

Career Guide for Finance Majors



Introduction







Thank you for reviewing this guide to Career Planning for Finance majors, and others interested in Finance careers. The Cohen Career Center is your partner in the educational process. We provide access to career development programs, services, connections, and resources, empowering you to pursue your post-graduate plans and navigate lifelong career changes. This guide offers specific strategies and resources for Finance majors. The Cohen Career Center partners with the Mason School of Business to provide targeted career advising resources for business students. As career development professionals, all members of the Cohen Career Center advising team are accessible to students from all majors and career interests. In addition to this generalist role, our staff members are also responsible for unique career verticals and industry liaison roles.

Core Competencies for Finance Majors

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) compiles research data from employers and recruiting professionals to determine the key career expectations for recent graduates. These core competencies are a list of skills required by a majority of employers hiring candidates for internship and entry level roles across industries and functional areas. The following infographic provides specific detail for each of the eight core competencies.

As you build your resume, draft your cover letter, and prepare for interviews, consider the following competencies as they relate to your specific background and experience. Employers are looking for candidates with the ability to articulate and/or demonstrate these skills. In addition to these comprehensive skills, following are specific recommendations for opportunities to highlight your skills as an Accounting major to prospective employers.

NACE Competency	Definition:	Strategies for FINANCE majors :
 <p>Critical Thinking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues • Make decisions, overcome problems • Obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take BUAD 419 (Valuation) as one of your electives to further develop your analytical and problem solving skills • Apply for a Research Assistantship to gain in-depth knowledge in gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing data
 <p>Oral & Written Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly • Effectively communicate to persons inside and outside the organization • Demonstrates public speaking skills • Can write and edit written pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a well-written resume & cover letter & review it with a Cohen career advisor • Sign up for a mock interview through your Tribe Careers account to practice your oral communication skills with a professional

 <p>Teamwork & Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles & viewpoints • Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers • Negotiate and manage conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in case competitions to acquire teamwork & negotiation skills. • Join a student organization, like Smart Women Securities, the Howard J. Busbee Finance Academy, or the Financial Modeling Club to build relationships with peers who have common interests and are from diverse backgrounds
 <p>Digital Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task • Demonstrate effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop your digital proficiency by learning business application software in BUAD 330 (Computer Skills for Business) that you take as part of the block • Master the use of financial software tools through BUAD 325 (Equity and Portfolio Management)
 <p>Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals • Use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others • Use empathetic skills to guide, motivate, organize, prioritize, and delegate work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a group project for a class assignment. Recognize the strengths of others to delegate and distribute the work fairly. • Apply for a Teaching Assistantship to help your peers succeed in their coursework.
 <p>Professionalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits • Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior • Acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 1 or more internships & learn the needed professional skills to achieve success in the workplace. • Learn the ethical considerations of the business world when you take BUAD 300 (Business Perspectives & Applications) as part of the block
 <p>Career Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position desired • Identify and explore career goals • Recognize areas necessary for professional growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with The Boehly Center for Excellence in Finance to learn of special opportunities designed for finance students • Attend From DoG Street to Wall Street of your Fall semester to learn more about finance careers & network with professionals
 <p>Global & Intercultural Fluency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations & religions • Demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and respectful interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take BUAD 417 (International Finance) as one of your electives • Consider adding the official designation of "International Emphasis" to your BBA degree. Consult with the Undergraduate Business Office for the requirements.

What should I be doing to get ahead?

TRIBE CAREERS

- TribeCareers is W&M's jobs and internships database, where employers post their jobs, where you search for positions that interest you, and where you submit your applications. Make sure to update your profile, and upload the latest copy of your resume. Tribe Careers is where you also learn of upcoming events and RSVP for career panels and employer information sessions.

THE BOEHLY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCE

- The Boehly Center is the centralized hub to help W&M finance students achieve success in finance careers through advanced training (Training the Street, Bloomberg Certificate), networking and experiential learning opportunities (From DoG Street to Wall Street, Case Competitions), and sponsoring alumni and guest speakers. Connect with the Boehly Center in Miller 3046.

STAY INFORMED

- **Business Careers Newsletter** – Sign up to receive Cohen’s weekly newsletter through your Tribe Careers account.

STAY INVOLVED

- There are 5 student clubs dedicated to finance: (1) the Howard J. Busbee Finance Academy, (2) the Financial Modeling Club, (3) Mason Investment Club, (4) Women in Business Club, and (5) Smart Women Securities. Find out who is on the respective student executive boards by going to <https://www.boehlycenter.mason.wm.edu/student-clubs/>
- By contacting one of the executive board members, you can get on their listserv to keep up-to-date on the latest happenings. All W&M students (including those not enrolled in the Mason School of Business) are invited to join any of the student organizations.

ATTEND FINANCE-SPECIFIC CAREER EVENTS

- **From DoG Street to Wall Street.** More commonly known as “From DoG to Wall”, this day-long event is held every FALL semester. The event features W&M alumni in a number of finance careers, so students can learn about their experiences and career paths. It involves a keynote address, career panels, lunch, and concludes with informal networking.
- **The Wall Street Program.** The Cohen Career Center takes a small group of students to New York City to learn more about finance careers in investment banking, asset management, risk, sales and trading, and merges and acquisitions, among others. Occurring every FALL semester, qualified students submit an application and 20 students are selected to attend.
- **Women’s Stock Pitch and Leadership Summit.** Over 150 student women from W&M and other top universities from across the country come together every spring semester to promote women in business careers. Held during the SPRING semester, the event consists of 2 components: the stock pitch competition and concurrent career panels. Networking is encouraged throughout the event. Learn more about this event at <http://mason.wm.edu/wsp>

Employers

Following are employers who are actively recruiting, interviewing, and/or hiring William & Mary students with backgrounds in Finance. This list represents a small sample of the organizations recruiting for finance positions. The average reported, first-destination salary for William & Mary Finance graduates is **\$70,870**. **\$43,000-\$95,000** was the reported salary range for Finance graduates in Finance roles.

