

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT I: CURRENCY MARKETS FIN 612 – FALL 2026

Purpose:

Finance 612 & 614 are designed to familiarize students with the basic tools and concepts of International Financial Management. The main goal of this sequence is to provide the conceptual and analytical framework required for understanding how international financial conditions influence the decision-making process of modern business leaders in the corporate and capital markets arenas. Within Fin 612, we will start by learning the major characteristics, institutions, and players of the exchange rate markets. We will then consider the interaction between cross-border trade, capital flows, interest rates, inflation, monetary and fiscal policies, economic growth, and their impact on financial investment and corporate decision-making. Finally, we will use these ideas to explore exchange rate regimes, Central Banks' intervention policies, and currency crises. Within Fin 614, we will examine various other international financial markets (equities, bonds, and derivatives), and the opportunities they present for corporate financial policies, risk management, and portfolio management. We will also attempt to explain and interpret the recent wave of international financial crises affecting the global capital markets. This sequence is tailored to students seeking careers in international banking and portfolio management or in finance and strategy for domestic and multinational corporations. Due to the nature of the material, the course will be taught in the form of lectures using many of the quantitative tools you have learned in previous Finance, Economics, and Statistics courses.

Instructor:

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Tutor:	Giada Durante	Email:	giada@umich.edu

Office Hours:

Tuesdays: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. remotely, by appointment, via Zoom at the following link:

<https://umich.zoom.us/my/ppasquar>

See the Canvas class website for the tutor's remote availability via Zoom.

Course Materials:

There is one required textbook for this course:

1. ***International Financial Management*** by Geert Bekaert and Robert Hodrick, 3rd edition (Cambridge University Press); **the Kresge library has a free digital edition available** at the following link:

<http://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316282274>

For your convenience only, I will provide optional additional readings and lecture notes on the Canvas class website. Additional optional textbooks you may be interested in are:

2. ***International Investments*** by Bruno Solnik and Dennis McLeavey, 5th or most recent edition (Pearson Addison-Wesley).
3. ***International Financial Markets***, by Richard Levich (McGraw-Hill Irwin);
4. ***International Money and Finance***, by Michael Melvin (Pearson Addison-Wesley).

All of these additional textbooks are also available for consultation at the **Kresge Library**.

Please always check the Canvas class website at least a day prior to each class session. I will NOT make any printout available in class. The Canvas class website also contains a **discussion board**, where I will occasionally post messages with answers to frequently asked questions.

Homework:

Two homework problem sets will be assigned throughout the term. The homework will be posted on the Canvas class website. Due dates for the homework are indicated below.

Homework may be done individually or in groups. Nonetheless, homework assignments must be submitted **individually, on the Canvas class website (under Quizzes), prior to class-time on the due date**. Late homework will not be accepted.

Homework 1: Due at the beginning of LECTURE 7

Homework 2: Due at the beginning of LECTURE 11

Practice Quizzes:

Three **ungraded** practice quizzes (made of five questions each) will be available throughout the term. The quizzes will be posted on the Canvas class website (in the Modules section). Practice quizzes are for your self-assessment and **won't count toward your final grade; however, you are required to try each of them, at least once.** Afterwards, the quiz will show you how to work through the solution. **I suggest you to work on the questions on your own first, before looking at the solutions.** The quizzes provide additional practice for the final exam.

Group Project:

There will be one group project. The purpose of the project is to write a “**currency report.**” Currency reports are routinely prepared and distributed by investment banks to clients worldwide. Typically, a currency report is focused on either one or a set of exchange rates. The report includes an analysis of the macro and microeconomic fundamentals of the countries involved, in absolute terms as well as relatively to the world business cycle, as related to your forecast: For instance, is the country in a recession? Does the domestic currency belong to any particular exchange rate regime? Then, the report often describes major economic, financial, and political events taking place in the selected currency markets in the last few weeks and months: Elections, Central Bank interventions, important monetary or fiscal decisions recently taken, etc. Finally, the report uses all this and other information to formulate a short (up to 1 year), medium (up to 3 years), and long-term (up to 5 years) forecast of the selected exchange rate(s).

Your team has to prepare and submit such report to me. **The report itself will have to be of no less than three but no more than four pages in length.** Indeed, global investors and CFOs tend to be busy and have little or no time for lengthy dissertations. Hence, your recommendations will have to be prominently placed in the report. Your analysis has to employ the tools and techniques we will discuss in class, as well as any other economic,

financial, or statistical tool you may be comfortable with. Currency reports are generally not too technical in nature, since they strive to be read by the largest possible number of clients. Therefore, you will attach an **Appendix of no less than two and no more than four pages in length** in which you describe the analytics and details of the methodologies you used to prepare the report. **Shorter or longer reports will be penalized.**

This project is to be completed in groups of three to five FIN 612 students. You have to submit only one report for the entire group, being careful to note all the names of group members, via email to me, in PDF format only, by 9:00 am of the due date: **October 18, 2026.** Late reports will not be accepted. The report will be graded based on quality of content, quality of exposition, and the extent to which it feels “professionally” executed.

