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5/24/2025

Individual Assignment: Portfolio Optimization Using Python

BBFE 31382- Computing for Finance

Several thin, curved, light blue lines originate from the bottom left and sweep upwards and to the right, creating a decorative flourish.

FE/2021/047 - Gamalath K.H.



University of Kelaniya

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

Department of Finance

BBFE 31382- Computing for Finance

**Individual Assignment: Portfolio
Optimization Using Python**



**UNIVERSITY OF
KELANIYA** | Faculty of Commerce
& Management Studies

Department of Finance

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Assignment Topic: Individual Assignment: Portfolio Optimization
Using Python

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project implements Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT) to construct an optimized investment portfolio using Python, focusing on risk-adjusted return maximization through Sharpe Ratio analysis. Historical adjusted closing prices for five diversified S&P 500 constituents—JPM, JNJ, DIS, BA, and XOM—were sourced via the yfinance API over a 5-year period. Preprocessing included daily return computation, outlier handling, and exploratory data analysis to establish statistical foundations. Annualized expected returns and the covariance matrix were derived to evaluate inter-asset dependencies and risk dynamics. A single simulated portfolio established baseline metrics for portfolio return and volatility, serving as a precursor to broader stochastic analysis.

A Monte Carlo simulation generated 10,000 random portfolios to construct the efficient frontier, facilitating the identification of both the maximum Sharpe Ratio and minimum volatility portfolios. Subsequently, constrained optimization using Sequential Least Squares Programming (SLSQP) via `scipy.optimize` was used to refine asset weights under real-world constraints (no short-selling, full capital allocation). The optimized Sharpe-maximizing portfolio delivered an expected annual return of 26.53% with a volatility of 24.72%, while the minimum variance portfolio achieved a lower return of 8.93% at 15.10% volatility. These results demonstrate the robustness of quantitative techniques in portfolio construction and reinforce the trade-off between return-seeking strategies and volatility minimization for different investor risk profiles.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	PORTFOLIO CONSTRUCTION OVERVIEW	1
3	KEY INSIGHTS FROM MONTE CARLO SIMULATION	1
4	OPTIMIZED PORTFOLIO COMPARISON AND EXPLAIN THE CHARACTERISTICS	2
4.1.1	Summary of Results:	2
4.1.2	Portfolio Weights:	2
5	SUITABILITY FOR INVESTOR TYPES	3
6	CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED	3
7	KEY LEARNINGS	4
8	CONCLUSION	4
9	REFERENCES	5
10	APPENDIX	a
10.1	Stock Tickers Used.....	a
10.2	Key Python Libraries Used	a
10.3	Assumptions	a
10.4	Portfolio Optimization Constraints	a
10.5	Efficient Frontier Plot Highlights	b
10.6	Codes	b
10.6.1	Task 01	b
10.6.2	Task 02	c
10.6.3	Task 03	e
10.6.4	Task 04	h
10.7	Outputs (Screenshots)	k
10.7.1	Task 01	k
10.7.2	Task 02	m
10.7.3	Task 03	m
10.7.4	Task 04	n

1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this project was to apply Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT) using Python [1] to construct an optimal investment portfolio. By analyzing historical data, calculating risk-return metrics, and leveraging optimization techniques, we aimed to identify the best portfolio allocations for different investor profiles.

2 PORTFOLIO CONSTRUCTION OVERVIEW

Five diverse stocks were selected from the S&P 500 index: **JPM**, **JNJ**, **DIS**, **BA**, and **XOM**, representing finance, healthcare, entertainment, aerospace(industrials), and energy sectors respectively. Historical adjusted close prices from May 2020 to May 2025 were collected using the yfinance library, and daily returns were calculated using the .pct_change() [2] method.

3 KEY INSIGHTS FROM MONTE CARLO SIMULATION

A Monte Carlo simulation [3] of 10,000 portfolios was performed, varying the asset weights randomly under the constraint that weights sum to 1. For each portfolio, expected return, volatility, and Sharpe ratio (with a 2% risk-free rate) were calculated. The efficient frontier was visualized, clearly highlighting the trade-off between risk and return.

4 OPTIMIZED PORTFOLIO COMPARISON AND EXPLAIN THE CHARACTERISTICS

Using scipy.optimize [4], two optimized portfolios were derived based on Modern Portfolio Theory principles:

- **Maximum Sharpe Ratio Portfolio:** Focused on maximizing risk-adjusted return.
- **Minimum Variance Portfolio:** Aimed to minimize total portfolio risk.

