

**Tentative Syllabus: Financial Derivatives 206/717**  
**Wharton, University of Pennsylvania**

**Prof. Philipp Illeditsch**

**Fall 2013**

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**Instructor**

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Office : 2426 Steinberg Hall/Dietrich Hall  
Office hours: Wed 1:00pm–2:30pm.

Please make an appointment if you would like to meet outside of office hours.

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**Teaching Assistants**

There will be several Teaching Assistants for the course. Their contact information and office hours will be posted on Canvas. The TA office hours will take place in the TA cubicles in the Finance Department (2300 SH-DH).

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**Course description**

There has been a dramatic growth in markets for financial derivatives in recent years. Modern managers can use financial derivatives such as futures, options, and swaps to hedge particular kinds of risk or to change the returns on their portfolios in certain ways. The purpose of this course is to provide the student with the necessary skills to value and to employ futures, options, and other related financial instruments. In order to provide a useful treatment of these topics it is necessary to stress fundamentals and to explore topics at a somewhat technical level.

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**Prerequisites:** NONE.

The following introductory Finance and Statistics courses are recommended but not required:  
FNCE 206: FNCE 100, FNCE 101, STAT 101-102  
FNCE 717: FNCE 601, FNCE 602, STAT 621

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**Class times and locations**

FNCE 206 Section 001: Tue/Thu 9:00am-10:30am, JMHH 350  
FNCE 206 Section 002: Tue/Thu 10:30am-noon, JMHH 350  
FNCE 717 Section 001: Tue/Thu 4:30pm-6:00pm, JMHH 240

*Exceptions:*

There will be no class on the following days:  
Thursday, October 10 (Fall break)  
Tuesday, October 22 (midterm exam)  
Thursday, November 28 (Thanksgiving)

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## Exams

There are two mandatory exams. The midterm exam is on Tuesday, October 22 in class, and you have to come to the section you are registered for. The final exam takes place on Friday, December 13 from 6:00-8:00pm, according to the University Registrar's office.

Undergraduate students who are unable to take the exam must petition their dean's office for a makeup exam. MBA students who are unable to take the exam must petition the MBA Program Office.

Both exams are closed-book, closed-notes. For each exam you may bring a single letter-size *handwritten* formula sheet. You may write on both sides of this sheet.

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## Problem Sets

No late assignments will be accepted.

There are six problem sets. These can be tackled in groups of up to five students. Completed assignments will be graded on the following scale,  $\sqrt{-}$ ,  $\sqrt{}$ ,  $\sqrt{+}$ . Problem sets are due *at the start of the class you attend*, on the dates shown below. Your group can be composed of students from different sections of the class; however, in this case you must submit the problem set at the beginning of the earliest section that one of your members is enrolled in.

Problem set solutions should be clearly written and should explain your thought process. If you submit a printout from a spreadsheet, please make sure to label it carefully. *You must submit a paper copy of your solution. I will not accept electronic copies.*

	due date
Problem Set 1	Thursday, September 12
Problem Set 2	Tuesday, October 1
Problem Set 3	Thursday, October 17
Problem Set 4	Tuesday, November 5
Problem Set 5	Tuesday, November 22
Problem Set 6	Thursday, December 5

I will post the grade for each problem set on Canvas. Please make sure you check your grade and report any errors as soon as possible and at the latest within two weeks of the problem set's due date. I will not accept any inquiries afterwards.

The solution to each problem set will be posted after your answers have been turned in (see table with deadlines). Your grades answers will be returned to a file cabinet in the Finance Department. I will not discuss the solutions to problem sets in class, but I encourage you to come the TAs' or my office hours if you have any questions.

## Books

The book for this class is:

*Derivatives Markets* (3rd edition), by Robert L McDonald.

Copies of the book are available at the campus bookstore.

As an additional reference, I also recommend

*Options, Futures and Other Derivatives* (8th edition), by John C Hull.

If students are interested in a more advanced (and more mathematical) text, I recommend *A Course in Derivative Securities: Introduction to Theory and Computation*, by Kerry Back.

Exams will be based only on material covered in class and in the accompanying problem sets.

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## Lecture notes etc.

This is a paperfree class. I will distribute all readings and lecture notes electronically via Canvas. I will always make sure to post my lecture notes on Canvas *prior* to class. If you wish to take notes directly on these lecture notes, please make sure to print out a set before class. I will *not* distribute paper copies in class. There is no bulkpack for this class.

I will also use Canvas to post the problem sets and the problem set solutions.

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## Course requirements

Your final grade will be based on your performance on the problem sets and the two exams. I will base your overall grade on one of the two weighting schemes below; for each individual student, I will use the weighting scheme that is more favorable for him/her.

	Weighting 1	Weighting 2
Problem sets	20%	20 %
Midterm exam	40%	25 %
Final exam	40%	55 %

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## Review sessions

There will be a review session before each of the two exams. Time and location TBA.

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**Classroom behavior**

Laptops may be used for note-taking only. Surfing the web is very distracting for students around you. Turn your cell phone off. DO NOT LEAVE THE CLASSROOM TO TAKE A PHONE CALL!

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**Academic integrity**

May I remind you that your work and conduct will be held accountable under the University of Pennsylvania's *Code of Academic Integrity*. Violations of this Code will be met with swift and certain punishment to the full extent of the regulation. You can find a copy of the code at:

[www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html)

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**Course outline**

- Introduction
  - Financial forwards
  - Financial futures
  - Interest rate and bond forwards/futures
  - Currency forwards/futures
  - Commodity forwards/futures
  - Hedging with forwards/futures
  - Swaps
  - Options: basics
  - American options
  - Pricing options I: binomial trees
  - Pricing options II: Black-Scholes-Merton model
  - Option Greeks
  - Additional topics as time permits:
    - limits of the Black-Scholes-Merton model
    - extensions of the Black-Scholes-Merton model
    - credit instruments (CDOs, CDSs, etc.)
    - more derivative pricing
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