PATREON PREMIUM GUIDE · FINANCE FOUNDATIONS

9 FREE FINANCE COURSES

A practical path for Christian entrepreneurs and operators

Rick Piña Coaching

Wharton · Yale · Duke · Illinois · Columbia · NYIF · MIT OCW
Institution-branded course cards + QR codes

Read the books. Decide with cash. Manage risk and behavior. Then go deeper only if you need the system map.

LEARNING GOAL

IN THIS BOOKLET

FROM RICK

God is your source.

He is not asking you to replace faith with spreadsheets.

He is asking you to grow your ability to manage what He puts in your hands.

Matthew 25:15 (TPT) says the master entrusted gold to his servants, each according to his ability to manage.

If the assignment feels heavy, Heaven already rated your capacity.

Audit mode is fine. Learning is the point.

Start with Financial Accounting, then Corporate Finance.

Add Behavioral Finance so good tools do not get undone by bad habits.

God can bless you. You still have to steward the blessing.

HONEST CAVEAT

On Coursera, free almost always means **audit** (videos/readings). Certificates and many graded quizzes are paid (aid may be available). MIT OCW materials are free for self-study (no Coursera-style certificate, and some cases may need separate purchase). Confirm enroll options on each course page.

STARTER PATH

Suggested 4-week starter

Busy operator · ~5-8 hours/week · audit mode OK · pick 2-3 courses

WEEK	FOCUS	COURSE(S)
1-2	Read the books	**Introduction to Financial Accounting** (Wharton)
2-3	Decide with money	**Introduction to Corporate Finance** (Wharton)
4	Bias check + next	**Behavioral Finance** (Duke) · optional Illinois stretch

If only two: Accounting + Corporate Finance. If accounting is solid: Corporate Finance + Decision-Making and Scenarios.

FULL PATH

Suggested learning order

01 **Introduction to Financial Accounting**
WHARTON

02 **Introduction to Corporate Finance**
WHARTON

03 **Behavioral Finance**
DUKE

04 **Financial Analysis of Scenarios and Decisions**
ILLINOIS GIES

05 **Decision-Making and Scenarios**
WHARTON

06 **Introduction to Risk Management**
NYIF

07 **Financial Markets**
YALE

08 **Economics of Money and Banking**
COLUMBIA

09 **Finance Theory II (15.402)**
MIT SLOAN

Courses 8-9 (Columbia Money & Banking, MIT Finance Theory II) are optional depth after the Wharton pair and operator toolkit courses.

Scan any QR in the following pages to open the official course URL on your phone.

COURSE CARDS

Nine institution-branded courses

The Wharton School
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

COURSE 01

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~2 WEEKS AT 10 HOURS/WEEK (4 MODULES, ~13–20 HOURS)

Introduction to Financial Accounting

University of Pennsylvania (Wharton)

Who for: Anyone who must read financial statements - owners reviewing books with a bookkeeper/CPA, board members, or operators evaluating a vendor, partner, or acquisition target.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Financial reporting overview: who sets and enforces the rules
- Balance sheet equation, assets, liabilities, and equity, debit/credit bookkeeping
- Accrual accounting, adjusting/closing entries, and the income statement
- Statement of cash flows: operating, investing, and financing classifications

Benefit: Turns financial statements from opaque PDF dumps into usable decision inputs. Critical for spotting cash vs. profit gaps, talking productively with accountants, and reading third-party statements before partnerships or credit decisions.

Free note: Coursera: audit typically free for videos/readings, certificate and graded assessments require paid enrollment (financial aid may be available).

https://www.coursera.org/learn/wharton-accounting

The Wharton School
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

COURSE 02

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~9 HOURS (4 MODULES)

Introduction to Corporate Finance

University of Pennsylvania (Wharton)

Who for: Operators and business owners who need core money tools - time value of money, NPV/IRR, and capital budgeting - without a Wall Street career track. Practical for evaluating equipment purchases, loans, and growth investments.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Time value of money: discounting, compounding, and tax effects
- Interest rates: inflation, APR vs EAR, and term structure
- Discounted cash flow (DCF) analysis and free cash flow forecasting
- Capital budgeting decision criteria: NPV, IRR, hurdle rate, payback

Benefit: Gives a repeatable framework for deciding whether a purchase, expansion, or financing deal creates or destroys value. Useful when comparing loan options, pricing a project, or stress-testing cash-flow assumptions before committing capital.

