



Risk, returns, and values in the presence of differential taxation

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Abstract

We show that there exist separate security market lines (SMLs) for debt and equity securities in an equilibrium with differential taxation of debt and equity. We characterize the conditions under which these SMLs have the same price of risk (with different intercepts) and the conditions under which the tax effect of leverage is linear in debt value as in the adjusted present value method. We explore the implications of our results for cost of capital calculations: How to calculate the cost of capital for debt and equity and how to unlever betas correctly accounting for differential taxation. © 2002 Published by Elsevier Science B.V.

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1. Introduction

In this paper we derive risk-return relations for differentially taxed debt and equity securities. When a tax code specifies differential taxation for assets it typically restricts asset holdings as well to prevent tax arbitrage. More importantly, such restrictions are generically necessary for the existence of equilibrium.¹ Hence, equilibrium

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¹ See, for example, Schaefer (1982) and Talmor (1989). Dammon and Green (1987) and Dammon (1988) show that restrictions on investor tax heterogeneity and on the span on the market may make an equilibrium possible without short-sale restrictions.

25 in a differential-taxation economy is generally characterized by market segmentation,
26 which implies different time values of money and different prices of risk in different
27 market segments. In the context of the CAPM, for example, this means that the sepa-
28 rate security market line (SMLs) of these market segments have different intercepts
29 and different slopes.

30 Corporate finance theory and practice tend to ignore this aspect of differentially
31 taxed capital markets: A typical cost of capital calculation takes the time value of
32 money and the price of risk to be (mistakenly, as we later show) the same for debt
33 and equity. One reason for this is that the finance literature dealing with equilibrium
34 and taxation has been almost exclusively concerned with dividend versus ordinary
35 income taxes.² There is, however, very sparse literature on risk-return tradeoffs
36 when debt and equity are differentially taxed: Theories of capital structure typically
37 examine the valuation effects of taxation and ignore the issue of risk-return tradeoff
38 while theories of risk-return tradeoff typically ignore the differential taxation of risky
39 asset classes.³ Consequently, academics and practitioners alike use a number of ad
40 hoc approaches to determine the appropriate risk-free benchmark returns and risk
41 adjustments for taxable cash flows.

42 The ad hoc nature of the formulas used to value risky taxable cash flows means
43 that the underpinnings of these formulas are often left unspecified and no proof is
44 offered to show that the formulas are consistent with equilibrium. Consider, for ex-
45 ample, the formulas to convert estimated betas of stocks and bonds to asset betas
46 (i.e., to “unlever” equity betas). Some authors (e.g., Myers and Ruback, 1992; Gil-
47 son et al., 1998) calculate asset betas simply as the weighted averages of the betas of
48 the firm’s debt and equity. Others, such as Kaplan and Ruback (1995), scale down
49 the debt’s beta as well as its weight by one minus the corporate tax rate. (Some text-
50 books, such as Ross et al. (1993), also use this unlevering formula.) These two dif-
51 ferent procedures yield different risk-adjusted discount rates even though both are
52 supposed to correspond to the same setting—the Modigliani and Miller (1963) set-
53 ting where interest is a deductible expense at the corporate level and there are no per-
54 sonal taxes. More importantly, independent of the unlevering formula used, the very
55 idea that debt and equity betas can be unlevered to estimate asset betas *implicitly as-*
56 *sumes that the same price of risk applies to all beta estimates* since the same market
57 risk premium is applied to *all* beta averages.

58 A similar confusion is evident in the use of the risk-free benchmark returns. A few
59 of the open issues are: Should the risk-free return for equity be before tax (as many
60 textbooks suggest) or after tax (as Ruback (1986) suggests)? If the equity risk-free

² See, for example, Long (1977), Elton and Gruber (1978), Litzenberger and Ramaswamy (1979), Singer (1979), Constantinides (1983, 1984), Dammon and Green (1987), Ross (1987), Dammon (1988), Dammon et al. (1989), Bossaerts and Dammon (1994), Dammon and Spatt (1996).

³ An exception is Hamada (1969, 1972) who analyzes the risk-return implications of the capital structure theory in the presence of asymmetric corporate taxation of Modigliani and Miller (1963). The literature on international taxation (e.g., Black, 1974 or Gordon and Varian, 1989) does deal with segmentation, though in a context different from the one considered here.

61 return should be after tax, after *what* tax? Should the risk-free return be the same for
62 debt and equity securities?

