FNCE 529Q: Fixed Income

Spring 2018, Term 1

This take-home final exam project must be the original work of the student whose name appears on the submission. No assistance other than that detailed in the instructions and code written in previous group assignments may be given, received, or used during the take-home exam period. Neither the instructor nor the TA will provide help beyond the instructions. You may not communicate with any other individual, including but not limited to your group members, regarding the exam project until after the due-date and time.

Due 3/3/2018 (midnight)

Congratulations, today is your first day on the new job, working in the M&A group at prestigious ex-investment bank Gold-in-Sacks. Your boss informs you that, while deal flow is slow, he would like you to help clean up the group's balance sheet. Over the years, the group opportunistically bought fixed income securities from the companies it advised in M&A deals.

One of the more exotic securities on the books is FNMA MBS pool #AS8610. Your boss says: "We know nothing about this security but with interest rates on the rise let's try to value it and see if we can sell it for a fair price."

Asking your colleagues in capital markets, who undoubtedly know more about MBSs, is out of the question for internal reputation reasons. After all, your boss probably should not have bought things he knew nothing about in the first place. You will have to start from scratch.

1. Your first task should be to describe the security. What type of security is it? Who issued it and when? What is the underlying collateral? When was it originated? Who are the borrowers? The more detail you provide in your proposal, the more credible it is.

Your main information source is Bloomberg. Here is what you found by typing "FN AS8610 <Mtge> <Go>":



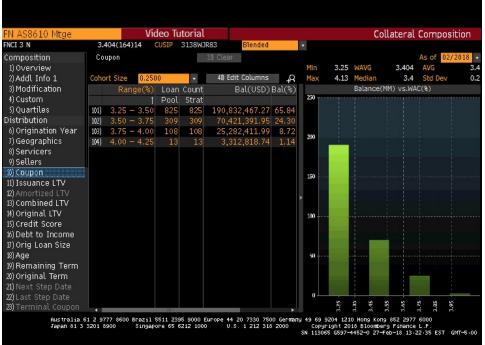


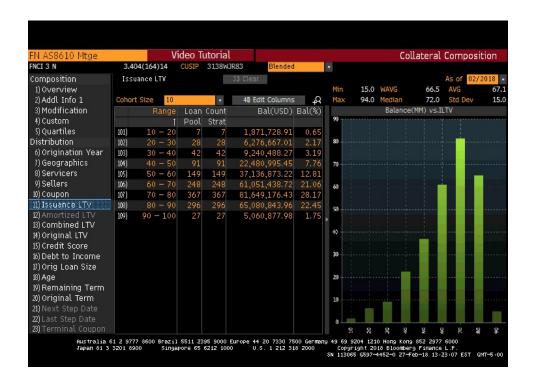


[Note, the difference between the coupon and net coupon is servicing.]





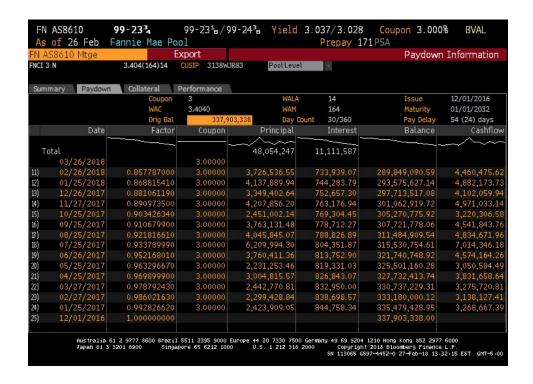




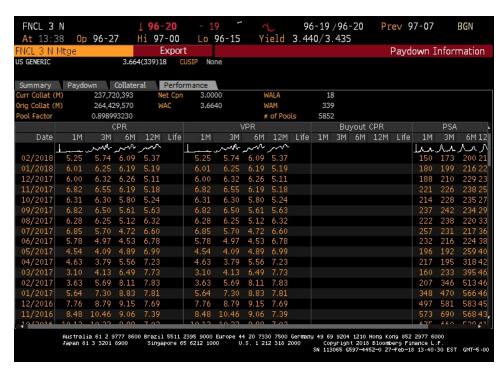
2. Next describe the security's cashflows to date. For this, you collect the following data:







To make sure there is nothing unique about this pool of loans, you also collect data on the "generic" FNMA 3% pool which represents the universe of all 5,852 pools with a 3% coupon created by FNMA over the years. Compare your pool to its generic counterpart.

