

March 25 2015

# NAVIGATING THE MARKETS

## COMPASS CHANGES

- Upgraded small value to neutral from negative/neutral.
- Upgraded telecom to neutral from negative/neutral.

## INVESTMENT TAKEAWAYS

- We forecast high-single-digit S&P 500 returns in 2015, supported by earnings, though the strong U.S. dollar and energy drags make the lower end of our 5–10% earnings growth forecast more likely.\*
- We continue to favor U.S. equities, but have moved to a less negative view of large and small cap foreign in recent weeks, primarily due to improved technicals.
- We continue to favor cyclical growth sectors, plus healthcare, while watching energy for contrarian opportunities.
- Lower yields and higher valuations suggest low future high-quality bond returns. Despite the Federal Reserve’s (Fed) recent lower for longer message, low yields and unattractive valuations argue for a defensive stance on fixed income duration.
- For fixed income allocations, we emphasize a blend of high-quality intermediate bonds and less interest rate-sensitive sectors such as high-yield bonds and bank loans.
- From a technical perspective, the S&P 500 price remains above a positively sloping 200-day simple moving average, which supports a long-term bullish trend.

The *Portfolio Compass* provides a snapshot of LPL Financial Research’s views on equity, equity sectors, fixed income, and alternative asset classes. This biweekly publication illustrates our current views and will change as needed over a 3- to 12-month time horizon.

The top down is an important part of our asset allocation process. As a result, we have a new macro section including our views of the global economy and key drivers of those views, and a section on what we are watching that might change those views.

## CONTENTS

Compass Changes.....1

Macroeconomic Views.....2

What We’re Watching.....3

Asset Class & Sector Top Picks.....4

Equity Asset Classes.....5

Equity Sectors.....6

Fixed Income.....7

Commodities & Alternative Asset Classes.....9

All performance referenced herein is as of March 24, 2015, unless otherwise noted.

## BROAD ASSET CLASS VIEWS

LPL Financial Research’s views on stocks, bonds, cash, and alternatives are illustrated below.



\* Historically since WWII, the average annual gain on stocks has been 7–9%. Thus, our forecast is in-line with average stock market growth. We forecast a 5–9% gain, including dividends, for U.S. stocks in 2015 as measured by the S&P 500. This gain is derived from earnings per share (EPS) for S&P 500 companies growing 5–10%. Earnings gains are supported by our expectation of improved global economic growth and stable profit margins in 2015.

## MACROECONOMIC VIEWS

	Economic Factor	Outlook	Investing Impact
ECONOMY	U.S. GDP Growth	2015 GDP 3.0–3.5%.	No recession or overheating in 2015 may support equity markets.
	Consumer Spending	Low oil prices, stock market, and home price gains help.	Supports consumer cyclicals.
	Business Spending	Priorities slowly shifting toward investment.	Industrials, technology most likely to benefit.
	Housing	Tight supply, years of underbuilding may help but consumers are still cautious.	A stronger turnaround could support housing/financials stocks.
	Import/Export	Cheaper oil, more oil exports, and “know-how” service sectors helping trade imbalances.	Supports technology, business services.
	Labor Market	Steadily improving but wage growth lagging.	Profit margins may begin to narrow; Fed rate hikes forthcoming.
	Inflation	Commodity declines, tepid wage growth creating downward pressure.	Interest rates likely to rise but process will be gradual.
	Business Cycle	Still mid-cycle but have likely moved into latter half.	Equity markets may have room to run, but expect more volatility.
	Dollar	Foreign central bank stimulus boosting U.S. dollar.	Drag on foreign market returns, hurts U.S. profits.
Global GDP Growth	Modest improvement in 2015 led by U.S.	Supports multinational technology and industrials.	
POLICY	Fiscal	Potentially minimal impact on U.S. economy.	Drag from 2013 rolled off, helping calm markets.
	Monetary	Expect Fed tightening in late 2015.	Modest negative for bonds; manageable risk for stocks.
	Government	Supreme Court ruling on provision of ACA expected in late June.	Odds slightly favor ruling friendly to healthcare sector.
RISKS	Financial	Most measures of financial stress are stable.	We expect stock market gains in 2015.
	Geopolitical & Other	High due to Ukraine, Islamic State; fallout from sharp drop in oil prices.	May contribute to higher stock volatility.
OVERSEAS	Developed Overseas Economies	Japan and Europe looking a little stronger; uncertainty still high.	Favor U.S. equities; monitor developed foreign.
	Emerging Markets Economies	China’s growth stabilizing at about 7%, more stimulus expected.	Faster growth in other countries may help lift low valuations.
FINANCIAL CONDITIONS	Corporate Profits	We expect 5–10% gains in 2015; low end more likely due to energy and currency drags.	Supportive of mid-cycle stock market gains.
	Main Street	Fed Beige Book depicts improving economy, labor market; harsh winter a drag on Q1 growth.	Supportive of consumer cyclicals.

