



Finance Writing Plan

Finance Writing Plan

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Summary

The Department of Finance and Legal Studies merged with the Department of Economics to form the Department of Finance and Economics (FIEC) beginning Fall 2021. Eight full-time, tenured faculty members from the Department of Economics during the 2020- 2021 academic year joined five full-time, tenured faculty members from the Department of Finance and Legal Studies. (Upon the retirement of Dr. Affaneh in 2022 there are four remaining finance faculty in FIEC.) The Economics Writing Plan was approved in 2021. The finance faculty of the new Department of Finance and Economics propose the following Finance Writing Plan for Finance programs within the new merged department. FIEC offers an undergraduate degree in finance, and its faculty members have been teaching courses in various graduate programs including the Master of Business Administration, Executive Master of Business Administration, and the Ph.D.—Business. The department has had no teaching assistants. Hence, the stakeholders are the full-time faculty and the students whom we instruct.

This development of this writing plan was launched during the Fall 2021 semester with writing across the curriculum as a consistent topic of discussion at department faculty meetings and with more targeted discussions involving Dr. Stephanie Jozefowicz (FIEC Chair and author of the Economics Writing Plan) and Dr. Alan Eastman (FIEC WAC liaison for finance faculty). It became quickly apparent that the issues surrounding writing across the curriculum for economics programs were also applicable to FIEC's finance programs. Hence this proposal draws heavily on the theoretical support for and application of writing pedagogy found in the Economics Writing Plan.

Throughout academic year 2021-2022, an inventory of writing activities across all finance-related undergraduate course offerings was compiled, and various faculty engaged in broader discussion of assessment and how future assessment might interface with WAC. Student learning objectives relating to Eberly College learning goals have previously been assessed in individual courses using specific assessment methods. These methods are consistent with and support the objectives of this writing plan

On March 1, 2023 the faculty in the Department of Finance and Economics voted to support the Finance Writing Plan for the Finance major as described below along with any revisions recommended by the WAC Director for continuing program facilitation on pages 17 - 18 of this document.

Department of Finance and Economics
Department Writing Plan for the Finance Major
Rollout (Fall 2023)

Professional and Academic Genres in Finance

Finance majors pursue jobs across a wide range of for-profit business, banking, non-profit, and government career paths. A finance degree is highly regarded in the labor market as it signals deeper analytical skills that can complement many other areas of study in business and lead to career advancement into upper-level leadership positions. Students trained in Finance must be comfortable working with mathematical equations, accounting and financial market data, statistically analyzing data, interpreting financial reports and statistical results, presenting data in the form of tables and graphs, and drawing policy conclusions.

The following paragraph from the Economics Writing Plan applies also to our finance programs:

In a frequently cited paper by Hansen (2001), six expected proficiencies for undergraduate Economics majors are enumerated:

1. Access existing knowledge
2. Display command of existing knowledge
3. Interpret existing knowledge
4. Interpret and manipulate economic data
5. Apply existing knowledge
6. Create new knowledge

Hansen points out, “In a sense, the sequence of proficiencies loosely parallels Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy of cognitive objectives but in a form that makes them appropriate and meaningful in economics.” Furthermore, Hansen envisions introductory courses primarily emphasizing the lower-level proficiencies (1-3), upper-level courses extending the emphasis to higher level proficiencies (4 and 5), and research-intensive courses focusing on proficiency 6. Writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate are both important dimensions to guide students towards achieving these proficiencies across the different undergraduate course levels.

As noted above, these proficiencies apply also to finance majors. Finance majors utilize economic data broadly defined, including financial reporting and financial market data along with traditional economic data such as GDP, interest rates, unemployment, etc. Finance professionals typically write a variety of analytical research reports. These vary from short, focused data analysis papers involving a few targeted variables such as a lease versus buy decision for a corporate asset to in-depth market analysis involving many types of data trying to predict the future direction of financial markets. Written communication skills include standard prose, as well as theoretical math equations, data tables and graphs, and financial model results. The IUP Department of Finance and Economics is committed to helping students in improving their writing skills toward the goal of being able to communicate as professionals in the field are required to do.