Free note: Coursera: course materials typically free to audit, shareable certificate and full graded experience require purchase or subscription (financial aid may be available).

https://www.coursera.org/learn/wharton-finance

Duke University
BEHAVIORAL FINANCE

COURSE 03

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~5 HOURS (3 MODULES)

Behavioral Finance

Duke University

Who for: Anyone making spending, saving, investing, or pricing decisions who wants to catch predictable bias - owners, ministry stewards, and household financial decision-makers alike.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Classical rational choice vs. how people actually decide
- Utility of money, expected utility vs. prospect theory
- Probability distortions, heuristics (availability, representativeness), framing
- Mental accounting, loss aversion, confirmation bias, overconfidence

Benefit: Improves personal and organizational money decisions by naming biases (holding losers, skipping matched retirement contributions, mental-accounting traps). Short course with outsized practical payoff for discipline and process.

Free note: Coursera: audit typically free, certificate paid. Completing the course does not yield a Duke University transcript/academic credit.

https://www.coursera.org/learn/duke-behavioral-finance

Gies College of Business
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

COURSE 04

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~2 WEEKS AT 10 HOURS/WEEK (4 MODULES, ~17–20 HOURS)

Financial Analysis of Scenarios and Decisions

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (Gies College of Business)

Who for: Managers and entrepreneurs who run day-to-day operations and need managerial accounting for pricing, break-even, budgets, and performance reviews - not external financial reporting.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Managerial accounting and cost frameworks (objects, behavior, relevant costs)
- Cost-volume-profit (CVP) analysis for what-if pricing and volume decisions
- Planning and budgeting: sales, production, cash, and master budget components
- Variance analysis: comparing actual vs. budgeted performance

Benefit: Helps answer operator questions: What volume do we need to break even? Where did the budget go off track? Which costs matter for this decision? Strengthens monthly planning and accountability inside a small business or ministry enterprise.

Free note: Coursera: part of Financial Analysis - Skills for Success Specialization, audit access to materials is typically free, certificate/graded path is paid (aid often available).

https://www.coursera.org/learn/financial-analysis-of-scenarios-and-decisions

The Wharton School
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

COURSE 05

COURSERA · INTERMEDIATE · ~9 HOURS (4 MODULES)

Decision-Making and Scenarios

University of Pennsylvania (Wharton)

SCAN TO ENROLL

Who for: Entrepreneurs and operators ready to model a new product, equipment buy, or expansion in a spreadsheet - linking strategy to NPV and scenario analysis.

LEARN

- Why NPV is the preferred project evaluation criterion vs. IRR, payback, ROI
- Time value of money and cost of capital in project decisions
- Incremental after-tax cash flows across investment, operating, and terminal phases
- Translating business activities into balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow forecasts

Benefit: Converts gut-feel expansion decisions into modeled alternatives with clear cash-flow and NPV implications. Especially valuable before launching a new offer, opening a second site, or committing to a large capital outlay.

Free note: Coursera: part of Business and Financial Modeling Specialization, audit typically free, certificate paid. Specialization suggests prior spreadsheet/modeling courses if you are new to modeling.

https://www.coursera.org/learn/wharton-decision-making-scenarios

New York Institute of Finance
PROFESSIONAL FINANCE EDUCATION

COURSE 06

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~2 WEEKS AT 10 HOURS/WEEK (6 MODULES, ~16–20 HOURS)

Introduction to Risk Management

New York Institute of Finance

SCAN TO ENROLL

Who for: Business managers and operators who need a structured vocabulary for market, credit, operational, liquidity, and enterprise risk - and how firms measure and limit it.

