

COURSE SYLLABUS

YEAR COURSE OFFERED: 2018

SEMESTER COURSE OFFERED: Spring

DEPARTMENT: Finance

COURSE NUMBER: TBD

NAME OF COURSE: Research Class on Shareholder Value Creation by Refining and Chemicals Sector

NAME OF INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Ross, Executive Professor

The information contained in this class syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.

Learning Objectives

This suite of courses is designed to provide students with an understanding of how companies in various sectors of the oil and gas and downstream industries create value for shareholders and other stakeholders. The course will introduce students to the major drivers of value for each of the industry segments and will present a framework for analyzing shareholder value creation through the financial lenses of growth, profitability and risk. The financial profiles of the segments will be reviewed in light of the strategic choices available to companies within each segment, the overall leadership models prevalent in the different segments, and the distinctive capabilities required for successful execution.

Major Assignments/Exams

The intent will be to publish a report on the findings for each sector that will provide a deeper, more objective and longer-term comparative analysis of value creation by companies within the study sector than is generally available from financial analysts. The summary reports will focus on the strategic implications of the successes and failures of the studied companies and the strategic lessons that can be drawn from these results. Students will benefit from an enhanced ability to connect what companies do and how they do it with the value they create for shareholders. Each student will be required to research and write a background report on a specific company and participate in teams to analyze drivers of value.

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Students will work in teams to connect performance on key drivers with shareholder value creation (or destruction) over different stages of the cycle.

Required Reading

None

Recommended Reading

Terra Incognita: A Navigation Aid for Energy Leaders by Ross and Sloan. Articles published in Oil & Gas Financial Journal describing how value drivers evolve through the oil price cycle for different energy sectors will be uploaded to Blackboard prior to the first class.

List of discussion/lecture topics

Students will evaluate the relative performance of companies within a specific segment of the industry. Students will be asked to research financial statements using S&P Capital IQ, build out the financial performance data for the company or companies they have been assigned and compare the performance of their target company with its peers. From investor presentations, students will characterize the strategic portfolio and business model choices made by their target company, its leadership and organizational philosophy and its distinctive capabilities.

The spring 2018 class will study the Refining and Chemicals sector covering companies that operate in two different but complementary sectors. The refining sector was previously studied in 2013. Since then there have been numerous strategy changes, including placing midstream assets in Master Limited Partnerships and dramatic expansion of exports to multiple international markets in response to limited growth in U.S. markets. Prolonged low domestic oil and natural gas prices have provided domestic refiners and chemicals companies with a comparative advantage over foreign rivals, but this advantage may be dwindling.

The class will investigate whether Total Shareholder Returns for these companies have been driven most by growth, profitability or risk metrics and will build simple financial models for the companies to compare Enterprise Value and Intrinsic Value (NPV of future cash flows) and discuss anomalies. Students will learn:

- The history, key strategic moves and financial performance of one refining and chemicals company, using investor presentations and financial reports;
- how to use S&P Capital IQ to calculate company performance on value drivers;
- how to use basic statistical tools to assess the correlation between company performance on the drivers and shareholder value creation or destruction;
- insights into a sector that is a major employer in the Houston region.

The class meets one evening per week with work requirements between meetings.

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Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the “Let's Talk” program, which is a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html