4.1.1 Summary of Results:

Portfolio	Expected Return	Volatility (Risk)	Sharpe Ratio
Max Sharpe Ratio	26.53%	24.72%	0.99
Minimum Variance	8.93%	15.10%	0.46

4.1.2 Portfolio Weights:

Stock	Max Sharpe Ratio	Min Variance
JPM	0.00%	0.00%
JNJ	0.00%	10.00%
DIS	0.00%	71.43%
BA	56.95%	9.52%
XOM	43.05%	9.05%

The **Maximum Sharpe Ratio Portfolio** is characterized by its objective to achieve the highest possible risk-adjusted return. It does this by allocating the majority of its capital to highperforming but volatile assets like BA (Boeing) and XOM (ExxonMobil). This results in a higher expected return (26.53%) with higher volatility (24.72%), making it a more aggressive strategy.

The **Minimum Variance Portfolio** seeks to minimize overall portfolio risk regardless of return. It allocates the largest portion of its weight to DIS (Disney), a relatively stable stock, resulting in a much lower volatility (15.10%) and moderate return (8.93%). This strategy reflects a conservative investment approach, prioritizing stability over growth.

5 SUITABILITY FOR INVESTOR TYPES

Each portfolio suits a different investor profile:

- **Max Sharpe Ratio Portfolio** ◦ Suitable for **aggressive investors** seeking **maximum return** even at the cost of higher volatility. ◦ These investors are willing to take on more risk for potentially higher reward, and are likely to have a **longer investment horizon**.
- **Minimum Variance Portfolio** ◦ Ideal for **conservative investors** who prioritize **capital preservation** and **lower volatility**.
 - This is a good fit for **risk-averse individuals** or those approaching retirement who value stability and predictable performance.

6 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

- **Missing or inconsistent data**

Used `.dropna()` to clean the dataset and ensure accurate return calculations.

- **Understanding annualization formulas**

Reviewed lecture slides and used $\text{mean} * 252$ and $\text{cov} * 252$ for annual returns and risk.

- **Sharpe ratio optimization logic was confusing**

Broke it into small functions and referred to documentation for `scipy.optimize`.

- **Efficient Frontier plot looked too crowded**

Added color gradients and alpha transparency to improve visualization clarity.

- **Constraint setup in optimization was tricky**

Used a lambda function with `'type': 'eq' [5]` to ensure weights sum to 1.

7 KEY LEARNINGS

- Learned how to collect and clean real-world financial data using yfinance.
- Understood how to calculate and interpret returns, volatility, and the Sharpe ratio.
- Discovered how optimization can improve investment decisions significantly.
- Gained practical experience in using scipy.optimize for financial problems.
- Realized the importance of diversification and risk management in portfolios.

8 CONCLUSION

Through systematic data analysis, simulation, and optimization, an efficient portfolio was constructed. The practical exposure to tools like yfinance, numpy, pandas, matplotlib [6], and scipy.optimize has enhanced my understanding of portfolio theory and financial computation, preparing me for real-world financial modeling.

9 REFERENCES

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- [2] "Python | Pandas dataframe.pct_change()," GeeksforGeeks, Sanchhaya Education Private Limited, [Online]. Available: https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/python-pandas-dataframepct_change/. [Accessed 17 5 2025].
- [3] "What is Monte Carlo Simulation?," GeeksforGeeks, Sanchhaya Education Private Limited, [Online]. Available: <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/what-is-monte-carlosimulation/>. [Accessed 14 5 2025].
- [4] "Optimization and root finding," The SciPy community, [Online]. Available: <https://docs.scipy.org/doc/scipy/reference/optimize.html>. [Accessed 17 5 2025].
- [5] "How to Use Python Lambda Functions," DevCademy Media Inc. DBA Real Python, [Online]. Available: <https://realpython.com/python-lambda/>. [Accessed 17 5 2025].
- [6] "Matplotlib Tutorial," W3Schools, [Online]. Available: https://www.w3schools.com/python/matplotlib_intro.asp. [Accessed 12 5 2025].

10 APPENDIX

10.1 Stock Tickers Used

- **JPM** – JPMorgan Chase & Co. (Finance)
- **JNJ** – Johnson & Johnson (Healthcare)
- **DIS** – Walt Disney Company (Entertainment)
- **BA** – Boeing Company (Industrials)
- **XOM** – ExxonMobil Corporation (Energy)

10.2 Key Python Libraries Used

- **yfinance** – For downloading historical stock data.
- **pandas** – For data manipulation and analysis.
- **numpy** – For numerical calculations and portfolio metrics.
- **matplotlib.pyplot** – For plotting visualizations.
- **scipy.optimize** – For portfolio optimization using constraints.

