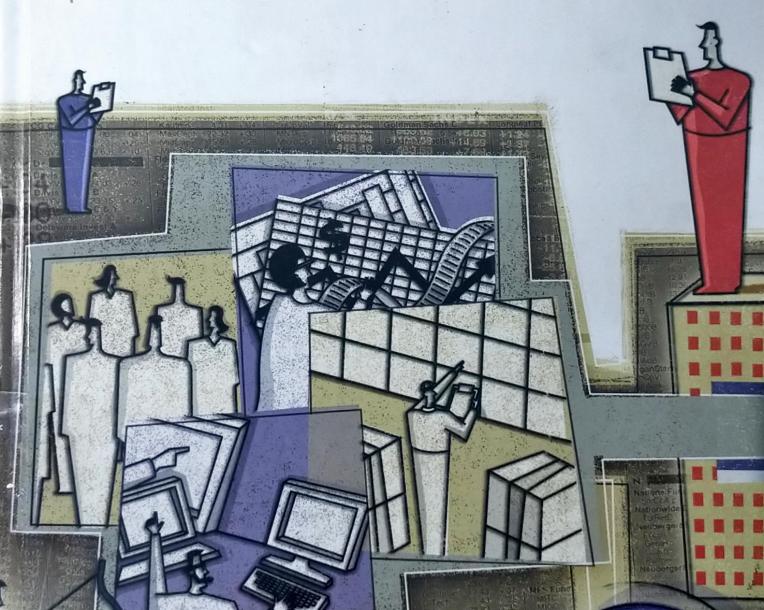
Essentials of Jordan Corporate Finance

Ross

FOURTH EDITION



Essentials of Corporate Finance

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-S.A.R. R.W.W. B.D.J.

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ESSENTIALS OF CORPORATE FINANCE

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

domestic 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOW/DOW 0 9 8 7 6 5 international 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOW/DOW 0 9 8 7 6 5

ISBN 0-07-251076-5 (student edition)
ISBN 0-07-253201-7 (annotated instructor's edition)

Publisher: Stephen M. Patterson Sponsoring editor: Michele Janicek Developmental editor: Jennifer V. Rizzi

Executive marketing manager: Rhonda Seelinger Senior producer, Media technology: Melissa Kansa

Senior project manager: Jean Lou Hess Senior production supervisor: Rose Hepburn

Lead designer: Pam Verros

Senior supplement producer: Carol Loreth Senior digital content specialist: Brian Nacik

Cover design: Michael Warrell Interior design: Michael Warrell Typeface: 10/12 Times Roman Compositor: GAC Indianapolis Printer: R. R. Donnelley

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ross, Stephen A.

Essentials of corporate finance / Stephen A. Ross, Randolph W. Westerfield, Bradford D. Jordan.— 4th ed.

p. cm. — (The McGraw-Hill/Irwin series in finance, insurance, and real estate) Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 0-07-251076-5 (student ed. : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-07-121507-7 (international : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-07-253201-7 (annotated instructor's ed.)

Corporations—Finance. I. Westerfield, Randolph. II. Jordan, Bradford D. III. Title.

HG4026 .R676 2004

658.15—dc21

2002038905

INTERNATIONAL EDITION ISBN 0-07-121507-7

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From the Authors

ith the Fourth Edition of Essentials of Corporate Finance, we have continued to refine our focus on our target audience, which is the undergraduate student taking a core course in business or corporate finance. This can be a tough course to teach. One reason is that the class is usually required of all business students, so it is not uncommon for a majority of the students to be nonfinance majors. In fact, this may be the only finance course many of them will ever have. With this in mind, our goal in Essentials is to convey the most important concepts and principles at a level that is approachable for the widest possible audience.

To achieve our goal, we have worked to distill the subject down to its bare essentials (hence, the name of this book), while retaining a decidedly modern approach to finance. We have always maintained that the subject of corporate finance can be viewed as the working of a few very powerful intuitions. We also think that understanding the "why" is just as important, if not more so, than understanding the "how," especially in an introductory course. Based on the gratifying market feedback we have received from our first three editions, as well as from our other text, *Fundamentals of Corporate Finance* (now in its 6th edition), many of you agree.

By design, this book is not encyclopedic. As the table of contents indicates, we have a total of 18 chapters. Chapter length is about 30 pages, so the text is aimed squarely at a single-term course, and most of the book can be realistically covered in a typical semester or quarter. Writing a book for a one-term course necessarily means some picking and choosing, with regard to both topics and depth of coverage. Throughout, we strike a balance by introducing and covering the essentials (there's that word again!) while leaving some more specialized topics to follow-up courses.

The other things we have always stressed, and have continued to improve with this edition, are readability and pedagogy. *Essentials* is written in a relaxed, conversational style that invites the students to join in the learning process rather than being a passive information absorber. We have found that this approach dramatically increases students' willingness to read and learn on their own. Between larger and larger class sizes and the ever-growing demands on faculty time, we think this is an essential (!) feature for a text in an introductory course.

Throughout the development of this book, we have continued to take a hard look at what is truly relevant and useful. In doing so, we have worked to downplay purely theoretical issues and minimize the use of extensive and elaborate calculations to illustrate points that are either intuitively obvious or of limited practical use.

As a result of this process, three basic themes emerge as our central focus in writing Essentials of Corporate Finance:

An Emphasis on Intuition We always try to separate and explain the principles at work on a common-sense, intuitive level before launching into any specifics. The underlying ideas are discussed first in very general terms and then by way of examples that illustrate in more concrete terms how a financial manager might proceed in a given situation.

A Unified Valuation Approach We treat net present value (NPV) as the basic concept underlying corporate finance. Many texts stop well short of consistently integrating this important principle. The most basic and important notion, that NPV represents the

excess of market value over cost, often is lost in an overly mechanical approach that emphasizes computation at the expense of comprehension. In contrast, every subject we cover is firmly rooted in valuation, and care is taken throughout to explain how particular decisions have valuation effects.

A Managerial Focus Students shouldn't lose sight of the fact that financial management concerns management. We emphasize the role of the financial manager as decision maker, and we stress the need for managerial input and judgment. We consciously avoid "black box" approaches to finance, and, where appropriate, the approximate, pragmatic nature of financial analysis is made explicit, possible pitfalls are described, and limitations are discussed.

Today, as we prepare to once again enter the market, our goal is to stick with and build on the principles that have brought us this far. However, based on an enormous amount of feedback we have received from you and your colleagues, we have made this edition and its package even more flexible than previous editions. We offer flexibility in coverage and pedagogy by providing a wide variety of features in the book to help students to learn about corporate finance. We also provide flexibility in package options by offering the most extensive collection of teaching, learning, and technology aids of any corporate finance text. Whether you use just the textbook, or the book in conjunction with other products, we believe you will find a combination with this edition that will meet your current as well as your changing needs.

Stephen A. Ross Randolph W. Westerfield Bradford D. Jordan

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