Source: LPL Research, U.S. Department of Energy, Haver Analytics 03/24/15

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide or be construed as providing specific investment advice or recommendations for your clients. Any economic forecasts set forth in the presentation may not develop as predicted and there can be no guarantee that strategies promoted will be successful.

## WHAT WE'RE WATCHING

As we highlighted in our *Outlook 2015: In Transit*, the Federal Reserve (Fed) is watching a number of labor market indicators to help determine an appropriate timetable for interest rate hikes. We expect the Fed to begin its rate hike campaign in late 2015, but the pace of hikes will likely be gradual and reflect the progress in the various labor indicators listed here. Fed Chair Yellen's labor market indicators are making progress, but have not yet reached full health, providing support for continued monetary policy support from the Fed.

"What We're Watching" features indicators that are keys to the current LPL Research macroeconomic outlook. Economic and market dynamics will dictate featured topics and their durability.

	Description	Prerecession High	Recession Low	Current Reading	Percentage from Prerecession Levels
Unemployment & Underemployment	Unemployment rate: % of labor force	4.40%	10.00%	5.5%	80%
	Labor force participation rate: year-over-year change, % of unemployed	0.4%	-1.1%	-0.2%	60%
	Part time for economic reasons: % of labor force	2.7%	6.7%	4.5%	56%
	Long-term unemployed: 27 weeks or more, % of unemployed	15.9%	45.3%	31.1%	48%
	Duration of unemployment: weeks	7.3	25	13.1	67%
Employment & Work	Private payroll employment: millions	116.0	107.2	119.2	137%
	Government payroll employment: millions	22.6	21.8	21.9	14%
	Temporary help employment: millions	2.7	1.7	2.8	114%
	Average weekly hours (production): hours	33.9	33.0	33.8	89%
	Average weekly hours of persons at work: hours	39.7	36.2	38.5	66%
	Wage rates: average hourly earnings, year-over-year % change	4.2%	1.3%	1.6%	9%
Job Market Environment	Composite help-wanted: index	4250	2750	5451.3	180%
	Hiring rate: % of payroll employment	4.5%	3.2%	3.5%	23%
	Transition rate from unemployment to employment: % of unemployment	29.6%	15.9%	22.8%	50%
	Jobs plentiful vs. hard to get: diffusion index	11.4	-46.1	-5.7	70%
	Hiring plans: diffusion index	19%	-10%	12%	76%
	Jobs hard to fill: %	31%	8%	29%	91%
Layoffs & Quits	Insured unemployment rate: % of covered employment	1.9%	5.0%	1.8%	103%
	Job losers unemployed less than 5 weeks: % of employment	45.4%	14.7%	26.3%	38%
	Quit rate: % of payroll employment	60%	39%	58%	91%
	Job leavers unemployed less than 5 weeks: % of employment	48.8%	17.5%	28.5%	35%

Have reached or exceeded their prerecession levels


Source: LPL Research, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics 03/24/15  
The time frame for all data is the last 10 years: 2004–2014.

## ASSET CLASS & SECTOR TOP PICKS

Below we provide our top overall ideas across the various asset classes and sectors covered in this publication, as well as our best ideas within the three disciplines of our investment process: fundamentals, technicals, and valuations. More details on these and other investment ideas can be found in subsequent pages.