10.3 Assumptions

- **Trading Days Per Year:** 252
- **Risk-Free Rate:** 2% (0.02)
- **Investment Horizon:** 5 years (2020-05-01 to 2025-04-30)
- **Short Selling:** Not allowed (weights constrained to $[0, 1]$)

10.4 Portfolio Optimization Constraints

- All weights sum to **1**: $\text{sum}(\text{weights}) == 1$
- No short-selling: $\text{weights} \geq 0$ and $\text{weights} \leq 1$

10.5 Efficient Frontier Plot Highlights

- **Red Dot:** Portfolio with **maximum Sharpe ratio**
- **Blue Dot:** Portfolio with **minimum volatility**
- **Scatter Points:** 10,000 simulated portfolios via Monte Carlo

10.6 Codes

10.6.1 Task 01

```
# -----#  
# Task 1: Data Collection & Preprocessing  
# -----#  
  
# Import necessary  
libraries import yfinance as  
yf import pandas as pd  
import numpy as np  
  
# Step 1: Select 5 diverse stocks from major stock market index  
  
# JPMorgan Chase (JPM)- Financial Sector  
# Johnson & Johnson (JNJ)- Healthcare Sector  
# The Walt Disney Company (DIS)- Entertainment Sector  
# Boeing (BA)- Aerospace Sector  
# Exxon Mobil (XOM)- Energy Sector  
  
tickers = ['JPM', 'JNJ', 'DIS', 'BA', 'XOM']  
  
# Step 2: Download historical stock data (5 years) with auto_adjust=True  
try:  
    data = yf.download(tickers, start="2020-05-01", end="2025-05-01", auto_adjust=True)  
except Exception as e:
```

```

    print("Error fetching data:", e)
raise

# Step 3:Directly extract 'Close' prices (already adjusted due to auto_adjust=True)
adj_close = data['Close']

# Step 4: Calculate Daily Returns and drop the first NaN
returns = adj_close.pct_change().dropna()

# Step 5: Display Outputs Nicely print("\n---
Adjusted Close Prices (Last 5 Rows) ---")
display(adj_close.tail())

print("\n--- Daily Returns (Last 5 Rows) ---")
display(returns.tail())

# Step 6: Summary Info print(f"\nAdjusted Close Data
Shape: {adj_close.shape}") print(f>Returns Data Shape:
{returns.shape}") print("\nData Info:")
display(adj_close.info())

print("\nBasic Statistics for Adjusted Close Prices:")
display(adj_close.describe())

```

10.6.2 Task 02

```

# -----#
# Task 2: Expected Returns & Risk Calculation
# -----#

import numpy as np

```

```

# Step 1: Calculate Annualized Mean Returns
# 252 trading days per year assumed
mean_returns = returns.mean() * 252

# Step 2: Calculate Annualized Covariance Matrix of returns
cov_matrix = returns.cov() * 252

# Step 3: Simulate a Basic Portfolio with Random Weights (must sum to
1) weights = np.random.random(len(tickers)) weights /= np.sum(weights)

# Step 4: Calculate Expected Portfolio Return & Volatility port_return =
np.dot(weights, mean_returns) port_volatility =
np.sqrt(np.dot(weights.T, np.dot(cov_matrix, weights)))

# Step 5: Display Results in Clean Tables print(" Annualized Mean Returns (%):")
display(mean_returns.to_frame(name='Annualized Mean
Return').style.format("{:.2%}"))

print(" Annualized Covariance Matrix:")
display(cov_matrix.style.format("{:.4f}"))

print(f" Simulated Portfolio Return: {port_return:.2%}")
print(f" Simulated Portfolio Volatility: {port_volatility:.2%}")

print("\n Portfolio Weights Used:") for
ticker, weight in zip(tickers, weights):
    print(f" {ticker}: {weight:.2%}")

