California Polytechnic State University  
Orfalea College of Business  

Business 464: CFA Challenge Senior Project, Fall 2016

**Contact Information:**
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**Office Hours:** Mondays 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course prepares students to take the CFA level I exam. This course embodies the essence of Cal Poly's commitment to “Learn by Doing,” plus the unofficial motto of “roll up your sleeves and get the job done”.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This course will require a minimum 9 months commitment! One quarter is not sufficient. The only prerequisite for the course is “passion for success”.

**The Challenge Ahead:**

1. The CFA test is a serious proposition requiring over 300 hours of focused study. This test is not for everyone. In fact, students with cumulative GPA below 3.00 (higher in finance courses) have a difficult time passing the test on the first try. Such students will have a real uphill battle and may have to spend 500 hours of study to have a chance. There is no glory to sign up for a test that costs significant time and money, when you may have little chance of passing.

2. Please sign up for the course if you can commit the time and the effort to pass. You will be required to take part in six (6) practice tests and all group meetings, as well as selected presentation by industry professionals, or other related events.

3. Those who take on this challenge should know this: You will have to significantly rearrange your classes and your personal life (reduce your social activity). You also will have to reduce your work hours and commit to a life of being very focused and studious, particularly during the quarters preceding the exam. Take a look at the realities of your personal life. Do not take on this challenge if you cannot make the necessary sacrifices!

4. As you start the term and commit to the CFA challenge, you need to learn about the following issues. I will discuss these topics during our meeting:  
   • How to learn about the CFA test (what areas it covers and at what level),  
   • How to register for the test and collect the appropriate study materials,  
   • Test taking and test preparation strategies,  
   • How to design a personal plan of action, including detailed weekly study plan until the exam
• Where to acquire the necessary tools to succeed (test preparation materials, and 7000 practice questions),
• How to make the necessary behavioral changes (reduce your social activity, etc.),
• How to form teams and study together,
• How we will help you succeed in passing the CFA test and gain good employment,
• What kind of activities will we engage in as a group,
• How you will be graded in this course,
• And other issues and your questions.

5. Within a couple weeks, you must address each of the above topics, come up with a clear plan of action for the rest of the quarter, and have the discipline to execute that plan. How can I help you? My role is to serve as a coach and a mentor. I will hold practice tests (at least 8) and help you gauge your progress. I will also help you figure out which courses to take to enhance your chance of passing. Most importantly, I stand ready to guide you one-on-one and encourage you along. I cannot help those that do not recognize the importance of taking on self imposed challenges in life.

6. On your way to passing the CFA test, you need to take every course you sign up for very seriously. Insist on doing excellent work in all your courses!

7. Please make sure to meet the other students who are taking on this challenge.

8. Please keep our scheduled class time (Fridays 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM) open. We will hold all our meetings and practice tests during this time slot. You must take at least 6 practice exams this quarter with a minimum average of 50% to receive credit.

9. You must take the CFA exam in December 2016 to receive credit. You also must provide a copy of your results, pass or fail.

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