

Forum is a development class, organized around four themes:

- Market developments
- Programming Clinic
- Ethics
- Model implementation

Forum comprises informal discussions and debates engaging students in the realities of living and working in the world, with a focus on economics and finance. These realities include broad awareness of contemporary events, ethical implications of decisions, proper implementation and use of models, the research process and the critical skills of communication. Forum meetings are designed to promote understanding and build experience in all these areas.

Other Forum activities include occasional industry speakers, attendance of professional meetings including the Matlab Computational Finance conference, IAQF and PRMIA seminars.

#### A note on the development of programming skills

Developing programming skills is a twofold matter of consistent practice and guided instruction. Most of the courses comprising the MSMCF program include practical work requiring students to construct solutions to small scale problems in Matlab or some equivalent. Forum seeks to expand students' programming experience, firstly by providing a program length perspective, and secondly by providing guidance from an experienced professional (the Program Director).

A range of specially created materials is used to support the programming development of students, including starting program exercises and program skill building tasks. The starting exercises are small scale implementations of models examined in MSMCF courses, such as the binomial model for option pricing, numerical methods, such as finite difference schemes for solving the Black-Scholes partial differential equation for option pricing, simulation for model calibration, and others. The program building tasks move students on from basic 'code translation of algorithms' to the development of structured programs with designed classes and modules. The models and methods are drawn from across the program courses and extend these to more general or advanced models. Students choose what to do and at what pace to work.

After completing this course students will have developed:

- Improved spoken and written English ability
- Consistent awareness of political, economic, and financial world events
- Improved computer programming skill
- Awareness of ethical issues in decision making