To: Students enrolled in FI 3300 WebCT Course  
From: Dr. Richard J. Fendler  
Date: January 2, 2006  
Re: Course Overview and Assignments for First Week of Class

According to the GSU Registrar, you are registered for my section of FI 3300 (Computer Number 10904) for the spring 2006 semester.

Contrary to the course bulletin and other information that may have been previously distributed, there will **NOT** be a first day meeting for this class. This letter essentially serves as a substitute for the first day of class. It will provide you with a basic overview of the course and help you to get started.

**Overview**

As noted in the spring 2006 course bulletin listing, this is a WebCT based online course. We will only officially physically meet one time during the semester – to take the common in-class final exam on Saturday, May 6 from 12:30 to 2:30 pm. All other aspects of the class will be conducted online. This may be your first “true” online course. If so, you have nothing to fear (even if you do not consider yourself to be computer literate). WebCT is very user friendly, I am well experienced in teaching online courses, the textbook for FI 3300 is easy to read and follow, and the online version of this class has received excellent reviews from prior students. In fact, in many ways you may even find this to be a better method of learning than a traditional course.

The course revolves around a WebCT homepage (on the Vista edition of WebCT – the old campus edition of WebCT has been deactivated this semester). The FI 3300 WebCT homepage contains a course calendar of reading assignments (updated, on average, for 2 weeks into the future), suggested problem assignments, quiz and exam dates, chat session times and dates, and so on. The page also contains links to PowerPoint lecture slides that cover many chapters in the book as well as a link to the course chat room (I will conduct weekly chat sessions during which I will “lecture” and/or answer questions). As for course structure, there will be 12 (nearly one per week) quizzes in the course, 2 online exams (you will be allowed to take online quizzes and online exams during an approximate one week window), two or three take-home problem sets and an in-class final exam.

**Getting Started**

It has been my experience that the most important aspect of an online course is to make certain that everyone understands how to use the technology before the course actually begins. Accordingly, during the first week of the class we will set up and work out the bugs in the system. The following is a step-by-step list of what I need for you to do:

1. I need to communicate with you via e-mail throughout the semester. In fact, the major form of communication in this course is via e-mail. Although there is a mailbox feature to WebCT, it has not worked well in the past. Accordingly, I will send all messages via my GSU GroupWise account. Messages must be sent to your GSU account only (according to the GSU lawyers, the only email address to which I can send global messages is your
GSU address. It is actually illegal for me to include an alternate email address in the list. I can respond to a private email address on an individual basis, but I cannot send group notes to private addresses). Thus, you need to check your personal GSU email daily OR you need to set up your GSU email account to forward mail to your personal and/or work address. The addendum to this letter tells you how to forward mail from your GSU account to a personal email account.

2. Verify that the class is in your myWebCT account. Either from the GSU homepage (www.gsu.edu) click the WebCT link or go directly to:

   http://webct.gsu.edu/webct/public/home.pl?action=print_home

When you log onto WebCT, you should see a link to “FI-3300 - FI-3300-004 10904”. If this course does not appear in your MyWebCT listing, immediately send me an e-mail message noting so – in the Subject area write the words “WebCT Log-in Problems.”

3. Enter the class WebCT page by clicking on the link. Download the course syllabus and read the ENTIRE syllabus carefully. The syllabus is a contract. Failure to follow the procedures and policies outlined in the course syllabus constitutes full acceptance of liability on your part.

4. Plan to participate in a brief chat session on Friday, January 13 at 11:00 am. The chat session will be held in Chat Room 1. This will be an introductory chat session during which I will answer any and all questions about the course.

I hope you enjoy the course. “See” you soon.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT NOTICE!!! YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS WEBCT FOR THE CLASS UNTIL MONDAY, JANUARY 9 – THE DAY CLASSES BEGIN FOR THE SEMESTER.
Addendum

If you use another email address such as a Hotmail, Yahoo and/or a work account for your primary email, you will need to forward your mail from the GSU official address to your main address. Here is how to do it.

1. Go to http://mail.student.gsu.edu.
2. Type in your user name and password.
3. Click <Login>.
4. Select the <Options> icon. (This is the middle icon at the top of the page that has two red check marks in it.)
5. Select <Mailbox Management>.
6. Under “forward all new messages,” select <Yes>.
7. If you want to keep copies of your messages in your student mailbox, select <Yes> for the “Keep Copy” option. In the “forward to” box, provide one or more email addresses where you want to forward your messages. List one email address per line.
8. Click the <Save> button to save your changes.
9. Whichever address you use, make sure you check it periodically for any messages. You will be responsible for complying with anything that I send in an email so make sure you check your mail frequently.