

Financial Economics

Instructor: Ji Huang (jihuang@cuhk.edu.hk)

Office Hour: Ji Huang by appointment;

Lectures: Friday 9:30 AM - 12:15 PM.

Venue: Yasumoto International Academic Park LT8

Course Description: This course is on the economic foundation of modern asset pricing theory. It serves as an introduction to the functioning of the financial market as an efficient venue for organizing investment activities. Various issues on risk measurement, risk assessment, managing risk, investors' psychological attitudes towards risk, and its implications on consumption and portfolio decision making in an uncertain world will be introduced and discussed. The classical Markowitz's mean-variance analysis, CAPM, multi-factor asset pricing theory and no-arbitrage asset pricing theory as cornerstones of modern finance will be received in-depth treatment.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students are expected to:

- Acquire advanced knowledge in asset pricing theory in Finance;
- Develop skills in financial modeling and analysis;
- Be able to apply the analytical tools introduced in the course to study complex issues in financial markets.

Prerequisites: Basic knowledge about microeconomics, macroeconomics, calculus, matrix algebra, probability and statistics are necessary for students to comprehend the contents in this course.

Course Web Page: Access through CUSIS.

Main References:

- Course Handouts
- Campbell, John, (2018): *“Financial Decisions and Markets: a Course in Asset Pricing”*, Princeton University Press.
- Cochrane, John H., (2005): *“Asset Pricing”*, Princeton University Press.
- Hull, C.J., (2011): *“Options, Futures, and Other Derivatives”*, 8th Edition, Prentice Hall.

- McDonald, Robert, “*Derivatives Markets*”, Addison Wesley, Boston. 2nd edition.

Course Requirements:

- **Class Participation [10%]:** Attendance contributes 10% to your final grade as participation score. Active class participation enriches the course, which is highly encouraged.
- **Problem Sets [20%]:** There are four problem sets assigned during the semester. For each problem set, students will have one week or two to complete. The problem sets are designed to give you the opportunity to review and enhance the material introduced in the class.
- **No Midterm Exam.**
- **Final Exam [70%]:** It is usually scheduled in the week after the final class. All students are expected to take the final examination at the same time. If you are sick or have other compelling reasons preventing you from taking the test, a certified medical note or proper documents from a dean or other authorities must be supplied. Then a make-up exam might be arranged with new questions different from those in the final examination taken by other students.

Honesty in Academic Work: Please visit the following web-site for details of university policy on Honesty in Academic Work: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

Course Outline:

The sessions outlined below include topics which are going to be covered in this course. These are only approximate and more time will be spent on some topics than others.

1. Expected Utility and Risk Aversion

- Utility theory under uncertainty
- Absolute and relative risk aversion
- Stochastic dominance

2. Mean Variance Analysis

- Efficient frontier with N risky assets
- Efficient frontier with riskless Asset

3. Linear Factor Models

- capital asset pricing model (CAPM)
- arbitrage pricing theory (APT)

4. No-Arbitrage Asset Pricing Theory with Applications

- Introduction to Derivatives
- Pricing Forwards and Futures
- Option Pricing: put-call parity, Binomial Option Pricing, Black-Scholes Model
- Credit Risk Modeling