Characteristics	EQUITY ASSET CLASSES	EQUITY SECTORS	FIXED INCOME	Characteristics	ALTERNATIVE ASSET CLASSES
<b>BEST OVERALL IDEAS</b>	Large Growth	Industrials Technology	High-Yield Bonds	<b>BEST OVERALL IDEAS</b>	Global Macro
<b>Fundamentals</b>	Large Growth	Industrials Technology Healthcare	Munis Treasuries	<b>Catalysts</b>	Event Driven Global Macro
<b>Technicals</b>	Large Growth Mid Growth	Consumer Discretionary Healthcare Technology	High-Yield Bonds Preferred Stocks Investment-Grade Corps	<b>Trading Environment</b>	Managed Futures
<b>Valuations</b>	Emerging Markets	Technology Telecommunications	Munis High-Yield Bonds Bank Loans	<b>Volatility</b>	Global Macro

## READING THE PORTFOLIO COMPASS

RATING	ICON		
Negative	■	●	<p>Fundamental, technical, and valuation characteristics for each category are shown by their blue icons below, and displayed as colored squares.</p> <p>Negative, neutral, or positive views are illustrated as a colored circle positioned over the scale, while an outlined black circle with an arrow indicates change and shows the previous view.</p> <p>Rationales for our views are provided on the right side.</p> 
Negative / Neutral		●	
Neutral	■	●	
Positive / Neutral		●	
Positive	■	●	
Previous Position	⊙		

Sector	F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	S&P*	Rationale
Materials	■	■	■	■	●	■	3.2	China stimulus could help more, but technicals are negative and China's growth is stalling
Energy	■	■	■	■	●	■	8.2	Intriguing potential contrarian opportunity, but supply and technicals suggest caution, favor MLPs.

Growth-oriented funds may underperform when value investing is in favor and growth stocks may be more volatile than other stocks because they are more sensitive to investor perceptions of the issuing company's growth of earnings potential.

Global macro strategy is a hedge fund strategy that selects its holdings primarily on the macroeconomic and political views of various countries, and is subject to numerous risks such as: geopolitical, derivative, commodity, volatility, currency, and regulatory.

## EQUITY ASSET CLASSES

We forecast high-single-digit S&P 500 returns for 2015, supported by earnings growth that is likely to fall near the low end of our 5–10% forecast due to drag from the U.S. dollar strength and energy downturn, and a stable PE ratio amid a favorable economic backdrop. We favor U.S. equities over their large foreign counterparts, although we have become less negative on foreign markets in recent weeks due to better European data and better investment performance, while we maintain a positive emerging markets bias. We expect a market leadership transition to large caps to occur in 2015 and favor growth over value. We find MLPs attractive, particularly for income-oriented investors, for their yields and potential upside if oil prices recover.

	Sector	F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	Rationale
Style / Capitalization	Large Growth	■	■	■	—	—	●	Recent small cap outperformance following underperformance in 2014 may continue, but we see a shift in leadership to large caps in 2015 as the business cycle matures. Our cyclical sector preferences, specifically our positive technology and consumer discretionary views and cautious stance on interest rate-sensitive sectors, drive our preference for growth over value.
	Large Value	■	■	■	—	●	—	
	Mid Growth	■	■	■	—	—	●	Positive mid growth view reflects our preference for cyclical sectors, above-market earnings growth, and potential up-capture as we expect the stock market to rise in 2015. Mid caps should also benefit from continued healthy acquisition activity. Mid cap valuations are in-line to slightly above long-term averages relative to the S&P 500.
	Mid Value	■	■	■	—	●	—	
	Small Growth	■	■	■	—	●	—	In the near term small caps may potentially continue to recoup some of 2014's underperformance and technicals have turned positive. But the age of the business cycle (past the midpoint in our view) suggests a transition in leadership from small to large may take place in 2015. Relative to the large cap S&P 500 Index, small cap growth valuations have moved to above-average levels.
	Small Value	■	■	■	—	●	—	
Region	U.S. Stocks	■	■	■	—	—	●	We favor U.S. equities over foreign despite quantitative easing (QE) from the European Central Bank (ECB) and relatively attractive valuations. Our cautious view of Europe primarily reflects structural constraints restricting credit, still sluggish economic growth, and deflation risk; but better recent economic data and positive technical analysis signals have made us less negative on international developed markets recently.
	Large Foreign	■	■	■	—	●	—	
	Small Foreign	■	■	■	—	●	—	Although Japan emerged from a technical recession during Q4 2014, we are not convinced that the country's stimulus programs will drive a sustained improvement in growth.
	Emerging Markets	■	■	■	—	—	●	Improving fundamentals and low valuations make EM one of our best ideas for 2015, but we would like to see better technicals and more oil price stability before considering a more positive near-term view. Within EM, our preference is for Asia due to relatively stronger current account balances and benefits of cheaper oil.
REITs	REITs	■	■	■	—	●	—	Solid job growth helps, but interest rate risk and still above-average valuations keep us neutral.
MLPs	MLPs	■	■	■	—	—	●	Very attractive yields, solid short-/intermediate-term distribution prospects despite oil decline, and upside potential as oil recovers offset interest rate risk and technical weakness.

