Finance Theory PhD Course

Semester One 2024

Instructor: Professor Tom Smith

Overview
This course, which is the first in the sequence of doctoral seminars offered in finance, is designed to introduce students to the major models of asset pricing and to rational expectations models. All of the material is developed from first principles, so there are no formal prerequisites for taking this seminar. It is assumed, however, that students are familiar with basic microeconomic theory and have a working knowledge of both calculus and matrix algebra. The outline that follows provides a brief description of the material that is covered in the course. The course consists of three 2 Day Modules which deal with three broad categories of asset pricing models: single-period static models and discrete time intertemporal models (Module 1), continuous time mathematics, Black Scholes and continuous time models (Module 2) and finally rational expectations models: fully revealing equilibrium, noisy rational expectations equilibrium, the Kyle model, its extensions and future directions (Module 3). The general approach will be:

- to examine the economic intuition behind each model
- provide a mathematically rigorous derivation of the model
- discuss the model's important features, and
- outline the testable implications of the model.
Textbooks
There are no required texts for this course. The following books are useful references:


Grading
There will be two assignments in the course. These assignments can be done either individually or in groups but group work is encouraged as this helps to develop a cohort which is very valuable to you as your research career goes forward. Each group will get a chance to present solutions to the problems in class. This gives the other students in the class a chance to see how a particular group approached the problems, and also provide members of the presenting group with an opportunity to develop their presentation skills. In addition to the assignments, there will be a final exam.

The exam will be 3 hours in duration and will be closed book, closed notes. The assignments determine 40% of the course grade; the remaining 60% is based on the performance on the final exam.

Venue
The class will be online this year with a zoom session 3-5 on Saturday for each module.

Timetable
Module 1 Saturday 2nd March
Module 2 Saturday 6th April
Module 3 Saturday 4th May

Final Exam: Thursday June 13th 2-5pm
List of Topics
The following is a list of topics that will be covered in the course along with the associated reading assignments. A set of class notes will be available.

Module 1 Discrete Time Models

The Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM)
- Class Notes
- Huang and Litzenberger chapters 3 and 4
- Ingersoll chapters 3 and 4

The Arbitrage Pricing Theory (APT)
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapters 2 and 7

State Preference Models
- Class Notes
- Huang and Litzenberger chapters 5, 6, and 7

The Lucas Model
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapters 10 and 11

The Pricing Kernel Approach: Putting the Models together
- Class Notes
Module 2 Continuous Time Models

Continuous Time Mathematics
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapters 12 and 16

The Black--Scholes Option Pricing Model
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapter 14

The Merton Model
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapter 13

The Breeden Model
Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapter 15

The Cox--Ingersoll--Ross Model (CIR)
- Class Notes
- Ingersoll chapter 18

Module 3 Rational Expectations Models

The Grossman Model
- Class Notes

The Admati Model
- Class Notes

The Kyle Model
- Class Notes

Extensions of the Kyle Model and future directions
- Class Notes

Review of the Course