

Alberta School of Business CFA® Program Information

This guide was created by University of Alberta Bachelor of Commerce students with support of the Finance Department in order to share the resources that we have gained during our own preparation for the CFA Program. Overall, we hope this guide provides you with an overview of the CFA Designation, registration information, cost information, exam day requirements, UofA courses that may help you study, 3rd party study tools, and other useful resources. While these resources may have been helpful to us, they may not be the best way for you to prepare for the exam. It is important to use this as an initial starting point to familiarize yourself with the intricacies of the exam, and then research and explore resources that will allow you to be successful in obtaining your Chartered Financial Analyst® (CFA) designation.

Please note: While we have done our best to provide you with the most accurate information available, the CFA Program curriculum, courses offered by the UofA, CFA Program requirements, and other information may be subject to change. We are not liable for your reliance on any of the information provided in this document. You should confirm details on CFA Institute's website to ensure you are well informed and prepared for the CFA exams. We are not affiliated with CFA Institute in any way.

We wish you the best of luck if this is something you decide to pursue and ask that you pass on what was helpful to you to your peers and other University of Alberta students.

What is the CFA Designation/Program?

The Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation is a designation achievable through the successful completion of the CFA Program. The CFA Program is composed of three exams that test candidates on finance fundamentals.

The three exams combined with the necessary work requirement are meant to be completed over the course of 4 - 5 years:

- The Level I CFA exam is the first part of the exam. This can be completed during the final year of your undergraduate degree.
- The Level II CFA exam can be completed upon the successful completion of the Level I CFA exam
- The Level III CFA exam is completed following the successful completion of the Level II CFA exam

Upon passing the three exams and the completion of 4,000 hours of experience directly applicable, completed in a minimum of 36 months, you will receive your CFA designation. See also: <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/membership/apply/resources>.

As of 2021, all CFA exams have shifted to a computer-based format. This has allowed additional test centers to be opened. There are currently several test centers located in Alberta, both in Calgary and Edmonton.

CFA Exam Structure and Content

	Level I	Level II	Level III
Exam Topics	Investment Tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics & Professional Standards • Quantitative Methods • Economics • Financial Reporting and Analysis • Corporate Finance 	Asset Classes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics & Professional Standards • Equity Investments • Fixed Income • Derivatives • Alternative Investments 	Portfolio Management and Wealth Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics & Professional Standards • Portfolio Management • Wealth Planning
Question Format	Multiple choice questions	Vignette-supported multiple choice questions	Vignette-supported constructed response questions and vignette-supported multiple choice questions
Exam Results Availability	Within 60 days of taking the exam	Within 60 days of taking the exam	Within 90 days of taking the exam
Level Advancement	<u>Meet CFA Program enrollment requirements</u>	Pass Level I CFA exam	Pass Level II CFA exam
Pass Rate	42%*	45%*	54%*

*10 year average pass rate as of 2012-2021

Cost

All costs associated with the CFA Program are paid in USD. Your first exam requires a one-time CFA Program registration fee of \$450 USD on top of the exam cost. The cost of the exam varies from \$700 to \$1,000 USD depending on the time of registration.

Scholarships

CFA Institute offers a variety of scholarships to help cover the expense of the exams.

<https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/programs/cfa/scholarships>

Scholarships are also available through the University Affiliation Program, which the University of Alberta is part of. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/programs/cfa/scholarships/student>
<http://info.cfainstitute.org/rs/357-TRH-938/images/Student%20Guide%20to%20Scholarships.pdf>

Calculators

CFA Institute authorizes only two calculators for the CFA exams. There is no recommendation as to which one is better, so it is best to do your own research to find out which one may be best for you. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/about/governance/policies/cfa-calculator-policy>

Approved calculators are limited to the following:

- Texas Instruments BA II Plus (including BA II Plus Professional)

- Hewlett Packard 12C (including the HP 12C Platinum, 12C Platinum 25th anniversary edition, 12C 30th anniversary edition, and HP 12C Prestige)

Study Tools

Every registered CFA Program candidate will have access to a variety of resources through CFA Institute that include the entire CFA Program curriculum, practice questions, mock exams, flashcards, and more. However, some candidates may choose to supplement their learning with third party preparation materials. Some of the materials available include online and physical resources for sale. Book sets that break down each topic of the CFA Program curriculum are a popular choice. However, a variety of practice tests and questions, flashcards, quick study sheets, mock exams, workshops, and even audio notes may be extremely helpful to you as well.

Some of the popular resource providers include:

Kaplan Schweser:

<https://www.schweser.com/cfa/level-1/study-materials>

Wiley Efficient Learning:

<https://www.efficientlearning.com/cfa/products>

Bloomberg Exam Prep – CFA Program:

<https://www.bloombergrep.com/cfa>

Pass Rate

The 10 Year Average Pass Rates:

- Level I: 42%
- Level II: 45%
- Level III: 54%

Retaking the Exam

If you are unsuccessful after taking the exam, it is not the end of the world.