Unconstrained eclectic strategies have a flexible investment style that does not limit the fund to a single asset class or security type.

Investing in real estate/REITs involves special risks such as potential illiquidity and may not be suitable for all investors. There is no assurance that the investment objectives of this program will be attained.

Investing in MLPs involves additional risks as compared with the risks of investing in common stock, including risks related to cash flow, dilution, and voting rights. MLPs may trade less frequently than larger companies due to their smaller capitalizations, which may result in erratic price movement or difficulty in buying or selling. MLPs are subject to significant regulation and may be adversely affected by changes in the regulatory environment, including the risk that an MLP could lose its tax status as a partnership. Additional management fees and other expenses are associated with investing in MLP funds.

## EQUITY SECTORS

We continue to favor cyclical growth sectors, which tend to do well during the middle to late stages of the business cycle. Our focus is on industrials and technology, while low energy prices underpin our positive consumer discretionary view. Meanwhile, we continue to watch the energy sector for potential contrarian opportunities, but have not seen enough evidence of a sustainable turn in oil prices or sector fundamentals to upgrade our view.

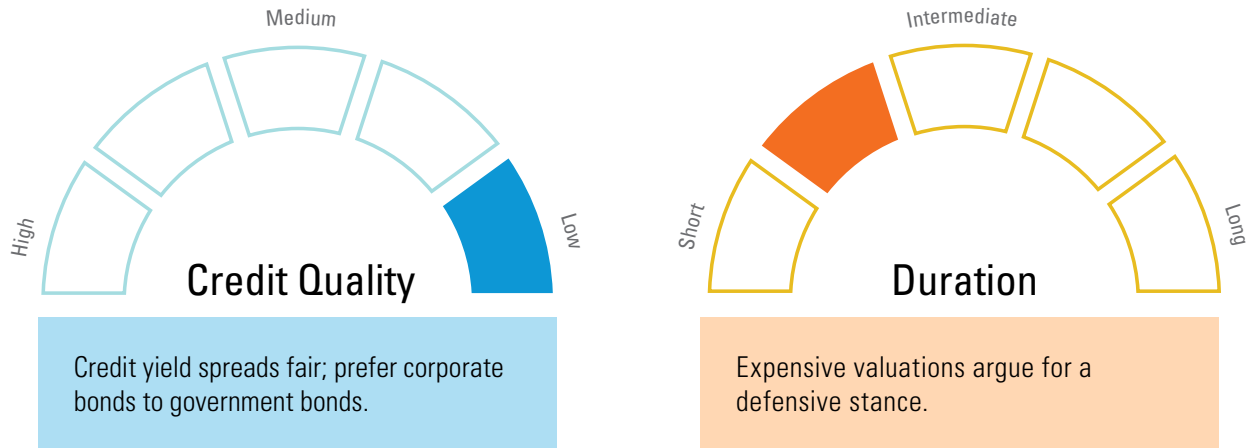
	Sector	F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	S&P*	Rationale
Cyclical	Materials	■	■	■	●	○	●	3.1	China stimulus may help and growth in China has steadied, but the strong U.S. dollar is a drag.
	Energy	■	■	■	●	○	●	7.9	Potential contrarian opportunity, but production is still booming despite lower prices; favor MLPs.
	Industrials	■	■	■	●	○	●	10.4	We expect a potential pickup in business spending; favor transports, which benefit from cheaper fuel costs.
	Consumer Discretionary	■	■	■	●	○	●	12.6	Cheaper oil helps boost the near-term outlook although late-cycle performance record is mixed.
	Technology	■	■	■	●	○	●	19.8	Earnings, improving business spending, and valuations all supportive, along with positive technicals.
	Financials	■	■	■	●	○	●	16.2	Still tough regulatory environment; outlook would be better if interest rates sustain a move higher.
Defensive	Utilities	■	■	■	●	○	●	3.0	Our negative view reflects interest rate risk, rich valuations, and our preference for cyclicals.
	Healthcare	■	■	■	●	○	●	15.1	Favorite defensive sector on solid earnings, innovation, and Affordable Care Act (ACA)-demand lift.
	Consumer Staples	■	■	■	●	○	●	9.6	Still favor cyclical sectors but low commodity prices help margins, overseas growth has stabilized.
	Telecommunications	■	■	■	●	○	●	2.3	Interest rate and business risks remain (saturation, capital outlays), but valuations are attractive and technicals have improved.