I cannot stress this enough: Start planning and working on this project early ... a few hours of work prior to the due date are insufficient to generate a “passing grade” report. **We will also devote some class time to discussion of the main issues you may encounter when working on your project.**

Data Collection: The Tozzi Center

As you will soon notice, one of the most challenging tasks for your project is to collect data. In the Files section of the Canvas class website, there is a subsection titled **International Finance Web Resources**; there you will find links to sources for most of your data needs.

In addition, you can look for the data you need in the Tozzi Center. Located in the first floor of the Executive Residence, the Tozzi Center is a state-of-the-art lab with PCs running the most important data applications in Finance (Reuters, Bloomberg, Datastream, etc.). **Kai Petainen** is the manager of the Tozzi Center and has kindly agreed to provide data retrieval help to the students of FIN 612. He has prepared a handout (available on the Canvas class website) with all the information you may need to collect data in the Tozzi Center. He can also help you find any new data you may be looking for. The Tozzi Center is open all day

long; Kai is usually available throughout the day, although he tells me that the best times for him to help you are usually in the mornings and in the late afternoons.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be a 2-hour remote, multiple-choice exam on:

October 15, 2026 from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm, Zoom Classroom (video ON);

There will be no makeup exam, unless you miss the exam because of a well-documented, valid written medical excuse (e.g., a doctor's note stating that it would have been impossible for you to be on Zoom by the scheduled day/time). The exam will be available to you on the Canvas class website, under Quizzes. The exam will be closed-book. You are not allowed to use any material during the exam besides **one calculator, your PC/laptop/tablet to read the test and choose your answers, and one 8-1/2" x 11" sheet of paper with notes and formulas** (both sides are ok) **on it**. The **paper does not have to be handwritten** (yet, it cannot contain any of the slides from the lecture notes or any of the solution sheets from the homework) and **has to be uploaded on the Canvas exam page (a photo, front and back, is fine)** as soon as you complete your exam.

Grading Policy:

Class Participation / Attendance	10%
Homework	10%
Group Project	40%
Final Exam	40%

Class participation will be assessed holistically, including for example by rewarding contributions to class discussion, among others.

I will grade graduate students according to the grading policy set by the Ross School of Business for MBA Electives, which requires the average grade for the class not to exceed 3.5 points; to that end, I am planning to assign (roughly):

“A [4 points]”	to $\leq$ 25% of the students
“A- [3.7]” or above	to $\leq$ 50% of the students
“B+ [3.3]” or above	to $\leq$ 75% of the students
“B [3]” or below	to $\geq$ 25% of the students.

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross Business School community. This course will be conducted in strict conformity with the **Academic Honor Code**. The Code and related procedures can be found at the following website: www.bus.umich.edu/Academics/Resources/communityvalues.htm. The site also contains comprehensive information on how to be sure that you have not plagiarized the work of others. Claimed ignorance of the Code and related information appearing on the site will be viewed as irrelevant should a violation take place. Non-Ross Business School students taking the course should also familiarize themselves with the Code as they will be subject to the Code as well while in this course.

ChatGPT and other similar technologies are advancing rapidly and there are many instances where they will be key tools in your schoolwork and career. For the purposes of this class, **I am asking all students to pledge that they will not use these technologies (except as explicitly mentioned by me in class)**. I believe this is key for this learning environment because I want you to learn how to critically engage with the material I will be discussing, including learning how to search for and identify relevant sources, synthesize these materials, and make recommendations without the aid of technology. Artificial Intelligence cannot do this learning for you. With the caveat above, students who are found to have used ChatGPT or the like to complete an assignment will receive a grade of zero for that assignment.

Attendance & Lecture Topic Requirements for Final Exam:

Attendance to this course (either in-person or, when appropriate, remotely) is mandatory. Lectures will stress the most important issues addressed in the course and may go beyond the scope of the textbook for certain topics. **You are responsible for announcements in class;** consult a colleague if you are absent. Perfect attendance will

factor into grading for those on the edge of grade distributions. **When attending in-person, please place a name tag with your name in front of your seat at all times.** **In the final exam, you will be deemed responsible for all the topics discussed in my class lectures**, even if I may not be able to cover in depth each topic due to time constraints; appendix material, additional readings, or any topic I explicitly mention in class as being out-of-bounds are instead optional and won't be required for the final exam.

