### Financial Information Systems
**INFO-GB.3350**  
**INFO-UB.0050**  
**Fall 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Bernard S. Donefer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~bdonefer/">http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~bdonefer/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Class Meetings   | Thursday 6:00 – 9:00 pm  
|                  | Room Tisch 415 (In person only, not on Zoom) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th><a href="mailto:bdonefer@stern.nyu.edu">bdonefer@stern.nyu.edu</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Website</th>
<th>NYU LMS Brightspace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Office Hours     | Appointments scheduled via email  
|                  | before class 4:30-5:30 KMC 8-171 or after class |

Understanding finance doesn’t prepare you for the realities of how markets and their underlying infrastructure work today. Technology is a key driver of advances in the global markets. Virtually all US trading is done on electronic markets with exchange floors a relic of the past. Trading is done using algorithms, high frequency quant models and by automated market makers. We have now have 1124 competing stock exchanges and over 40 Alternative Trading Systems (ATSs) providing the mysterious dark liquidity which executes more than a third of our stock trades. We hear the markets rigged? We examine the issues of market structure and technology interaction that underlie these claims and make our own objective assessment. We study evolving payment systems, such as online transaction security using encryption, hashing, digital signatures, EMV, global mobile payment products, Bitcoin and crypto currencies including CBDCs. In examining post trade clearing and settlement, we consider how the blockchain may significantly improve these processes.

The financial services industry is being transformed by globalization, regulation, competition, consolidation and technology. These forces will be explored, focusing on how technology is both a driver of change as well as the vehicle for its implementation. Industry consolidation and convergence will be viewed in light of current events. The course objective is to bring both the business practitioner and technologist closer together. Topics will be covered through a combination of lectures, readings, news and case studies.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course consists of five primary topics, describing their underlying technology and industry practices:

1. Payment systems, institutional (Fedwire, CHIPS, ACH, SWIFT) and retail credit/debit cards and mobile payments
2. Internet transaction security, cryptography, digital signatures, TLS,
3. Blockchain, Cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, Ethereum smart contracts, new applications
4. Securities markets, electronic trading, high frequency trading
5. Post trade clearance and settlement
PREREQUISITES

None, however one course in investments, equities, fixed income, etc. or equivalent personal experience would be beneficial. If you have any questions, please contact me with any questions.

TEACHING MATERIALS

- NYU LMS website for this course will contain lecture materials and late breaking news
- Readings will be posted on NYU LMS at least a week early and should be read prior to class each class. In order to keep current, THERE IS NO TEXT BOOK for this course.
- Students are encouraged to find current materials in the news or on the Internet for class discussion.
- Industry speakers will be invited periodically. Their materials will also be posted.

GRADING (Tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Quiz – Intro and payment systems</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Quiz – Internet security, blockchain, crypto</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quiz – Financial markets</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments and class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quiz study guides will be posted and quiz dates will be announced in class.

YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

Be sure your email address in NYU Brightspace is correct. I will use it to communicate timely information about the course.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR

- Wear a mask indoors, in class and in the halls. It must cover both your mouth and nose. It is required at NYU; you should make it a habit in other settings, too.
- If you’re sick, stay home; don’t come in to class or work. It is one of the easiest and most effective ways to fight the spread of COVID-19. If you have symptoms, complete the COVID-19 reporting form to notify the NYU COVID-19 Prevention & Response Team.
- Avoid crowded settings or gatherings where people aren’t wearing masks.
- No eating during class. If you can eat outdoors, that’s best. If you cannot, then at NYU you should only eat in spaces designated for eating, you should maintain physical distancing while your mask is down to eat, and you should eat within 15 minutes and put your mask back on. Off-campus — although New York City does allow vaccinated individuals to eat inside at restaurants, the data continues to demonstrate eating and drinking indoors or in close proximity to one another (in or outdoors), for prolonged periods of time, poses higher risk for COVID-19 transmission.
- Stern rules state that you may not use cell phones, laptops, pads or other ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND during class meetings. You must silence cell phones BEFORE class. If you are on-call for work or family, place your device on vibrate and leave the room
before taking the call. If your phone rings, you will be asked to leave. Further I reserve the right to reduce your final grade by reducing points normally awarded for class participation.