\* S&P 500 Weight (%)

Because of its narrow focus, specialty sector investing, such as healthcare, financials, or energy, will be subject to greater volatility than investing more broadly across many sectors and companies. There is no guarantee that a diversified portfolio will enhance overall returns or outperform a nondiversified portfolio. Diversification does not ensure against market risk.

## FIXED INCOME

We prefer corporate bonds over higher-quality government bonds due to their relatively higher yields and the financial health of corporate America. Despite the Fed’s recent lower for longer message, low yields and unattractive valuations argue for a defensive stance on fixed income duration.



Yield spread is the difference between yields on differing debt instruments, calculated by deducting the yield of one instrument from another. The higher the yield spread, the greater the difference between the yields offered by each instrument. The spread can be measured between debt instruments of differing maturities, credit ratings, and risk.

Municipal bonds have failed to match Treasury strength in recent months, and that trend has continued to start 2015. On a positive note, municipal valuations are at their most attractive level since late 2013 and may provide a buffer when interest rates turn higher.

Sector	F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	Rationale
Munis–Short-Term	■	■	■	●			Higher relative valuations and low yields limit appeal.
Munis–Intermediate-Term	■	■	■		●		Valuations attractive relative to Treasuries, but offset by low absolute yields. Intermediate is our preferred spot on the yield curve.
Munis–Long-Term	■	■	■		●		Valuations attractive relative to Treasuries, but offset by low absolute yields. The risk of rising interest rates keeps us focused on intermediate rather than long.
Munis–High-Yield	■	■	■		●		Default risk is low, but greater interest rate sensitivity offsets above-average yield.

Continued on next page.

For the purposes of this publication, intermediate-term bonds have maturities between 3 and 10 years, and short-term bonds are those with maturities of less than 3 years.

All bonds are subject to market and interest rate risk if sold prior to maturity. Bond values will decline as interest rates rise and are subject to availability and change in price.

High-yield/junk bonds are not investment-grade securities, involve substantial risks, and generally should be part of the diversified portfolio of sophisticated investors.

Municipal interest income may be subject to the alternative minimum tax. Federally tax-free but other state and local taxes may apply.

Corporate bonds are considered higher risk than government bonds but normally offer a higher yield and are subject to market, interest rate, and credit risk, as well as additional risks based on the quality of issuer coupon rate, price, yield, maturity, and redemption features.

## FIXED INCOME (CONTINUED)

Bonds rebounded in March on weaker economic data and a more benign message from the Fed. The timing and pace of Fed rate hikes is more in-line with futures pricing; but on a longer-term basis, yields remain low and valuations above average, suggesting low future returns for high-quality bonds. For fixed income allocations, we emphasize a blend of high-quality intermediate bonds coupled with less interest rate-sensitive sectors such as high-yield bonds and bank loans.