Student Writing Skills and Abilities

Different Finance courses lend themselves to focusing on different aspects of writing abilities. We limit our focus to 300- and 400-level courses. (FIN 143 Financial Wellness is our only 100- or 200-level course and is cross-listed with ECON 143, so we will defer to the Economics Writing Plan for that course and include it in our curriculum map as FIN 143 or ECON 143.) Virtually all finance majors complete ECON 121 and ECON 122 (as well as other 100- or 200-level courses in mathematics and accounting) prior to taking their 300-level finance courses. These courses prepare our majors at a basic level as noted in the Economics Writing Plan: “exposure to fundamental building blocks of communicating with tables, graphs, and mathematical equations occurs in the 100- and 200-level courses. The proportion of Economics majors in any single class section typically is 10% or less. Thus, the emphasis is to develop key economic language and skills to better enable students to understand and apply these concepts

across the broad range of their own disciplines.

Basic skills are reinforced, and new skills are expanded in the 300- and 400-level courses. Most 300- and 400-level courses are required and consist almost exclusively of Finance majors. FIN 310 Fundamentals of Finance is required of all Eberly College business majors. Hence, instructors may tailor writing- to-learn (WTL) and writing-to-communicate (WTC) assignments based on specific course content relevant to similarly situated student groups made up almost entirely of business majors.

The IUP Department of Finance and Economics is committed to introducing, emphasizing, and reinforcing these skills and abilities throughout the curriculum, and does so through the purposeful mapping of writing assignments and activities that follows at the end of this document.

Integration of Writing into Undergraduate Curriculum

Writing has long been an emphasis of the Finance faculty in the Department of Finance and Economics despite the designation of only one course (FIN 422 Seminar in Finance) as writing-intensive under IUP's previous system. Course syllabi include many writing assignments and developing good communication skills for our students has always been a high priority. Moving forward, the finance faculty in the Department of Finance and Economics will more transparently document and develop the writing activities for our students.

Writing instruction in the Department of Finance and Economics is integrated in two ways: writing-to-learn (WTL) and writing-to-communicate (WTC).

WTL activities allow students to acquire financial analysis tools and enhance financial knowledge through the writing process. In Finance classes, students participate in writing-to-learn activities in order to...

- Employ financial language and models
- Work through and describe complicated concepts and mathematical equations
- Practice self-expression and express individual opinions utilizing scholarly information
- Demonstrate problem solving and graphing skills in a step-by-step manner
- Foster critical thinking skills
- Respond to reading content, analyze published sources, and make connections between texts across current events news articles, academic journal articles, government agency websites, financial markets websites, legal writings, Federal Reserve publications, and other professional publications
- Develop note taking skills
- Pose discussion questions relevant to a theme
- Cultivate succinct prose writing skills

WTC involves direct communication of course content to demonstrate proficiency describing and conducting financial analysis. In finance courses, students practice writing-to-communicate in order to...

- Employ and synthesize financial concepts and models
- Display problem solving and presentation skills
- Demonstrate critical thinking and knowledge of the course material
- Answer questions and express ideas in a clear, thoughtful, and organized manner
- Gain mastery of basic editing and proof-reading such as identifying paragraph and sentence construction, word choice, and citation format
- Develop proficiency with writing at all stages of research including research notes, data collection, data analysis, reporting financial and statistical results, and addressing policy implications
- Ethically and accurately represent diverse perspectives and experiences

¹ "What is Writing to Learn?" *Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse*. Colorado State University. 2015. <http://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop2d.cfm>

Communicating Writing Expectations to Students

In addition to course syllabi statements, the Department of Finance and Economics communicates writing expectations to undergraduate students through a combination of writing assignment structures and instructions, discussion about writing expectations when assignments are made, potential preliminary draft/writing product feedback by either an instructor or a peer, and instructor feedback on final draft/product submissions. Furthermore, instructors actively encourage students to take advantage of resources available through the IUP Writing Center when applicable.

Most courses assign several low-stakes WTL activities throughout a semester. Other common writing activities include essay questions in exams and major assignments. Returning to the six proficiencies for undergraduate economic majors (and applied to finance majors as well) enumerated by Hansen (2001), 100- and 200-level class assessments will primarily utilize WTL exercises to help students access existing knowledge, display command of existing knowledge, and interpret existing knowledge in economics (or finance) when presented as prose, algebraic equations, data tables, statistical reports, and graphical analysis. Finance majors are involved in these WTL exercises in their economics, accounting, and mathematics courses taken prior to beginning their finance major courses at the 300-level. As students progress into 300- and 400-level finance classes, a combination of WTL and WTC activities will guide students to interpret and manipulate financial data and apply existing knowledge. Through the Student Managed Investment Portfolio courses, students will have opportunities to create new knowledge as they conduct their own financial research and manage significant amounts of IUP funds.