**Class will start on time.** Arriving late interferes with other students' learning and is not acceptable. Subway delays and other problems are unavoidable on occasion, but it is each student's responsibility to plan carefully to arrive on time and well prepared. Repeated latecomers will be penalized. **Classes are recorded and will be available for students unable to attend a session.** Repeated absences will affect class participation grades.

As a mark of respect, **I ask all men to remove their caps or hats while in class**, unless worn for a religious reason.

**Default Policies for Stern Courses** are incorporated by reference:

https://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/current-students/undergraduate/community/community-expectations

https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/code-of-ethical-conduct.html#maintenance

http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/academic-affairs-advising/policies-procedures/default-policies-stern-courses

http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html

**Student Accessibility**

If you will require academic accommodation of any kind during this course, you must notify me at the beginning of the course (or as soon as your need arises) and provide a letter from the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (212-998-4980, mosescsa@nyu.edu) verifying your registration and outlining the accommodations they recommend. For more information, visit the CSA website:

https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/student-accessibility.html

**Student Wellness**

Classes can get stressful. I encourage you to reach out if you need help. The NYU Wellness Exchange offers mental health support. You can reach them 24/7 at 212 443 9999, or via the “NYU Wellness Exchange” app. There are also drop in hours and appointments. Find out more at:

http://www.nyu.edu/students/health-and-wellness/counseling-services.html

**Name Pronunciation and Pronouns**

NYU Stern students now have the ability to include their pronouns and name pronunciation in Albert. I encourage you to share your name pronunciation and pronouns this way. Please utilize this link for additional information: Pronouns & Name Pronunciation

**Religious Observances and Other Absences**

NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. You must notify me in advance of religious holidays or observances that might coincide with exams, assignments, or class times to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives. Students may also contact religiousaccommodations@nyu.edu for assistance.
NYU Stern is committed to ensuring an equitable educational experience for all students regardless of identity or circumstances and strives to recognize the obligations its students have outside of Stern. Please review all class dates at the start of the semester and review all course requirements to identify any foreseeable conflicts with exams, course assignments, projects, or other items required for participation and attendance. If you are aware of a potential conflict, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss any potential conflicts to determine whether/how they can be accommodated.

*If full attendance is required:

Except for religious observances or other absences that may be required in compliance with nondiscrimination law, this class otherwise requires attendance and participation and cannot accommodate conflicts. Please review all class dates at the start of the semester and review all course requirements to identify any foreseeable conflicts with exams, course assignments, projects, or other items required for participation and attendance. If you are aware of a potential conflict, it is strongly recommended that you do not take this class.

**Inclusion Statement**

*This course strives to support and cultivate diversity of thought, perspectives, and experiences. The intent is to present materials and activities that will challenge your current perspectives with a goal of understanding how others might see situations differently. By participating in this course, it is the expectation that everyone commits to making this an inclusive learning environment for all.*

**Integrity**

This course has a “zero tolerance” policy on cheating and plagiarism. Any student who breaks academic rules in this course has violated the mutual trust on which teaching and learning are based and will not only receive a zero for that assignment, but will be excluded from taking any further quizzes or exams in this course, which is likely to result in a failing grade for the course. For serious infractions I will ask the University’s Disciplinary Panel to suspend the violator from all future courses. Remember that giving improper help is as clearly a violation as taking it. Please see the NYU Stern Code of Conduct.
## Topic Schedule

Classes September 23 - December 16, 2021 (Ex Nov 25)

All topics, dates and guest speakers are subject to change.

