

# AASU RC

# Academic Overview

Fall  
2025



Harvard  
Business  
School

# AGENDA

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**1** Course Overview

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**2** Grades & Exams

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**3** Support & Resources

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# Course Overview



# Fall Semester

## Finance 1

This course examines the role of finance in supporting the functional areas of a firm, and fosters an understanding of how financial decisions themselves can create value.

Topics covered include:

- Basic analytical skills and principles of corporate finance.
- Functions of modern capital markets and financial institutions.
- Standard techniques of analysis, including capital budgeting, discounted cash flow valuation, and risk analysis.

## Financial Reporting & Control (FRC)

Recognizing that accounting is the primary channel for communicating information about the economics of a business, this course provides a broad view of how accounting contributes to an organization.

Students will gain:

- An understanding of the concepts and language of accounting so it can be used as an effective tool for communication, monitoring, and resource allocation.
- Mastery of the vocabulary of financial statements and accounting reports.
- Familiarity with how modern accounting and control theory is used in evaluating economic conditions and making organizational decisions.

# Fall Semester

## **Leadership & Organizational Behavior (LEAD)**

This course focuses on how managers become effective leaders by addressing the human side of enterprise.

The first modules examine teams, individuals, and networks in the context of:

- The determinants of group culture.
- Managing the performance of individual subordinates.
- Establishing productive relationships with peers and seniors over whom the manager has no formal authority.

The intermediate modules look at successful leaders in action to see how they:

- Develop a vision of the future.
- Align the organization behind that vision.
- Motivate people to achieve the vision.
- Design effective organizations and change them to achieve superior performance.
- The final module introduces a model for strategic career management.

## **Marketing**

The objectives of this course are to demonstrate the role of marketing in the company; to explore the relationship of marketing to other functions; and to show how effective marketing builds on a thorough understanding of buyer behavior to create value for customers.

Students learn how to:

- Make marketing decisions in the context of general management.
- Control the elements of the marketing mix—product policy, channels of distribution, communication, and pricing—to satisfy customer needs profitably.
- Use this knowledge in a brand management simulation. The course culminates in an examination of the evolution of marketing, particularly focusing on opportunities presented by the Internet.

# Fall Semester

## Technology & Operations Management (TOM)

This course enables students to develop the skills and concepts needed to ensure the ongoing contribution of a firm's operations to its competitive position. It helps them to understand the complex processes underlying the development and manufacture of products as well as the creation and delivery of services.

Topics encompass:

- Process analysis
- Cross-functional and cross-firm integration
- Product development
- Information technology
- Technology and operations strategy

## Strategy

The objective of this course is to help students develop the skills for formulating strategy.

It provides an understanding of:

- A firm's operative environment and how to sustain competitive advantage.
- How to generate superior value for customers by designing the optimum configuration of the product mix and functional activities.
- How to balance the opportunities and risks associated with dynamic and uncertain changes in industry attractiveness and competitive position.

Students learn to:

- Develop a mastery of a body of analytical tools and the ability to take an integrative point of view.
- Use these tools to perform in-depth analyses of industries and competitors, predict competitive behavior, and analyze how firms develop and sustain competitive advantage over time.
- Particular attention is paid to competitive positioning; understanding comparative costs; and addressing issues such as cannibalization, network externalities, and globalization.

# Fall Semester

## **Data Science & AI for Leaders (DSAIL)**

Recognizing that data-driven insights are critical for modern business decision making, this course equips managers to effectively lead analytics-powered organizations.

Students will gain:

- An understanding of foundational data science concepts and techniques that can inform business insights and decisions.
- Exposure to R statistical programming language to manipulate, analyze, and visualize data.
- Knowledge of how modern data science strategies and analytics are used across finance, marketing, operations, and other business functions to create value and solve problems.
- Ability to set up and manage data science teams, governance policies, and analytics infrastructure.
- Expertise to prioritize and sequence data science projects based on their feasibility and impact.
- Skills to critically evaluate data science methodologies, results, and recommendations.
- Fluency in the vocabulary and logic used by data scientists to drive key organizational decisions.
- Exposure to emerging technologies like generative AI and foundational concepts within ethical AI, like algorithmic transparency, fairness, privacy, and bias.

# Spring Semester

## **Business, Government & the International Economy (BGIE)**

This course introduces tools for studying the economic environment of business to help managers understand the implications for their companies.

Students will learn the impact of:

- National income and balance of payment accounting
- Exchange rate theory
- Political regimes

An examination of both the gains and problems arising from regional global integration covers:

- International trade
- Foreign direct investment
- Portfolio capital
- Global environmental issues

## **The Entrepreneurial Manager (TEM)**

This course addresses the issues faced by managers who wish to turn opportunity into viable organizations that create value, and empowers students to develop their own approaches, guidelines, and skills for being entrepreneurial managers.