By employing a variety of WTL and WTC activities, students regularly encounter the need to formulate their thoughts in writing across the Department of Finance and Economics finance curriculum. For WTL activities, grading is primarily based on completion or content ideas. Rather than trying to implement a “one-size-fits-all” common assignment approach, instructors have the flexibility to develop WTC assignments including financial analyses, reaction papers, case studies, research papers, presentations with slides and/or multi-media components, etc. to best fit sub-disciplinary course emphases. Common assignments are used for multiple sections of the same course for assessment of learning activities required for accreditation purposes. As the Department continues to implement broader assessment strategies, gaps can be determined and addressed.

Students will continue to take English 202 as required by IUP Liberal Studies

Department of Finance and Economics Commitment to Writing Syllabus Statement

Department of Finance and Economics faculty are committed to adding the following writing statement to Finance course syllabi (Note: a slightly different version has already been added for Economics course syllabi):

Effective writing is critical to a student's current academic and future career success. Thus, the Department of Finance and Economics is committed to developing student writing that includes communicating with tables, graphs, mathematical equations, and financial and statistical analyses throughout the curriculum. In Finance courses, students will engage in various writing activities and assignments intended to improve their learning and communication skills and to prepare them for professional careers. In this class you will complete writing assignments and activities designed to improve your communication skills in the profession.

Implementation and Assessment of Department Writing Plan

Based on the Director recommendations for the Economics Writing Plan, the following action items for continuing program facilitation are expected:

- Elect at least one faculty member to continue to be the WAC/Finance Majors Liaison (this should count as department Service)
- Provide all Finance faculty with a copy of the DWP
- Encourage Finance faculty to add “Department Commitment to Writing” statement to syllabus as appropriate
- Conduct biennial assessment of a subset of 300- and 400-level Finance courses as part of the broader assessment plan for Finance majors such that this assessment will focus on Finance primary and secondary majors and will utilize an adequate subset of offered courses for a given assessment year
- Report results to the WAC Director for feedback and guidance
- Add areas for the teaching and assessment of writing as goals on department and faculty five-year review documents
- Update the writing outcomes curriculum map as courses are added, removed, and revised in the Finance curriculum (and communicate these changes to the WAC Director)

WRITING OUTCOMES CURRICULUM MAP

Department of Finance and Economics finance instructors will implement a combination of writing-to-learn (WTL) and writing-to-communicate (WTC) activities that are differentiated across course levels. Writing within professional finance incorporates mathematical equations, as well as, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and written presentation of data and statistical analysis through tables, graphs, spreadsheets and prose. Hence, learning to communicate well within finance must include the fundamental building blocks of learning to work with written problem-solving equations, produce effective spreadsheets, develop organized data tables and financial information, interpret and describe statistical results, as well as, learning to write in a succinct narrative style.

The Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map demonstrates

- Conscious effort on the part of department faculty has been made to place core disciplinary genres at appropriate levels of the curriculum and reinforcing the writing skills necessary for students to succeed in writing those genres
- Thoughtful integration of writing-to-learn (WTL) activities in most courses in the curriculum

Balanced measures for assessing writing as process and product, i.e., writing is graded for demonstrating mastery of course content, as well as, improvement of writing skills over time

Course Number, Course Title, and Course Prerequisite(s) ¹	Expected Writing Skills	Sample WTL and WTC Activities (Course components include some selection of the following assignments ²)	Introduced, Reinforced, or Emphasized	Genres Modeled through Reading
FIN 143, ECON 143 Financial Wellness Prerequisite(s): None	a) Students should be able to coherently summarize key points from a presentation and clearly explain the linkages between these key points. b) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials. c) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use diagrams and graphs.	1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Web chat 4. Newspaper/Song lyric/YouTube video/Movie commentary writing 5. Reflective writing 6. Process writing 7. Essay/process writing exams 8. Creative writing 9. Position paper 10. Annotated bibliography	Introduced	Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings
FIN 310 Fundamentals of Finance Prerequisite(s): ACCT 201, MATH 214. Non-Business majors: ACCT 200 or ACCT 201 (ACCT 201 recommended), MATH 214 or MATH 216 or MATH 217 (MATH 214 recommended)	a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials. b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data. c) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.	1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 6. Excel spreadsheet analyses/written reports	Introduced or Reinforced	Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles
FIN 315 Financial Analysis Using Electronic Spreadsheets Prerequisite(s): COSC 101 or IFMG 101 or IFMG 110 and FIN 310 (or corequisite)	a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials. b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial spreadsheets. c) Students employ financial communication skills by application of electronic spreadsheet software for financial analysis and modeling and by building spreadsheet templates to solve various financial problems.	1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 6. Problem analysis with Excel spreadsheet solutions/short answers in homework and exams	Introduced/ Reinforced	Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles

<p>FIN 320 Corporate Finance</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): Grade of C or better in FIN 310</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data.</p> <p>c) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 6. Corporate Governance Case (WTC) 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 324 Principles of Investments</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 310</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data.</p> <p>c) Students are expected to be able to apply valuation concepts to a wide range of assets and be able to use data from online sources such as financial reporting databases and other sources of financial information to aid in the development of sound investment policies. They should be able to explain investment choices and investment policies through the use of graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 6. Position paper/Stock Simulation Analysis and Report 	<p>Emphasized</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>

<p>FIN 360 Insurance and Risk Management</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 310</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial information and statistical analyses to evaluate alternative risk management techniques.</p> <p>c) Students employ financial communication skills by demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the risk management process by providing written analyses of risk management cases. Students use correct sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and logical thought development in producing a risk-related term paper.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams and cases 6. Position paper/Term Paper on Risk Management or Insurance Topic 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 365 Student Managed Investment Portfolio I - Valuation</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): Finance and accounting majors or instructor permission.</p>	<p>a) Students are expected (by way of market updates and sector reports) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data.</p> <p>b) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem (security and portfolio valuation), generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p> <p>d)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 2. Reflective writing 3. Process writing 4. Essay/process writing Financial Sector Updates, Financials Reports Contextual analysis/solution, Valuation Reports and Investment Recommendations 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 366 Student Managed Investment Portfolio II - Performance</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 365</p>	<p>a) Students are expected (by way of market updates and sector reports) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data.</p> <p>b) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem (security and portfolio valuation), generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 2. Reflective writing 3. Process writing 4. Essay/process writing Sector Performance, Company Performance Reports, Portfolio Performance Reports 5. Contextual analysis/solution, Valuation Reports and Investment Recommendations 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>

<p>FIN 410 Financial Institutions and Markets</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 324</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use financial reports and financial market data.</p> <p>c) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 5. Contextual analysis/solution; Stability of Financial Markets and Bank Safety homework/cases. 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
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<p>FIN 422 Seminar in Finance</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 320 and FIN 324, Seniors Only</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected to be able to create and use diagrams, graphs, spreadsheets, and financial statements and reports.. Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, written summaries, and oral presentations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing via case summaries and speaker summaries 6. Presentation slides Oral presentations of case studies supporting group analysis and decisions 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 424 International Financial Management</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 310</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use diagrams and graphs.</p> <p>c) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams and quizzes 7. Measure risk, identify hedging techniques, and make recommendations via individual and/or group projects 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 425 Financial Derivatives</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 320 and FIN 324 or equivalent / permission</p>	<p>a) Students are expected to be able to generate a cogent set of course notes based on classroom presentations, outside data, and other source materials.</p> <p>b) Students are expected (by way of exams) to be able to create and use diagrams, graphs, equations, data tables and spreadsheet models.</p> <p>c) Students are expected to be able to apply analytical techniques to a given business problem, generate and compare alternatives, develop solutions and effectively communicate the results through graphs, charts, financial reports, and written summaries.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing exams 6. Contextual analysis/solutions; strategies involving financial derivatives (homework/exams). 	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>

