Nový PORG Investment Society | ECONET

A Guide to the Foundations of Investing and Financial Markets



Class Structure and Guidelines for ECONET's FIFM

Name: Foundations of Investing and Financial Markets (FIFM)

Organized by: Divisions under ECONET

- Delivery Mode: Online via Google Classroom
- Target Group: High school students (15-18) and university freshmen/sophomores

Course Objectives

- Build financial literacy and confidence in personal finance
- Introduce core investing concepts, tools, and strategies
- Foster global awareness of economic systems and capital markets
- Encourage critical thinking, discussion, and real-world application

Key Course Features

- Duration: First week of October - June (56 sessions)
- Format: Online via Google Meet
- Class Size: Max. 15 students per group
- Language: English materials; discussions may be in local language
- Certificates: Bronze / Silver / Gold based on performance

Student Expectations

- Attendance: Cameras ON, active participation.
- Homework: Short weekly tasks and quizzes.
- Final Assignment: Written Stock Analysis Report (detailed later in guide).
- Extra Credit: At least one activity for Brozne (from the provided list).

Curriculum Overview

- ~28 weeks: ~60-70% dedicated to stocks, valuation, and company analysis
  - 2x 60 minutes a week
- Flexible "Holiday/Recap" weeks allow a buffer for different country calendars

Week 1: Welcome & Money Basic

- Design two-part sessions (60-70 mins total) to introduce students to the course, each other, and the idea of why finance matters.

Between-lecture activity:

- Paragraph prompt: “What does financial literacy mean to me and why do I want to improve it?”

Discussion prompts:

- Why do most people feel overwhelmed by money?
- What would you do with your first paycheck?
- Can you succeed financially without being ‘good at math’?

Week 2: Saving Tools

- Introduce different tools and vehicles used for saving money.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students compare two real-world savings products and outline pros/cons

Discussion prompts:

- What makes a savings tool trustworthy?
- Should everyone have an emergency fund?
- How much liquidity is “enough”?

Week 3: Interest & Inflation

- Teach the fundamental ideas behind interest accumulation and inflation.

Between-lecture activity:

- Provide 2-3 interest rate scenarios and ask students to calculate future value

Discussion prompts:

- How does inflation affect savers vs. borrowers?
- What happens if interest rates don’t beat inflation?
- How can inflation be both good and bad?

Week 4: Central Banks & Rates

- Explain the function of central banks and their influence on the economy.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students research their central bank’s base rate and latest inflation rate

Discussion prompts:

- Should politicians influence central bank policy?
- What tools do central banks have beyond rate changes?
- Can interest rates fix every problem?

Week 5: Why Invest? Types of Investing

- Explain the core motivations for investing and the types of strategies.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students write what type of investor they think they are and why

Discussion prompts:

- Is investing the same as gambling?
- How does investing help society?
- What matters more: returns or peace of mind?

Week 6: What Is a Stock?

- Clarify what ownership in a company means and how stocks work.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students look up a company, its ticker, and sector

Discussion prompts:

- What company would you buy if you could own 1%?
- Why do companies go public?
- Should all stocks be tradable by the public?

Week 7: Types of Stocks & Indexes

- Introduce stock categories and how market performance is benchmarked.

Between-lecture activity:

- Categorize three stocks: growth, value, dividend

Discussion prompts:

- Is it better to own a little of everything or a lot of one thing?
- Are indices better than analysts?
- Why do some sectors outperform others?

Week 8: Stock Markets in Action

- Show how markets function in real-time and respond to news.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students follow one company for 5 days and note price changes and news headlines

Discussion prompts:

- Are markets predictable?
- Can you react fast enough to beat the news?
- What makes people panic?

Week 9: Economic Indicators

- Connect macro data to investor decisions.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students find and interpret their country's GDP and CPI

Discussion prompts:

- What economic stat would you track if you ran a fund?
- Can the market ignore bad data?
- Why do markets sometimes rise during recessions.
- Is GDP a god indicator of a country's economic standing? What are its weaknesses and what are the alternatives?

Week 10: Recap / Game Session

- Reinforce learning in a fun, interactive format.

