



PRE MBA QUANTITATIVE SKILLS

Finance, Accounting, Data mechanics/terminology. Familiarize yourself with the skills and terminology to jumpstart your MBA Journey. These three courses are offered through [Coursera for Rice](#).

INSTRUCTORS



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GET AN INTRODUCTION TO

- ✓ Microsoft Excel
- ✓ Financial Accounting
- ✓ Capital Budgeting
- ✓ Capital Expenditure
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Data Analysis
- ✓ Financial Statements

About these three Courses

These courses were designed to equip you with a basic understanding of business finance, accounting, and data analysis. We've put together these three courses with the explicit intent of helping people prepare for the rigors of a prestigious MBA program, as well as, introducing and refreshing basic knowledge and skills for aspiring business leaders.

Having taught at Rice for nearly a combined 40 years, we have found that entering students often lack confidence in some fundamental quantitative skills, as well as struggling with accounting and finance mechanics and terminology. As a result we have put together a series of lectures, plenty of practice opportunities, and video walk-throughs that will allow you to confidently take a seat at the leadership table.

Applied Learning Project

Learners will have the opportunity to practice foundational math skills, familiarize themselves with terminology, and complete scenario-based problems commonly found in finance or accounting courses. More specifically, learners will construct financial statements, navigate key concepts and tools in financial accounting, identify basic principles of financial valuation discounting, perform some data analysis, and more.

Course 1 – Math & Statistics Primer

This course will equip students with the quantitative skills needed to begin any Masters of Business Administration program. The goal is not to build foundational skills or expert mastery but rather, to provide some middle ground to “shake the rust off” skills that a typical MBA student probably knows, but may not have thought about for quite some time. The course provides a quick refresher on top level math and statistics concepts that will be used throughout the MBA curriculum at any school. All of the concepts will be reinforced with practical real-world examples. All calculations, formulas, and data analysis will be performed in excel, with many detailed demonstrations. For those unfamiliar or less comfortable with spreadsheets, the course will also prepare students with a basic facility for using spreadsheets to solve quantitative business problems. This course has no prerequisites and is intended for any audience.

Course 2 – Accounting Primer

Financial Statements are a key source of information about the economic activities of a firm. This course is a primer on the construction and basic interpretation of financial statements that should provide learners with a rudimentary understanding of the types of information included in the four primary financial statements: balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement, and statement of stockholders equity. We will spend time recording transactions using accounting terminology and then building financial statements from those transactions to provide you with an understanding of how and why transactions influence the various financial statements. We will focus on the language of accounting including such terms as the accounting equation, debits and credits, T-accounts, journal entries, accruals versus cash flows, and more.

By the end of the course, learners will be able to understand the basic differences and similarities of the four financial statements, and will have developed a solid foundation to build upon in an introductory financial accounting course at the MBA level. It is ideally suited for those learners that have never taken a financial accounting course before, as well as for those students who would like to refresh their understanding of basic financial accounting concepts.

Course 3 – Finance for Non Finance Professionals Primer

This short course surveys all the major topics covered in a full semester MBA level finance course, but with a more intuitive approach on a very high conceptual level. The goal here is to give you a roadmap and framework for how financial professionals make decisions.

We will cover the basics of financial valuation, the time value of money, compounding returns, and discounting the future. You will understand discounted cash flow (DCF) valuation and how it compares to other methods. We also step inside the mind of a corporate financial manager and develop the basic tools of capital budgeting. We will survey the how, when, and where to spend money, make tradeoffs about investment, growth, dividends, and how to ensure sound fiscal discipline. Our journey then turns to a Wall Street or capital markets perspective of investments as we discuss the fundamental tradeoff between risk and return. We then synthesize our discussion of risk with our valuation framework and incorporate it into series of direct applications to practice.

This course requires no prior familiarity with finance. Rather, it is intended to be a first step for anyone who is curious about understanding stock markets, valuation, or corporate finance. We will walk through all of the tools and quantitative analysis together and develop a guide for understanding the seemingly complex decisions that finance professionals make.

By the end of the course, you will develop an understanding of the major conceptual levers that push and pull on financial decision making and how they relate to other areas of business. The course should also serve as a roadmap for where to further your finance education and it would be an excellent introduction of any student contemplating an MBA or finance concentration, but who have little background in the area.

FAQs

What if I have technical issues while enrolling or navigating courses? Who can I contact for support?

- Contact riceonline@rice.edu with any questions regarding Coursera for Rice and a member of the Rice Online Learning team will assist you.

Do I need to take the courses in any specific order?

- No, these courses may be taken in any order, however the suggestion is to begin with Math & Stats, Accounting, and then Finance for Non Finance Professionals.

Is this course really 100% online? Do I need to attend any classes in person or live online?

- This course is completely online, so there's no need to show up to a classroom in person. You can access your lectures, readings and assignments anytime and anywhere via the web or your mobile device.

Who has access to Coursera for Rice?

- All current students, faculty, and staff can enroll in any Rice course offered on Coursera.

Do I receive academic credit for completing courses through Coursera for Rice?

- No, academic credit is not awarded for courses taken on Coursera. The courses offered on Coursera are created and taught by Rice faculty, but are not official academic courses. If you complete a course on Coursera, you earn a certificate offered by Coursera.

What's the difference between taking a course through Coursera for Rice and taking a course through the main Coursera site (coursera.org)?

- Coursera for Rice gives you free access to the same courses you would have to pay for if you accessed them on the Coursera site. While anyone can audit a course for free on the Coursera site, auditing students don't have access to some learning activities, assignment grading and cannot participate in the course discussion forums. Through Coursera for Rice, you have free, premium access to all Rice courses, which means you can fully participate in the courses and can even earn a certificate for successfully completing a course.

How long does it take to complete a course?

- Courses are self-paced. You can take as much time as you need, but most courses are designed to be completed in 4-6 weeks if you're investing 3-6 hours per week. However, this online material also works well as a supplement to your current coursework and/or interests.

Can students skip videos and assignments?

- Yes, but it is not advisable. Students need to complete graded assignments to complete the course, which are end of week quizzes (usually around 10-15 questions) and a cumulative final (cumulative per course, not all three). One additional step in the Finance for Non-Financial Professionals course, students have to complete a capstone project in order to complete the course.

Can students skip to the end and take the exam to see how they do?

- Students would need to take each weekly quiz in order to access and complete the final exam.

Are assignments and exams automatically graded?

- Yes.

Is there a TA or another way for students to get assistance with the material?

- Not currently. For any questions related to the course, please reach out to riceonline@rice.edu.