Department of
FINANCE
Master of Science in Finance

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN FINANCE (MSF) PROGRAM

2026-2027

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1. WELCOME

Welcome to the Master of Science in Finance (MSF) program at Clemson University!

We are excited to support you throughout your academic journey and look forward to working with you to meet your academic and personal goals in finance.

This handbook was created to help Graduate students in Finance to understand the Clemson University Graduate Programs and MSF policies and procedures. It provides an overview of departmental guidelines, academic expectations, and responsibilities of MSF graduate students.

All graduate students in the Department of Finance are expected to review and understand the contents of this handbook.

Along with this handbook, it's important to review the **Graduate School Policies and Procedures**, which take priority if any conflict arises. The Graduate School website also provides details on housing, student life, and other university resources. You can access the Graduate School guidelines at the Graduate School office in E-109 Martin Hall or online (link).

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2. INTRODUCTION

The MSF program at Clemson University is designed to provide advanced, technical, and career-focused training as preparation for leadership roles across important fields such as corporate finance, investment management, and financial services.

This program emphasizes:

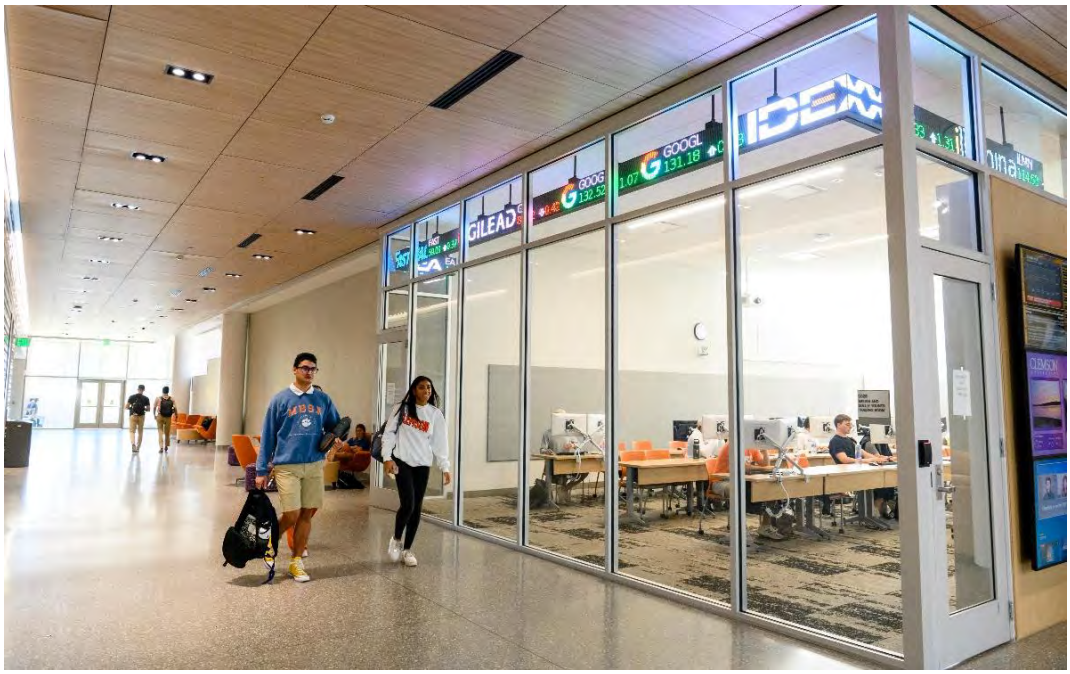
- **Industry-informed curriculum** developed through extensive consultation with Clemson alumni and finance industry leaders. The program addresses the evolving demands of modern finance careers by emphasizing the technical competencies employers are actively seeking.

- **Experiential learning** through the Student Managed Investment Fund, actively managing real capital using Clemson's state-of-the-art Melvin and Dollie Younts Trading Room equipped with Bloomberg terminals.

- **Advanced technical skills** including programming in Python, advanced data analysis, and applied financial modeling.