Sector		F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	Rationale
Taxable Bonds – U.S.	Treasuries	■	■	■	●			Yields are at the low end of a trading range and provide limited opportunity.
	TIPS	■	■	■	●			Implied inflation expectations have increased from a four-year low, but are still well below average; remain more attractive relative to conventional Treasuries.
	Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS)	■	■	■	●			Average yield spread stabilizing near 0.75% above comparable Treasuries.
	Investment-Grade Corporates	■	■	■		●		Corporate balance sheets remain very strong and extra yield is an additional benefit.
	Preferred Stocks	■	■	■		●		Higher valuations warrant caution, but fundamentals are firm. Financial companies, which make up the bulk of the issuers, have seen credit worthiness improve.
	High-Yield Corporates	■	■	■			●	Average yield spread of 5% suggests sector still offers value and oil price impact fading. Low defaults are a positive
	Bank Loans	■	■	■			●	Potentially attractive due to short-term nature and above-average yield; less energy exposure than high-yield.
Taxable Bonds – Foreign	Foreign Bonds – Hedged	■	■	■	●			Despite high valuations, early indications from the start of QE suggest bond prices may remain supported from significant reduced supply.
	Foreign Bonds – Unhedged	■	■	■	●			Low yields, unattractive valuations, and euro currency weakness pose risks.
	Emerging Markets Debt	■	■	■		●		Valuations have improved but remain fair. Uncertainty over pace of growth and Fed rate hike sensitivity may limit additional improvement.

Mortgage-backed securities are subject to credit, default, prepayment risk that acts much like call risk when you get your principal back sooner than the stated maturity, extension risk, the opposite of prepayment risk, market and interest rate risk.

Bank loans are loans issued by below investment-grade companies for short-term funding purposes with higher yield than short-term debt and involve risk.

Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS) help eliminate inflation risk to your portfolio, as the principal is adjusted semiannually for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI)—while providing a real rate of return guaranteed by the U.S. government. Investing in foreign and emerging markets debt securities involves special additional risks. These risks include, but are not limited to, currency risk, geopolitical, and regulatory risk, and risk associated with varying settlement standards.



## COMMODITIES & ALTERNATIVE ASSET CLASSES

Central bank policy divergence should lead to higher market volatility and more dispersion among assets, which may create a more fertile environment for macro strategies. While narrowly led equity markets have proven difficult for equity-oriented alternative strategies, we favor higher beta options in that space until individual stock selection is better rewarded. On commodities, technical weakness and the strong U.S. dollar keep us cautious, although industrial metals have bucked the trend as a copper rebound has driven a technical upgrade.

	Sector	F	T	V	⊖	○	⊕	Rationale
Commodities	Industrial Metals	■	■					After its sharp decline, oil is an intriguing opportunity on a potential technical bounce, but supply pressures and the strong U.S. dollar suggest caution is warranted. Some of the factors we are watching to consider a more positive view on oil include inventories, rig counts, futures curves, capital spending reductions, guidance from major producers (OPEC and non-OPEC), and various technical indicators.  Likely Fed rate hikes in late 2015, the potential for rising interest rates that increase the carrying costs of precious metals, and the strong U.S. dollar keep us neutral on precious metals.  Agricultural commodities broadly remain in a downtrend amid strong harvests and abundant supplies.
	Precious Metals	■	■					
	Energy	■	■					
	Agricultural	■	■					

	Sector	T E	C T	V O	⊖	○	⊕	Rationale
Alternatives	Long/Short Equity	■	■	■				May benefit from higher volatility and rising dispersion across equity sectors and securities. Favor more directional as opposed to lower net and market neutral-oriented funds.
	Event Driven	■	■	■				Increased M&A and recent widening of deal spreads raise optimism on event driven and merger arbitrage strategies.
	Managed Futures	■	■	■				Expectation of rising volatility across currency and commodity markets may be beneficial, along with more persistent trends across asset classes.
	Global Macro	■	■	■				Expectation of rising volatility may be beneficial, while the ability to position in advance of market inflection points will also be a useful tool.

### LEGEND

CHARACTERISTICS	ICON	DEFINITION
Catalysts		Potential for favorable macroeconomic and/or idiosyncratic market developments that may benefit the investment strategy.
Trading Environment		Market characteristics present sufficient investment opportunities for this investment style.
Volatility		The current volatility regime provides a constructive environment that an investment of this style can capitalize on.

Alternative strategies may not be suitable for all investors and should be considered as an investment for the risk capital portion of the investor's portfolio. The strategies employed in the management of alternative investments may accelerate the velocity of potential losses.

Commodity-linked investments may be more volatile and less liquid than the underlying instruments or measures, and their value may be affected by the performance of the overall commodities baskets as well as weather, geopolitical events, and regulatory developments.

