

## Center for Financial Services (CFS)

### Director

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Executive Treasurer and Secretary at the American Finance Association (<https://afajof.org/>)

Co-Director, FinTech Minor (<https://cbe.lehigh.edu/academics/undergraduate/fintech-minor/>)

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### assistant Director

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### overview

As an academic center within Lehigh University's College of Business, the **Center for Financial Services (CFS)** fosters collaboration on real-world, relevant business challenges. Since its establishment in 2016, the CFS has facilitated conferences, symposia, panels, lectures, and networking events, bringing together the latest developments in research and practice to encourage meaningful exchanges on critical issues in the financial services sector. The Center's core mission is to **connect, educate, partner, and inspire**.

### Goals:

- Provide thought leadership in financial services.
- Develop innovative ideas and possible solutions to challenges facing the industry.
- Facilitate open discussions on pertinent topics among alumni, students, policymakers, academics, and practitioners.
- Produce and distribute research insights relevant to the industry through Lehigh's esteemed faculty scholarship, the Bosland Financial Services Lab, and the CFS Blockchain Lab, part of a broader interdisciplinary initiative in blockchain technology at Lehigh.
- Contribute to the development of future leaders—Lehigh Business' bright and motivated students.

### Faculty Expertise

The Perella Department of Finance faculty are actively engaged in intellectual discovery and regularly publish in leading finance journals including *the Journal of Finance*, *Journal of Financial Economics*, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *Review of Financial Studies*, *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, and *Journal of Accounting Research*. Their work has been widely cited and incorporated into both finance curricula and the practice of industry professionals.

### Undergraduate and Graduate Program Information

The Center oversees the Financial Services Laboratory (FSL) which serves as the vehicle for understanding, creating, and employing financial data and software on the Lehigh University campus.

The CFS Blockchain Lab promotes interdisciplinary research on the potential uses of blockchain technology in financial services. The lab is designed to engage faculty and students in producing research, conferences, and white papers on the applications of blockchain in areas of finance such as currency, clearing and settlement, capital formation, and efficient contracts. The lab's work addresses the implementation and regulatory challenges in adopting blockchain technology and the challenges and opportunities presented by central-bank digital currencies. The lab is part of a broad, interdisciplinary initiative in blockchain technology and applications (<https://blockchain.cse.lehigh.edu/>).

CFS Faculty Fellows (<https://business.lehigh.edu/centers/center-financial-services/faculty-fellows/>) oversee affiliate programs, such as the FinTech Minor, Investment Management Group, which includes the student-run investment funds - Dreyfus Portfolio and Thompson International Portfolio, and the CFS Student Fellows Program. These affiliate programs support the CFS mission.

### Collaboration – Universities and Industry

The Annual Conference on Financial Market Regulation (CFMR) (<https://business.lehigh.edu/centers/center-financial-services/news-and-events/annual-conference-financial-market-regulation/>) began accepting paper submissions in 2013, with the inaugural conference held in the spring of 2014. It is co-hosted by the Securities and Exchange Commission's Division of Economic and Risk Analysis (DERA), Lehigh University's Center for Financial Services (CFS), and the University of Virginia's Mayo Center for Asset Management. Now in its twelfth year, the conference has grown in global stature and selectivity, with a current paper acceptance rate of just 4%.

Over the past decade, 122 papers have been presented and discussed at CFMR. Of these, 40% have been published in leading academic journals, including the *American Economic Review*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Finance*, *Journal of Financial Economics*, *Review of Financial Studies*, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *Journal of Accounting Research*, *Management Science*, *Review of Finance*, *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, and *Review of Asset Pricing Studies*, as well as in influential publications such as *The Economist*.

Since its inception in 2017, the Annual CFS Symposium has brought together distinguished experts to explore key topics in financial services. Panelists have led in-depth discussions on financial service reform, asset management challenges, blockchain technologies, ESG investing, special-purpose acquisition companies (SPACs), climate change mandates, investing in collectibles, and the role of AI in wealth management.

Led by the (<https://business.lehigh.edu/centers/center-financial-services/advisory-council/>)CFS Advisory Council, the symposium serves as a vital platform for fostering collaboration between academia and industry—bridging theory and practice to address key challenges shaping the financial services landscape.

Past speakers have been recognized leaders in their fields, representing prestigious organizations such as BlackRock, Bank of America, KKR, CNBC, IBM, Two Sigma, Neuberger Berman, and Mellon.

As a cornerstone of CFS's broader mission, the symposium fosters a dynamic exchange of ideas among researchers and industry professionals. By leveraging its extensive network of Lehigh faculty, alumni, and industry leaders, the CFS continues to drive thought leadership and innovative solutions in financial services.

The Center also closely collaborates with the Lehigh Wall Street Council (<https://alumni.lehigh.edu/lehigh-wall-street-council/>), a Lehigh alumni professional alliance, whose mission is to educate and assist Lehigh students in their efforts to find career and internship opportunities in the financial world.

### Contact

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