- **Professional development** through dedicated courses on communication, networking, presentation skills, and career strategy – addressing the "soft skills" gap that employers consistently identify as critical for advancement.

This handbook serves as your guide to the program. Students should become familiar with the contents of this handbook, as they are accountable for understanding and following the policies, procedures, and deadlines outlined by the University, the Graduate School, the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business, and the Department of Finance.



3. APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

Those interested in applying to the MSF program can do so by using the Clemson University Graduate School website (link). Only fully complete applications will be considered. Please refer to the Supporting Materials description for additional details (link). The following are required to successfully apply to the MSF program:

Materials required for all students:

Personal statement (written essay). The personal statement should highlight your career objectives and explain your motivation for pursuing a Finance graduate degree at Clemson University. Statements are limited to one page in length.

Personal statement (video essay). The video essay offers an opportunity to discuss your interest in pursuing an MSF degree at Clemson University and how it aligns with your long-term goals. The video essay should not exceed two minutes in length.

Resume. Your resume should highlight key details relating to your education, relevant experience, professional affiliations, and technical skills. Sample resumes and helpful tips are available on the Graduate website (link).

Transcripts. A minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with at least a 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) is required. Unofficial transcripts are acceptable for the initial application, however accepted students are required to provide official transcripts prior to securing their enrollment in the program.

Contacts for two letters of recommendation. Applicants must provide contact information for two individuals who know the applicant in a supervisory capacity. Examples of reference letter writers include former or current professors and internship or full-time employment supervisors. Writers should be able to discuss the applicant's work ethic, character, and past performance.

GMAT or GRE score: Official scores are required. Clemson's institution code is 5111 and scores are valid for five years. For additional details, please refer to the Graduate website (link). Students with an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.4 (on a 4.0 scale) or finance major GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) may request to waive the GMAT/GRE requirement.

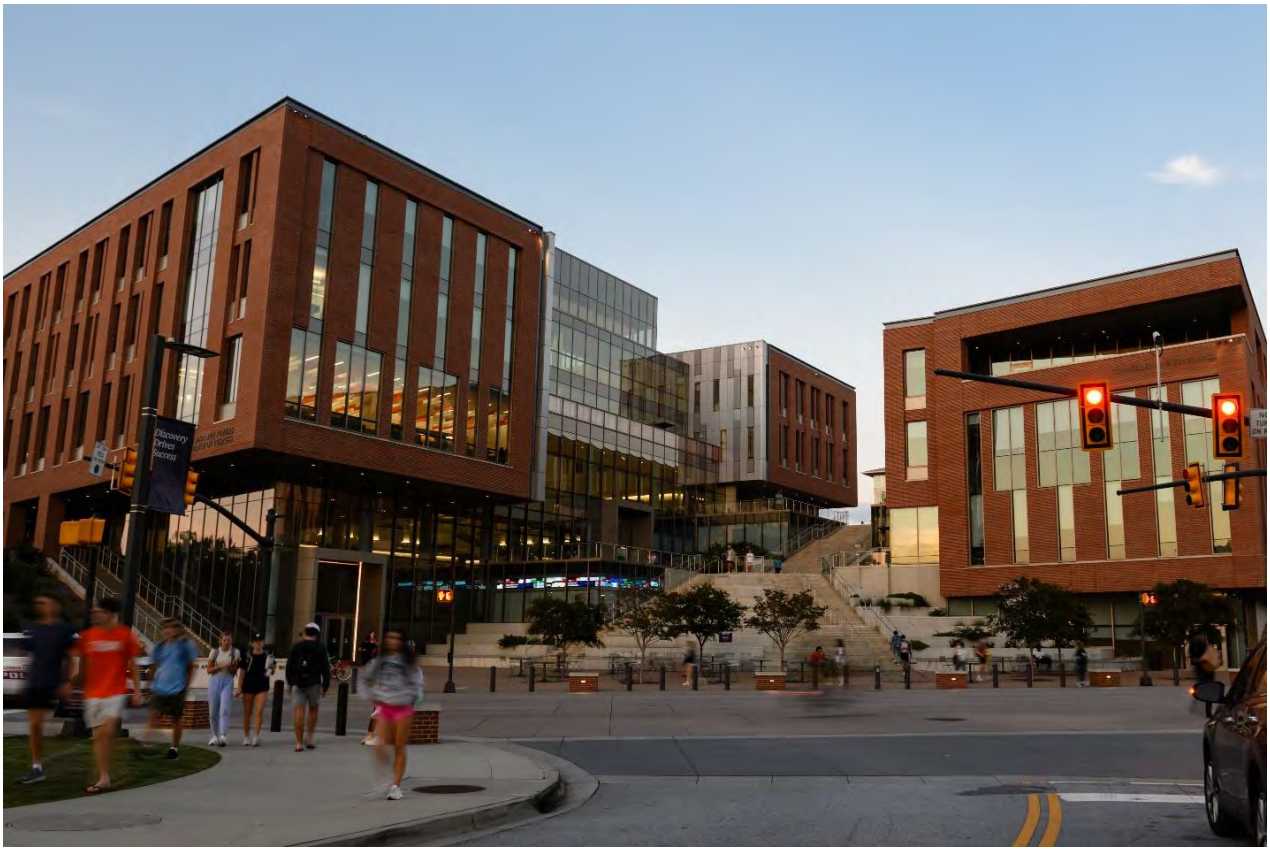
Community standards. Clemson University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all members of our community. All applicants must answer six questions on the application related to criminal and disciplinary charges. Applicants are required to provide an explanation for each instance where you answer "yes". The statement will be used in the review process. The academic program to which you are applying will not see these responses. These questions are reviewed by an Applicant Conduct Review Committee (separate from the academic review of your application). For general information about the University's values of integrity, honor and respect, see the Office of Community and Ethical Standards (link). For more information regarding Graduate School Policy check out the Graduate School Policies and Procedures handbook (link).

