Instructor: Robert Podorefsky  
Email: rpod@brandeis.edu  
Telephone: (508) 245-5888  
Office Hours: Mon / Weds: 12:45 – 1:45 and 3:45 – 4:45  
Office Location: Lemberg 269  
Class Hours: Mon / Weds: 11:00 am – 12:20 pm (section 2) and 2:00 – 3:20 pm (section 3)  
Spring session: Class begins Monday January 13th. Last class Wednesday April 29th.  
Class Location: Section 2, Lemberg 055 and Section 3, Lemberg 180  
TA / Email: Section 2, Yecheng Jin / yechengjin@brandeis.edu  
Section 3, Samyak Rajendra Nahar / samyaknahar@brandeis.edu  

Course Description:  
The course will focus on the fundamentals of both bond markets and fixed income derivative markets. These fundamentals include pricing and interest rates, the risks of investing in bonds, and the role of bonds in an investment portfolio.

The course will cover markets for U.S. Treasury securities, U.S. agency securities, corporate bonds, convertible bonds, municipal bonds, asset backed securities, loans, international sovereign debt, and markets for derivatives based on fixed income instruments.

Learning goals and outcomes:  
- Price fixed income securities  
- Build a fixed income investment portfolio for varied market environments  
- Identify the risks inherent in various forms of fixed income investing  
- Apply macroeconomic, monetary & fiscal policy considerations to bond market analysis  
- Use bond terminology fluently  
- Develop a theoretical and mathematical approach to fixed income risk management  
- Use derivatives in a global fixed income portfolio  
- Evaluate investment opportunities in various sectors of the fixed income markets

Prerequisite:  
FIN 201A, or other equivalent course. The course will rely heavily on the LATTE/Moodle platform. The web site will include downloadable files with the class handouts, copies of problem sets and suggested answers. You will need your UNet username and password to log on to the system at http://latte.brandeis.edu. You should check LATTE and your e-mail regularly for the course announcements.
Textbook:

Other:
Daily reading of debt and credit market developments. Convenient online sources include Bloomberg Terminal, The Financial Times, Reuters, The Wall Street Journal, and Barron’s. Relevant and instructive articles will also be posted to LATTE on a regular basis.

Examinations and grading:
There will be 2 mid-terms and a final examination. Course grade will be based on the following:

- Midterm 1: 20%
- Midterm 2: 20%
- Final Exam: 35%
- Homework: 10%
- Class Participation: 10%
- Bond Project: 5%

Class sessions will be interactive and preparation before class will be essential. Students will need to come to class prepared to discuss in detail each week’s reading assignment. Class discussions are improved by pre-class preparation. As such, preparation before each lecture – including completion of the homework assignments – is essential to success in this course.

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc).

The goal of the homework assignments will be to further the understanding of the topics presented in class, to enable students to keep pace with lectures and to prepare for the examinations. Homework may be discussed in groups but each student is expected to submit their own work.

To facilitate the class discussion, students are required to bring name-cards (with large and legible lettering) to each class. Electronic devices (including mobile phones and laptop computers) are not to be used during class sessions. Students will be required to arrive on time and be ready to start class at 11:00 am for Section 2 and 2:00 pm for Section 3.

The final exam will be cumulative, reflecting the content covered on the mid-term examinations as well as content from the final third of the course.

This course is intended to be extremely challenging for most students.
**Planned schedule (subject to change):**

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<td>Introduction, course overview</td>
<td>Chapter 1, 2</td>
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<td>2:</td>
<td>Measuring yields</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Bond price volatility</td>
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<td>Term structure of interest rates</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td>5:</td>
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<td>Corporate debt instruments</td>
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<td>Interest rate swaps</td>
<td>PowerPoint slides</td>
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<td>7:</td>
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<td>Z-spread and embedded options</td>
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<td>13:</td>
<td>Bond portfolio management, review</td>
<td>Chapter 24, 25</td>
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**Final Exam:** Date and location TBD.

**Disabilities:**
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

**Academic Integrity:**
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University [Rights and Responsibilities](https://example.com) for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at [LTS - Library guides](https://example.com).