



Career Paths in Finance:

Six primary areas of employment for finance majors are:

1. Corporate Finance
2. Investment Banking
3. Commercial Banking
4. Asset Management
5. Real Estate
6. Personal Financial Planning

While this list is not exhaustive, it gives a good sense of career directions for finance graduates. Below, each of these areas is discussed in more detail regarding the nature of the work, positions available, employers, and tips for launching a career. Beyond the required finance courses, students are encouraged to take additional coursework in accounting, math, statistics, economics, and the liberal arts to fully prepare for a finance career. See the Appendix for information resources on finance careers.

Corporate Finance:

Corporate finance refers to the financial activities of a private business. Specifically, “corpfin” refers to the more day-to-day accounting activities of a business, like accounts payable and accounts receivable, as well as higher-level strategic financial analysis. Finance professionals analyze revenue and expenses to contribute to the effective use of capital. They also advise managers about project costs, make capital investments, and structure acquisitions to help companies grow.

- **Common positions/areas in Corporate Finance include:**
 - Financial Analyst
 - Accountant
 - Cash Management
 - Credit Analysis & Management
 - Controller/Finance Director
 - Payroll
 - Financial Reporting
 - Investor Relations
 - Treasurer
 - Chief Financial Officer
- **Employers with Corporate Finance positions include:**
 - Private businesses of all sizes and types
 - State and local governments
 - Federal agencies including: IRS and US Dept. of Treasury
 - Schools and universities
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Foundations
 - Hospitals
- **Tips for launching a career in Corporate Finance:**
 - Complete a relevant internship.
 - Develop strong computer skills, including Excel, Access, and PowerPoint.
 - Advanced study of Financial Accounting is helpful.
 - Strong analytical skills are crucial.

Investment Banking:

Investment banking refers to a range of activities: underwriting, trading securities (stocks and bonds), providing financial advisory services (such as mergers and acquisition advice), financing of deals, and managing assets. Investment banks offer these services to companies, governments, non-profit institutions, and individuals.

- **Common positions/areas in Investment Banking:**
 - Sales & Trading
 - Research
 - Mergers & Acquisitions
 - Equity & Debt
 - Advisory Services
 - Underwriting
- **Employers in Investment Banking include:**
 - Investment banking firms (bulge bracket, middle market, regional, and boutique)

Business Career Services Center | 1300 Sunnyside Ave. Rm. 125 | Lawrence, KS 66045 | (785) 864-5591 |

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What Can I Do With A Major In FINANCE?

- **Tips for launching a career in Investment Banking:**
 - Focus on strong academics. A high GPA is essential.
 - Research financial markets and money centers. An entry-level job may require geographic flexibility.
 - Apply for KU's Finance Scholars Program
 - Develop relevant summer experiences and leadership
 - Network with alumni contacts in the industry
 - Be prepared to work significant overtime, start at the bottom, and pay your dues.
 - Develop strong analytical and communication skills.

Commercial Banking:

The jobs available at commercial banks vary significantly according to the scope of their operations. Mega-banks, such as Citibank and Bank of America, offer a variety of positions, from sales to investment banking and trading. Small and regional banks tend to have a smaller range of more traditional positions such as loan officer, credit analyst, etc.

- **Common positions/areas in Commercial Banking:**
 - Bank Examiner
 - Loan Officer
 - Branch Manager
 - Sales
 - Programmer
 - Trust Officer
 - Commercial Lending
 - Mortgage Loans
 - Trust Management
 - Capital Services and Mergers & Acquisitions
 - Operations
 - Credit Scoring
- **Employers in Commercial Banking include:**
 - Commercial banks
 - Credit unions
 - Savings & loan associations
 - Mortgage banks
 - Captive finance companies (GMAC, Ford Motor Credit)
 - Regulatory agencies (Federal Reserve, FDIC)
- **Tips for launching a career in Commercial Banking:**
 - Develop a solid foundation all areas of business including marketing and accounting
 - Get experience through internships, part-time, or summer employment in a financial services firm
 - Develop strong interpersonal communication and client interaction skills.

Asset Management:

Asset management companies manage the money of their clients to achieve specific financial objectives within guidelines under which the investment pool is organized. These might take the form of mutual funds, hedge funds, retirement or pension funds, or other institutional funds, and, depending on how the fund is organized, could invest in any range of investment vehicles including stocks, bonds, options, and futures or commodities.

- **Common positions/areas in Asset Management:**
 - Fund Accountant
 - Economist
 - Buy-side or Sell-side Research Analyst
 - Quantitative Analyst
 - Portfolio/Fund Manager
- **Employers in Asset Management include:**
 - Hedge Funds
 - Mutual Funds
 - Private Banking
 - Commercial bank trust departments
 - Investment banks
 - Federal Reserve banks
 - Insurance firms
 - Private equity funds
- **Tips for launching a career in Asset Management:**
 - Work toward CFA designation

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Real Estate:*

Real estate finance is both an industry in itself and a career within larger financial services organizations such as commercial and investment banks. There are a number of careers within the overall real estate industry, including development and construction and leasing. Real estate finance in contrast has more of an emphasis on the "finance" side than it does on the "real estate" side. Generating or evaluating a real estate finance deal involves doing many of the same kinds of sophisticated financial analyses as a public stock offering, debt issuance, large commercial loan, or merger.

