

PROPOSAL FOR A NEW MASTER OF SCIENCE, FINANCE (MSF)
Proposal Date: September 11, 2007

Department of Finance
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Part I. Program Summary

A. Statement of program purpose and expectation of graduate study in the program.

The purpose of the MS in Finance (MSF) program is to provide students with the theoretical knowledge and practical skills to be innovative, well-informed, and experienced finance professionals. The curriculum is based on the financial theory and empirical methods employed by professionals practicing corporate finance, financial security valuation, financial modeling, portfolio management, financial services management, financial risk management, and corporate governance. In addition, students are expected to leverage educational opportunities afforded by the Exelon Trading Center and the Weinberg Center for Corporate Governance. As a result, students will obtain training and experience valued by corporations, financial service firms, consulting firms, and government agencies. Additionally, if desired, students may tailor their MSF program to enhance progress through a subsequent doctoral degree program.

A1. Degree length and target population

Students admitted to the program are expected to have related work experience beyond the date they earned their undergraduate degree and/or related undergraduate training, and/or relevant undergraduate coursework in finance, business, or economics. The 30-credit degree program may be completed in nine months by a full-time student, admitted in the fall semester with a strong background in finance. Part-time students may complete the program in twenty-one months.

A2. Skills developed through the program

The field of finance has foundation-level concepts that should be mastered by each student, regardless of their expected career path. These core principles include the valuation of assets, securities, and projects; the relation between risk and return; an understanding of primary capital markets (commercial and investment banks, venture capital, etc.) and secondary capital markets (e.g. the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ); the valuation of derivative contracts such as options and futures; the structure of a firm's financing; and financial contracting under asymmetric and incomplete information.

To help teach these core principles, the Department will employ many unique resources beyond faculty expertise and the curriculum. For example, many courses will utilize the Exelon Trading Center, students may be exposed to alumni and the larger financial community with activities such as trips to New York City, and students may be exposed to leading corporate governance issues and advocates through the Weinberg Center for Corporate Governance.

Beyond the core topics students will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of various issues by choosing appropriate electives. As a result, MSF students will develop skills that allow them to practice finance in a variety of professional settings including industrial

corporations, service operations, not-for-profit firms, government agencies, investment banks, commercial banks, consulting firms, and brokerage houses.

B. Date of Permanent Status (or current status)

The program has been approved by the Department of Finance faculty on April 13, 2007, by the College Graduate Program Committee on September 11, 2007, and the College Faculty on September 28, 2007, and hopes to obtain sufficient approvals by the UD Faculty Senate and Provost during the 2007-2008 academic year.

C. Degrees offered (include brief description of concentrations, fields, etc.).

The program offers a Master of Science degree in Finance (MSF). Although the program does not designate official concentrations or fields, students can select electives so as to maximize their exposure to certain areas within the Finance discipline.

Part II. Admission

A. Admission Requirements (be specific about GRE, GMAT, TOEFL scores, G.P.A. and others).

Qualified applicants for MSF admission must:

- Hold the equivalent of a 4-year U.S. Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university.

Candidates for admission need not have majored in any specific undergraduate field; however, students must possess strong written and oral communication skills, have had a full sequence of calculus at the college level, have basic computer skills and understand fundamental finance and accounting concepts as presented in FINC850 Financial Management and ACCT800 Financial Reporting and Analysis. The admissions committee will examine each accepted applicant's undergraduate transcript and work experience to determine if these prerequisites have been satisfied.

- Submit a Graduate Admission Application and official transcripts of all previous academic work to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- Submit results of the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT).
- Submit Application Essays on the following topics:
 - What are your career objectives and how will an MSF help you achieve your goals?
 - Describe a particular challenging experience, and how you handled that experience.
 - Describe any special circumstances related to your academic record that you think the admissions committee should consider.
- Submit two letters of recommendation from faculty and/or employers.

Students whose native language is not English must submit the results of the Test of English and a Foreign Language (TOEFL). This requirement may be waived if the student has earned a degree from an accredited educational institution in which English is the primary instructional language.

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths. Admission decisions are made by the MSF Program Committee and are based upon a number of factors, including:

- Undergraduate grade point index (or grade point average).
- GMAT or GRE scores
- Previous graduate study
- Work experience
- Letters of recommendation
- Application Essays
- An optional interview with MSF Program Director or member of the MSF Program Committee

Students may apply and be admitted on a full-time or part-time basis.