<p>FIN 481 Special Topics</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): As appropriate to course content</p>	<p>As special courses are taught, the instructor of record has the prerogative to determine course goals and the structure of the course, in consultation with the Department Chair/Department Curriculum Committee.</p>	<p>TDB</p>	<p>Reinforced or Emphasized</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 482 Independent Study</p> <p>Individual research and analysis of contemporary problems and issues in a concentrated area of study under the guidance of a senior faculty member.</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): Prior approval through advisor, faculty member, department chairperson, dean and Office of the Provost</p>	<p>Students are to build and deliver a professional presentation demonstrating their writing skills.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note-taking (including narrative, algebraic equation, data table, and graphical analyses) 2. Individual and/or collaborative learning responsive writing 3. Reflective writing 4. Process writing 5. Essay/process writing 6. Presentation slides 	<p>Reinforced or Emphasized</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>
<p>FIN 493 Finance Internship</p> <p>Prerequisite(s): FIN 310, FIN 315, FIN 324; Prior approval through advisor, faculty member, department chairperson, dean and Office of the Provost</p>	<p>Students are expected to work in professional setting to refine their understanding of the standard tools of the trade in the context of hands on experiences as directed by their internship supervisor.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Journal 2. Employer determined analysis/presentations 3. Summary paper 	<p>Emphasized</p>	<p>Textbook, websites, current events reported in news media, popular articles, videos, supplemental readings, scholarly articles</p>

¹ Based on the list of courses included in the Course Descriptions section of the *IUP Undergraduate Catalog, 2022-2023*, as well as curricular changes being brought forward during the 2022-2023 academic year.

² See <https://english.umd.edu/writing-programs/writing-center/undergraduate/writing-center/faculty-resources> "Writing Assignments Across the Curriculum" listed here.

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Appendix A – Writing Samples Assessment

The FIN 422 Seminar in Finance (capstone course) is completed by graduating seniors and case analyses and PowerPoint presentations are graded as part of the course. It is suggested that at the end of a semester, two faculty members may separately review and rate the capstone case analysis projects using the rubric provided on page 16 of this document.

Below is a typical writing assignment used in FIN 422. In the future, a statement similar to the following one will be included in assignment instructions:

*The Finance major is undergoing programmatic evaluation. Please be advised that your work may be randomly chosen for program assessment purposes. Assessment activities **will have no bearing on your course grade**. If you have any questions about assessment protocols for the Finance major, please contact the Department Chair.*

Writing Assignment

Students are to conduct a finance case analysis project and submit their findings in a case analysis report. Students work in small groups with group size dependent on the course enrollment.

Case analysis provides active learners with opportunities to use a process to identify and to solve organizational problems. Thus, by analyzing situations that are described in cases and presenting the results, active learners (i.e., students) become skilled at effectively using the tools, techniques, and concepts that combine to form the organizational analysis process. In addition, the case analysis report and presentation provide students an opportunity to write-to-communicate.

Students are presented a number of cases throughout the semester. Presented within the cases are problems and situations that managers and those with whom they work must analyze and resolve. A finance case can focus on finance theory, a single organization, or a business unit of a large, diversified firm. Students present their case analyses and discuss their results in class throughout the semester. Each group's final case submission of the semester must include the formal written assignment described below.

Basically, the case analysis method calls for a careful diagnosis of current conditions (as manifested by its external and internal environments) so that appropriate strategic actions can be recommended in light of the firm's strategic intent and financial condition. Strategic actions are taken to develop and then use a firm's financial strengths and core competencies to select and implement different strategies, including short-term versus long-term financing, capital structure decisions, capital budgeting choices, corporate restructuring and mergers and acquisitions. Thus, appropriate strategic actions help the firm to survive in the long run as it creates and uses competitive advantages as the foundation for maximizing shareholder value. The case method that we are recommending to you has a rich heritage as a pedagogical approach to the study and understanding of strategic financial management.

The written case analysis report must include:

- Title / Cover page
- Executive summary
- Table of Contents and Table of Figures
- Glossary of terms
- Body / Text
 - ▶ Introduction through Summary
- Appendices (Tables, graphs, visuals, financial spreadsheets, exchange rates, etc.)

