MASTER OF FINANCE (MFIN) DEGREE

Program Learning Outcomes for the MFin Degree

Upon completing the MFin degree, students will be able to:

1. Conduct Robust Financial Analysis: Use quantitative methods and financial modeling techniques to perform in-depth analysis and support decision-making in corporate finance, investment banking, and asset management.
2. Develop and Implement Financial Strategies: Design effective financial strategies that align with investment objectives, considering risk management, portfolio optimization, and risk management.
3. Utilize Data-Driven Insights: Leverage financial data and analytical tools to evaluate investment opportunities, assess performance, and make strategic recommendations.
4. Corporate Finance: Analyze and optimize capital structure, funding strategies, and corporate governance practices to enhance firm value and financial performance.
5. Technological Proficiency: Demonstrate proficiency in financial software, programming languages (e.g., Python, R), and other technological tools used in financial analysis and modeling.

Requirements for the MFin Degree

The MFin degree is a non-thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, please see Non-Thesis Master's Degrees (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/). Students pursuing the MFin degree must complete:

- A minimum of 10 courses (30 credit hours) to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level study (graduate semester credit hours, coursework at the 500-level or above).
- A minimum of 24 graduate semester credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum of 24 graduate semester credit hours must be taken in standard or traditional courses (with a course type of lecture, seminar, laboratory, lecture/laboratory).
- A minimum residency enrollment of 3 semesters of full-time graduate study at Rice University.
- A maximum of 2 courses (6 graduate semester credit hours) from transfer credit. For additional departmental guidelines regarding transfer credit, see the Policies (p. 2) tab.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework.
- A minimum program GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements fort he non-thesis master's degree with a minimum grade of C (2.00 grade points) in each course.

The MFin degree program has a lockstep curriculum that students typically complete during contiguous fall, spring, summer, and fall semesters.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the department or program's Official Certifier (https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/). Additionally, these course substitutions must be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the MFin Degree		

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
FINA 501	(INTRODUCTION TO FINANCE) [1]	3
FINA 502	(FINANCIAL MODELING: AI, PYTHON, AND SPREADSHEETS) [1]	3
FINA 503	(ECONOMICS AND DATA ANALYSIS FOR FINANCE)	3
FINA 504	(FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING AND VALUATION)	3
FINA 505	(INVESTMENTS)	3
FINA 506	(CORPORATE FINANCE)	3
FINA 507	(ADVANCED TOPICS IN FINANCE I)	3
FINA 508	(FINANCIAL MARKETS)	3
FINA 509	(ADVANCED FUTURES, OPTIONS, AND RISK MANAGEMENT)	3
FINA 510	(ADVANCED TOPICS IN FINANCE II)	3
Total Credit Hours		**30**

Footnotes and Additional Information

1. FINA 501 *INTRODUCTION TO FINANCE* (3 credit hours) and FINA 502 *FINANCIAL MODELING: AI, PYTHON, AND SPREADSHEETS* (3 credit hours) are completed in one week in-person on campus, prior to the first fall semester.

Proposed Plan-of-Study

The following plan-of-study represents the current lockstep four-semester sequence in which students pursuing the MFin degree complete the required coursework. Changes to the sequence of courses may be made with the permission of the program director.

Course	Title	Credit Hours
First Year		
1st Semester		
FINA 501	INTRODUCTION TO FINANCE [1]	3
FINA 502	FINANCIAL MODELING: AI, PYTHON, AND SPREADSHEETS [1]	3
FINA 503	ECONOMICS AND DATA ANALYSIS FOR FINANCE	3
FINA 504	FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING AND VALUATION	3
	Credit Hours	**12**

2nd Semester		
FINA 505	INVESTMENTS	3
FINA 506	CORPORATE FINANCE	3
	Credit Hours	**6**
3rd Semester		
FINA 507	ADVANCED TOPICS IN FINANCE I	3
FINA 508	FINANCIAL MARKETS	3
	Credit Hours	**6**
Second Year		
4th Semester		
FINA 509	ADVANCED FUTURES, OPTIONS, AND RISK MANAGEMENT	3
FINA 510	ADVANCED TOPICS IN FINANCE II	3
	Credit Hours	**6**
	Total Credit Hours	**30**

Footnotes and Additional Information

[1] FINA 501 *INTRODUCTION TO FINANCE* (3 credit hours) and FINA 502 *FINANCIAL MODELING: AI, PYTHON, AND SPREADSHEETS* (3 credit hours) are completed in one week in-person on campus, prior to the first fall semester.

Policies for the MFin Degree

Admission Requirements

For general university requirements, see Degrees: Graduate-Level (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degrees/).

Admission to the MFin degree program is open to students regardless of their undergraduate major, but the program is highly selective and access is limited to those who have performed with distinction across all areas of the application. A bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from an accredited undergraduate institution is required before a student begins the program, though a student may be admitted to the program before having completed their bachelor's degree. Applicants participate in an interview by invitation as part of their admission requirements.

All applicants to the MFin degree program must submit the following:

- an online application and application fee
- transcripts from all degree-granting institutions and/or institutions at which an applicant completed 15 or more credit hours
- resume
- essays
- a score from TOEFL, Duolingo, or IELTS is required for international applicants whose undergraduate degree was from an institution where the primary language of instruction was not English
- a GMAT or GRE standardized test score
- at least one letter of recommendation

Students may apply as early as the summer before their senior year.

Academic and Professional Standards

Students must meet both academic and professional standards to continue academic work and to graduate. In accepting admission to the MFin program, all students agree to be governed by the standards and procedures for dismissal or disciplinary action stated below.

