Based on solid fundamentals and proven leadership, students are strongly advised to study with Stephen Ciccone.

In a financial world of bubbles and buyouts, of Internet dreams and Ponzi schemes, Ciccone teaches the lasting virtues of sound understanding, strong research, and clear communication. A course on investment analysis, for example, may begin with a discussion of asset pricing models at the blackboard—Ciccone prefers the flexibility and immediacy of chalk to keep students on their toes. Once they catch on, the class turns high tech, running stock market theory through real-world testing as everybody invests online using special stock trading simulations.

“If they beat my account they get extra credit,” quips Ciccone, who admits to having gambled away some of his own student loan money on “over-priced and over-hyped” Internet stocks during his graduate school days. “The moral,” says Ciccone, “is that there is no easy money in the stock markets.”

Finance and accounting have enjoyed run-ups at UNH since Ciccone arrived 10 years ago. Graduating finance classes have grown from 30 students to 100. The department’s signature student organization, the Atkins Investment Group, which Ciccone co-founded in 2004 with colleague Ahmad Etebari, has grown to a highly selective, 45-student-strong investment-firm-within-a-business-school, managing a $40,000 fund that has outperformed the S&P 500.

Ben Collins ’10, who was the president of the Atkins group as a senior finance major, is “taking advantage of the risk he can afford to take” at this time in life to create a Web-based, start-up company called MarketConnector. While he counts his experience with the Atkins group among his “most fulfilling” at UNH, he saves the superlatives for his mentor. “Professor Ciccone connects dynamically with his students,” says Collins. “He can make a class of 50 feel like a class of 10.”

So, word on the street? Contrary to conventional market wisdom, Ciccone’s past performance is a strong predictor of future excellence.

~David Moore