Amazon* BB&T Capital Markets*+ BDO Partners*+ Bain & Co. *+ Booz Allen Hamilton*+ Capital One*+ The Carlyle Group*+ Christie’s Cornerstone Research*+ <i>*Organizations that have posted positions and/or held info sessions on-campus</i>	Corporate Executive Board Deutsche Bank Eaton Vance The Educe Group*+ Ernst & Young (EY)*+ FTI Consulting*+ Freeman and Co. Goldman Sachs Grant Thornton*+ <i>+Organizations with an active on-campus recruiting presence (on-campus interviews and career fairs)</i>	Halo8 Hanover Insurance Houlihan Lokey* IBM*+ Izar Capital Group J.P. Morgan Chase* KCIC*+ McKinsey & Company* Microsoft*+	Moda Operandi Needham & Co. Norfolk Southern Corp.+ NHK Tishman Speyer Toll Brothers Wells Fargo*
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Job Titles

Financial Analyst	Partner	Broker	Budget Analyst
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	Principal	Sales Trader	Corporate Bond Trader
Managing Director	Personal Financial Advisor	Commercial Banker	Budget Analyst
Associate	Operations Analyst	Portfolio Manager	Treasurer
Controller	Senior Loan Officer	Compliance Specialist	Bank Examiner
Vice President of Finance	Risk Analyst	Credit Director	Investment Analyst

(Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook)

Other Resources

Learn more about Finance professions:

- **Vault** – Vault contains ranking information such as the Vault Banking 50 and The Best Banking Firms to Work for, plus specialized guides on specific finance industries. Guides on investment banking, middle market investment banking, sales and trading, and leveraged finance are just a few examples. You will also find resources on Case Interviews and technical-based questions. *(Access Vault from your Tribe Careers account by searching for the heading “External Job Resources”).*
- **Candid Careers** – Watch short videos of individuals who work in the finance field. Hear directly from them on what a typical work day is like, pros and cons of the job, and their recommendations for young professionals. *(Access Candid Careers from the Cohen website under the heading of Career/Major Exploration).*
- **O*NET Online** – Read in-depth information on specific financial career fields. Learn about employment trends, education requirements, and salary statistics on the national, state, and local level.

Professional Associations:

Exactly what is a professional association and why should it matter to me? Professional associations serve as the formal organization for a profession, think of it as a professional “club.” Professional associations typically set the standard for the industry, plus host workshops and webinars for continued training. Oftentimes, it’s where you can also find job boards where employers advertise for positions. Here are a select few targeted for finance:

- AFP (Association for Financial Professionals): <https://www.afponline.org>
- CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) Institute: <https://www.cfainstitute.org>
- CFP (Certified Financial Planner) Board of Standards: <https://www.cfp.net>

ANDREA SAMPLE

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www.linkedin.com/andreasample35

EDUCATION

William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA

B.B.A. in Finance, Marketing Concentration

Anticipated May 20XX

GPA: 3.65

Relevant Coursework: Corporate Financial Strategy, Marketing Research, Consumer Behavior

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Analyst Intern, **Credit Suisse**, New York, NY

May 20YY – August 20YY

- Completed a competitive 10-week summer rotational program, receiving exposure to investment banking, fixed income, equities, global markets, and asset management divisions
- Teamed with Senior Researchers and Portfolio Managers to perform qualitative analysis of trading strategies and portfolios
- Developed risk and return forecasting models using SPSS

Deloitte National Leadership Conference

Westlake, TX

Participant

July 8 – 11, 20ZZ

- Engaged in interactive workshops designed to develop leadership skills and gain in-depth knowledge about the accounting profession
- Networked with Deloitte executives to build communication skills and develop professional relationships

Marketing Intern, **Strathmore Hall Foundation, Inc.**, Bethesda, MD

June 20WW – August 20WW

- Drafted and edited press releases and distributed to local media outlets
- Created and proofed publications, advertisements, and email announcements to the general public
- Conceptualized and implemented redesign of content for Strathmore Facebook and Twitter presence
- Operated box office on an as-needed basis by professionally interacting with customers, addressing questions and solving problems

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Shift Manager, **McDonalds**, Fredericksburg, VA March 20TT – June 20WW

- Financed 100% of associates degree education through continuous full- and part- time work
- Promoted to shift manager from team member in February 20UU

LEADERSHIP & AFFILIATIONS

- Financial Modeling Club, College of William and Mary August 20YY - present
- Howard J. Busbee Finance Academy, College of William and Mary September 20ZZ - present
- Student Marketing Association, College of William and Mary August 20ZZ - December 20YY
- Student Government Association, Germanna Community College February 20WW - June 20ZZ

CERTIFICATIONS & LANGUAGES

- STATA, Python, R
- Bilingual in Italian and English; Intermediate Proficiency in Spanish
- Bloomberg Terminal Certified