```


10.6.3 Task 03

```
# -----#
```

```
# Task 3: Monte Carlo Simulation for Efficient Frontier
```

```
# -----#
```

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
```

```
# Use previously defined variables from Task 2:
```

```
# - mean_returns
```

```
# - cov_matrix
```

```
# - tickers
```

```
# Step 1: Parameters num_portfolios = 10000
```

```
risk_free_rate = 0.02 # 2% risk-free rate as per
assignment
```

```
# Step 2: Arrays to store simulation results results = np.zeros((3,
num_portfolios)) # Rows: Return, Volatility, Sharpe Ratio weights_record = []
```

```
# Step 3: Monte Carlo Simulation Loop
```

```
for i in range(num_portfolios):
```

```
    # Step 3.1: Generate random weights that sum to 1
```

```
    weights = np.random.random(len(tickers))
```

```
    weights /= np.sum(weights)
```

```
    weights_record.append(weights)
```

```
    # Step 3.2: Calculate expected return and volatility for the portfolio
    port_return = np.dot(weights, mean_returns)
    port_volatility = np.sqrt(np.dot(weights.T, np.dot(cov_matrix,
weights)))
```

```
# Step 3.3: Calculate Sharpe Ratio    sharpe_ratio =  
(port_return - risk_free_rate) / port_volatility
```

```
# Step 3.4: Store results  
results[0, i] = port_return  
results[1, i] = port_volatility  
results[2, i] = sharpe_ratio
```

```
# Step 4: Plotting the Efficient Frontier plt.figure(figsize=(14, 8)) scatter =  
plt.scatter(results[1, :], results[0, :], c=results[2, :], cmap='viridis', s=10, alpha=0.5)  
plt.colorbar(scatter, label='Sharpe Ratio') plt.title('Monte Carlo Simulation - Efficient  
Frontier (10,000 Portfolios)') plt.xlabel('Portfolio Volatility (Risk)') plt.ylabel('Expected  
Portfolio Return') plt.grid(True)
```

```
# Step 5: Highlight Max Sharpe Ratio Portfolio max_sharpe_idx = np.argmax(results[2])  
plt.scatter(results[1, max_sharpe_idx], results[0, max_sharpe_idx], c='red',  
            s=100,  
            edgecolors='black', label='Max Sharpe Ratio')
```

```
# Step 6: Highlight Min Volatility Portfolio min_vol_idx = np.argmin(results[1])  
plt.scatter(results[1, min_vol_idx], results[0, min_vol_idx], c='blue', s=100,  
            edgecolors='black', label='Min Volatility')
```

```
# Step 6.5: Add Efficient Frontier Line  
sorted_indices = np.argsort(results[1])  
sorted_vol = results[1][sorted_indices]  
sorted_ret = results[0][sorted_indices]
```

```

efficient_vol = []
efficient_ret = []
max_ret_so_far = -np.inf

for vol, ret in zip(sorted_vol, sorted_ret):
    if ret > max_ret_so_far:
        efficient_vol.append(vol)
        efficient_ret.append(ret)
        max_ret_so_far = ret

plt.plot(efficient_vol, efficient_ret, 'r--', linewidth=2.5, label='Efficient Frontier')

plt.legend()
plt.show()

# Step 7: display portfolio details
print(f"\nMax Sharpe Ratio Portfolio Metrics:")
print(f"Return: {results[0, max_sharpe_idx]:.2%}")
print(f"Volatility: {results[1, max_sharpe_idx]:.2%}")
print(f"Sharpe Ratio: {results[2, max_sharpe_idx]:.2f}")
print("Weights:")
for ticker, weight in zip(tickers, weights_record[max_sharpe_idx]):
    print(f" {ticker}: {weight:.2%}")

print(f"\nMin Volatility Portfolio Metrics:")
print(f"Return: {results[0, min_vol_idx]:.2%}")
print(f"Volatility: {results[1, min_vol_idx]:.2%}")
print(f"Sharpe Ratio: {results[2, min_vol_idx]:.2f}")
print("Weights:")
for ticker, weight in zip(tickers, weights_record[min_vol_idx]):
    print(f" {ticker}: {weight:.2%}")

```

10.6.4 Task 04

```
# -----#
# Task 4: Portfolio Optimization
# -----#

from scipy.optimize import
minimize import numpy as np
import pandas as pd import
matplotlib.pyplot as plt

# Already defined from Task 1 ,2 & 3
# tickers, mean_returns, cov_matrix, results

risk_free_rate = 0.02 # 2% risk-free rate

# Step 1: Function to Calculate Portfolio Performance def
portfolio_metrics(weights, mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate):
    ret = np.dot(weights, mean_returns)
    vol = np.sqrt(np.dot(weights.T, np.dot(cov_matrix,
weights))))    sharpe = (ret - risk_free_rate) / vol    return ret,
vol, sharpe