The course teaches students how to:

- Identify potentially valuable opportunities.
- Obtain the resources necessary to pursue an opportunity and to create an entrepreneurial organization.
- Manage the entrepreneurial organization once it has been established.
- Grow the business into a sustainable enterprise.
- Create and harvest value for the organization's stakeholders.



# Spring Semester

## Finance II

This course builds on the foundation developed in Finance I, focusing on three sets of managerial decisions:

- How to evaluate complex investments.
- How to set and execute financial policies within a firm.
- How to integrate the many financial decisions faced by firms.

The Finance II course is divided into four blocks of material:

- Tools of financial analysis (credit market analysis, option pricing, valuation of interest tax shields, weighted average cost of capital)
- Financial policy choices of firms (whether to finance with debt or equity, distributing cash to shareholders)
- Financial market imperfections (costs of financial distress, transaction costs, information asymmetries, taxes, agency conflicts)
- Deals and transactions (mergers and acquisitions, leveraged buyouts, hostile takeovers, initial public offerings)

## Leadership & Corporate Accountability (LCA)

In this course, students learn about the complex responsibilities facing business leaders today. Through cases about difficult managerial decisions, the course examines the legal, ethical, and economic responsibilities of corporate leaders. It also teaches students about management and governance systems leaders can use to promote responsible conduct by companies and their employees, and shows how personal values can play a critical role in effective leadership.

## FIELD Global Capstone

FIELD Global Capstone is a spring semester course that uses experiential education and project-based learning to enhance the classroom experience. Student teams are paired with a Global Partner company with a product or service challenge to be addressed. Designed to integrate learnings from across the Required Curriculum, the course develops skills in cultural awareness, team building, customer-driven innovation, and culminates in a one-week immersion at the company's location, where students meet with their Global Partner and local consumers.

# Spring Semester

## **The Purpose of the Firm**

The Purpose of the Firm is a short module designed to explore how, and under what circumstances, private firms can help address some of society's greatest challenges. Each of the five cases describes a set of leaders trying to “make a difference in the world” – that is, to harness the resources of the firm to tackle massive problems such as climate change, poverty, or economic development. Together, the cases are thus designed to help students think about what it actually means to make a difference, and what it takes. How do would-be leaders identify the problems or challenges they wish to tackle? What enables them to craft solutions that other individuals or organizations have missed? Under what circumstances are private firms a reasonable solution to society's problems? And when should they cede this role to other players instead?

# Grades & Exams



# Course Grading

At the conclusion of each course, instructors give students one of four grades designated as Category I, II, III, and IV. These grades are reported to the Registrar.

- **Category I:** Given to the top 15%–20% of students in an RC section and the top 15%–25% of students in an EC course section.
- **Category II:** Given to the next 70%–75% of students in an RC section and the next 65%–75% in an EC course section. The actual number of Category II grades is subject to the number of Category I grades assigned.
- **Category III:** Given to the lowest performing 10% of students in an RC or EC course section.
- **Category IV:** Seldom assigned; designates failure of achievement and/or commitment and, therefore, failure to meet minimum standards of the course. If Category IV is used in a course, the combined number of students who receive Categories III and IV must equal the lowest 10% of the section.

While grading varies considerably among courses, grades are typically calculated from class participation (30 – 50%), written midterm exams (approx. 5 – 15%) and written final exams (30 – 60%). Grades reported for an individual student are not averaged. No determination of rank or academic standing is made, except for the purpose of awarding academic honors.

# Categories of Academic Difficulty

A student falls into a classification if s/he has reached its threshold but has not reached the threshold of the next classification. The threshold applies to grades from that term only, unless otherwise stated.

## Thresholds for Classifications of Academic Difficulty

	Academic Concern	Academic Alert	Academic Review
<b>Action:</b>	<b>Letter of Concern</b>	<b>Letter of Alert</b>	<b>APC Review</b>
<b>Term 1</b> 16.5 Credits: 6 Courses	Category III in 2 courses	Category III in 3 courses	No APC Review at end of Term 1
<b>Term 2</b> 16.5 credits: 6 courses	Category III in 2 courses	Category III in 3 courses	Terms 1 & 2 combined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Category III in 5 courses</li><li>• Category IV in any course</li><li>• No Credit in any course</li></ul>

### Additional Notes:

- Grades for SIPs carry zero credits and, therefore, are not part of APC calculations. They are, however, part of the record provided to the APC for consideration when evaluating academic honors and difficulty.
- If you are concerned about the APC process, you can contact Joyce Majewski, Secretary to the APC.

