

**AACSB  
ASSURANCE OF LEARNING**

**Master of Finance**

**LEARNING GOAL # 2**

**Students can interact effectively in teams.**

**Responsibility: Emmanuel D. Hatzakis**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION: LEARNING GOAL #2

**Goal: Students can interact effectively in teams.**

*Objective 1: Students will be able to form teams that work together effectively and bring a complex project of function assigned to them to successful completion.*

Almost all work in the industry is team-based, especially in financial services as well as finance functions in non-financial sectors of the economy. Even where teamwork is not direct, workflow streams are organized such that dependencies on co-worker inputs are crucial to the successful completion of the expected and planned work output.

A key goal of the Stevens School of Business is to provide students the skills needed to be effective team players, and contributors to the work of their employer post-graduation. This goes above and beyond equipping them with the essential technical skills they need to perform their assigned work tasks at the individual contributor level.

Being able to work effectively as part of a team or larger organization depends on a set of personality traits and learned skills that are more developed in some students than others. The necessary skills to be an effective team player are teachable. Several courses in our academic programs have team-based assignments, class projects and other deliverables in which ability of students to work in teams is assessed directly by the quality of the output and indirectly by observing teamwork as it happens. The AACSB assessment process is introducing a systematic framework that helps the school deliver more effectively toward this important educational outcome, which is critical to career success of our graduates.

This goal is assessed in the fall offering of the FIN 627 Investment Management course.

# 2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND TRAITS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MFIN - 2** | **Learning Goal, Objectives, and Traits** |
| **GOAL** | Students can interact effectively in teams. |
| **Learning Objectives** |  |
| **Objective 1:** | *Students will be able to form teams that work together effectively and bring a complex project of function assigned to them to successful completion* |
| **Traits** |  |
| Trait 1: | Conflict Resolution |
| Trait 2: | Collaborative Problem Solving |
| Trait 3: | Communication/Active Listening |
| Trait 4: | Team Leadership and Task Coordination |

# 3. RUBRICS

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **MFIN Learning Goal 2 (Teams) Rubric for 2013 and Beyond**  ***Goal: Students can interact effectively in teams.*** | | | | | | |
| **Objective 1:** | | *Students will be able to form teams that work together effectively and bring a complex project of function assigned to them to successful completion* | | | | |
|  | **Trait** | | **Poor** | **Good** | **Excellent** | **Pre-Test/Post-Test Scores** |  |  |
|  | **Value** | | **0** | **5** | **10** |  |
| Trait 1 | Conflict Resolution | | * Does not acknowledge /avoids conflict. * Forces their view on others. * Discounts or marginalizes others’ ideas. | * Encourages diverse perspectives. * Protects all views -- those of the majority and those of the minority. * Strives to ensure that differing perspectives are understood by all. | * Helps team evaluate differing alternatives against agreed upon “criteria for a good solution”. * Works to resolve conflict by identifying where differing solutions agree and where they diverge. * Helps team synthesize ideas such that synergy is achieved – i.e., new ideas surface that are superior to what has come before. |  |
| Trait 2 | Collaborative Problem Solving | | * Team members withhold information. * Team members protect self-interests. * Team members operate as individuals, each responsible for a discreet set of tasks. | * Team members share knowledge, information, and expertise freely. * Team members demonstrate a willingness to influence others as well as be influenced by others. * Team members reinforce the team’s understanding of itself as working together toward a common goal. | * Team members facilitate the teams’ feeling “collectively accountable” for outcomes. * Team members operate such that the collective goal of the team is more important than self-interest.   . |  |
| Trait 3 | Communication/Active Listening | | * Communication is abrasive, insensitive. * Individual(s) feel threatened or attacked as a result of the communication. * Aggression, anger, competitiveness, and/or avoidance result from the communication | * Communication is characterized by the use of clarifying, probing, and reflective statements. * You see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person’s point of view. * You can sense how it feels to the other person. * You achieve the other person’s frame of reference about the subject being discussed | * Others feel understood and respected as a result of the communication. * Differences become more rational and understandable. * Defensiveness decreases. * Statements become less exaggerated. Members come closer to seeing the objective truth of the situation. * Attitudes become more positive and oriented toward effective problem-solving. |  |
| Trait 4 | Team Planning and Task Coordination | | * No attempt is made to clarify roles or responsibilities. * No attempt is made to organize a process by which the team will work * Deliverables and critical dates are not identified. | * Facilitates a discussion of how the team will complete the task. * Facilitates the team’s understanding of roles, responsibilities, deliverables, and due dates. * Periodically reviews progress and due dates. | * Helps team achieve a common understanding of the task and how the team will achieve its collective goal. * Helps surface problems and generate solutions when needed.   Helps define priorities and contingency plans as needed |  |

**Criterion: Does not meet expectations: 0 – 20; Meets: 21-30; Exceeds: 31-40**

# 4. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

*Objective 1*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Where & when measured?** | **How measured?** | **Criterion** |
| Course-embedded detailed case-report and presentation in course *FIN 627A Investment Management.*  Assessed in the Fall semester each year. | Description: team-based class projects are graded by course owners and aggregated to obtain a total score.  Sampling: 100% of the students in the MFIN program are assessed. | % of students get a grade of GOOD or better as measured by the rubric for this learning goal |

# 5. RESULTS OF LEARNING GOAL ASSESSMENT – INTRO

No learning goal assessment has been carried out to date according to the following structure.

