



Financial Services

HONORS OPTION

Financial Services has been approved for honors weighting starting this school year. You will now have an option of whether to take FS for honors weighting or not. If you choose the Honors Option, there will be additional assignments (as with any honors class). If you are interested, please complete the attached "Commitment Form" and submit it to me by Friday, September 5.

Honors Project

Completion of an honors project would be required for all students taking Financial Services/Honors Option. The completed project would be due by 2:40pm on December 19 (the day before winter break). No late assignments will be accepted; if you miss the deadline, you will be switched back to the regular weighting for FS. Students have three ways to meet the honors project requirement:

- Independent Reading Assignment. Read an approved book on business, finance, or entrepreneurship... and write a reflective essay. My list of "The 50 Best Business Books" is attached, or you can request permission to read a different book on related topics. For this assignment, you would read the book, write a 500-word reflective paper, and share your thoughts with the class. *No two students can select the same book, so make sure to let me know your choice before you get started; first come, first served.*
- Business Research Project. Complete a business research project ... and write a reflective essay. You should select a competitive market and conduct research to learn everything you can about the market (major players, means of competition, market leadership, etc.). Then you would choose two businesses that compete in this market and research the companies in depth using both primary and secondary sources. For this assignment, you would present your research in a 500-word paper and share your findings with the class. *No two students can select the same market, so make sure to let me know your choice before you get started; first come, first served.*
- Summer College Program. Successfully complete a summer college program prior to the beginning of the school year, such as TL2 (UC), ACAP (OSU), Junior Executive Business Program (OU), Junior Scholars (Miami), Ohio Business Week, or INROADS College Links Program ... and write a reflective essay. The college program must be approved; some programs are for rising juniors, some are for rising seniors, and others allow either. This option would require acceptance into an approved college program. For this assignment, you would write a 500-word reflective paper and share your experience with the class.

Once you submit the attached commitment form, I will sit down with you to discuss the honors project in more detail and help you decide which alternative would be best for you.

Service Points

You would also be required to earn 20 service points related to BPA/KCU/FS during the school year (to be completed by May 14). Here's how you can earn these points:

- BPA Leadership. Serve as a BPA Officer or Rep and receive 5 points per semester of service. Qualify for State or Nationals in a competition and earn 5 additional points for each.
- KCU Team Member. Work for the Knights Credit Union and receive 5 points per semester of service. 1 additional point may be earned for each KCU marketing event you work.
- FS Volunteer. Every hour you volunteer for an approved FS event (in-school fundraisers, homecoming parade, StEP, etc.), you earn 1 point. In addition, every \$25 you raise for an approved FS/BPA out-of-school fundraiser (Frozen Food, Country Meats, Buddy Cards, etc.), you earn 1 point.

As always, if you have any questions about any of this, please ask!