Academic Standards

A minimum overall grade point average of 2.67 (B-) is required for graduation. All courses taken towards the MFin degree are counted in the overall grade point average calculation.

Students with an overall grade point average lower than 2.67 at the end of any semester will be notified of dismissal. A student who has been notified of dismissal may appeal to the Academic Standards Committee of the Jones Graduate School of Business. The committee will decide, based on the circumstances of the appeal, whether the student:

1. may resume studies on probation,
2. is to be suspended for one semester or an academic year, or
3. is to be dismissed from the MFin program.

Students are removed from academic probation only upon achieving an overall grade point average of at least 2.67 at the end of the following semester of work.

Students proposing to return aqer a period of academic suspension must apply to the Academic Standards Committee and receive permission to be readmitted. If permitted to return, the student will pay the current rate of tuition, based upon the class of students they are joining.

Only grades of C (2.00 grade points) and above are counted for credit toward graduation. If a student receives a grade below a C (2.00 grade points) in a course, the student must meet with the program director to determine remediation. Any plans for remediation must be approved by the Academic Standards Committee.

Professional Standards

Master's students are held to the high standards of professional conduct expected of managers—standards substantially exceeding those expected of them simply as students. Students may be dismissed or suspended for failure to meet professional standards, as defined in the University Code of Conduct (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/rights-responsibilities/code-student-conduct/). The dean may place a student on disciplinary probation for unacceptable conduct, giving oral and written notice that future misconduct will lead to filing specific charges. (This probationary notice, however, is not required as a precondition for filing specific charges.)

The Process

A student who wishes to appeal a dismissal should address the following issues in a letter to the Academic Standards Committee. The student must address the letter to the chair of the Academic Standards Committee and submit it to mbaadvising@rice.edu. The following questions should be answered in the appeal letter. Students may also include any additional information that they deem relevant in the appeal letter.

1. What circumstances led to your academic performance last semester and to what degree were those circumstances beyond your control?
2. If your performance in a particular course(s) last semester was below par, describe any circumstances specific to that course that explain your performance
3. Do you expect the circumstances that created the problems for you last semester to change next semester? If so, how? If not, why?

Timing

The student must inform mbaadvising@rice.edu immediately of the intention to appeal. The appeal letter to the committee must be filed no later than the date stated in the dismissal letter (typically within one week of notification). If a student plans to appeal, he/she should attend classes while the appeal is pending. It is important to keep up with courses during the appeal process.

Appeals

Appeals beyond the Academic Standards Committee must go to the dean of the Jones Graduate School of Business, who may seek guidance from other constituents of the school. All decisions rendered by the dean are final.

Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and amendments govern the records of actions related to appeals.

Grade Appeal Process

Once a course grade has been assigned by an instructor, it is generally considered final and is rarely changed for any reason. Student appeals shall be limited to calculation errors or an alleged failure of the instructor to follow the grading norms set forth in the course syllabus. The procedure below outlines the process by which a student may appeal a course grade. Appeals to the Academic Standards Committee cannot be made until a course grade is assigned; grading questions concerning a particular assessment within the term should be addressed following whatever formal or informal process the instructor has outlined for the course (see step 1).

The student should first pursue any grading question with the instructor following whatever formal or informal process the instructor has outlined for the course.

If the matter is not resolved in step 1 above, the student must file (via email) a written appeal to the instructor, copying the senior associate dean of degree programs. This written appeal must be filed no later than 30 days after the last day of finals for the term (mini-term) in which the course was offered. If the instructor feels further discussion is warranted based on the written appeal, the instructor may discuss the appeal with the student directly. Within two weeks of receiving the written appeal, the instructor should notify (via email) both the student and the senior associate dean of their opinion regarding the appeal.

If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of both the student and the instructor within two weeks of the student's written appeal in step 2, the student may appeal to the Academic Standards Committee by emailing a written notice to jgs-academic-standards@rice.edu describing the grounds for the appeal, copying the instructor and the senior associate dean. This appeal must be sent within four weeks of the student's initial written appeal in step 2.

The Academic Standards Committee will consider the appeal based on information provided by the instructor and the student. At its discretion, the Committee may hold a hearing to further consider them after. The decision of the Academic Standards Committee will be rendered within four weeks of receiving a written notice of appeal (step 3).

The decision rendered by the Academic Standards Committee is generally final, except for extraordinary cases in which there was a procedural error or major information omission in the steps above. Appeal beyond the Academic Standards Committee must go to the dean of the JGSB, who may seek guidance from other constituents of the school. All decisions rendered by the dean are final.

If the protested grade is necessary for the student to graduate, an accelerated schedule will be followed.

More information can be found in the Dispute Resolution section for graduate students, including guidelines set forth by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). The Committee on Examinations and Standing (EX&S) has established faculty guidelines on grading. Additional information can be found in the Faculty Grading Guidelines section.

Withdrawal Policy

A Jones Graduate School of Business student, participating in any offered program, may voluntarily withdraw from school at any time. Upon withdrawal, Rice University applies a sliding scale to tuition, which is noted in the university's Academic Calendar (https://registrar.rice.edu/calendars/).

Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see Transfer Credit (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Program Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the MFin degree should be aware of the following program-specific transfer credit guidelines:

- No more than 2 courses (6 credit hours) of transfer credit from U.S. or international universities of similar standing at Rice may apply towards the degree.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Finance website: https://business.rice.edu/.

Opportunities for the MFin Degree

Rice Undergraduate Students

Rice undergraduate students completing studies in Business (the major or minor) are eligible for admission to the MFin degree program prior to completing their undergraduate degree. For additional departmental guidelines regarding admission requirements, see the Policies (p. 2) tab.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Finance website: https://business.rice.edu/.