Your session must include:

- A Kahoot or quiz covering Weeks 1-9
- Group activity or mini-competition
- Optional: Peer voting on "most useful session so far"

Between-lecture activity:

- Students reflect on one concept they mastered and one they're still unsure about

Week 11: Financial Statements - Income Statement

- Introduce how companies generate and report earnings.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students pull a public company's income statement and identify: revenue, gross profit, net income, and EPS
- Students must learn the basic structure of an income statement => random people will be tested

Discussion prompts:

- Is high revenue always good?
- How can a profitable company be in trouble?
- Why do investors love EPS?
- Is negative profitability a reason to always look away?

Week 12: Financial Statements - Balance Sheet

- Explain what a company owns and owes.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students calculate debt-to-equity ratio and current ratio of one company

Discussion prompts:

- Is a debt-free company always better?
- What does it mean to be "asset-heavy" or "asset-light"?
- When should a company borrow money?
- Is low/high current ratio always bad/good?

Week 13: Financial Statements - Cash Flow Statement

- Illustrate how money moves through a business.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students identify operating, investing, and financing cash flows for a company

Discussion prompts:

- What happens if a company runs out of cash?
- Why is cash flow from operations considered most important?
- Can a company survive with negative free cash flow?

Week 14: Key Ratios

- Introduce fundamental performance indicators.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students calculate and interpret gross margin and ROE for a fake company (created by us)
- Calculate the P/E, P/B, P/S and EV/EBITDA

Discussion prompts:

- What's the most useful ratio for a beginner investor?
- Can ratios be misleading?
- Should investors focus on numbers or context?

Week 15: Valuation I - Relative Valuation

- Explain how companies are valued using peer comparison.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students calculate P/E ratio using data from Yahoo Finance or Google Finance
- Fill the template for AAPL

Discussion prompts:

- What does a high P/E tell us?
- Can an expensive stock still be a good investment?
- Is value always in the numbers?

Week 16: Valuation II - DCF & Dividend Models

- Introduce intrinsic valuation tools (qualitative overview).

Between-lecture activity:

- Provide a DCF template that the students should fill in for AAPL with explanations => then compare results
- Check out Damodaran's work

Discussion prompts:

- Can you really predict future cash flows?
- When does DCF not work well?
- Is valuation a science or an art?

Week 17: Valuation Tools & Case Study

- Teach students to use real-world valuation platforms.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students screenshot and summarize a valuation dashboard of one company

Discussion prompts:

- Can you trust analyst forecasts?
- What does "market expectations" actually mean?
- When is the market wrong?

Week 18: Stock Analysis Workshop

- Prepare students for their final stock pitch.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students submit company choice and short rationale (2-3 sentences)

Discussion prompts:

- What makes an investment thesis strong?
- What's the most common mistake in pitches?
- How should you communicate risk?

Week 19: Project Presentations / Submissions

- Facilitate project presentations or collect and review written reports.

Between-lecture activity:

- Peer review form: strengths, improvements, one takeaway per project

Discussion prompts:

- What did you learn from a peer's pitch?
- What would you improve about your own?
- Did you change your mind on any company?

Week 20: Reflection & Feedback

- Help students synthesize learnings and evaluate their own progress.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students write three takeaways from the course

Discussion prompts:

- What was your favorite concept?
- How did your view of investing change?
- What would you teach others?

Week 21: Bonds & Yield Curves

- Introduce fixed-income securities and macro implications.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students graph a current yield curve using official data

Discussion prompts:

- Why do people invest in bonds?
- What does an inverted yield curve mean?
- Can bonds be riskier than stocks?
- Why are Japan's treasuries yielding so little compared to the US?

Week 22: Real Estate Investing

- Introduce students to real assets as part of portfolios.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students compare a REIT's 5-year performance to a tech stock

Discussion prompts:

- Would you rather own a rental apartment or Apple stock?
- What makes property risky?
- Can real estate be passive?

Week 23: Options & Derivatives (Intro)

- Give a basic, conceptual intro to options.

Between-lecture activity:

- Scenario quiz: who profits from call/put options

Discussion prompts:

- Should beginners use options?
- What's the difference between hedging and gambling?
- When are options useful?

Week 24: Funds & Institutions

- Explain how professional money management works.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students choose a fund type and summarize how it works

Discussion prompts:

- Should you invest through funds or directly?
- Why do funds charge different fees?
- What makes a good fund manager?

Week 25: Insider Trading & Corporate Governance

- Discuss ethics and accountability in markets.

Between-lecture activity:

- Mini case analysis of a governance failure
- Watch a video about Bernie Madoff (recommend the Netflix series + the movie)

Discussion prompts:

- Can strong ethics create better financial performance?
- Is it possible to invest "morally"?
- Should retail investors care about board structure?

