation for first class:** Our goal is to get materials to you by August 9th for those of you who would like to hit the ground running depending on your level of experience. We will use Canvas, and there will be content under each track team as well as general material useful for preparing for networking, recruiting, and our class. Specific readings and assignments by week will be posted on Canvas as well.
- **Class Assignments:** You will be expected to review any materials posted “PREPARE” under the date of each class. Be aware that assignments may be posted up to six days ahead of time, but I hope to have most materials in place by late August. You will also see items marked (REVIEW)

that will not be required for class but will be relevant for those looking to learn more on the topic. Separately, you will be assigned two brief "reflection papers" that will ask you to apply Sloan's mission around solving complex problems in the world to any of the discussions or readings for the class. More on this later, but I am hoping that by having you approach the semester through the lens of your career path that you might be able to frame challenges or even propose high-level solutions in interesting ways.

- **Class Participation:** Your participation and preparation are important. I am offering a relatively broad list of materials on the 15.403 Canvas site that is divided by the five Track Teams. If you are a career switcher, some of the foundation content via Wall Street Prep and the additional articles and links will be important for you to get prepared for class. For more experienced finance professionals, there are more advanced materials but also perspectives on the industry and the various specializations. If there is a specific case or article that we will discuss in class before the guest speaker begins, I will flag it for you. Whether you are new to finance or experienced, you will be evaluated on your contributions to the conversations in class and to the group projects and presentations.
- **Expectations:** Class begins at 5:05pm and ends at 6:25pm. Sometimes our speakers run a few minutes long but it is understood that if you need to leave after 6:25pm, that is OK. If you need to miss part of or all of a class, please contact me or the teaching assistant and we will do our best to accommodate you.

For many of you, this will be your first time back in a classroom. Unlike most other Sloan classrooms, I am OK with you using your laptops in class (unless explicitly noted otherwise). I am also OK with using messaging and collaboration platforms inside and out of the classroom as long as they are inclusive and used for positive and productive purposes. What do I ask for in return? Your attention, engagement, and respect for our team and our guests. If we observe that any students are abusing the use of technology in class, we will have to change the policy. Being back together in person is a great privilege for me. Let's maximize our time together.