WAC Assessment Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations = 4	Meets Expectations = 3	Emerging = 2	Below Expectations = 1
Clearly and correctly presenting data analysis	Demonstrates clear/strong understanding of how to interpret and explain financial and statistical data for a familiar audience	Demonstrates general understanding of how to interpret and explain financial and statistical data and write it for a familiar audience	Demonstrates an attempt to interpret and explain financial and statistical data but with errors	Does not explain or interpret financial data or does so inaccurately
Clearly and correctly linking finance theory to the problem or issue	Prose descriptions are vivid and non-generic; provides ample examples and details in responses of appropriate length	Prose descriptions are vivid and non-generic, uses minimal amount of examples and details, at or close to appropriate length for document	Uses some descriptive language but it is not impactful or vivid; may not have enough description	Vague, generic terms, unclear, does not provide the full amount of necessary/required information
Understanding of audience and task	Formal language, free of colloquialisms, mindful of stakes and audience	Approaches task seriously, may contain only a few minor lapses in formality	Approaches task seriously but contains enough lapses in formality that they are distracting	Inappropriate tone or language (e.g. contractions, stream of consciousness, lack of organization, self-referential)
Grammar and mechanics	Polished grammar and mechanics	Minor errors that do not impede meaning or sentence clarity	Sentences are readable but there are enough errors that they are distracting	Grammatical issues detract from readability
Uses disciplinary terminology appropriately	Fluency with terminology of the discipline	Uses some disciplinary terms mostly appropriately; may miss a few key terms that could be helpful for clearer expression	An even mix of accurate and inaccurately used terminology; may use commonplace terms more than disciplinary terms	Most terms used inaccurately or haphazardly; or does not use any terminology from the discipline
Effective Power Point Presentation Design	This is a professionally produced PowerPoint document and presentation.	Professional and ready for an external audience (clear, concise, easy to read and follow, page numbers, uses headings, formatting options)	There is an attempt at general formatting, but lack of attention to detail (unclear or missing headings, formatting, and organization).	Lack of organization, haphazard or lack of formatting, difficult to follow.

Appendix B –Writing Assessment Results, Fall 2022

The Writing Across the Curriculum Grading Rubric was used for assessing “high stakes” student writing assignments from the Fall 2022 semester that were graded. These assignments entailed deep course content coverage along with both WTL student expectations and more importantly WTC expectations. Finance majors in FIN 422 (Seminar in Finance) had a case analysis evaluated and Finance majors in FIN 360 (Risk Management & Insurance) had a term paper evaluated. FIN 360 papers were included in the assessment as enrollment in FIN 422 is unusually low in Fall 2022 resulting in only four group case submissions. Only the FIN 422 case analyses required power point presentations so results for criterion 6 reflect only FIN 422 submissions.

The results are considered “baseline” survey results from the first assessment of student writing samples. Based upon the rubric, the percentages of papers that exceeded expectations, met expectations, did not meet expectations but were emerging, and those that were below expectations, were determined. The results were as follows:

Areas in which student writing was ABOVE expectation: 77%+

Criterion 2: Clearly and correctly linking finance theory to the problem or issue

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	17% / 67%	17% / 0%

Criterion 3: Understanding of audience and task

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	42% / 50%	8% / 0%

Criterion 5: Uses disciplinary terminology appropriately

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	17% / 75%	8% / 0%

Criterion 6: Effective Power Point presentation design

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	0% / 100%	0% / 0%

Areas in which student writing was BELOW expectation: 77%+

Criterion 1: Clearly and correctly presenting data analysis

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	8% / 67%	25% / 0%

Criterion 4: Grammar and mechanics

Year/Term	Exceeds/Meets	Emerging/Below
Fall 2022	17% / 50%	8% / 25%

Analysis of Baseline (2022) Assessment Results and Recommendations from the WAC Director

Notably, students are exceeding expectations in all but two rubric criteria. The department should be commended for their work in achieving student writing outcomes. The majority of students (between 50 and 100%) in this sample are meeting expectations for the defined writing criteria, although the department would like to see a higher percentage of students exceeding expectations.

Over the next two years, department faculty will review this DWP and use these assessment results for professional development and curriculum revision as they deem appropriate. To make the most out of this time toward improving student writing skills and therefore assessment results, my recommendations are as follows:

- (Re)consider the lowest end of the rubric: it seems unusual that student writing samples scored in the lowest range in only one of the criteria. Faculty should discuss what it really would take to score in that range and if those expectations are too low for graduating seniors.
- In almost all categories, the highest percentage of students are in the “meeting” range. This suggests that overall writing pedagogy could be aimed more toward students who are meeting expectations to try and challenge them more so they are pushed toward “exceeding.”
- The department should look carefully at criteria where 20% or more of students are emerging or below expectations (Criteria 1 and 4) and consider ways to revise pedagogy and/or support all students in improving these skills. Department instructors who feel confident in their teaching in those areas or the WAC director could run workshops for the full faculty in these specific areas.