# Step 2: Objective Function to Maximize Sharpe Ratio (minimize negative Sharpe)
def neg_sharpe_ratio(weights, mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate):
    return -portfolio_metrics(weights, mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate)[2]

# Step 3: Objective Function for Minimum Variance Portfolio
def portfolio_volatility(weights, mean_returns, cov_matrix):
    return portfolio_metrics(weights, mean_returns, cov_matrix, 0)[1]
```

```

# Step 4: Constraints & Bounds constraints = {'type': 'eq', 'fun': lambda x:
np.sum(x) - 1} # Weights must sum to 1 bounds = tuple((0, 1) for _ in tickers) #
No short selling

# Step 5: Initial Guess (Equal allocation)
init_guess = len(tickers) * [1. / len(tickers)]

# Step 6: Optimization for Maximum Sharpe Ratio Portfolio opt_sharpe
= minimize(neg_sharpe_ratio, init_guess,
args=(mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate),
method='SLSQP', bounds=bounds, constraints=constraints)

# Step 7: Optimization for Minimum Variance Portfolio opt_min_var =
minimize(portfolio_volatility, init_guess,
args=(mean_returns, cov_matrix), method='SLSQP',
bounds=bounds, constraints=constraints)

# Step 8: Get Optimized Metrics
max_sharpe_return, max_sharpe_volatility, max_sharpe_ratio =
portfolio_metrics(opt_sharpe.x, mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate)
min_var_return, min_var_volatility, min_var_sharpe = portfolio_metrics(opt_min_var.x,
mean_returns, cov_matrix, risk_free_rate)

# Step 9: Display Optimized Portfolios
comparison_df = pd.DataFrame({
    'Stock': tickers,
    'Max Sharpe Ratio Weights': opt_sharpe.x,
    'Min Variance Weights': opt_min_var.x
})

portfolio_summary = pd.DataFrame({
    'Portfolio': ['Max Sharpe Ratio', 'Min Variance'],

```

```

    'Expected Return': [max_sharpe_return, min_var_return],
    'Volatility': [max_sharpe_volatility, min_var_volatility],
    'Sharpe Ratio': [max_sharpe_ratio, min_var_sharpe]
})

```

Step 10: Display Optimized Portfolios

```

Table print("\nOptimized Portfolio
Allocations:")
display(comparison_df.style.format({    'Max
Sharpe Ratio Weights': "{:.2%}",
    'Min Variance Weights': "{:.2%}"
}))

```

Step 11: Display Portfolio Performance Summary Table

```

print("\nPortfolio Performance Summary:")
display(portfolio_summary.style.format({
    'Expected Return': "{:.2%}",
    'Volatility': "{:.2%}",
    'Sharpe Ratio': "{:.2f}"
}))

```

Step 12: Plot Efficient Frontier and mark optimized points plt.figure(figsize=(12,

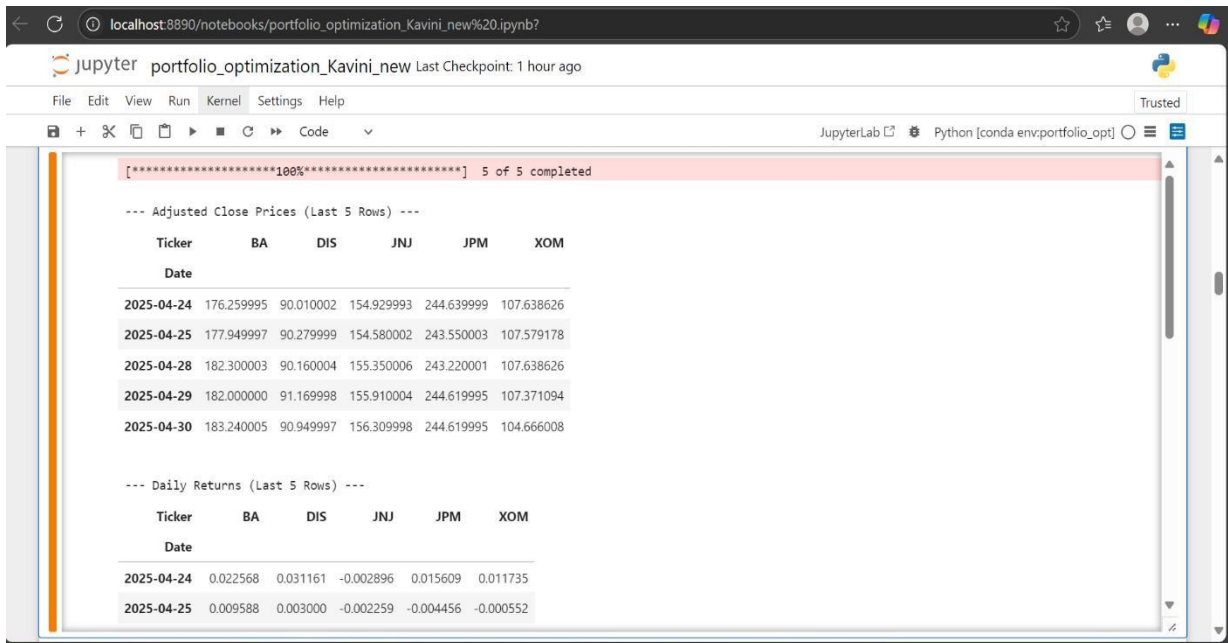
```