Every Applicant who has accepted admission must submit a \$200 non-refundable deposit by the deadline stated in the acceptance letter to secure a place in the MSF Program.

B. Prior degree requirements.

- Hold the equivalent of a 4-year U.S. Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university.

Candidates for admission need not have majored in any specific undergraduate field; however, students must possess strong written and oral communication skills, have had a full sequence of calculus at the college level, have basic computer skills and understand fundamental finance and accounting concepts as presented in FINC850 Financial Management and ACCT800 Financial Reporting and Analysis. The admissions committee will examine each accepted applicant's undergraduate transcript and work experience to determine if these prerequisites have been satisfied.

C. Application deadlines.

Admissions will occur on a rolling basis, so early application may improve chances for admission and financial assistance if applicable. While the published application deadline for the fall semester is May 1st, applications are accepted after that date.

Applications can be submitted before taking the GRE or GMAT. Please indicate on your application the scheduled date of your GRE or GMAT exam. However, late exam submission will delay application processing and the admission decision.

D. Special competencies needed (i.e., specific courses or experience).

Candidates for admission need not have majored in any specific undergraduate field; however, students must possess strong written and oral communication skills, have had a full sequence of calculus at the college level, have basic computer skills and understand fundamental finance and accounting concepts as presented in FINC850 Financial Management and ACCT800 Financial Reporting and Analysis. The admissions committee will examine each accepted applicant's undergraduate transcript and work experience to determine if these prerequisites have been satisfied.

E. Admission categories (explain other than regular, such as provisional).

Provisional Status

Students deficient in any of the admission requirements may be admitted on provisional status and be required to complete non-degree credit coursework. Such determination is made by the MSF Program Committee.

Students admitted on provisional status will be notified in writing by the MSF Program Committee prior to matriculation of the requirements that need to be met for obtaining regular status in the program.

Students admitted on provisional status may be required to complete course work that will not count towards the degree and this course work may be required to be completed before the student can take courses that satisfy degree requirements.

For provisional status to be lifted, the student must petition the MSF Program Committee in writing stating how they have satisfied the requirements for obtaining regular status. Lifting of provisional status is determined by the MSF Program Committee and a student admitted on provisional status remains on provisional status until they have been notified in writing that they have met the requirements for regular status.

A student cannot be granted a degree while on provisional status.

F. Other documents required (i.e., letters of recommendation, essays, portfolios, interviews, writing assessments, etc.).

No documents other than those stated in Part II, Section A are required.

G. University statement on admissions

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

Part III. Academic

A. Degree Requirements

A1. List of course requirements according to categories such as core requirements, concentration requirements, electives, research credits and dissertation credit requirements. List number of credits in each category and include total credits required for degree.

A minimum of 30 credits is required for the Master of Science degree.

1. Prerequisites

- Full sequence of calculus at the college level
- Basic computer skills
- Understanding of fundamental finance and accounting concepts as presented in FINC850 Financial Management and ACCT 800 Financial Reporting and Analysis.

2. Required Courses

Finance Core - 12 credits:

		Credits
FINC851	Corporate Financial Analysis	3
FINC852	Investment Analysis & Portfolio Management	3
FINC855	Financial Institutions & Markets	3
FINC861	Workshop in Financial Economics	3

Skills Core - 6 credits:

		Credits
ECON822	Econometric Theory*	3
ACCT820	Financial Statement Analysis	3

*An equivalent course may be substituted for ECON822 Econometric Theory if the course is approved on their program of study by the MSF Program Director.

3. Electives - 12 credits, with a minimum of 6 credits in FINC courses:

Students may choose courses from the following list but are not limited to courses on the list. Other courses may be used towards the degree requirements if submitted as part of the student's program of study and approved by the MSF Program Director prior to registration in the course. The MSF Program Director will decide on whether a particular variation from the above degree requirements is allowed.

For elective courses offered outside the Department of Finance, students will have to meet all listed prerequisites or receive approval from the instructor.

