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Baltimore, MD

Contact

Simon Business School Information

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EDUCATION

University of Rochester

Rochester, NY Ph.D. in Finance 2015–2021 (expected)

Johns Hopkins University

M.S., Applied Mathematics and Statistics 2013 - 2015

Central University of Finance and Economics

Beijing 2009-2013 B.S., Mathematics and Economics

Research Interests Empirical asset pricing, institutional investors (e.g., mutual funds and hedge funds), short selling and security lending, real effects of financial markets

Working Papers

Predicting Active Fund Performance with Aggregate Idiosyncratic Volatility Job Market Paper

Abstract: This paper shows that aggregate idiosyncratic volatility (AIV) is a key determinant of active funds' ability to generate superior performance. Using the sample of active US equity mutual funds from 1984 through 2019, I find that AIV positively predicts benchmark-adjusted fund returns, and its predictive power is stronger for funds that deviate more from passive benchmarks. The predictability of AIV is also significant for active mutual funds in 47 equity markets and equity hedge funds in the US. I then explore two non-mutually exclusive explanations for these findings: 1) active funds require a reward for accommodating exogenous asset demands and AIV drives their risk-bearing capacity (i.e., the risk view); and 2) they profit from private signals about firms' fundamentals and AIV proxies for aggregate flows of fundamental news (i.e., the information view). Additional analyses provide evidence consistent with the risk view. First, on average, active mutual funds scale back their active positions when AIV rises. Second, funds that do not reduce active positions earn larger abnormal returns following high AIV levels. Third, a substantial AIV shock leads to a temporary impact on stock prices. The evidence during the COVID-19 crisis also corroborates the risk view.

Does Media Investor Identity Affect Its Coverage? The Role of Common Ownership (with Zhao Jin and John Yang)

Abstract: We study whether institutional investors affect media coverage of their portfolio firms through their ownership in media firms. We hypothesize that the blockholders of a publicly traded media outlet affect this media outlet's coverage of their portfolio firms in their interests. Consistent with this hypothesis, we find that a news outlet issues more positive articles covering the firms in its blockholders' portfolios. In addition, the results are stronger when the covered firms have higher weights in the blockholders' portfolios. Our results are robust when we fully control for firm fundamentals by exploiting within firm-quarter variation in media ownership and coverage, providing evidence that the effect is causal. Overall, our findings suggest that institutional investors influence media coverage through their media ownership.

Working In Progress

Lending Fees and Pricing Under Asymmetric Information (with Ron Kaniel and Christian Opp)

- We develop and calibrate a model of asymmetric information to rationalize (1) why lending fees haven't come down despite the growing fraction of institutional investors that lend out shares and (2) why we still see an OTC structure with custodial banks.
- Preparing the first draft

Agglomeration Investing as Mutual Fund Manager Skill (with Zhao Jin)

- We show that some skilled mutual fund managers generate large abnormal returns by exploiting the benefits of industrial agglomeration of their holdings firms.
- Finished the main results and conducting tests on economic mechanisms

What do managers learn from stock prices? Evidence from cross-border mergers and acquisitions (with John Yang)

- We show that an acquirer's manager learns from the acquirer's stock prices about the target's country-specific information, which is incorporated by the acquirer's foreign institutional investors who have informational advantages of the target country.
- Finished the main results and conducting tests on economic mechanisms

Awards	Doctoral Fellowship, University of Rochester	2015 – 2021
	National Scholarship in China (Granted to top 1%)	2010

WORKSHOPS Finance Theory Group Summer School 2017

Office of Financial Research (OFR) PhD Symposium 2020

TEACHING Instructor:

EXPERIENCE • Laboratory for Quantitative Finance with Python 2018, 2019 Instructor score: 4.09/5 in 2018, 4.57/5 in 2019

Teaching Assistant:

 Investment 	2016
• Fixed Income	2017
 Investment Management and Trading Strategies 	2017, 2018, 2019
o Options and Futures Market	2019

Research	For Ron Kaniel and Christian Opp	2020
Assistance	For Robert Novy-Marx	2019-2020

SKILLS Python, MATLAB, SAS, Stata

REFERENCES Ron Kaniel (Co-chair)

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Alan Moreira (Co-chair)

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Robert Novy-Marx

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