8)) plt.scatter(results[1, :], results[0, :], c=results[2, :], cmap='viridis', s=10,
alpha=0.5) plt.colorbar(label='Sharpe Ratio')
plt.scatter(max_sharpe_volatility, max_sharpe_return, c='red', s=100, edgecolors='black',
label='Max Sharpe Ratio')
plt.scatter(min_var_volatility, min_var_return, c='blue', s=100, edgecolors='black', label='Min
Variance') plt.xlabel('Volatility (Risk)') plt.ylabel('Expected Return') plt.title('Optimized
Portfolios on Efficient Frontier') plt.legend() plt.grid(True) plt.show()

```

10.7 Outputs (Screenshots)

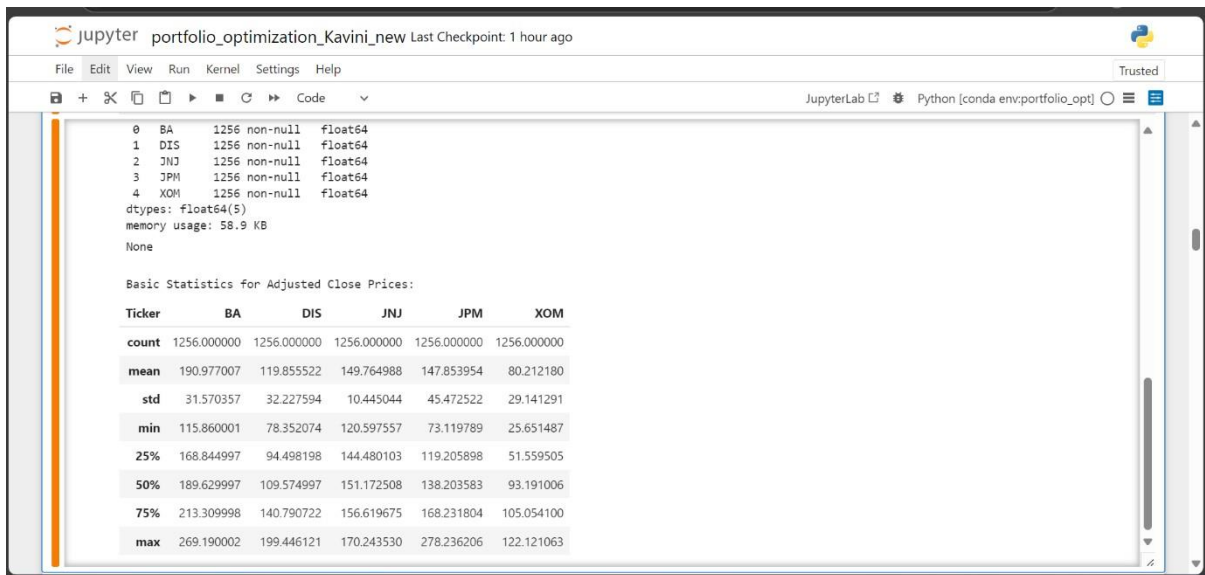
10.7.1 Task 01



```
[*****100%*****] 5 of 5 completed

--- Adjusted Close Prices (Last 5 Rows) ---
      Ticker    BA      DIS      JNJ      JPM      XOM
      Date
2025-04-24  176.259995  90.010002  154.929993  244.639999  107.638626
2025-04-25  177.949997  90.279999  154.580002  243.550003  107.579178
2025-04-28  182.300003  90.160004  155.350006  243.220001  107.638626
2025-04-29  182.000000  91.169998  155.910004  244.619995  107.371094
2025-04-30  183.240005  90.949997  156.309998  244.619995  104.666008

