

**Common Course Outline**  
**ACCT/MNGT 251**  
**Financial Planning and Investments**  
**Community College of Baltimore County**

**Description**

**ACCT/MNGT 251 – Financial Planning and Investments** examines the concepts, strategies, and tools used in saving, borrowing, and investing to facilitate good credit, prudent budgeting, and effective money management. The impact of the time value of money and various tax regulations on investment decisions are emphasized. The importance of planning in advance for retirement is reinforced through the examination of various insurance products along with wills, trusts, and estates.

**3 Credits**

**Prerequisites:** ACLT 052 or ACLT 053; MATH 082

**Overall Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. apply a reasoned approach to personal financial planning;
2. explain the time value of money;
3. prepare a budget to facilitate proper money management;
4. evaluate credit reports and scoring systems;
5. compare the different aspects of borrowing including the types of loans, interest rates, and terms;
6. evaluate the use of insurance as a personal financial strategy;
7. prepare a basic tax return;
8. compare and contrast different tax strategies that impact personal finance;
9. examine the strategies and techniques associated with effective retirement planning;
10. discuss the purpose of wills and trusts and proper estate planning;
11. discuss the importance of building a credit history through the use of personal loans and student loans;
12. describe the steps in purchasing a house including the financing aspects;
13. evaluate stocks, bonds, and mutual funds as investments;
14. apply diversification techniques and strategies in the creation of an investment portfolio;
15. evaluate the validity of various internet sites to answer financial planning and investment questions;
16. describe basic investment strategies including dollar cost averaging; and
17. identify financial challenges unique to diverse groups.

## **Major Topics**

- I. The financial planning process
  - A. Personal financial statements
  - B. Identifying and setting financial goals
- II. The mathematics applied to financial planning and investments
  - A. Time value of money
  - B. Compound annual return
- III. Investments
  - A. Common stocks
  - B. Bonds
  - C. Other fixed income savings and certificates of deposit
  - D. Mutual funds
- IV. Budgets and budgeting
  - A. Preparing a budget
  - B. Preparing a personal financial statement
- V. Money management
  - A. Banking services
  - B. Banking products
- VI. Taxes
  - A. Income taxes
  - B. Tax planning strategies
- VII. Credit and credit instruments
  - A. Personal loans and mortgages
  - B. Credit scores and credit reporting
- VIII. Insurance
  - A. Health
  - B. Disability
  - C. Casualty
  - D. Life
- IX. Wills and trusts
- X. Retirement planning
  - A. Budgeting for retirement
  - B. Pensions and retirement savings

## **Course Requirements**

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

Evaluations of student progress will be evenly spaced over the course of a semester, culminating in at least four independent measures of student performance (not including attendance and class participation).

## **Grading/exams**

- At least two tests or exams; one may be administered as a comprehensive final exam.

- Required participation such as oral reports, discussion, or peer instruction.
- A semester project that incorporates a term paper and portfolio which requires the creation of an investment portfolio of stocks and mutual funds whose performance is researched and tracked in order to gain experience in investing.
- Required homework and/ or case study assignments
- One or more writing assignments that total at least 1,000 words (in addition to the semester project).

Written Assignments: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources. A semester written project (noted above), worth at least 20% of the total course grade, will be required for students to demonstrate at least 5 of the 7 following General Education Program outcomes:

1. Written/Oral Communication;
2. Critical Analysis and Reasoning;
3. Technological Competence;
4. Information Literacy;
5. Scientific and Quantitative or Logical Reasoning;
6. Local and Global Diversity; and
7. Personal and Professional Ethics.

***Other Course Information***

Students can earn credit for ACCT 251 or MNGT 251 but not both courses.