# Midterm Feedback & Final Exams

## Midterm Feedback

In the middle of each semester, students will get midterm feedback, highlighting participation and midterm grades. For participation, professors will indicate whether your contributions thus far place you in the upper 30 percent, middle 50 percent, or lower 20 percent of the section.

## RC Exam Quartile Grades Exam Format & Procedures

Grading	Description
1	In the top quarter of the class
1/ 2	On the borderline between quartile 1 and quartile 2
2	Between the top quarter and the midpoint of the class
2/3	On the borderline between quartile 2 and quartile 3
3	Between the midpoint and the bottom quarter of the class
3/ 4	On the borderline between quartile 3 and quartile 4
4	In the bottom quarter of the class

- Final exams are case-based and they are open notes (pending instructions from professors)
- Exams are generally 4 – 5 hours in length and must be taken in assigned classroom space on campus
- Students may not collaborate on their exams unless specifically and explicitly authorized by instructors.
- Students cannot receive unpermitted aid while taking their exams, including using published material, internet resources, or notes taken by prior years' students.
- To ensure effective administration of exams, students are expected to take in-class exams in their assigned rooms



# Support & Resources



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# Tutoring

Peer Tutors are EC students who were identified by their RC faculty as having demonstrated thorough subject knowledge, technical competence, and commitment to helping others learn. In addition, they should be in good academic and Community Values standing by the beginning of the academic year.

## Overview

- Peer Tutoring Service is a short-term, supplemental support resource available to students in Term 1 and Term 2 of the MBA Program when in-class performance and mid-term feedback suggest that additional support may be beneficial. Students who wish to use Peer Tutoring Service should make an appointment with a member of the support team in MBA Student & Academic Services (SAS) by calling **617-495-6087** or emailing **[sas@hbs.edu](mailto:sas@hbs.edu)**.
- Tutors manage their own schedules. After a student has met with a SAS staff member, the student is responsible for contacting the tutors and negotiating a mutually convenient schedule for a meeting. Tutoring is offered in one-on-one sessions and small group sessions.
- The tutoring relationship should conform to the principles of fairness and academic integrity promoted by the HBS learning community. Because case preparation is a vital part of case method learning, it is always the primary responsibility of the individual student. Your tutor may help you review the material previously discussed in class. **However, it is a violation of Community Values to preview upcoming cases in advance of the full class discussion.**
- **The tutoring program starts the second week of RC classes.**





# EC Tutors

Courses	EC		Courses	EC	
<b>BGIE</b>	Sabine Nau Esham Macauley Simisola Oke	Judson Asiruwa Lovely Akomoize Victoria Enoc-Ahiamadu	<b>LCA</b>	Hawi Tiyo	
<b>DSAIL</b>	Isaiah Drummond Jess De Suza		<b>LEAD</b>	Allegra Tomassa Massaro Sabine Nau Dawit Wondimagegn Eghosa Amadin	Jonathan Young Jasmin Johnson Lovely Akomoize Hawi Tiyo Victoria Enoc-Ahiamadu
<b>FIELD</b>	Maria Curry		<b>MKT</b>	Isaiah Drummond Jonathan Young Jess De Suza	
<b>FIN 1</b>	Sebastien Pierre-Louis		<b>STRAT</b>	Warren Fuselier Isaiah Drummond Eghosa Amadin	
<b>FIN 2</b>	Sebastien Pierre-Louis Chandra Sahu		<b>TEM</b>	Isaiah Drummond Jasmin Johnson	
<b>FRC</b>	Alexis Ukogu Temisan Hambraeus	Lovely Akomoize Victoria Enoc-Ahiamadu			



# Writing Coach

Coaching for Effective Writing (CEW) is a resource provided and managed by MBA Student & Academic Services. CEW helps students meet the standards for satisfactory written performance in the MBA Program.

## Overview

- In the Required Curriculum, the CEW helps students develop skills for writing compelling, persuasive case-based arguments under timed conditions.
- Writing Coaches do not provide writing samples or sample exams and do not edit papers. Rather, they provide feedback on the organization, argument, and expression of student writing. Students get assigned to Writing Coaches by SAS on a case-by-case basis, based on coaches' availability and other considerations.
- If you are concerned about your case-based writing skills, contact MBA Student & Academic Services, 617-495-6087, [sas@hbs.edu](mailto:sas@hbs.edu), to schedule an appointment with a SAS staff member to discuss your writing needs. Individual coaching sessions then can be scheduled through a referral to an approved Writing Coach.