- **Common positions/areas in Real Estate:**
 - Residential Brokerage
 - Commercial Sales
 - Appraisals
 - Property Management
 - Real Estate Portfolio Management
- **Employers in Real Estate include:**
 - Real estate brokers
 - Commercial banks
 - Appraisal firms
 - Apartment & condominium complexes
 - Developers
 - Real estate investment trusts
 - Mutual funds
- **Tips for launching a career in Real Estate:**
 - Obtain relevant experience through internships, summer jobs, or part-time positions
 - Research how to become a real estate broker through the National Association of Realtors

* *Real Estate overview used with permission of **CareerLeader-College**.*

Personal Financial Planning:*

Financial planners help clients make decisions about long-term financial issues, helping clients to achieve their financial goals. They typically charge an hourly or flat fee -- though some who offer advice regarding mutual funds charge a percentage of the assets a client has invested. Stock brokers advise clients about which individual stocks and bonds to invest in. They earn their fees on a commission basis: For every purchase or sale they make, the brokerage house they work with charges a fee and pays them part of that fee. Personal investment managers are compensated based on the amount of money they manage (their "assets under management").

- **Common positions/areas in Personal Financial Planning:**
 - Sales
 - Customer Services
 - Operations
 - Portfolio Management
- **Employers in Personal Financial Planning include:**
 - Brokerage firms
 - Trust companies
 - Financial partnerships
 - Multi-line insurance firms
 - Sole practitioners
- **Tips for launching a career in Personal Financial Planning:**
 - Gain experience in sales. Top candidates are highly motivated and entrepreneurial.
 - Research the CFP (Certified Financial Planner) designation.
 - Develop a solid personal network.

* *Personal Financial Planning overview used with permission of **CareerLeader-College**.*



What Can I Do With A Major In FINANCE?

General Tips for Students Considering a Major or Career in Finance:

- Get experience through an internship or other relevant part-time or summer work.
- Conduct informational discussions with individuals from industry. The Alumni Directories in the BCSC provide a great place to start.
- Participate in a job shadowing experience through Jayhawks on the Job or a company visit through an End of Week Excursion. Both are programs coordinated through the BCSC.
- Attend the Finance Roundtable and Business Career Fair events each September to talk with hiring organizations and industry representatives from Finance.
- Read the Wall Street Journal.
- Join the Finance Club or other student organizations that will facilitate career exploration
- Develop strong analytical, accounting, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Explore various professional designations and licenses relevant to finance career paths.

Companies Recruiting Finance Majors at KU Include:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Advantage Recycling | • Deloitte Consulting | • Koch Industries |
| • Aldi | • Edward Jones | • M&I Bank |
| • Allstate | • E&J Gallo Wineries | • MarketSphere Consulting |
| • Altria (formerly Philip Morris USA) | • Eli Lilly | • Metlife |
| • Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services | • Epic Systems | • Payless Shoesource |
| • Bank of Kansas City | • Ernst & Young | • PepsiCo |
| • Bartlett & Co. | • Farmers Insurance Group | • Piper Jaffray |
| • Burlington Northern Santa Fe | • Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City | • RSM McGladrey |
| • Cerner | • George K. Baum | • Sabre Holdings |
| • C.H. Robinson | • Hallmark Cards | • Shaw Industries |
| • Commerce Bank | • Hawker Beechcraft | • State of Missouri |
| | • Hormel Foods Corp | • Target Distribution Center |
| | | • Travelers |
| | | • Union Pacific |
| | | • Wal-mart Stores |

** Companies listed reflect organizations running formal on-campus recruiting schedules for Finance majors in the Business Career Services Center during the 2008-2009 and 2008-2009 academic years. Data does not include companies attending the career fair, companies posting jobs and internships through KU Career Connections, or companies hiring recent KU finance grads through student-initiated efforts.*

Salary Data for KU Finance Graduates:

- Range: \$30,000-100,000 (2009-2010) and \$31,000-65,000 (2008-09)
- Average Salary: \$48,440 (2009-10) and \$45,587 (2008-09)
- Median Salary: \$47,500 (2009-10) and \$45,000 (2008-09)
- % of Students Seeking Employment who Accepted an Offer by Graduation: 49% (2009-10) and 49% (2008-09)



Appendix:

For further information, students are encouraged to review the following resources:

Websites:

- www.careers-in-finance.com - Information about finance career paths
- www.salary.com - Compensation information for various positions in finance
- www.iii.org - Insurance Information Institute
- www.efinancialnews.com – Financial News
- <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm> - Occupational Outlook Handbook, providing employment projections from the US Department of Labor on a range of careers in finance.
- www.restatecareer.com - Information about careers in real estate

Career Resources available through the Business Career Services Center:

Wet Feet and Vault are FREE online career libraries, enabling students to access up-to-date career information via the web, 24/7. Both libraries include company guides, industry guides, career guides, message boards, and more! Access Vault and Wet Feet through the Business Career Services Center website at

www.business.ku.edu/bcsc

- Wet Feet - Available to UNDERGRADUATE Business students. www.business.ku.edu/wetfeet. Username is "kansas", password is "jayhawk".
- Vault – Available to GRADUATE Business students. Password is "jayhawk"

CareerLeader-College:

CareerLeader-College is an integrated approach to business career self-assessment. The self-directed web-based career tool was developed at Harvard and is used by top business schools globally to help students guide their careers. Students may set up a *CareerLeader-College* account in the BCSC for \$20 (the amount BCSC pays to obtain an individual license from the vendor). Students completing the online assessment will receive individualized printable reports for the following:

- Business Career Interest Inventory – defining your career INTERESTS
- Management & Professional Reward Profile – focusing your career VALUES and REWARDS
- Management & Professional Abilities Profile – thinking about your business SKILLS and the implications of your strengths and weaknesses for different business career paths

CareerLeader-College also provides Industry Sketches, describing all major business industries in detail, who the major corporations are, what they do, how they operate, and what kinds of business career paths they offer.

For additional information on careers in finance, see the Business Career Services Center in 125 Summerfield.

For information regarding degree requirements for the finance major, visit the Student & Academic Services Office in 206 Summerfield.

LAST UPDATED SUMMER 2010