Credits

FINC853	International Financial Management	3
FINC854	Special Topics in Finance	3
FINC856	Financial Engineering and Risk Management	3
FINC858	Corporate Governance	3
FINC859	Seminar in Finance	3
ECON801	Microeconomic Theory	3
ECON802	Macroeconomic Theory	3
ECON815	Managerial Forecasting	3
ECON819	Economics of Information	3
ECON823	Seminar in Econometrics	3
ECON824	Topics in Advanced Econometrics	3
ECON825	Time-Series Econometrics	3
ECON852	Monetary Economics	3
ACCT614	Federal Tax Research and Planning	3

Credit Summary:

Required Core Finance Classes	12
Required Skill Classes	6
Elective Classes	<u>12</u>
Total Credits	30

A2. Give non-registered requirements in detail; includes residency requirements, qualifying examinations (number and format), portfolios, seminars, English proficiency, language requirements, teaching experience, internships, etc.

There are not any non-registered requirements.

A3. Give procedure for petitions for variance in degree requirements (e.g. course substitution policies, completion deadlines, etc.)

Degree candidates are required to have a program of study approved by the MSF Program Director prior to matriculation. The program of study consists of the list of the courses the student intends to take to satisfy the MSF degree requirements. Any revisions in the program of study must be approved by the MSF Program Director prior to the student registering for courses not previously approved in their program of study.

Maintenance of steady, reasonable progress towards the degree is the responsibility of the student.

The University requires that the master's degree be completed within ten consecutive semesters. If accepted into the program as a full-time student with a strong background in finance, the 30-credit degree program may be completed in nine months. Part-time students may complete the program in twenty-one months.

Any shortcomings in progress will be communicated in writing by the MSF Program Director to the student and to the University Office of Graduate Studies.

A4. Define any grade minimums in courses that are different from University policy.

None.

A5. Identify any courses, which may not be used towards the degree (i.e., independent study, pre-candidacy study).

Only courses listed in Part III, Section A, above can be used towards the degree unless the student submits a revised program of study that is approved by the MSF Program Director prior to taking the proposed course.

A6. Identify expectations of facility of expression in English (oral and written) as part of the degree requirement.

For admission to the program students must possess strong written and oral communication skills.

B. Committees for exams, thesis, or dissertations

B1. Identify initial procedure for advisor and advisement procedures.

Not applicable.

B2. Identify each student committee needed and procedures for selecting committee members.

Not applicable.

B3. Give deadlines for establishing and preparation requirements for comprehensive examinations.

There are no comprehensive examinations.

B4. Give policies for dates of examinations, grading of committee examinations and retake options.

There are no comprehensive examinations.

B5. Give guidelines for approving research proposals involving human or animal subjects.

Not applicable.

B6. Define procedures for thesis/dissertation approval in the department (e.g., role of department chair, dean, etc.).

Not applicable.

B7. Define departmental and student obligations for finding committee members. Define departmental and student obligations and procedures for changes in committee members.

Not applicable.

C. Timetable and definition of satisfactory progress towards the degree.

C1. Academic load (full & part-time) expectations. Define normal progress. Define departmental review procedures for evaluating normal progress and evaluation of performance.

Full time student (1 year program) admitted in the fall semester: A normal load will be 12-15 credits in the fall semester followed by 3-6 credits in the winter, and 12-15 credits in the spring semester.

Part time student (2 year program): A normal load will be 6 credits per semester, plus 3 credits during each winter semester.

Following UD guidelines, an MSF student is making 'normal progress' if they maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher while taking the recommended number/sequence of courses.

C2. Grade requirements (general and specific). Include any special departmental expectations such as minimum grades in specific courses, limits on special problem courses, etc.

Graduate students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.00 to remain in good academic standing. GPA requirements are monitored by the Office of Graduate Studies according to the Graduate Studies Academic Probation Policy.

C3. Identify consequences for failure to make satisfactory progress. Protocol for grievance procedure if student has been recommended for termination for failure to make satisfactory progress.

The University requires that the master's degree be completed within ten consecutive semesters. If accepted into the program as a full-time student with a strong background in finance, the 30-credit degree program may be completed in nine months. Part-time students may complete the program in twenty-one months.

Any shortcomings in progress will be communicated in writing by the MSF Program Director to the student and to the University Office of Graduate Studies.

Part IV. Financial aid

A. Financial Awards

A1. Types of awards, policy for granting financial awards, summer appointments, and number of years of support.