Additional materials required for international students:

Financial certification: U.S. law requires international students entering the country on temporary student visas to provide evidence that they have sufficient financial resources to support their studies. Please follow directions on the IS-50 Financial Certification form (link) to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20 for F-1 visas or form DS-2019 for J-1 visas) from Clemson University. For additional information, please refer to the Clemson University International Services (link).

English language proficiency. International students whose native language is not English are required to provide proof of English proficiency, as demonstrated through (a) a degree (earned or in progress) from a qualifying English-language institution, (b) official test scores, or (c) completing an approved ESL program offering Conditional Language Admission. Please refer to the Clemson University English language proficiency for Graduate admission website for additional details (link).

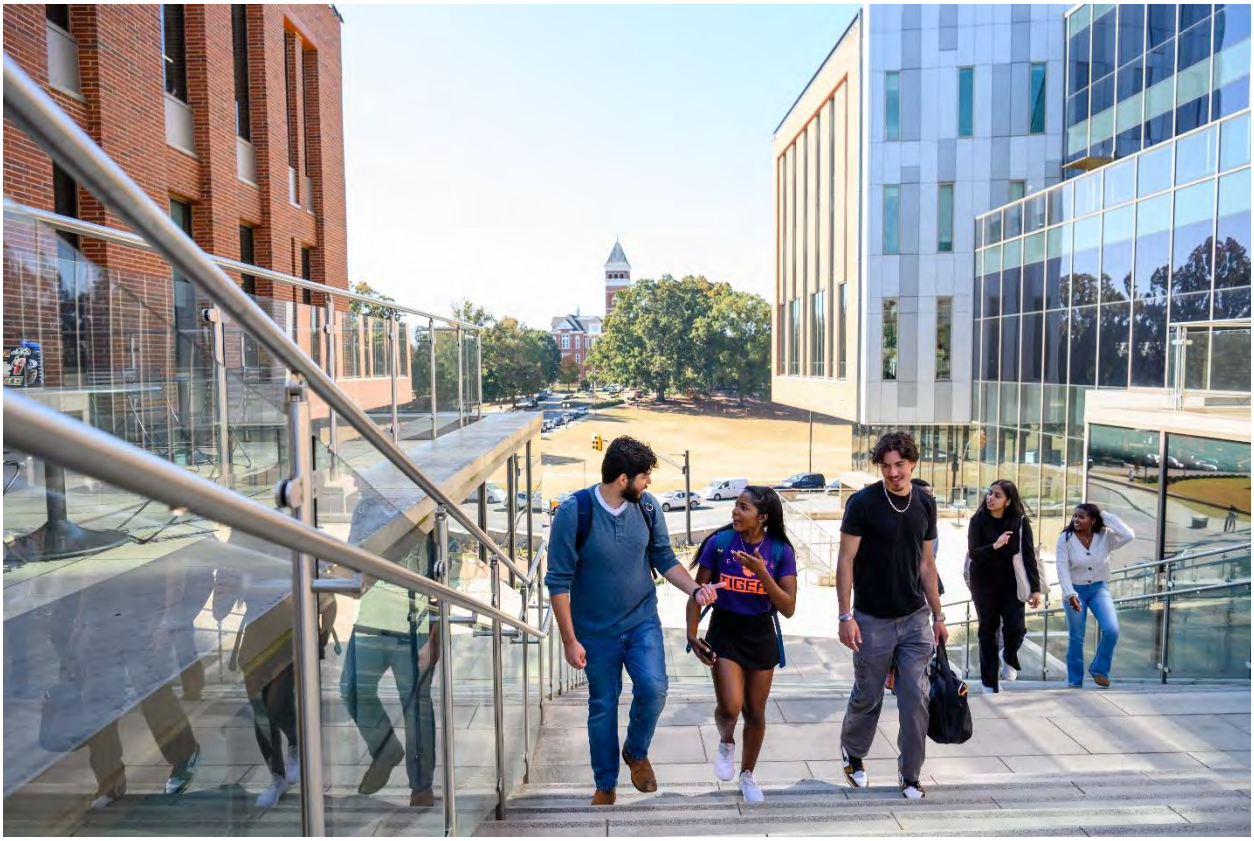
The MSF Admissions Committee may request an interview (either in-person or online).



4. GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

New Student Orientations

The MSF new student orientation will take place the week prior to the beginning of the Fall Semester. All students are required to attend this in-person event. New students are also required to attend both online and in-person orientations offered by the Clemson University Graduate School.



Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Students are required to conduct themselves in a polite and professional manner in all dealings with fellow classmates, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to demonstrate integrity with the understanding that they are responsible for their choices and actions. Maintaining the highest standards of honesty and truthfulness is essential and the Graduate School will respond accordingly to charges of violations of academic integrity. Please refer to the Graduate School Policies and Procedures for more information (link).

Using Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a powerful technology that, depending on how it is applied, can either enhance or impede student learning. AI policies will vary by instructor and are outlined in the syllabus for each course. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the AI policies of each course and adhere to their requirements.

Course Delivery

The MSF is a full-time program beginning the Second Summer Semester. Summer courses are taught online asynchronously, while Fall and Spring classes are taught in-person.

Computer Requirements

Students are required to have a Microsoft Windows based laptop in good working condition. Note that non-Windows based operating systems (e.g. MacBook, Chromebook, Linux-based models, etc.) are not permitted.

Calendar and Deadlines

The following is a list of important dates and deadlines. Applicants will be accepted on a rolling basis until the program reaches capacity. Cohorts are accepted on an annual basis, with each group entering the program in the Summer and completing their studies the following Spring. Second Summer, Fall, and Spring semester dates are estimates and may be subject to change.