Wellness and Mental Health

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus [here](#), including our campus' office of [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) ("CAPS"). You may also find helpful the [well-being resources for students](#) offered through the University's office of student life.

The Ross School of Business has a CAPS Embedded Counselor available to its students. Embedded Counselors are located in school/college buildings and services are tailored to the school's climate. For more information, please visit the [CAPS Embedded Model](#) site. caps.umich.edu/caps-embedded-model. To schedule, please email [Julie Kaplan](#), LMSW. You can also schedule a tele-health appointment remotely from their home page. If you have an urgent matter when CAPS is closed, please call 734-764-8312 to connect with [CAPS After Hours](#).

Academic Integrity, Community Values, and Teaching at Ross

This discussion of academic honesty and conduct is not exhaustive, and there may be areas that remain unclear to you. If you are unsure whether some particular course of action is proper, it is your responsibility to consult with the faculty immediately for clarification.

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross School community. You have a duty to be familiar with and understand the Ross School's Statement of Community Values, the Ross School Academic Honor Code, and the Ross School Code of Student Conduct including all campus public health policies. Each of these, including a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, may be found in the Ross School Impact on [Ross Community Values](#). In addition every student at the University of Michigan accepts the rights and responsibilities of membership in the University's academic and social community. These rights and responsibilities are clearly laid out in [The Statement](#). By enrolling in this course you confirm that you have read and understood these statements and policies, and further that you agree to abide by them. The Ross Community Values site contains valuable information and links on writing and how to check to make sure you have not plagiarized the work of others. Claimed ignorance of these codes and policies will be viewed as invalid should a violation take place. In all cases if you have questions please address them with the professor as far **in advance** as possible.

Any violation of the Ross School Academic Honor Code such as plagiarism, otherwise passing off anyone else's work as your own, unauthorized collaboration, use of materials generated for use during past offerings of this course, or any form of cheating will be referred to the Community Values Committee. Possible penalties include course failure with a permanent notation of an honor policy violation on your transcript and even expulsion. As a community we are all still adapting and learning how this applies to hybrid and remote learning environments, but the same principles of academic integrity apply.

Policy Related to the Use of Class Materials

All materials generated for the course including slides, handouts, review materials and assignments, or any other materials prepared by you or the professor for this course, are intended for use by current students in this class only, unless you have the permission of your instructor. You are not permitted to use materials related to the class that were generated by the professor or students in previous versions of this course. A violation of this policy may be a violation of the Ross Community Values Code and may result in disciplinary action.

Finally, the Dean's Office wants to remind you that *the responsibility of all faculty when teaching a class is to deliver the course content to the best of their ability. The University of Michigan has a deep commitment to free speech and civil discourse, and we support the exchange of ideas in public spaces across our campus. Since classrooms and classroom buildings are not public spaces, faculty will dedicate class time to course-related content, and generally steer discussions away from unrelated topics.*

Accommodations

The University of Michigan is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Disability can include: mental health conditions, ADHD, learning disabilities, autism, chronic illness, physical conditions, sensory conditions, and more.

If you anticipate or are experiencing barriers based on disability or temporary injuries, the [Services for Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#) office works with students to explore reasonable accommodations, tools, and resources.

- **If you are already connected with SSD and have approved accommodations,** please share your letter through [Accommodate](#). For testing accommodations, ***letters must be sent one week prior to the first exam in order to guarantee they will be met.*** Reach out to me and/or your SSD Disability Access Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns about your accommodations.
- **If you have not connected with SSD and anticipate or are experiencing a disability-related barrier,** and would like to discuss accommodations and/or resources, please contact SSD by completing their [Initial Information Form](#).
- If you have a **temporary and/or sudden medical injury/condition**, such as a broken arm, contact the SSD directly at the contact information below.

For more information, call 734-763-3000 or email ssdoffice@umich.edu.

Laptop & Electronic Device Use and Zoom Connectivity in Class

Laptop and electronic device use will be necessary for learning for both in-person and remote courses. I will discuss specifics of remote attendance the first week of class; additional details are available on the Canvas class website. Naturally, for those attending courses remotely you will need an electronic device (e.g., desktop, laptop, tablet) with video camera (built in or external), audio device and a microphone to engage fully in the course. A stable and sufficient bandwidth connection will also be necessary.

All remote students are to have their camera on during class. Use of your laptop should be for learning and discussion in class with the class material. Please contact your faculty member if you encounter challenges with laptops/electronic devices/internet connectivity/remote learning environment which may impede your ability to learn in the course.