Week 26: Crisis Case Study

- Walk through a major financial crisis and its lessons.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students summarize the crisis in 150-200 words

Discussion prompts:

- What caused the panic?
- Who gained and who lost?
- Could it happen again?

Week 27: Global Finance & Career Paths

- Inspire students with future-facing finance and career options.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students research and summarize one finance career

Discussion prompts:

- Would you want to work in finance?
- What part of finance aligns with your values?
- How can you start preparing now?

Week 28: Course Wrap-Up

- Celebrate, reflect, and bring closure.

Between-lecture activity:

- Students write a short "letter to future self" about what they learned

Discussion prompts:

- What surprised you most?
- What will you do differently going forward?
- How will you keep learning?
- What would you change about the course? What would you like to have done more?

Diploma Requirements for FIFM Course

There are 3 levels of the completion that the students can finish with: Bronze, Silver and Gold - they can choose which one they want to fullfill

- All levels require different level of participation, amount of extra credit activities (see next page), etc.

Generally to obtain diploma for everyone:

- Students with valid reasons (health, exams) can make up missed sessions with an extra assignment
  - 1 missed lesson = 1 extra credit - does not count towards the required extra credit
- Active involvement in discussion throughout the course, insightful questions

Brozne (Basic Completion)

- Attendance: Minimum 70% → at least 39 sessions out of 56
- Homework: Complete at least 60% of assigned homework
- Final Assignment: Submitted and presented in class
- Extra Credit: Complete 2 activities from the list

Silver (Active Engagement)

- Attendance: Minimum 85% → at least 48 sessions out of 56
- Homework: Complete at least 80% of assigned homework
- Final Assignment: Submitted, presented, and demonstrates strong understanding during Q&A
- Extra Credit: Complete 4+ activities
- Class Participation: At least moderate engagement (e.g., 3+ meaningful contributions during live sessions)

Golden (Excellence & Leadership)

- Attendance: Minimum 95% → at least 53 sessions out of 56
- Homework: Complete 100% of assigned homework
- Final Assignment: High-quality submission with clear analysis and confident presentation.
- Extra Credit: Complete 7+ activities
- Class Participation: Active and consistent (leading discussions, asking questions, helping peers)

For lecturers:

- Attendance will be taken at the start of each class
- Take notes about homework completion
- Take notes about everyone's activity in the class

Final Assignment: Stock Analysis

Objective: Demonstrate understanding of stock fundamentals, valuation basics, and the ability to form an investment opinion supported by data

Format & Length

- Word Count: 2,500-3,000 words (excluding cover page, charts, tables, and bibliography)
- **Format:**
  - 11 pt
  - Times New Roman or Arial
  - 1.5x spaced
  - 1-inch margin on all sides
  - Block centered text
  - Page numbers included
- Structure: Formal language, appropriate vocabulary, organized into clearly labeled sections which are bolded (see below)
- Submission format: PDF or Word document via Google Classroom

Citation & Bibliography:

- Style: APA (American Psychological Association) OR MLA – choose one and use consistently.
- In-text citations: Required when referencing data, quotes, or analysis.

To ensure originality:

- Inclusion of a short "Reflection" paragraph at the end: *What was the hardest part of this analysis for you, and what did you learn?*

Week 18: Stock Analysis Workshop - preparation
Week 19: Project Presentations - pitch about the company, 10 minutes per each max.
Week 24: Stock Analysis needs to completed and submitted
Week 26: One feedback from the lecturer
Week 27: Final version submitted

Final Assignment: Stock Analysis

Detailed Structure:

1. Cover Page (Not included in word count)
- Content:
  - Report Title (e.g., "Stock Analysis: Apple Inc.")
  - Student Name
  - Course Name & Instructor
  - Date
- Formatting: Centered, clean layout.

2. Executive Summary (300-400 words)
- Concise snapshot of entire report:
  - Company name & sector
  - Key financial metrics (revenue, EPS, market cap)
  - Stock performance summary (1-year trend)
  - Valuation summary
  - Final investment recommendation (Buy/Hold/Sell) with 2-3 supporting arguments.
  - (Think of this as a professional investor memo.)