Important Dates	**Event Details**
Application Submissions	
November 1	Accepting applications
December 31	Early application submission deadline
March 31	Initial application submission deadline
April 15 (set by Graduate School)	International student application submission deadline
May 31	Final application submission deadline
Second Summer Semester	
July 1	Classes begin (online)
July 31	Last day of classes
August 3 – August 4	Final exams
Fall Semester	
August 17	Classes begin (in-person)
December 3	Last day of classes
December 7 – December 11	Final exams
Spring Semester	
January 6	Classes begin (in-person)
Late January	Deadline to apply for Spring Graduation
Late March	Deadline to order graduation regalia
April 22	Last day of classes
April 26 – April 30	Final exams
Early May	Graduation

5. TUITION

The Clemson University Board of Trustees sets tuition and fees on an annual basis. The MSF is a Tier 1 program for tuition purposes. Academic tuition (excluding fees) for the 2026-2027 academic year is approximately $19,040 for full-time in-state students and approximately $40,676 for full-time out-of-state students. These estimates do not include fees, the costs of books, materials, and living expenses. Tuition and fees are subject to change based on the discretion of the University. For additional details on tuition and fees please refer to Student Financial Services (link).

6. PROGRAM OF STUDY

The MSF program requires successful completion of all 32 hours of graduate finance course work. Listed below is the current program of study. Course offerings are subject to change depending on student and departmental needs.

Summer II (online)
FIN 8000: Quantitative Foundations in Finance (3 credits)
FIN 8010: Applied Computational Finance (3 credits)

Fall (in-person)
FIN 8020: Financial Statement Analytics (3 credits)
FIN 8100: Advanced Corporate Finance (3 credits)
FIN 8200: Portfolio Management Theory (3 credits)
FIN 8210: Applied Portfolio Management I (3 credits)
FIN 8070: Professional Development in Finance I (1 credit)

Spring (in-person)
FIN 8110: Corporate Finance Strategy (3 credits)
FIN 8090: Special Topics, Artificial Intelligence in Finance (3 credits)
FIN 8220: Advanced Risk Management (3 credits)
FIN 8210: Applied Portfolio Management II (3 credits)
FIN 8080: Professional Development in Finance II (1 credit)

Course Descriptions

FIN 8000: Quantitative Foundations of Finance (3 credits)
This course equips students with quantitative techniques and analytical frameworks critical for advanced financial analysis. Emphasis is placed on applying mathematical and statistical methods to finance-specific contexts, including portfolio optimization, risk assessment, and financial forecasting. Topics include matrix algebra for portfolio analysis, calculus for asset pricing and risk sensitivity, probability and statistics for financial decision-making, and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression for predictive modeling in finance. Practical applications focus on solving real-world financial problems using quantitative tools.

FIN 8010: Applied Computational Finance (3 credits)
This course introduces programming languages used in financial analysis, such as Python, R, SAS, Stata, and Excel Macros. Students will learn to import, clean, and analyze financial data, and automate repetitive tasks across multiple platforms. The course focuses on practical financial applications such as portfolio analysis, time series modeling, and basic regressions to develop foundational programming skills for application to financial decision-making and research.

FIN 8020: Financial Statement Analytics (3 credits)
This course provides an in-depth exploration of financial statement analysis using empirical datasets and advanced data analytics tools. Students will learn to evaluate a firm's financial health by analyzing its income statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement, and other reports using programming languages. The course covers core topics such as profitability, liquidity, and leverage ratio analysis, earnings quality assessment, and cash flow analysis. Additionally, students will engage with real-world financial data from sources like Bloomberg, CRSP, and Compustat to perform forecasting, valuation, and risk analysis.

FIN 8070: Professional Development for Finance I (1 credit)
This is the first of two one-hour courses spanning the Fall and Spring Semesters, providing finance students with essential professional development skills to prepare for successful careers in the industry. The Fall Semester focuses on foundational skills such as career exploration, networking, resume building, and interview preparation. Students engage with industry professionals, practice networking and interviewing skills.

FIN 8080: Professional Development for Finance II (1 credit)
This is the second of a two one-hour courses spanning the Fall and Spring Semesters, providing finance students with essential professional development skills to prepare for successful careers in the industry. In the Spring Semester, students build on skills learned in FIN 8070 with advanced topics, including leadership, negotiation, communication, and ethical decision-making. Students engage with industry professionals, practice networking, and develop a comprehensive career strategy.