As per CFA Exam Eligibility Policy:

Candidates are permitted to take the exam a maximum of two times per calendar year (when applicable), but not in consecutive windows or windows that are six months or less apart. Candidates will have a total of six maximum attempts per exam level. This policy is in effect beginning with the 2021 exams. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/about/governance/policies/cfa-exam-eligibility-policy>

Additional Tips and Information

300 hours provides a number of useful blogs and resources to help candidates better their understanding of the CFA designation, how to best prepare, and whether the designation fits your career path. <https://300hours.com/>

This link will give you an idea of what you will need to have ready for exam day aside from studying the material. (Highly recommend reading this!)

<https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/programs/cfa/exam/candidate-checklist>

Here is a supplementary link with information regarding Exam Dates, Cost, and Registration Fees.
<https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/programs/cfa/exam>

Wondering if the CFA Program is right for you? This link will give you an overview of the various careers CFA Charterholders do, the various sectors in finance, and typical job titles.
<https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/programs/cfa/charterholder-careers>

CFA Institute has very specific rules as to what you can and cannot bring on exam day. To give you an idea, you can check out this checklist for exam day.
<https://www.cfainstitute.org/-/media/documents/form/cfa-candidate-cbt-checklist-2020.ashx>

CFA Institute policies can be found here if you require additional information regarding a specific policy. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/programs/cfa/policies>

There are countless links and resources out there to help you. If you are unsure about something, there is likely an answer somewhere on the CFA Institute website or elsewhere.

UofA Bachelor of Commerce Curriculum Guide

The left column represents the CFA Curriculum and its subtopics. For each section, we have provided a list of courses you may consider taking in preparation for your exams.

Please note: The CFA curriculum topics and the UofA course offerings and contents are subject to change frequently. The courses listed below have not been confirmed by CFA Institute.

Curriculum Topics	Courses Covering Curriculum Domain
Ethical and Professional Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethics and Trust in the Investment Profession• Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct• Guidance for Standards• Introduction to the Global Investment Performance Standards® (GIPS®)• Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS)	Some SMO or SEM courses may be of use but the CFA Ethics Curriculum does have specific guidelines and standards that you will need to know for the exam
Quantitative Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time Value of Money• Statistical Concepts and Market Returns• Probability Concepts• Common Probability Distributions• Sampling and Estimation• Hypothesis Testing	FIN 301, MGTSC 312

<p>Economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics in Demand and Supply Analysis • The Firm and Market Structures • Aggregate Output, Prices, and Economic Growth • Understanding Business Cycles • Monetary and Fiscal Policy • International Trade and Capital Flows • Currency Exchange Rates 	<p>BUEC 311, BUEC 479</p> <p>ECON 101, ECON 102, ECON 281, ECON 282, ECON 341, ECON 353, ECON 373</p> <p>FIN 442</p>
<p>Financial Statement Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Financial Statement Analysis • Financial Reporting Standards • Understanding Income Statements • Understanding Balance Sheets • Understanding Cash Flow Statements • Financial Analysis Techniques • Inventories • Long-Lived Assets • Income Taxes • Non-Current (Long-Term) Liabilities • Financial Reporting Quality • Applications of Financial Statement Analysis 	<p>ACCTG 311, ACCTG 322, ACCTG 414, ACCTG 415, ACCTG 418, ACCTG 412, ACCTG 432</p>
<p>Corporate Issuers (Finance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Corporate Governance and Other ESG Considerations • Capital Budgeting • Cost of Capital • Measures of Leverage • Working Capital Management 	<p>FIN 422, FIN 430, FIN 434, FIN 473</p>
<p>Equity Investments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Organization and Structure • Security Market Indexes • Market Efficiency • Overview of Equity Securities • Introduction to Industry and Company Analysis • Equity Valuation: Concepts and Basic Tools 	<p>FIN 412, FIN 422, FIN 415</p>
<p>Fixed Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed-Income Securities: Defining Elements • Fixed-Income Markets: Issuance, Trading, and Funding • Introduction to Fixed-Income Valuation • Introduction to Asset-Backed Securities • Understanding Fixed-Income Risk and Return • Fundamentals of Credit Analysis 	<p>FIN 301, FIN 418</p>
<p>Derivatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derivative Markets and Instruments • Basics of Derivative Pricing and Valuation 	<p>FIN 413</p>
<p>Alternative Investments</p>	<p>FIN 412, FIN 415, FIN 416</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to Alternative Investments• Portfolio Management and Wealth Planning• Portfolio Management: An Overview• Portfolio Risk and Return: Part I• Portfolio Risk and Return: Part II• Basics of Portfolio Planning and Construction• Introduction to Risk Management• Technical Analysis• Fintech in Investment Management | |
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