63 The disjoint analysis of tax effects and risk adjustments is in part due to the per-
64 ception that there exists no integrated equilibrium model of capital asset pricing that
65 incorporates both corporate and personal taxation. This perception is probably driven
66 by the fact that the existence of differential tax rates on personal income neces-
67 sitates some restrictions on asset holdings (typically in the form of short-sale
68 constraints). The reason such restrictions are needed is that in their absence there
69 may be unbounded tax arbitrage opportunities, which entail unbounded investor op-
70 portunity sets. This means that the first-order conditions for unconstrained asset al-
71 location do not hold for all individuals and for all assets. The common perception is
72 that, while it is not difficult to incorporate these restrictions in a model, it is well nigh
73 impossible to manipulate the model to get a simple linear equation for the risk-return
74 tradeoff. We address this difficulty and show that it can be overcome.

75 We address another, related, question: The interaction of leverage, taxation, and
76 value in a differentially taxed world. The analysis of this issue is typically done using
77 the adjusted present value (APV) tool. In the standard application of APV, the tax
78 effects of leverage are taken to be some fraction of debt value. It is not clear, how-
79 ever, that the value of the debt is a sufficient statistic for the impact of taxation on
80 firm value. To see how this may happen, consider two debt securities whose cash
81 flows are *not* the same but whose market values *are* equal. If the tax implications
82 of debt financing are *state dependent*, the overall tax impact of these two debt issues
83 need not be the same. In other words, the market value of the debt need not be a
84 sufficient statistic of which one can calculate the tax impact of leverage, as one does
85 in the standard application of the APV method. In the context of our preference-free
86 model, we find necessary and sufficient conditions for the market value of the debt to
87 be a sufficient statistic of which the APV of a firm can be calculated, and show that
88 these conditions are analogous to the necessary and sufficient conditions for the price
89 of risk being the same in the debt and equity markets. This means that, when using
90 APV one implicitly assumes similar conditions under which the use of weighted av-
91 erage cost of capital (WACC) (i.e., the unlevering of either equity risk or equity re-
92 turn) is valid—assuming equality of the price of risk across security types.

93 The structure of this paper is as follows: In Section 2 we derive an equilibrium
94 model with differential taxation of equity and debt. The results of this model are ap-
95 plied in Section 3 to show that there are two SMLs, one for debt securities and one
96 for equity securities. In Section 3 we also derive the necessary and sufficient condi-
97 tions under which the tax effect of leverage is a function of the market value of a
98 firm's debt. In Section 4 we discuss the application of our results to the standard
99 CAPM. In Section 5 we apply the results to the calculation of asset betas and the
100 WACC. Section 6 concludes.

101 2. The model

102 We derive our results within a standard two-date state-preference model with mul-
103 tiple consumers (also called “investors”) and multiple firms similar to that of DeAn-

104 gelo and Masulis (1980). There are two dates, 0 and 1. At date 0 firms issue securities
 105 and consumers invest their wealth in a portfolio of securities that payoff at date 1.
 106 We assume that there exist all possible state securities—securities that pay a unit
 107 of consumption at date 1 if a given state of nature occurs and zero otherwise. We
 108 also assume that there are no bankruptcy costs, agency costs, etc., exclusively focus-
 109 ing on the risk-return tradeoff in the presence of differential taxation.

110 State securities can be either *debt* or *equity*. The type of the security determines its
 111 taxation both at the investor level and at the corporate level. The payoff of a debt
 112 security that pays off in state s is taxed when received by investor i at the rate
 113 $\tau_{PD}^i(s)$. Hence, purchasing a unit of this security for price $P_D(s)$ at date 0 will give
 114 consumer i an after-tax payoff of $(1 - \tau_{PD}^i(s))$ in state s at date 1.⁴ Similarly, the pur-
 115 chase of one unit of an equity security today at price $P_E(s)$ results in an after-tax cash
 116 flow to the consumer of $(1 - \tau_{PE}^i(s))$ in state s at date 1. We assume that, state by
 117 state, personal tax rates on debt income are higher than the personal tax rates on eq-
 118 uity income: $1 > \tau_{PD}^i(s) > \tau_{PE}^i(s) \geq 0 \forall i, s$. We assume that there exists a fixed,
 119 strictly positive, supply of the full set of both equity and debt state securities. This
 120 means that financial markets are *doubly complete*.

121 Under double completeness, investors may attempt to tax arbitrage across the
 122 debt and equity markets; hence investor opportunity sets may be unbounded and
 123 no equilibrium may exist. Tax codes, however, prohibit unbounded tax arbitrage
 124 by restricting the tax deductibility of asset returns, which effectively restrict investors'
 125 asset holdings. To capture these restrictions in our model, we assume that short sales
 126 are not allowed.⁵ Note that, since the debt and the equity markets are both com-
 127 plete, the investment opportunity sets of investors are not restricted by the short-sale
 128 constraints.