Students wishing to be considered for financial aid should so indicate on their application for admission. Students may also apply for financial aid after being accepted to the program. Conditional on funding, students may be selected for merit-based financial awards by the MSF Committee. Students may be selected as research and/or teaching assistants for faculty. Conditional on funding, support for a student may last up to 2 years as long as progress toward the degree is satisfactory.

Students are encouraged to explore external funding opportunities through their employers or through other granting agencies.

A2. Responsibilities of students on contract.

If a student does receive funding, it will be provided in a manner consistent with UD statement on Graduate Student Funding. In particular, “funding may be available for selected students on a continuing basis if the student maintains satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree.” There are 5 aspects of satisfactory progress:

1. Academic performance/grades; a cumulative GPA of 3.0 must be maintained in course work each semester throughout the program;
2. Full compliance with the University’s Code of Conduct;
3. Fulfillment of degree requirements, making timely progress in required course work;
4. Satisfactory performance in teaching and research assignments;
5. Submission of student initiated annual progress reports signed by the MSF Program Director.

A3. Evaluation of students on contract

Students on contract will be reviewed at the end of each semester by their assigned faculty member, and by the MSF Program Director. Student reviews will be based on the quality and quantity of work they performed for the faculty member.

Part V. Departmental Operations

A. General student responsibilities and privileges

A1. Up-to-date addresses, etc.

Students will be required to furnish the Department of Finance with current addresses and phone numbers. All PNPI data will be maintained in the Department Chair office files (306 Purnell Hall).

A2. Laboratories and research equipment.

MSF students will be granted access to the research room of the Exelon Trading Center if not previously scheduled by another class. In addition, MSF students will have access to all other UD resources generally available to UD graduate students.

A3. Keys, offices, mail, telephone, copy machine, computer terminals, etc.

MSF students will be given mailboxes in the Department of Finance, and may have access to the copy machine with permission of a faculty member. Student offices may also be made available if the student is asked to instruct undergraduate students.

B. Student government and organizations (both student and professional)

MSF students will be encouraged to participate in the Blue Hen Investment Club and join the Financial Management Association (a professional group supporting academic and professionals practicing finance).

C. Travel for professional meetings or presentations

Ordinarily, travel funds for professional meetings and presentations will not be made available to MSF students. However, the Department Chair may allocate such funds if warranted.

Part VI. Additional issues.

A. Establishment of MSF Program Director and MSF Committee

The Department of Finance will maintain an MSF Program Director. The MSF Program Director will lead the admissions process, chair the MSF Committee (see below), coordinate and resolve student scheduling conflicts as they might arise, and advise students about their progress.

The Department of Finance will maintain an MSF Committee of at least 3 faculty members. The committee is responsible for handling admission decisions and other issues that arise regarding the maintenance of the MSF program.

B. Incremental Program Costs

The program, as stated, can be provided with the current Department Faculty without altering the size of faculty regular teaching workloads.

The program requires FINC861 Workshop in Financial Economics. This course has been offered as an experimental course (FINC867) for the past 2 years and was submitted for the Course Challenge list on November 2, 2007.

It is expected that the MSF Program Director will require a reduction of one course from their workload in order to allow for effort directed toward the MSF program. This may result in an additional S-contract to cover the current portfolio of courses provided by the Department.

C. Flow of Courses

The precise flow of courses will vary by student and by year, but here is a possible flow of courses for a full time student completing the requirements in 1 year. The letter 'R' denotes a required course and 'E' denotes an elective.

Fall Semester

- FINC851 Corporate Financial Policy (R) 3 credits
- FINC852 Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management (R) 3 credits
- ACCT820 Financial Statement Analysis (R) 3 credits
- ECON822 Econometrics (R) 3 credits

Winter Semester

- FINC854 Special Topics (E) 3 credits
- FINC859 Seminar in Finance (E) 3 credits

Spring Semester

- FINC861 Workshop in Financial Economics (R) 3 credits
- FINC855 Financial Institutions & Markets (R) 3 credits
- AAAA111 Elective Course (E) 3 credits

BBBB111 Elective Course (E) 3 credits

During the winter term, Special Sessions has offered FINC859 (Research in Finance) continuously for at least 6 years and FINC854 (Special Topics in Finance) for 2 years. The Department will commit to offering at least 6 credits of 800 level courses that satisfy degree requirements during the winter session.