Class Presentation Project Description

The presentation will be held at the end of the semester, spreading over three sessions. Each group shall contain 5-8 students. You form your own group and register your preferred date/time with me. If you register early, you can have more choices for the time slot.

The presentation accounts for 10% of your overall grade. The grading is based on a combination of your presentation style and your content. All members in the group work together and can have different tasks or work on different parts, but it is important to integrate all materials in one coherent presentation. Not all members need to do the presentation, but it is important that every one contribute.

As a general rule, all members in the same group are graded the same way. The exception to the rule occurs when some one in the group is so lack of effort or disruptive that the other group members decide to write a negative report on this one person. It is also possible that the group decides to write a positive report on one person. These reports can alter that person’s grade from the group grade under the instructor’s discretion. To prevent abusing of the rule, only one person can be named per group and it has to be a report signed by all other members of the group. Hence, it does not apply to internal fights, for example, between three members of the group against another three or two members.

For the presentation, you should pick a public traded company from the S&P 500 companies and perform some analysis. The final result of your analysis should be a recommendation on whether one should buy, hold, or sell the stock. The analysis should be based on the contents discussed in the class, including, for example,

- Financial ratio analysis, with which you can determine how the company compares with its peers and how it has been varying over time in terms of the company’s liquidity, proficiency, and profitability.
- Stock valuation, which involves projecting the company's future cash flows (dividends or earnings or free cash flows) and its discount rate (cost of equity).

There is not fixed style requirement for the presentation and the analysis. There is not right answer as to whether one should buy, hold, or sell a stock. The key is to be coherent with your analysis (don’t contradict yourself or your group members), and be well-prepared and convincing in your presentation (don’t just read). Think of the presentation as a selling pitch (you are trying to convince the whole class to buy/sell something).

Another important aspect of the project is group work. There is no winning with internal fighting with your group members. It is important to learn to compromise and work together to make use of each other’s strengths. Any show of internal
conflicts during the presentation is treated as an indication of weakness, which makes your selling pitch less convincing.

It is OK for different members to work on different parts of the presentation, but it is important that these parts fit together. For example, they must use the same competitors group, arrive at the same conclusion, and use the same style for the presentation so that to the audience, the presentation is from ONE group, not separate members.

Good luck.