3. Company Overview (400-500 words)
- Business Model & Revenue Drivers
  - Core products/services
  - Geographic presence
- Industry & Market Position
  - Competitors, market share estimates
- Corporate Strategy & Goals
  - Recent initiatives, growth strategy
- Key Challenges
  - Risks, regulatory pressures, industry dynamics

4. Financial Analysis & Performance (700-800 words)
- Comprehensive Income Statement Review
  - Revenue growth trend (last 3-5 years)
  - Net income, EPS evolution
- Balance Sheet Highlights
  - Assets, liabilities, leverage ratios
- Cash Flow Overview
  - Free cash flow, operating cash trends
- Detailed Ratio Analysis (6-8 ratios)
  - Profitability: ROE, ROA, net margin
  - Liquidity: Current ratio
  - Valuation: P/E, EV/EBITDA
  - Efficiency: Asset turnover
- Comparison with Industry Averages
- (Use tables for ratios and highlight differences.)

5. Recent Developments (300-400 words)
- At least 2-3 major events in the last year:
  - Earnings reports, product launches, acquisitions, regulatory updates
- Impact on financial performance and stock price
- Analyst & market reactions

6. Stock Price & Market Analysis (400-500 words)
- Historical Price Performance (1-3 years)
- Volatility analysis
- Comparison with Benchmark Index
- Technical Snapshot (optional for advanced students)
  - Moving averages, trend observations
- Visuals:
  - 1-year price chart
  - Multi-year trend chart with index overlay

Final Assignment: Stock Analysis

7. Valuation Section (500-600 words)
- Multiple Methods (at least 2 required):
  - Relative Valuation (P/E vs peers)
  - Discounted Cash Flow (summarized from AlphaSpread or your own basic version)
  - Analyst Price Target Summary
- Interpretation of Results
  - Is the stock overvalued, undervalued, or fair?
- Sensitivity Analysis (optional for advanced students)
- Visual: Table comparing valuation metrics vs industry

8. Investment Recommendation (300-400 words)
- Final call: Buy, Hold, or Sell
- 3-4 strong arguments based on:
  - Financial health
  - Valuation
  - Market conditions
- Key Risks to your thesis (2-3 points)

9. Personal Reflection (150-200 words)
- What was the most challenging part?
- What new insights did you gain?

10. Bibliography & Appendices
- Minimum 6 reputable sources (Yahoo Finance, GuruFocus, Seeking Alpha, Bloomberg, company filings).
- Citation Style: APA or MLA (consistent throughout).
- Append charts, graphs, financial tables for clarity.

Tips and tricks:

1. Start with Reliable Data
- Use primary financial sources: Yahoo Finance, GuruFocus, Seeking Alpha, AlphaSpread, or the company's investor relations page.
- Always double-check numbers (especially ratios and market cap) as they change frequently.

2. Keep the Structure Clear
- Use headings and subheadings for each section (e.g., Company Overview, Valuation).
- Include charts and tables instead of long text for financial data–visuals make your report easier to read.

3. Prioritize Quality over Quantity
- Explain what numbers mean, not just list them:
  - Bad example: P/E ratio is 16.
  - Good example: P/E of 16 is below the industry average of 22, suggesting possible undervaluation.

4. Use Professional Language
- Avoid personal phrases like "I think" or "in my opinion"–use phrases like:
  - The analysis suggests...
  - Based on valuation and recent performance...
- Keep tone analytical, concise, and objective.

5. End with a Strong Recommendation
- Clearly state Buy / Hold / Sell–don't leave it vague.
- Provide 3 reasons and mention 1-2 risks to show critical thinking.

Diploma Requirements for FIFM Course

Extra Credit Activities:

- Students must complete an **X** amount of extra credit activities throughout the whole year in order to fullfill the requirements for the diploma:
  - Brozne: 2
  - Silver: 4
  - Golden: 7
- All the extra credit activities will have to be submitted AND have to be presented to the class at the start / end of some lesson + Q&A
  - All submissions have to be unique - if there are signs of generative AI, the activity will not be counted

Options (examples):

- Read 1 book from the course list and write about key insights (minimum 400 words) - cannot be a summary, has to be a niche insight
- Watch a finance / business / economics related movie and write a unique reflection (400 words)
- Attend an external webinar or finance-related event and post a brief reflection (400 words) + add photos or evidence of participation
- Give a short presentation (approx. 10 minutes) on any finance, economics, or related topic (can be outside the curriculum)
- Record a short video (5 minutes) explaining a concept you learned in the course for future students
- Write an opinion article or blog post (400 words) on a financial trend, investment idea, or market news
- Interview someone in finance (e.g., family member, professional) and share 3 new key insights learned with the class + written form (400 words)
- Participate in a virtual investment game or stock simulation (demo account) and write a short summary of your experience (400 words) + evidence
- Prepare a mini case study / analysis / pitch on a company for the class (400 words)
- Analyze macroeconomic event (interest rate changes, RRR changes, etc. - the reasons for its implications and future effects on the market) (400 words)
- Create a quiz or Kahoot on course topics for your peers (25 questions) + be able to explain correct asnwers
- *Other ideas are acceptable upon agreement*