LEARN

- Differentiate financial vs. business risks and why firms manage risk
- Types of financial risk: market, credit, operational, and enterprise perspectives
- Risk measurement vs. risk management, setting risk limits
- Money and capital markets participants and US/UK/EU regulatory structures

Benefit: Helps owners name and prioritize risks before they become crises - cash crunches, concentration risk, operational failures, and regulatory exposure. Useful for insurance/vendor decisions and for building a simple risk register for a growing organization.

Free note: Coursera: part of Risk Management Specialization, materials typically free to audit, certificate path paid (aid may be available).

https://www.coursera.org/learn/introduction-to-risk-management

Yale University
OPEN YALE / COURSERA

COURSE 07

COURSERA · BEGINNER · ~3 WEEKS AT 10 HOURS/WEEK (7 MODULES, ~30–33 HOURS)

Financial Markets

Yale University

Who for: Leaders who want a big-picture map of how markets, insurance, banking, and regulation work - useful context for investing, borrowing, and understanding the financial system that surrounds any enterprise.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Risk management basics, insurance concepts, diversification, and CAPM
- Behavioral finance principles and limits of market efficiency
- Stocks, bonds, dividends, corporate structure, and market history
- Mortgages, bubbles, recessions, and financial regulation

Benefit: Builds financially literate leadership: how risk is pooled, why markets misbehave, and how institutions shape credit and capital. Improves conversations with bankers, advisors, and boards without requiring a trader's skill set.

Free note: Coursera: free audit of lectures/materials typically available, certificate and graded work require payment (financial aid may be available). Robert Shiller remains the listed instructor.

https://www.coursera.org/learn/financial-markets-global

Columbia University
ECONOMICS OF MONEY AND BANKING

COURSE 08

COURSERA · INTERMEDIATE · ~3 WEEKS AT 10 HOURS/WEEK (13 MODULES, SUBSTANTIAL, ~30+ HOURS)

Economics of Money and Banking

Columbia University

Who for: Learners who want deep context on how banks, money markets, central banks, and market liquidity actually work - more analytical than operator-tooling, but clarifying for credit cycles and financial stress.

SCAN TO ENROLL

LEARN

- Money hierarchy and balance-sheet approach to monetary economics
- Banking as a clearing/payments system and settlement constraints
- Repo, Fed Funds, Eurodollar markets and funding liquidity
- Dealers as suppliers of market liquidity, Treynor-style dealer economics

Benefit: Explains why credit freezes, why liquidity ≠ solvency, and how policy/market plumbing affects borrowing costs and financial stability. Helps entrepreneurs interpret news about rates, banks, and crises with less confusion.

Free note: Coursera: audit typically free for lectures/readings, certificate and graded exams require payment (financial aid may be available). Produced with Institute for New Economic Thinking.

https://www.coursera.org/learn/money-banking

MIT Sloan / MIT OCW
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

COURSE 09

MIT OPENCOURSEWARE · ADVANCED · SEMESTER GRADUATE COURSE (ORIGINALLY 2 × 1.5-HOUR SESSIONS/WEEK, SPRING 2003 MATERIALS)

Finance Theory II (15.402)

MIT Sloan School of Management

SCAN TO ENROLL

Who for: Self-directed learners who already have corporate finance basics and want graduate-level case work on capital structure, valuation (WACC/APV), and corporate strategy applications. Not a first course.

LEARN

- Financing needs and optimal capital structure (debt vs. equity choices)
- Case-based analysis of growth financing and leverage decisions
- Project valuation: free cash flows, cost of capital, WACC and APV
- Company valuation, mergers/restructuring themes, and real options

Benefit: Deepens judgment on how much to borrow, how to value projects/companies, and how financing interacts with strategy. Best used after Wharton intro finance/accounting as an advanced self-study library - not a certificate track.

Free note: MIT OCW: materials (lecture notes, assignments, exams/solutions) are free to access under OCW terms. No Coursera-style paid certificate, archival Spring 2003 course (cases may require separate purchase from publishers).

https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/15-402-finance-theory-ii-spring-2003/