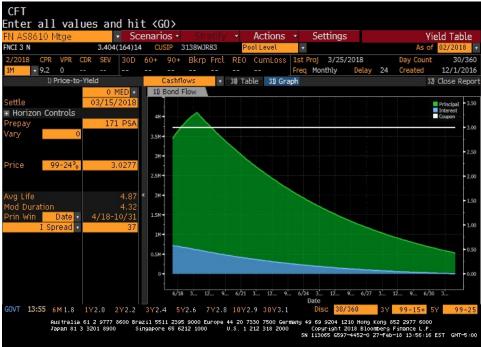




All of this data is also provided electronically in "Generic FNMA 3 Mtge.xlsx".

3. Comfortable that you understand the security, it is time to price it. You begin with a simple PSA model. Calibrate the model to the historical prepayments of your pool (given the lumpy nature of prepayment, it probably makes sense to calibrate to a moving average of prepayments over the last three or six months, rather than just the last month). Use the model to project the cashflows of your security (at this stage, simplify the problem by assuming that all loans in the pool are identical). Create projections like these (except yours will be calibrated properly and go out to maturity of the loans):

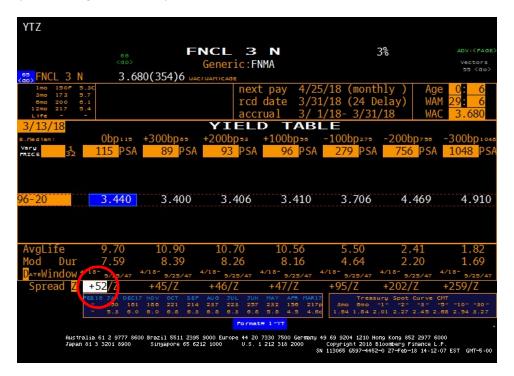




Plot your projected cashflows to make sure they look like PSA projections should.

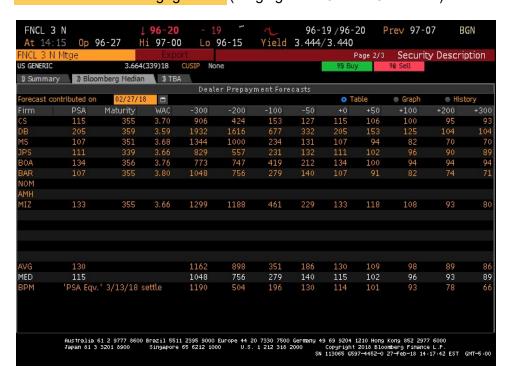
The final step is to discount. For this, you need a spot rate curve and an assumption for the spread over spot rates. You know how to obtain the spot rate curve from coupon-bearing Treasuries, but to save time you may use key rates from zero-coupon STRIPs provided in "US Sovereign Strips.xlsx".

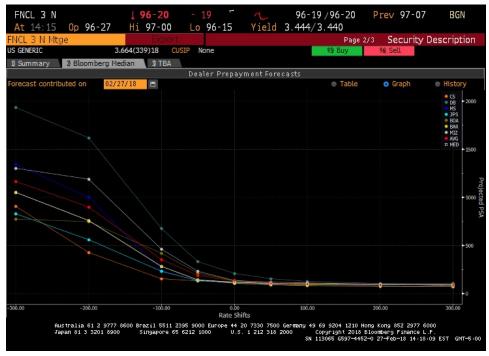
For a reasonable spread over Treasuries, you look at Bloomberg again. You see that the current market for 3% FNMA mortgage pools like yours is about 52bp over spot rates (Bloomberg's z-spread).



Finally, once you valued the security, value it again with a small parallel shift of the spot discount rate curve. What is the DV01 and modified duration of the security? Be explicit about your calculations.

4. The calculations above assume that as interest rates shift by a small amount prepayment behavior does not change. You now need to relax that assumption. Specifically, repeat your analysis for different levels of prepayment. What are reasonable levels? One place to look are Wallstreet's (i.e., different banks) forecasts for different shifts in mortgage rates (ranging from -3% to +3% below):





Using the Bloomberg median changes in PSA from +/- 50bp changes in mortgage rates, re-evaluate the DV01 and modified duration of the security. Note that the forecasts Bloomberg provides are for the generic pool (again, all FNMA 3% coupon pools) which have had somewhat different prepayment behavior relative to the specific 2016 vintage pool you are evaluating. Therefore, you need to make some assumptions about how the PSA forecasts above can be used for your pool.

Finally, comment on the differences in the risk characteristics of the pool when you take into account the change in prepayment due to interest rate changes. How good do you expect this local approximation to perform if all of the sudden rates change by +/-2%?