Thanks,

1. **A RANDOM WALK DOWN WALL STREET**, by Burton Malkiel. An excellent investment primer. It explains the basics of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, and will reinforce the efficient market concept.
2. **ADAPT: WHY SUCCESS ALWAYS STARTS WITH FAILURE** by Tim Harford. Taking us from corporate boardrooms to the deserts of Iraq, Adapt clearly explains the necessary ingredients for turning failure into success. It is a breakthrough handbook for surviving—and prospering—in our complex and ever-shifting world.
3. **BACKSTAGE WALL STREET** by Joshua M. Brown. This is a brutally honest look at the investment business from a veteran who's seen it all. "Reformed" Wall Street insider Joshua M. Brown offers clear and proven advice on how to navigate all the snares set by the lords of Wall Street.
4. **COMMON SENSE ON MUTUAL FUNDS**, by John Bogle. It provides as much detail as you could ever want about this important investment vehicle. Mr. Bogle is the founder and retired chairman of The Vanguard Group, and has been an important voice in the industry for decades.
5. **CRAZY BOSSES** by Stanley Bing. Hilarious book about boss personality types.
6. **CRUSH IT!**, by Gary Vaynerchuk. How the Web can help turn your passion into a business.
7. **DRIVE**, by Daniel H. Pink. What really motivates people is the quest for autonomy, mastery and purpose, not external rewards.
8. **DRIVEN: HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS AND IN LIFE** by Robert Herjavec. Robert Herjavec has lived the classic "rags to riches" story, from having \$20 in his pocket to starting up technology companies worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Now the star of television's Dragons' Den and Shark Tank, this son of Croatian immigrants earned his incredible wealth by overcoming the odds with hard work and determination.
9. **ELON MUSK: THE X-FACTOR, TESLA, AND THE HOLY GRAIL** by Daniel Alef. Elon Musk is the man behind PayPal, SpaceX, Tesla, and SolarCity, multi-billion dollar companies he founded. Although he is now a multi-billionaire, his objective has never been to amass great wealth, but to save humanity.
10. **EVERYTHING CONNECTS** by Faisal Hoque and Drake Baer. Philosophy, business, and history come together in this look at leadership, creativity, innovation, and sustainability from a successful serial entrepreneur and a cutting-edge journalist.
11. **FLASH BOYS: A WALL STREET REVOLT**, by Michael Lewis. Flash Boys is about a small group of Wall Street guys who figure out that the U.S. stock market has been rigged for the benefit of insiders and that, post-financial crisis, the markets have become not more free but less, and more controlled by the big Wall Street banks.
12. **GOOGLED**, by Ken Auletta. A comprehensive study on how Google became media's premier digital company.
13. **HOW THE MIGHTY FALL**, by Jim Collins. Companies fail in stages, and their decline can be detected and reversed.
14. **HOW TO WIN AT THE SPORT OF BUSINESS**, by Mark Cuban. Mark Cuban shares his wealth of experience and business savvy on what it takes to become a thriving entrepreneur. Cuban tells his own rags-to-riches story of how he went from selling powdered milk and sleeping on friends' couches to owning his own company and becoming a multi-billion dollar success story.
15. **INVISIBLES** by David Zweig. Why do some of the world's most talented, accomplished people choose to fly under the radar, hiding in the shadows rather than clamoring for the spotlight?
16. **JIM CRAMER'S GET RICH CAREFULLY**, by James J. Cramer. The "Mad Money" host offers advice for investing in a changed market. Drawing on his unparalleled knowledge of the stock market and on the mistakes and successes he's made on the way to his own fortune, Cramer explains—in plain English—why you can get rich in a prudent, methodical way, as long as you start now.
17. **LIAR'S POKER**, by Michael Lewis. The time was the 1980s. The place was Wall Street. The game was called Liar's Poker.
18. **LINCHPIN**, by Seth Godin. How to become one of those workers who figure out what to do when there's no rule book.
19. **NAKED ECONOMICS** by Charles Wheelan and Burton G. Malkiel. Explains our global economy in a way that is (gasp!) actually entertaining.
20. **NO ONE WOULD LISTEN**, by Harry Markopolos with others. The man who blew the whistle on Bernie Madoff and was ignored.
21. **ON THE BRINK**, by Henry M. Paulson Jr. The Treasury secretary during the financial meltdown describes the decisions that were made.
22. **OUTLIERS**, by Malcolm Gladwell. Why some people succeed — it has to do with luck and opportunities as well as talent — from the author of "Blink" and "The Tipping Point."
23. **PAYBACK TIME**, by Phil Town. A set of rules for investing in the right businesses at the right time.
24. **QUICK AND NIMBLE** by Adam Bryant. An expert guided tour through the minds of the world's most innovative CEOs, sharing insights that are both enlightening and immensely practical.