Recommended Curriculum Reading

Rich Dad Poor Dad - Robert Kiyosaki (210 pages)

- When: October - Early in the course (Personal Finance Basics) + Great mindset shift for financial literacy and understanding assets vs. liabilities

The Psychology of Money - Morgan Housel (240 pages)

- When: October-November (Intro to finance & behavior) + Perfect for understanding how behavior and psychology impact financial decisions.

The Little Book of Common Sense Investing - John C. Bogle (220 pages)

- When: November (Introduction to Stocks & ETFs) + Explains why index funds and long-term investing work for most people.

The Bogleheads' Guide to Investing - Larimore, Lindauer & LeBoeuf (340 pages)

- When: November-December (Before we dive deeper into investing strategies) + Covers the fundamentals of investing in a practical, beginner-friendly way.

One Up on Wall Street - Peter Lynch (300 pages)

- When: December-January (As stock analysis section begins) + Teaches how everyday observations can lead to great stock picks.

Beating the Street - Peter Lynch (350 pages)

- When: January (Valuation and Stock Analysis) + Builds on One Up on Wall Street, with real-world examples and strategies for analyzing companies.

The Little Book That Still Beats the Market - Joel Greenblatt (180 pages)

- When: January-February (Valuation & ratios deep dive) + Explains value investing through the simple Magic Formula approach.

The Intelligent Investor - Benjamin Graham (640 pages)

- When: February-March (Advanced section on valuation) + The foundational text for long-term investing and margin of safety.

The Warren Buffett Way - Robert G. Hagstrom (280 pages)

- When: March (As students work on final stock projects) + Explains Buffett's philosophy and its practical application.

The Man Who Solved the Market - Gregory Zuckerman (380 pages)

- When: April-May (Advanced/optional reading) + Introduces the world of quantitative investing and financial innovation.

I Will Teach You to Be Rich (Young Adult Edition) - Ramit Sethi (270 pages)

- When: Flexible (Anytime during the course for personal finance tips) + A modern, action-oriented guide to budgeting, saving, and investing for beginners.

Other Recommended Reading

- **Thinking, Fast and Slow** - Daniel Kahneman (500 pages) – A deep dive into human decision-making and cognitive bias from a Nobel Prize-winning psychologist; highly relevant to investor psychology and financial choices.
- **Freakonomics -** Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner (320 pages) – A bestselling collection of surprising stories and data-driven investigations that challenge conventional wisdom about incentives and behavior.
- **The Big Short -** Michael Lewis (300 pages) – A gripping account of the 2008 financial crisis told through the eyes of outsiders who saw it coming; great narrative journalism with technical depth.
- **Flash Boys -** Michael Lewis (300 pages) – Investigates the rise of high-frequency trading and how Wall Street was reshaped by speed, algorithms, and hidden market structures.
- **The Most Important Thing -** Howard Marks (200 pages) – A reflective and philosophical take on investing by a seasoned value investor, focusing on risk, cycles, and second-level thinking.
- **Barbarians at the Gate -** Bryan Burrough & John Helyar (600 pages) – The true story of the leveraged buyout of RJR Nabisco; a business drama that reveals the excesses and complexity of corporate America in the 1980s.
- **When Genius Failed -** Roger Lowenstein (300 pages) – Chronicles the spectacular rise and fall of Long-Term Capital Management, showing how smart people with models can still blow up.
- **Poor Economics -** Abhijit V. Banerjee & Esther Duflo (450 pages) – A Nobel Prize-winning look into global poverty and how small-scale interventions can drive real economic improvement.
- **Shoe Dog -** Phil Knight (400 pages) – The memoir of Nike's co-founder, detailing the risks, failures, and breakthroughs behind one of the world's most iconic brands.
- **The Upstarts -** Brad Stone (370 pages) – A modern tech-business narrative about how Airbnb and Uber transformed industries, culture, and regulation.
- **Irrational Exuberance** - Robert J. Shiller (400 pages) – A landmark analysis of bubbles and market psychology, explaining how emotional behavior drives asset mispricing over time.
- **Security Analysis** - Benjamin Graham & David L. Dodd (700+ pages) – The classic bible of value investing; extremely detailed and technical, best suited for advanced students or long-term study.
- **Business Adventures** - John Brooks (400 pages) – A collection of engaging, well-written case studies about Wall Street, corporate failures, and management decisions; praised by Warren Buffett and Bill Gates.