FIN 8090: Special Topics, Artificial Intelligence in Finance (3 credits)
This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in financial analysis and decision-making. Students will explore the fundamentals of machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), and large language models (LLMs), with applications across asset pricing, portfolio optimization, trading, risk management, banking, and real estate. Emphasis is placed on both conceptual understanding and practical application, with Python and APIs used to demonstrate model implementation and interpretation. Students will learn how AI enhances predictive modeling, supports automation in financial services, and raises new challenges related to ethics, governance, and systemic risk. Case studies and projects will highlight how firms are adopting AI to gain competitive advantage while addressing regulatory and compliance considerations.

FIN 8100: Advanced Corporate Finance (3 credits)
This course provides an in-depth exploration of advanced topics in corporate finance, focusing on corporate investment, financing, liquidity management, risk management, and governance. Students will learn to build financial models using Microsoft Excel to evaluate real-world corporate finance decisions. Topics include capital budgeting, dividend policy, corporate valuation, and leveraged buyouts. The course also covers key areas like corporate governance and financial strategy, with case studies that simulate complex financial decisions.

FIN 8110: Corporate Finance Strategy (3 credits)
This course focuses on the strategic aspects of corporate finance, with an emphasis on investment banking activities such as mergers and acquisitions (M&A), leveraged buyouts (LBOs), initial public offerings (IPOs), and capital raising. Students will gain hands-on experience building financial models in Excel (with optional programming applications), including valuation techniques, accretion/dilution analysis, and LBO models. The course covers the full deal cycle, from due diligence and financial advisory to transaction structuring and post-deal integration. Through case studies and a capstone project, students will simulate real-world investment banking transactions, developing the skills necessary for careers in corporate finance, private equity, and investment banking.

FIN 8200: Portfolio Management Theory (3 credits)
This course explores the theory and practice of portfolio management, with a strong emphasis on building data-driven models using programing language. Students will learn to construct and manage portfolios, applying techniques such as asset allocation, risk-adjusted performance measurement, and portfolio optimization. Key topics include the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM), factor models, portfolio rebalancing, and performance attribution. The course incorporates real-world financial data from sources such as Bloomberg, Compustat, and Capital IQ, and students will use programming to automate portfolio management tasks, conduct risk analysis, and evaluate portfolio performance.

FIN 8210: Applied Portfolio Management I, II (3 credits)
Spring and Fall courses offer practical, hands-on experience managing the Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF), utilizing the trading room equipped with Bloomberg terminals and integrating programming for advanced portfolio analysis. Students will act as portfolio managers, making real-time investment decisions, conducting security analysis, and managing risk. Using Bloomberg, large datasets, and programming, students will perform asset allocation, security selection, performance attribution, and portfolio rebalancing. The course emphasizes the integration of financial theory with real-world applications, with students preparing quarterly and annual reports, managing investor relations, and presenting fund performance to stakeholders. Ethical considerations will be explored throughout the course. The capstone project will require students to prepare a comprehensive report and deliver a formal presentation on the SMIF's performance and strategies.

FIN 8220: Advanced Risk Management (3 credits)
This course provides an in-depth exploration of the strategies and models used to manage financial risks, including market risk, credit risk, operational risk, and liquidity risk. Students will learn to measure and mitigate these risks using tools such as value-at-risk (VaR), stress testing, credit risk models, and derivatives. The course also covers the regulatory frameworks that govern risk management in financial institutions and corporations. Hands-on exercises using programs such as Excel, Python, R, or Stata will help students develop risk models, perform scenario analysis, and evaluate the effectiveness of hedging strategies.

Career Outcomes

Graduates of the MSF program will be prepared for roles in corporate finance (financial analysis, treasury management, corporate strategy), investment management (portfolio management, securities analysis, wealth management), banking (corporate banking, investment banking, credit analysis), and financial Services (risk management, financial planning, consulting).

7. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Graduate School (link).
University and Graduate School deadlines (link).
Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business (link).
Department of Finance (link).