Event-driven strategies, such as merger arbitrage, long/short equity strategies, and futures trading are highly speculative, include a high degree of risk, and may not be suitable for all investors.

## DEFINITIONS:

EQUITY AND ALTERNATIVES ASSET CLASSES

**Large Growth:** Stocks in the top 70% of the capitalization of the U.S. equity market are defined as large cap. Growth is defined based on fast growth (high growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow) and high valuations (high price ratios and low dividend yields).

**Large Value:** Stocks in the top 70% of the capitalization of the U.S. equity market are defined as large cap. Value is defined based on low valuations (low price ratios and high dividend yields) and slow growth (low growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow).

**Mid Growth:** The U.S. mid cap range for market capitalization typically falls between \$1 billion and \$8 billion and represents 20% of the total capitalization of the U.S. equity market. Growth is defined based on fast growth (high growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow) and high valuations (high price ratios and low dividend yields).

**Mid Value:** The U.S. mid cap range for market capitalization typically falls between \$1 billion and \$8 billion and represents 20% of the total capitalization of the U.S. equity market. Value is defined based on low valuations (low price ratios and high dividend yields) and slow growth (low growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow).

**Small Growth:** Stocks in the bottom 10% of the capitalization of the U.S. equity market are defined as small cap. Growth is defined based on fast growth (high growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow) and high valuations (high price ratios and low dividend yields).

**Small Value:** Stocks in the bottom 10% of the capitalization of the U.S. equity market are defined as small cap. Value is defined based on low valuations (low price ratios and high dividend yields) and slow growth (low growth rates for earnings, sales, book value, and cash flow).

**U.S. Stocks:** Stock of companies domiciled in the U.S.

**Large Foreign:** Large cap foreign stocks have market capitalizations greater than \$5 billion. The majority of the holdings in the large foreign category are in the MSCI EAFE Index.

**Small Foreign:** Small cap foreign stocks typically have market capitalizations of \$250 million to \$1 billion. The majority of the holdings in the small foreign category are in the MSCI Small Cap EAFE Index.

**Emerging Markets:** Stocks of a single developing country or a grouping of developing countries. For the most part, these countries are in Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, the Far East, and Asia.

**REITs:** REITs are companies that develop and manage real estate properties. There are several different types of REITs, including apartment, factory-outlet, health care, hotel, industrial, mortgage, office, and shopping center REITs. This would also include real estate operating companies.

**Commodities – Industrial Metals:** Stocks in companies that mine base metals such as copper, aluminum, and iron ore. Also included are the actual metals themselves. Industrial metals companies are typically based in North America, Australia, or South Africa.

**Commodities – Precious Metals:** Stocks of companies that do gold- silver-, platinum-, and base-metal mining. Precious metals companies are typically based in North America, Australia, or South Africa.

**Commodities – Energy:** Stocks of companies that focus on integrated energy, oil and gas services, oil and gas exploration and equipment. Public energy companies are typically based in North America, Europe, the United Kingdom, and Latin America.

**Event Driven:** A hedge fund strategy in which the stocks of two merging companies are simultaneously bought and sold to create a riskless profit. A merger arbitrageur looks at the risk that the merger deal will not close on time, or at all. Because of this slight uncertainty, the target company's stock will typically sell at a discount to the price that the combined company will have when the merger is closed. This discrepancy is the arbitrageur's profit.

**Long/Short:** An investment strategy generally associated with hedge funds. It involves buying long equities that are expected to increase in value and selling short equities that are expected to decrease in value.

**Managed Futures:** Managed futures use systematic quantitative programs to find and invest in positive and negative trends in the futures markets for financials and commodities. Historically, the benefit of managed futures have been solid long-term returns with very low correlation to equities and fixed income securities.

**The Simple Moving Average** is an arithmetic, moving average that is calculated by adding the closing price of the security for a number of time periods and then dividing this total by the number of time periods. Short-term averages respond quickly to changes in the price of the underlying, while long-term averages are slow to react.

**Up-capture** is a statistical measure of an investment manager's overall performance in up-markets. The up-market capture ratio is used to evaluate how well an investment manager performed relative to an index during periods when that index has risen.