- **The Black Swan -** Nassim Nicholas Taleb (450 pages) – Explores the impact of rare, unpredictable events in finance, economics, and life, challenging the usefulness of traditional forecasting.
- **The Investment Checklist -** Michael Shearn (350 pages) – A structured, question-driven approach to analyzing companies before investing; helps students think like long-term business owners.
- **Common Stocks and Uncommon Profits -** Philip A. Fisher (320 pages) – A foundational growth-investing book focusing on qualitative analysis and company research beyond numbers.
- **The Warren Buffett Way -** Robert G. Hagstrom (280 pages) – Explains Buffett's strategy, philosophy, and decision-making in accessible terms; useful for understanding fundamental investing principles.
- **The Outsiders -** William N. Thorndike (250 pages) – A study of eight unconventional CEOs who outperformed peers by focusing on capital allocation, not flashy growth or PR.
- **The Making of an American Capitalist -** Roger Lowenstein (450 pages) – A compelling biography of Warren Buffett, combining storytelling with lessons in discipline, temperament, and value investing.
- **Zero to One -** Peter Thiel (200 pages) – A startup manifesto exploring how to build unique, monopoly-like companies; emphasizes innovation, technology, and business strategy.

Recommended Movies and TV Shows

The Big Short (2015)

- What it's about: A dramatized story of how a few investors predicted the 2008 financial crisis and profited from the housing market collapse.
- When: February-March (during Valuation, Risk, and Economic Crises case studies).

Margin Call (2011)

- What it's about: A tense 24-hour window inside an investment bank at the start of the 2008 financial meltdown.
- When: February-March (alongside risk management and leverage discussions).

Inside Job (2010)

- What it's about: A documentary exploring the causes of the global financial crisis of 2008, including systemic corruption and regulatory failures.
- When: February (before or after "The Big Short" for deeper understanding of systemic risk).

Too Big to Fail (2011)

- What it's about: A dramatization of the U.S. government's response to the 2008 financial crisis, focusing on key decisions that shaped the bailout.
- When: February-March (policy, fiscal/monetary response discussions).

Betting on Zero (2016)

- What it's about: A documentary about Bill Ackman's activist short bet against Herbalife, revealing ethics and tactics in modern hedge funds.
- When: April (during discussions on hedge funds, activist investing, and short selling).

Wall Street (1987)

- What it's about: A fictional look into the excesses of 1980s Wall Street through the rise and fall of a young stockbroker under a ruthless corporate raider.
- When: January (when discussing investor ethics, insider trading, and corporate governance).

Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps (2010)

- What it's about: A sequel exploring the aftermath of the 2008 crash through personal and financial drama.
- When: February (complements crisis and ethics discussion).

Billions (2016-)

- What it's about: A drama series focusing on hedge funds, legal battles, and high-stakes investing strategies in New York's finance world.
- When: Optional - Throughout the course for students interested in modern hedge fund culture.

Industry (2020-)

- What it's about: A raw and realistic TV drama about young graduates navigating the high-pressure environment of investment banking.
- When: Optional - Anytime as an insight into finance careers and lifestyle challenges.

Platforms & Tools Information

WSJ + Barron's + MarketWatch

- Daily financial news, earnings reports, macroeconomic coverage, company interviews

Login: nemeckova.veronika@icloud.com / Password: NP10Investment

GuruFocus

- Deep company research, valuation metrics, insider trades, historical financials, Buffett-style stock screening

Login: investmentsociety.sc@gmail.com / Password: NP10.Investment

SeekingAlpha

- Analyst articles, earnings call transcripts, valuation models, stock ratings and community opinions

Login: investmentsociety.sc@gmail.com / Password: NPInvestment10

AlphaSpread

- Valuation tools (DCF, multiples), risk analysis, price target modeling, visual dashboards

Login: nemeckova.veronika@icloud.com / Password: NPInvestment.10

Quiver Quantitative

- Political trading disclosures, insider transactions, lobbying data, ESG ratings, alternative datasets

Login: NPIS / Password: NPInvestment.10

Free useful tools: Yahoo Finance, Bloomberg, CNBC, Zacks, Finacial Times

YouTube Educational Channels

YT videos are an excellent way to introduce new financial concepts in a simple, visual, and engaging format. They're especially effective as homework before lessons or as icebreakers at the start of a session - kick off meaningful discussion. Most channels below offer free, high-quality content ideal for beginners and curious learners alike.