# Graduate Student Learning Support

Students who have been successful in the past may, for the first time, be overwhelmed by academic demands. Graduate Student Learning Support (GSLS) is a program designed to help students who are struggling with academic and learning issues. Students seek help for problems with reading, completing academic work on time, anxiety about speaking up in class and/or taking tests, procrastination, distractibility, finishing tests on time, and advocating for themselves. The goal of GSLS is to help students overcome academic hurdles before they become insurmountable.

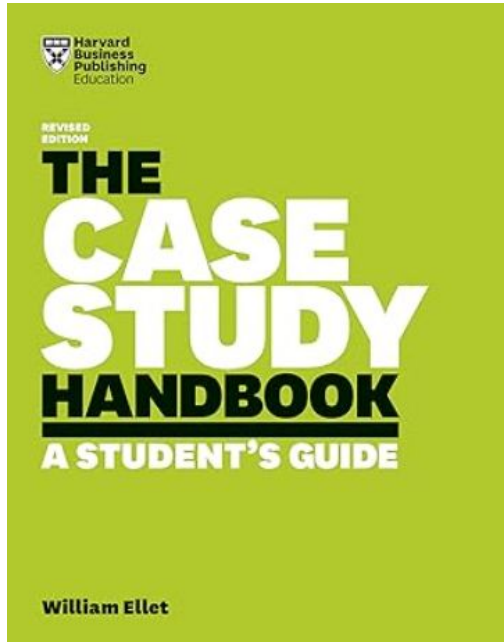
## Overview

- **Learning Specialists** help to with the following: Improve time management, create a study plan and pace learning, read more efficiently, increase class participation, minimize test taking anxiety, get started on assignments, organize thoughts, improve presentation skills, manage academic anxiety, and set realistic goals
- A consultation may result in assignment to a learning specialist, on-site neuropsychological screening, referral for full neuropsychological evaluation, and academic accommodations, pending evaluation.
- To request a consultation, contact Aldo Peña Moses, Associate Director, MBA Student & Academic Services, 617-384-8516 or [amoses@hbs.edu](mailto:amoses@hbs.edu).



# Other resources:

- [The Case Method | MBA](#)
- [The Case Study Handbook, Revised Edition: A Student's Guide: 9781633696150: Business Communication Books @ Amazon.com](#)



# Academic Calendar



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# 2025 - 2026 Academic Calendar

## 2025

4 AUG	MS/MBA: Engineering and MS/MBA: Biotechnology RC program begins
25 AUG	Required RC Registration
26-29 AUG	Required RC START
28 AUG-4 SEP	Cross-Registration petitions accepted for EC Fall Term
1 SEP	Labor Day
2 SEP	RC Fall Term courses begin; Required EC Kickoff
3 SEP	EC Fall Term courses begin
5 SEP	EC Open Day
27 SEP	Weekend Sprints (special on-campus academic programming, optional)
2 OCT	RC and EC Open Day
3 OCT	EC Open Day
13 OCT	Columbus Day (Federal); Indigenous Peoples' Day (City of Cambridge)
24 OCT	EC Open Day
27 OCT	EC Open Day
2 NOV	Weekend Sprints (special on-campus academic programming, optional)
5 NOV	EC Open Day
11 NOV	Veterans Day
26-28 NOV	Thanksgiving Recess
5-11 DEC	EC Final Exams
10-12 DEC; 15-19 DEC	RC Final Exams
22 DEC	Winter Recess Begins

## 2026

8 JAN	MS/MBA: Engineering and MS/MBA: Biotechnology RC Spring begins
12 JAN	MS/MBA: Engineering EC Spring begins
19 JAN	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
20-23 JAN	Short Intensive Programs (SIPs)
21-27 JAN	Cross-Registration petitions accepted for EC Spring Term
26 JAN	RC and EC Spring Terms begin
9 FEB	RC and EC Open Day
16 FEB	Presidents' Day
2 MAR	EC Open Day
7 MAR	Weekend Sprints (special on-campus academic programming, optional)
14-22 MAR	Spring Break
23-29 APR	EC Final Exams
28-29 APR; 4-7 MAY	RC Final Exams
29 APR	Last day of EC Spring Term
29 APR-1 MAY	Required EC Bridges
4 MAY	MS/MBA: Biotechnology EC Capstone
8-10 MAY; 19-20 MAY	Field Global Capstone Travel
11-18 MAY	Field Global Capstone
20 MAY	Last day of RC Spring Term
25 MAY	Memorial Day
28 MAY	Harvard University Commencement