**Topics do not equate to class meetings.**

Changes will be posted on NYU Brightspace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic 1</td>
<td>Course Logistics</td>
<td>What’s this course about? How are the teaching materials organized? What is the grading policy? How should we communicate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction Financial Services - Banks</td>
<td>How is the financial services industry organized? Money, and banking history and functions Federal Reserve Bank Decentralized Finance DeFi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 2</td>
<td>Payment Systems I Retail</td>
<td>What is the history and economics of various payment methods? Cash, checking, debit cards, credit, prepaid cards How are payments processed in the US? Smart chip cards, NFC communication What has the experience been with emerging payment systems, Paypal, EMV, Square, EZpass, Metrocard, Zelle, Venmo, Alipay, mPesa, etc. PCI DSS Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 3</td>
<td>Payment Systems II Institutional</td>
<td>Clearance and settlement Institutional high value payments via ACH, Fedwire, CHIPS and SWIFT. CLS for ForEx Bangladesh Central Bank Hack ISO 20022 standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 5</td>
<td>Blockchain and Bitcoin</td>
<td>Distributed ledgers, peer to peer computing, hash pointers How the Blockchain works, transactions, wallets Cryptocurrency - Bitcoin Mining consensus Building an exchange on a blockchain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 6</td>
<td>Smart Contracts and Blockchain Use Cases Cryptocurrencies</td>
<td>Smart contracts Ethereum EMV Initial coin offerings (ICOs) and other cryptocurrencies Proof of concept blockchain use cases Central Bank Digital Currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 7</td>
<td>Introduction to Financial Services - Securities</td>
<td>What are the functions of securities, insurance, markets? Differences between retail and institutional, buy side and sell side How firms raise capital, The IPO process and Google’s Dutch auction How to research a firm and Homework Assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topic 8 | US Equity Markets | What was the history of the NYSE  
How is the floor organized in posts and booths?  
What is a seat  
Who are the people on the floor, brokers, (house and $2) and the specialists?  
What is the trading process?  
How did abuses and regulation drive it  
Reg 390, Reg ATS and decimalization, implications of Reg NMS  
What happened in 2005 – the new NYSE Group  
Merger with Arca Exchange  
DMMs, SLPs – the new trading process  
Future of the NYSE |
|---|---|---|
| Topic 9 | US Equity Markets II | What is the history of NASDAQ  
How does its multi-dealer model work; What is its trading process and rules  
How does an order book work?  
What was the impact of ECNs  
Maker taker model  
Acquisitions of INET and BRUT by NASDAQ  
What happened when NASDAQ became an “exchange”  
The Trade Reporting Facility (TRF)  
What are NASDAQ’s future plans?  
Bulletin Board and Pinksheets |
| Topic 10 | Institutional Trading | The institutional search for liquidity  
Transaction Cost Accounting (TCA)  
Benchmarks, VWAP, implementation shortfall etc. and post trade analytics  
Dark liquidity, dark pools  
Alternative Trading Systems e.g., Liquidnet, BIDS, LEVEL, etc.  
Market Structure 24Exchanges and 40+Dark Pools and internalization  
Algorithmic trading by institutions |
| Topic 11 | Low latency Trading and the Flash Crash | Automated Market Making  
The May 2010 Flash Crash  
Quant Trading (Stat Arb, Pairs, etc.) Trading Strategies |
| Topic 12 | HFT and Are US Equity Markets Rigged? | Payment for Order Flow  
Wholesalers (Internalizers)  
HFT, Colocation, Latency Arbitrage, Front Running  
Market Structure, Fragmentation, Spreads, Volatility  
International Views on HFT |
| Topic 13 | After the Trade | What is clearance and settlement  
What are CUSIPs, LEI  
What are T+1 and T+3 processes  
What are the functions of a prime broker and custodian |
| Optional | Forex | How is foreign exchange traded?  
How to read FX rates  
What are FX forwards  
How are forward rates calculated?  
How are FX rates related – purchasing power parity  
How are cross rates calculated? |
| Optional | Futures | What are futures?  
How are they traded and settled?  
What is in the futures contract  
How are they valued?  
What are the margin requirements?  
What is the difference between forwards and futures? |
| Optional | Options | What are options, How are they traded and settled?  
How are they valued – Black Scholes model, what are the Greeks  
How do futures and options differ |