--- Daily Returns (Last 5 Rows) ---
      Ticker    BA      DIS      JNJ      JPM      XOM
      Date
2025-04-24   0.022568   0.031161  -0.002896   0.015609   0.011735
2025-04-25   0.009588   0.003000  -0.002259  -0.004456  -0.000552
```



```
0 BA      1256 non-null float64
1 DIS     1256 non-null float64
2 JNJ     1256 non-null float64
3 JPM     1256 non-null float64
4 XOM     1256 non-null float64
dtypes: float64(5)
memory usage: 58.9 KB
None

Basic Statistics for Adjusted Close Prices:
      Ticker    BA      DIS      JNJ      JPM      XOM
count  1256.000000  1256.000000  1256.000000  1256.000000  1256.000000
mean   190.977007  119.855522  149.764988  147.853954  80.212180
std     31.570357   32.227594   10.445044   45.472522   29.141291
min     115.860001   78.352074   120.597557   73.119789   25.651487
25%     168.844997   94.498198   144.480103   119.205898   51.559505
50%     189.629997  109.574997   151.172508   138.203583   93.191006
75%     213.309998  140.790722   156.619675   168.231804  105.054100
max     269.190002  199.446121  170.243530  278.236206  122.121063
```

JupyterLab interface showing the output of a Jupyter Notebook. The notebook is titled "portfolio_optimization_Kavini_new" and the last checkpoint was 1 hour ago. The output displays the daily returns for five stocks (BA, DIS, JNJ, JPM, XOM) over a period of 1256 entries, from 2020-05-01 to 2025-04-30.

--- Daily Returns (Last 5 Rows) ---

Ticker	BA	DIS	JNJ	JPM	XOM
2025-04-24	0.022568	0.031161	-0.002896	0.015609	0.011735