**Explanation**

Each learning goal has several learning objectives and performance on each objective is measured using a rubric that in turn contains a few desired “traits”. Students are scored individually on each trait.

The grading sheets for each student are used to develop a Summary Results Sheet for each learning goal objective. A selection of these Summaries is included below.

The first table in the Summary Results Sheet for a learning objective and trait gives the counts of students falling in each of the three categories:

- Does not meet expectations  
- Meets expectations  
- Exceeds expectations

The right-hand column in the table is used to record the average score of the students on each trait. This table provides an indication of the relative performance of students on each trait.

The second table on each sheet provides the counts of students who fall in each of the above three categories for the overall learning objective.

The person doing the assessment provides explanatory comments and recommendations on the bottom of the Results Summary Sheet. The recommendations improve content or pedagogy changes for the next time the course is given.

# 6. RESULTS OF ASSESSMENT

**First assessment: Fall 2021**

**LEARNING GOAL MFIN 1: Goal: Students can interact effectively in teams.**

*Objective 1: Students will be able to form teams that work together effectively and bring a complex project of function assigned to them to successful completion*

**ASSESSMENT DATE: ASSESSOR: Emmanuel D. Hatzakis**

**NO. OF STUDENTS TESTED: 45 COURSE: FIN 627A**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of Students** | | |  |
| **Learning Goal Traits** | **Not Meet Expectations** | **Meet Expectations** | **Exceed Expectations** | **Avg. Grade on Trait** |
| 1. Conflict Resolution | 7 | 28 | 10 | 5.3/10.0 |
| 1. Collaborative Problem Solving | 3 | 24 | 18 | 6.7/10.0 |
| 1. Communication/Active Listening | 10 | 17 | 18 | 5.9/10.0 |
| 1. Team Leadership and Task Coordination | 1 | 11 | 33 | 8.6/10.0 |
| **Average Grade (Maximum 10)** | | | |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Not meet Expectations** | **Meets Expectations** | | **Exceeds Expectations** |
| **Total Students by Category (Based on Average score across all traits)** | **5** | **20** | | **20** |
| **Students meeting or exceeding expectations:** | | | **40 of 45** | |

**COMMENTS:**

Throughout the semester, I was fully engaged with the class team project. I instructed them on how to form teams by interacting directly with one another. They did that quickly – formed teams, selected a team name, the team captain and their roles within the team – and I only had to force-team two students who joined the class late, and selected names for only two teams that were unable to come up with one.

Early in the semester, I had evidence of poor coordination, as tasks were being delayed, e.g., opening of the paper trading account, who was responsible for placing trades, etc. for each of those I had intervene myself in none of the team members was not stepping up to take this role.

Every couple of weeks, I had them meet as teams for 10 minutes during class time to make sure they get to know each other and coordinate off-class meetings. In mid-semester, I had a 30-minute meeting with each team to check in and understand how they are working together. I made myself available for feedback anytime, and I was pleasantly surprised that students were forthcoming with comments about the workings of the team, e.g., who was doing work and who did not – and made sure to cross-check any negative feedback with other team members, which helped me better understand the intra-team dynamics and conflicts, and in certain cases discount earlier negative comments. I coached teams on how to prepare professional presentations, stressing to them that they are not presenting just to get a grade in the course, but treat it as a sales pitch to investors or, at the very minimum, a job interview in front of a judging panel consisting two industry judges (a PM at BofA ML Wealth Management and the former deputy CFO of Tesla, who is now owner of a renewable energy SPAC), me, and the course TAs.

**REMEDIAL ACTIONS:**

I am planning to seek feedback from students earlier in the semester to ensure that corrective action / coaching takes place as soon as possible to address any issues that might be developing within teams.

# 7. Outcomes from Previous Assessments:

This is the first time the assessment is made in this course: FIN 627 – Investment Management.

# 8. Close Loop Process – Continuous Improvement Record:

**Assurance of Learning**

**Assessment/Outcome Analysis**

**Close Loop Process - Continuous Improvement Record**

**Program:** Master of Science in Finance

**Goal 2:** Students can interact effectively in teams

**Goal Owner:** Emmanuel D. Hatzakis

**Where Measured:** Course-embedded analysis assignment in required course *FIN 627A Investment Management.* Assessed in fall semester each year.

**How Measured:** Sampling: Sample of FIN 627A students from one section of course taught in Fall 2021: Individual written project also presented individually in class.

**Closing the Loop: Actions taken on specific objectives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **When Assessed** | *Fall 2021:* |
| **Remedial Action** | *Fall 2022:* |
| **Outcome from previous assessment** | NA |

# APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

The main evaluation of this goal is based on the individual contribution to the team-based class project. The class project will focus on the process of managing a portfolio of equity securities based on the methods and techniques learned in the course, which student teams are expected to use. Each student will assume a different role in a team, e.g., Research Analyst, Chief Investment Officer, Macro Strategist, Head of Trading, Portfolio Manager, etc. The goal owner/instructor will participate in some team meetings, follow deliberations, and take notes of how students interact with one another; will also schedule meetings with students individually at the middle of the semester and interview them on their experience working as part of the team and interacting with other team members. At semester-end, all teams are required to prepare a final presentation and deliver it in front of the entire class and a judging panel consisting of one or more industry professionals, the instructor, and a teaching assistant, if the course has one. The industry professional(s) participating in the judging panel will provide the indirect assessment on this goal.