25. **REWORK**, by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson. Counterintuitive rules for small-business success, like “Ignore the details early on” and “Good enough is fine.”
26. **SCALING UP EXCELLENCE** by Robert Sutton and Hayagreeva Rao. A landmark book full of rich case studies, powerful research evidence, and actionable ideas for anyone who cares about making groups or organizations more effective.
27. **SHARK TALES: HOW I TURNED \$1,000 INTO A BILLION DOLLAR BUSINESS** by Barbara Corcoran. The inspiring true story of Shark Tank star Barbara Corcoran--and her best advice for anyone starting a business.
28. **START WITH WHY: HOW GREAT LEADERS INSPIRE EVERYONE TO TAKE ACTION** by Simon Sinek. Why are some people and organizations more innovative, more influential, and more profitable than others? Why do some command greater loyalty?
29. **STEVE JOBS**, by Walter Isaacson. A biography of the recently deceased entrepreneur.
30. **STRENGTHS BASED LEADERSHIP**, by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie. Three keys to being a more effective leader.
31. **SUPERFREAKONOMICS**, by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner. A scholar and a journalist apply economic thinking to everything: the sequel.
32. **SWITCH**, by Chip Heath and Dan Heath. How everyday people can effect transformative change at work and in life.
33. **THANKS FOR THE FEEDBACK** by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen. This is a potentially life-changing look at one of the toughest but most important parts of life: receiving feedback.
34. **THE 4-HOUR WORKWEEK**, by Timothy Ferriss. Reconstructing your life so that it's not all about work.
35. **THE BIG SHORT**, by Michael Lewis. The people who saw the real estate crash coming and made billions from their foresight.
36. **THE DILBERT PRINCIPLE** by Scott Adams. The world's most accurate description what goes on inside large corporations.
37. **THE INTELLIGENT INVESTOR**, by Ben Graham. This book has great relevance to the markets in general and should be read by any serious investor ... plus it is particularly pertinent to those who feel compelled to buy individual stocks. Many of today's most successful money managers obtained their original financial inspiration from this author.
38. **THE MILLIONAIRE NEXT DOOR**, by Thomas Stanley and William Danko. If you can't save, it doesn't matter if your name is Warren Buffett. If you think the road to happiness runs past a Beemer and a McMansion, this book will scare you straight.
39. **THE QUANTS**, by Scott Patterson. How a new breed of math whizzes conquered Wall Street and nearly destroyed it.
40. **THE SELLOUT**, by Charles Gasparino. How Wall Street's love affair with risk (and enormous profits) and government mismanagement caused the global economy.
41. **THE SOFT EDGE: WHERE GREAT COMPANIES FIND LASTING SUCCESS**, by Rich Karlgaard. Explains why innovation, to be sustainable, must be tempered with altruism.
42. **THE TOTAL MONEY MAKEOVER**, by Dave Ramsey Debt reduction and fiscal fitness for families, by the radio talk-show host.
43. **THE WEALTH OF NATIONS** by Adam Smith. This masterpiece of economic analysis was first published in 1776 (the same year as the Declaration of Independence); the foundation for modern economics and business thought.
44. **THINK LIKE A FREAK** by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner. The latest book from the rogue economist and perceptive journalist who brought us *Freakonomics* and *SuperFreakonomics* takes us behind the curtain with studies, stories, and illustrations that enrich our abilities to solve problems in our personal and professional lives.
45. **THINKING, FAST AND SLOW**, by Daniel Kahneman. The winner of the Nobel in economic science discusses how we make choices in business and personal life and when we can and cannot trust our intuitions.
46. **THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT**, by Carmen M. Reinhart and Kenneth S. Rogoff. Analyses of centuries of financial blunders.
47. **THRIVE** by Arianna Huffington. In the quest for success, many people end up taking paths that they come to regret. Climbing up the ladder in pursuit of money and power, leaders and managers sacrifice their health and well-being, and miss out on meaningful opportunities to give back.
48. **TOO BIG TO FAIL**, by Andrew Ross Sorkin. The 2008 financial implosion on Wall Street and in Washington, by a New York Times reporter and columnist.
49. **USE YOUR HEAD TO GET YOUR FOOT IN THE DOOR**, by Harvey Mackay. Secrets for getting and keeping a job you truly love, at any age.
50. **WHAT GREAT SALESPEOPLE DO** by Michael Bosworth and Ben Zoldan. The Science of Selling Through Emotional Connection and the Power of Story.

Financial Services/Honors Option Commitment Form

The purpose of this form is to formalize your commitment to the honors option for Financial Services. Please read over all the information in this packet and submit this form by Friday, September 5, 2014.

As a requirement of the honors option, students will be expected to complete an **Honors Project** and earn **Service Points**, as detailed in the attached "Financial Services/Honors Option" letter. If these requirements are not completed by the indicated deadlines, you will lose the honors weighting for this course.

Student Name _____

Student ID # _____

Course (*check one*) Financial Services Juniors Financial Services Seniors

By signing below, I agree that I have read the attached "Financial Services/Honors Option" letter and I am committed to meeting the requirements of Financial Services/Honors Option for the 2014-15 school year.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

THIS FORM IS DUE BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2014