## FIXED INCOME

**Credit Quality:** One of the principal criteria for judging the investment quality of a bond or bond mutual fund. As the term implies, credit quality informs investors of a bond or bond portfolio's credit worthiness, or risk of default.

**Duration:** A measure of the sensitivity of the price (the value of principal) of a fixed-income investment to a change in interest rates. Duration is expressed as a number of years. Rising interest rates mean falling bond prices, while declining interest rates mean rising bond prices. The bigger the duration number, the greater the interest rate risk or reward for bond prices.

**Munis – Short-Term:** Bonds issued by various state and local governments to fund public projects. The income from these bonds is generally free from federal taxes. These bonds generally have maturities of less than three years.

**Munis – Intermediate:** Bonds issued by various state and local governments to fund public projects. The income from these bonds is generally free from federal taxes. These bonds generally have maturities of between 3 and 10 years.

**Munis – Long-Term:** Bonds issued by various state and local governments to fund public projects. The income from these bonds is generally free from federal taxes. These bonds generally have maturities of more than 10 years.

**Munis – High-Yield:** Bonds issued by various state and local governments to fund public projects. The income from these bonds is generally free from federal taxes. These bonds generally offer higher yields than other types of bonds, but they are also more vulnerable to economic and credit risk. These bonds are rated BB+ and below.

**Treasuries:** A marketable, fixed-interest U.S. government debt security. Treasury bonds make interest payments semiannually and the income that holders receive is only taxed at the federal level.

**TIPS (Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities):** A special type of Treasury note or bond that offers protection from inflation. Like other Treasuries, an inflation-indexed security pays interest every six months and pays the principal when the security matures. The difference is that the underlying principal is automatically adjusted for inflation as measured by the consumer price index (CPI).

**Mortgage-Backed Securities:** A type of asset-backed security that is secured by a mortgage or collection of mortgages. These securities must also be grouped in one of the top two ratings as determined by a accredited credit rating agency, and usually pay periodic payments that are similar to coupon payments. Furthermore, the mortgage must have originated from a regulated and authorized financial institution.

**Investment-Grade Corporates:** Securities issued by corporations with a credit rating of BBB or higher. Bond rating firms, such as Standard & Poor's, use different designations consisting of upper- and lower-case letters A and B to identify a bond's investment-grade credit quality rating. AAA and AA (high credit quality) and A and BBB (medium credit quality) are considered investment-grade.

**Preferred Stocks:** A class of ownership in a corporation that has a higher claim on the assets and earnings than common stock. Preferred stock generally has a dividend that must be paid out before dividends to common stockholders and the shares usually do not have voting rights.

**High-Yield Corporates:** Securities issued by corporations with a credit rating of BB+ and below. These bonds generally offer higher yields than investment-grade bonds, but they are also more vulnerable to economic and credit risk.

**Bank Loans:** In exchange for their credit risk, these floating-rate bank loans offer interest payments that typically float above a common short-term benchmark such as the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate, or LIBOR.

**Foreign Bonds – Hedged:** Non-U.S. fixed income securities generally from investment-grade issuers in developed countries, with hedged currency exposure.

**Foreign Bonds – Unhedged:** Non-U.S. fixed income securities normally denominated in major foreign currencies.

**Emerging Markets Debt:** The debt of sovereigns, agencies, local issues, and corporations of emerging markets countries and subject to currency risk.

---

## IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide or be construed as providing specific investment advice or recommendations for any individual. To determine which investments may be appropriate for you, consult your financial advisor prior to investing. All performance referenced is historical and is no guarantee of future results. All indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested into directly.

Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Stock investing involves risk including loss of principal.

Preferred stock investing involves risk, which may include loss of principal.

The Standard & Poor's 500 Index is a capitalization-weighted index of 500 stocks designed to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.

This research material has been prepared by LPL Financial.

To the extent you are receiving investment advice from a separately registered independent investment advisor, please note that LPL Financial is not an affiliate of and makes no representation with respect to such entity.

Not FDIC or NCUA/NCUSIF Insured | No Bank or Credit Union Guarantee | May Lose Value | Not Guaranteed by Any Government Agency | Not a Bank/Credit Union Deposit

RES 5021 0315 | Tracking #1-367306 (Exp. 03/16)