2025-04-25	0.009588	0.003000	-0.002259	-0.004456	-0.000552
2025-04-28	0.024445	-0.001329	0.004981	-0.001355	0.000553
2025-04-29	-0.001646	0.011202	0.003605	0.005756	-0.002485
2025-04-30	0.006813	-0.002413	0.002566	0.000000	-0.025194

Adjusted Close Data Shape: (1256, 5)
Returns Data Shape: (1255, 5)

Data Info:
<class 'pandas.core.frame.DataFrame'>
DatetimeIndex: 1256 entries, 2020-05-01 to 2025-04-30
Data columns (total 5 columns):
Column Non-Null Count Dtype

0 BA 1256 non-null float64
1 DIS 1256 non-null float64
2 JNJ 1256 non-null float64

10.7.2 Task 02

JupyterLab interface showing the output of a Jupyter Notebook. The notebook is titled "portfolio_optimization_Kavini_new" and the last checkpoint was 1 hour ago. The output displays the annualized mean returns and covariance matrix for five stocks (BA, DIS, JNJ, JPM, XOM).

Annualized Mean Returns (%):

Ticker	Annualized Mean Return
BA	15.43%
DIS	2.12%
JNJ	5.28%
JPM	25.84%
XOM	27.45%

Annualized Covariance Matrix:

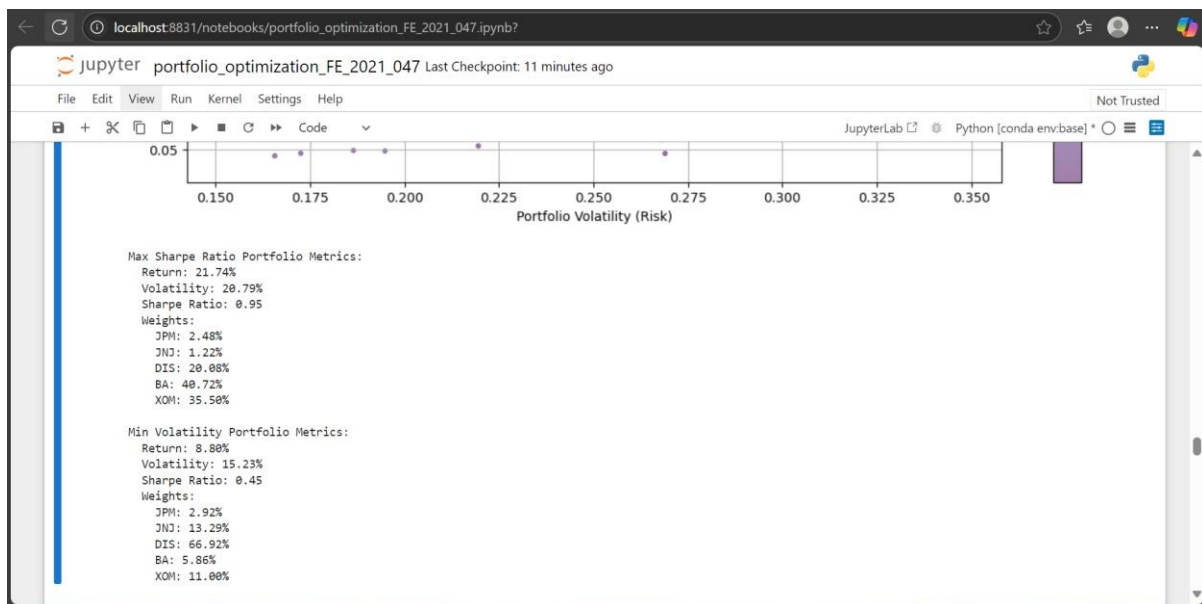
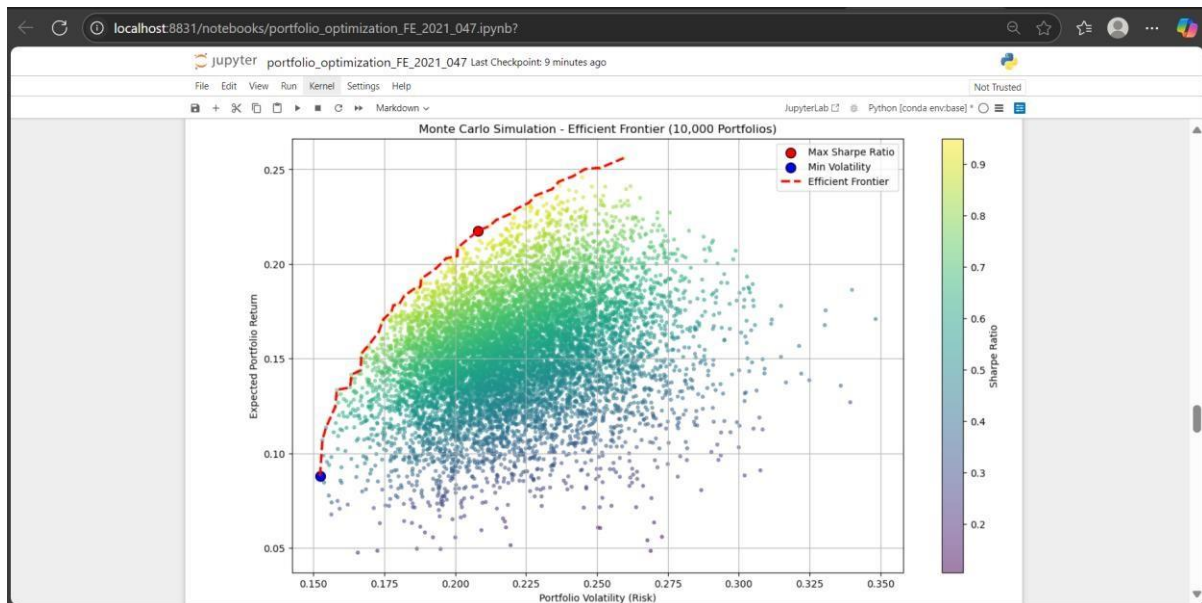
Ticker	BA	DIS	JNJ	JPM	XOM
BA	0.1823	0.0618	0.0095	0.0599	0.0533
DIS	0.0618	0.0975	0.0084	0.0420	0.0348
JNJ	0.0095	0.0084	0.0280	0.0111	0.0097
JPM	0.0599	0.0420	0.0111	0.0740	0.0401
XOM	0.0533	0.0348	0.0097	0.0401	0.0942

Simulated Portfolio Return: 9.88%
Simulated Portfolio Volatility: 16.88%

Portfolio Weights Used:

Ticker	Weight
JPM	16.68%
JNJ	14.71%
DIS	56.38%
BA	8.46%
XOM	3.76%

10.7.3 Task 03



10.7.4 Task 04