129 Firms are endowed with state-dependent, before-interest, before-corporate-tax in-
 130 come, which is assumed to reflect each firm's optimal investment decisions. Firms are
 131 taxed at the rate $\tau_C(s)$ in state s when their income is positive. Since we are dealing
 132 with a single-period model, there is no carry backward or forward of losses; when
 133 corporate income is negative the corporation's tax rate is zero. Payments to debt
 134 holders are tax deductible expenses while payments to equity holders are not.

135 3. Equilibrium asset prices

136 Investor i chooses her holdings $x_E^i(s)$ and $x_D^i(s)$ in state- s equity securities and
 137 state- s debt securities, respectively, to solve the following utility maximization prob-
 138 lem:

⁴ We assume that the whole payoff is taxed. This is the appropriate equivalent in a one-period framework to taxation of rates of returns only in an infinite-horizon framework.

⁵ This assumption can be weakened somewhat (see Dammon and Green, 1987; Talmor, 1989).

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Max}_{x_E^i(s), x_D^i(s)} \quad & u_i(c_{i0}) + \delta_i E[u_i(\tilde{c})] = u_i(c_{i0}) + \delta_i \sum_s \pi(s) u_i(c_{is}) \\
 & = u_i(c_{i0}) + \delta_i \sum_s \pi(s) u_i [x_E^i(s)(1 - \tau_{PE}^i(s)) \\
 & \quad + x_D^i(s)(1 - \tau_{PD}^i(s))] \quad \text{s.t. } x_E^i(s), x_D^i(0) \geq 0, \\
 c_{i0} + \sum_s x_E^i(s) P_E(s) + x_D^i(s) P_D(s) & = W_i \quad (1)
 \end{aligned}$$

140 c_{i0} is consumer i 's date-0 consumption, $\tilde{c} = \{c_{i1}, \dots, c_{is}\}$ is her date-1 consumption in
 141 each state, δ_i is her rate of time preference, and W_i is her wealth. The state proba-
 142 bilities, $\pi(s)$, need not be homogeneous.

143 It can be shown using standard tools of general equilibrium analysis (e.g., Debreu,
 144 1959) that an equilibrium with positive prices for equity and debt state securities ex-
 145 ists if some mild conditions are assumed about investor beliefs and preferences.

146 3.1. Consumer indifference between purchasing debt and equity

147 Investor i will be indifferent between purchasing a state- s equity security and pur-
 148 chasing a state- s debt security if and only if a given expenditure at date 0 yields the
 149 same state- s consumption:

$$x_E P_E(s) = x_D P_D(s) \iff (1 - \tau_{PD}^i(s)) x_D = (1 - \tau_{PE}^i(s)) x_E \quad (2)$$

151 Relation (2) means that consumer i will be indifferent between state- s equity and debt
 152 if and only if:

$$\frac{(1 - \tau_{PD}^i(s))}{P_D(s)} = \frac{(1 - \tau_{PE}^i(s))}{P_E(s)} \quad (3)$$

154 We assume that for each state s there exists a consumer $i(s)$ who is indifferent be-
 155 tween purchasing state- s debt and equity securities. A sufficiently rich range of rela-
 156 tive tax rates will imply satisfaction of this assumption. We denote the state- s break-
 157 even ratio of personal tax rates by $\varphi(s)$:

$$\varphi(s) \equiv \frac{(1 - \tau_{PD}^{i(s)}(s))}{(1 - \tau_{PE}^{i(s)}(s))} = \frac{P_D(s)}{P_E(s)} \quad (4)$$

159 Since investors are, by assumption, taxed less heavily on debt income than on equity
 160 income, $0 < \varphi(s) < 1$ and hence $P_D(s) = \varphi(s) P_E(s) < P_E(s)$.

161 3.2. Security pricing in equilibrium

162 Consider an arbitrary equity security that pays a random before-personal-tax pay-
 163 off of $\underline{Q}_E = \{Q_E(s)\}$. The time-0 price of this security is $V_E = \sum_s Q_E(s) P_E(s)$. Simi-
 164 larly, the price of a debt security with time-1 payoffs $\underline{Q}_D = \{Q_D(s)\}$ is $V_D =$
 165 $\sum_s Q_D(s) P_D(s) = \sum_s Q_D(s) \varphi(s) P_E(s)$.

