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Executive Summary

Real Life: Strategic Financial Decision-Making A Leadership-Oriented Course for College-Preparatory Students

Extending College Preparation into Strategic Judgment

Independent schools are distinguished by intellectual rigor, character formation, and strong college placement.

Yet academic excellence and long-term strategic decision-making are not always the same skill.

Students may demonstrate strong analytical reasoning in structured academic settings while still developing the habit of applying disciplined judgment to consequential life decisions — particularly those involving long-term financial tradeoffs.

As higher education costs approach \$200,000 over five years and career pathways evolve within an AI-influenced economy, the ability to evaluate investment decisions, model long-term outcomes, and interpret economic signals has become central to sustained success.

Real Life: Strategic Financial Decision-Making was designed to complement rigorous college-preparatory programs by providing a structured arena in which students apply analytical ability to real-world decisions tied directly to their own goals and aspirations.

From Intellectual Capacity to Strategic Habit

Independent school students possess significant intellectual capability.

What distinguishes long-term leaders, however, is the habit of thinking strategically before acting.

Real Life engages students in disciplined modeling of:

- College cost-of-attendance and return-on-investment analysis
- Debt structures and career flexibility implications
- Income trajectory forecasting
- Investment fundamentals and capital markets
- Economic cycles and opportunity assessment

Students are required not merely to compute, but to reason, defend, and revise their conclusions. By linking structured analysis to their own ambitions, motivation increases. Over time, strategic thinking becomes internalized rather than episodic.

The objective is not additional content coverage. It is the cultivation of disciplined judgment.

Leadership Skills in an AI-Influenced Economy

Artificial intelligence is accelerating change across industries and professions.

While technical skills evolve, these skills remain constant:

- Evaluate uncertainty
- Analyze tradeoffs
- Interpret financial and economic data
- Make disciplined, forward-looking decisions

Strategic financial decision-making provides a uniquely practical framework for cultivating these competencies.

These are not simply financial skills. They are leadership skills.

Faculty Partnership & Professional Development

We provide complimentary professional development to support faculty in facilitating structured analysis, modeling exercises, and high-level problem-solving discussions.

The program integrates seamlessly within independent school academic environments and may be delivered as:

- A semester course
- An upper-level elective
- A capstone experience
- An integrated strategic decision module

Implementation is flexible and aligned with institutional priorities.

Partnership Invitation

We welcome the opportunity to provide:

- Course preview access
- Sample analytical exercises
- Curriculum structure overview
- Faculty briefing session
- Custom implementation discussion

If appropriate, this overview may be forwarded to principals, department chairs, or curriculum leaders for further evaluation.

Next Steps

For additional information or to schedule a brief conversation:

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