- **The Plain Bagel** - Clear and objective explanations of investing concepts, valuation, market trends, and financial news without hype or bias.
- **Yahoo Finance -** Daily market updates, company news, earnings recaps, and short interviews with executives and analysts.
- **CNBC / CNBC Television -** Timely videos about global markets, earnings results, CEO insights, and economic developments in an accessible style.
- **Bloomberg Originals -** Well-produced mini-documentaries and interviews focusing on finance, technology, business trends, and global markets.
- **CrashCourse (Economics) -** Fast-paced animated videos explaining core economics concepts like supply and demand, inflation, and fiscal policy.
- **Good Works -** A creator offering humorous and slightly ironic takes on financial topics, investing trends, and real-world money behavior (great for younger audiences).
- **MarketBeat -** Short videos explaining recent market events, investing updates, and actionable stock-related news.
- **Business Insider -** Insightful videos on business strategy, money psychology, and case studies of companies and industries.
- **TLDR News (Economics & Global) -** Informative and visually engaging summaries of current political and economic events, often tied to markets and global finance.

Podcasts

- **Planet Money (NPR)** - Explains economic and financial concepts through real-world stories in a clear and entertaining way. *(Available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, NPR)*
- **The Indicator from Planet Money** - Quick, 10-minute episodes focused on current economic trends and data insights. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts, NPR)*
- **Invest Like the Best** - Patrick O'Shaughnessy - In-depth interviews with top investors and business leaders about markets and strategies. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **Masters in Business** - Barry Ritholtz - Conversations with influential figures in finance, covering investing and market insights. *(Bloomberg, Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **The Meb Faber Show** - Discussions on global investing strategies, asset allocation, and lessons from experienced professionals. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **Animal Spirits** - Michael Batnick & Ben Carlson - Covers market news, behavioral finance, and personal finance in an accessible style. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **Money for the Rest of Us** - J. David Stein - Breaks down how markets and investing work for everyday listeners, using practical examples. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **Freakonomics Radio** - Explores the hidden side of economics and human behavior through surprising and entertaining stories. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts)*
- **Exchanges at Goldman Sachs -** Professional-level market analysis and discussions on economic and industry trends by Goldman Sachs experts. *(Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Goldman Sachs Website)*

Course Rules of Conduct

The Foundations of Investing and Financial Markets course is designed to promote active learning, collaboration, and practical skills. To ensure fairness and **meaningful learning for all participants, the following rules apply (these will be shared with the class):**

1. Academic Integrity

- All work submitted must be your own.
- Using AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to generate entire assignments or presentations is prohibited.
- AI tools may be used for research or brainstorming only, not for producing the final submission.

2. Final Assignment & Extra Credit

- Submissions should reflect your personal understanding and analysis.
- To maintain authenticity:
  - Final Assignment: Will be presented live in class. If you cannot explain your slides or analysis during Q&A, the submission will not be accepted.
  - Book summaries: To prevent copy-paste from AI, these will be presented briefly (2-3 minutes) during a session instead of written form.
  - Webinar/event attendance: Must include proof of participation (e.g., screenshot, photo at event, or short video reflection).
  - Interviews: Submit a short audio/video snippet or screenshot of the interview (with permission).

3. Attendance & Engagement

- Minimum attendance of 70% (approx. 40 out of 56 sessions) is required for the course diploma - for bronze level.
- Active participation is expected during discussions, presentations, and Q&A sessions.

4. Use of Technology

- Google Classroom is the official platform for all materials and communication.
- Cameras should be ON during live sessions for engagement and accountability, only in rare cases (with explanation) can camera be off

5. Presentation Standards

- For any assignment involving a presentation:
  - You must speak and explain your content in your own words.
  - Reading from notes or slides without understanding will not count as successful completion.
  - If asked questions during your presentation and you cannot answer basic points, the assignment will be marked incomplete.