Recordings

For your convenience only, **I will make recordings of each lecture available on the course Canvas class website, typically within 24 hours for its occurrence. Class recordings are NOT meant to substitute for class attendance.** These recordings are meant to support learning, as well as to help those of you who are affected by illness or unforeseen circumstances. I reserve the right to stop providing class recordings should it materially affect class attendance.

Students may not record or distribute any class activity without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. This applies to both the live recording of an actual class, as well as the duplication of any recordings shared by the faculty with the course participants. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Course Content & Class Schedule (tentative):

1. Course Introduction and Overview (LECTURE 1)

Themes of the course; structure of the course; international financial market features and recent developments; challenges and opportunities for investors and corporations.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 1).

2. The International Financial Setting

2.1. The Foreign Exchange Market (LECTURE 2)

Organization of the market; size of the market; traded contracts; the participants; the marketplace; currency quotes and prices; triangular arbitrage; settlement; bid-ask spreads; describing changes in exchange rates.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 2); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 1); Levich (Chap. 1, 3); Melvin (Chap. 1, 3)

2.2. Forward Markets and Foreign Exchange Risk (LECTURES 3 & 4)

Foreign exchange risk for investors and corporations; describing uncertain future exchange rates; hedging foreign exchange risk; the forward foreign exchange market; forward premiums and discounts; foreign exchange swaps; hedging import payments and export receipts; partial hedging and the opportunity cost of hedging: The Volkswagen example; Central Bank swap lines.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 3); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 1); Levich (Chap. 4); Melvin (Chap. 4)

2.3. Interest Rate Parities (LECTURES 5 & 6)

The time value of monies; covered interest rate parity; the external currency market for deposits and loans for investors and corporations; covered interest arbitrage with transactions costs; hedging foreign exchange risk (e.g., import payments, export receipts)

with synthetic money market hedges; default risk, exchange control risk, and political risk; currency risk and sovereign bond risk.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 6, 14.1, pp. 620-628); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 2); Levich (Chap. 5); Melvin (Chap. 5)

2.4. Speculation and Risk in the Foreign Exchange Market (LECTURE 7)

Speculating in the foreign exchange market; uncovered interest rate parity and the unbiasedness hypothesis; foreign exchange risk and the unbiasedness hypothesis; the importance of uncovered interest rate parity and the unbiasedness hypothesis for investors and for corporations' international capital budgeting decisions; further implications for the opportunity cost of hedging; empirical evidence on the unbiasedness hypothesis.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 7, 16.2); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 2, 3); Levich (Chap. 5); Melvin (Chap. 6)

2.5. Purchasing Power Parity (LECTURE 8)

Price levels and price indices; the purchasing power of a money; the theory of absolute purchasing power parity; the law of one price; overvaluations and undervaluations of currencies; the MacPPP standard; exchange rates and absolute PPPs; PPP, firm profitability, and market segmentation; explaining the failure of absolute PPP; relative purchasing power parity; the international law of one price; absolute purchasing power parity; relative purchasing power parity.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 8); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 3); Levich (Chap. 4); Melvin (Chap. 8)

2.6. Real Exchange Rates, Real Exchange Rate Risk (LECTURE 9)

The real exchange rate; the real exchange rate as a relative price; real appreciations and depreciations; currency policies and firm decisions; real competitiveness of countries and corporations: Japan versus China; real foreign exchange risk; the international Fisher effect.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 8); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 3); Levich (Chap. 4); Melvin (Chap. 8)

3. Exchange Rate Regimes, Determination, and Forecasting

3.1. Balance of Payments (LECTURE 10)

The balance of payments; the impact of the capital budgeting and financing decisions of domestic and foreign firms on the balance of payments of a country; current account and capital account dynamics.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 4); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 2); Levich (Chap. 3); Melvin (Chap. 2)

3.2 Exchange Rate Regimes and Central Bank Intervention (LECTURE 11)

Exchange rate systems; fixed, floating and intermediate regimes; relevance of alternative exchange rate regimes for the extent and nature of business risk and currency risk faced by investors and corporations; Central Bank intervention: Mechanics, benefits, and costs.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 5); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 3); Levich (Chap. 2, 17); Melvin (Chap. 3, 10)

3.3. Exchange Rate Determination and Forecasting (LECTURE 12)

Parity conditions and exchange rate forecasts; forecast evaluation criteria for corporations and speculators; active versus passive hedging for corporations with foreign exchange exposure; fundamental exchange rate forecasting; technical analysis and exchange rate forecasting; devaluation prediction. In-class group project discussion and work.

Suggested readings: Bekaert-Hodrick (Chap. 10); Solnik-McLeavey (Chap. 3, Appendix to Chap. 3); Levich (Chap. 6, 8); Melvin (Chap. 9, 10)