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166 When the tax system differentiates between debt income and equity income, it is
 167 necessary to distinguish between the risk-free rate of *debt* securities and the risk-free
 168 rate of *equity* securities:

$$Rf_E \equiv 1 + rf_E = 1 / \sum_s P_E(s)$$

170 and

$$Rf_D \equiv 1 + rf_D = 1 / \sum_s P_D(s)$$

172 Since equity income is less heavily taxed than debt income, $P_D(s) < P_E(s) \forall s$ so that
 173 the risk-free return for equity securities is lower than the risk-free rate for debt se-
 174 curities:

$$Rf_D = \frac{1}{\sum_s P_D(s)} = \frac{1}{\sum_s \varphi(s) P_E(s)} > \frac{1}{\sum_s P_E(s)} = Rf_E \quad (5)$$

176 Next we consider the expected returns of *risky* securities. (All proofs are in Appendix
 177 A.)

178 **Proposition 1.** *There are separate SML for debt and equity securities:*

$$E(\tilde{R}_E) = Rf_E - \text{Cov}\left(\frac{Rf_E \tilde{P}_E}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_E\right) \equiv Rf_E - \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_E, \tilde{R}_E) \quad (6)$$

$$E(\tilde{R}_D) = Rf_D - \text{Cov}\left(\frac{\tilde{P}_D}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_D\right) Rf_D \equiv Rf_D - \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_D, \tilde{R}_D) \quad (7)$$

181 where \tilde{M}_E and \tilde{M}_D are the equity and debt pricing kernels.⁶

182 Eqs. (6) and (7) imply that, in general, the SMLs for debt securities and for equity
 183 securities have different intercepts and different slopes. This means that the expected
 184 rates of return of equity and debt securities with identically distributed *before-person-*
 185 *al-tax* payoffs are, in general, different. The different pricing of debt and equity secu-
 186 rities is due to the differential taxation of debt and equity and is sustained by the
 187 restrictions on tax arbitrage, which entail segmentation between investors who hold
 188 state-*s* debt and equity securities.

189 **Proposition 2.** *The price of risk is the same for debt and equity securities (i.e., the*
 190 *equity SML and the debt SML are parallel, albeit with different intercepts) if and only*
 191 *if for every state s $\varphi(s) = \varphi$.*

192 In Section 4, we use the following corollary to Proposition 2:

⁶ In Section 4 we rederive these SMLs in their more familiar form by assuming that there are traded assets that are perfectly correlated with the pricing kernels.

193 **Corollary.** *The pricing kernel for debt and equity securities is the same if and only if*
 194 $\varphi(s) = \varphi$ *for all* s .

195 Proposition 2 shows that the necessary and sufficient condition for the SMLs of
 196 debt and equity securities to be parallel is that *state by state* the relative pricing of
 197 debt income and equity income is the same, i.e., that the marginal relative tax rate,
 198 $\varphi(s)$, is state independent. While the marginal investor need not be the same in each
 199 state, the marginal tax rates on equity and debt incomes should have a constant *ratio*
 200 in *all* states. (Below, we show that this happens in an extension of Miller (1977) equi-
 201 librium.)

202 Proposition 2 also provides a necessary and sufficient condition to answer one of
 203 the questions posed in the introduction: *When the break-even ratio of tax rates is*
 204 *state-independent, the price of risk is the same for debt and equity securities.* Intu-
 205 itively, when the relative pricing of debt and equity is state-independent, the covari-
 206 ance terms in (6) and (7) capture the relative taxation of debt and equity incomes.

207 As we show next, the condition of Proposition 2—i.e., that the break-even tax rate
 208 $\varphi(s)$ is state independent—is also related to the standard APV method for the valu-
 209 ation of levered firms. Suppose we write—as in the standard APV method for valuing
 210 leverage— $\Delta V \equiv V_L - V_U = KV_D$, where V_L and V_U are, respectively, the values of the
 211 same firm with and without leverage, V_D is the market value of the levered firm's
 212 debt, and K is some constant that reflects the tax-related valuation impact of lever-
 213 age. Implicit in this adjustment is the assumption that debt value, V_D , is a sufficient
 214 statistic for the valuation impact of leverage; otherwise K should depend on the par-
 215 ticular distribution of the debt payments.

216 **Proposition 3.** *The adjustment of the value of the firm for the tax effect of leverage is*
 217 *independent of the shape of the distribution of the debt payments (i.e., the market value*
 218 *of the debt is a sufficient statistic to compute the tax effect of leverage) if and only if*
 219 $(P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)])/(P_D(s))$ *is state-independent. Since* $P_E(s)/P_D(s) = 1/\varphi(s)$, *this con-*
 220 *dition is equivalent to the state-independence of* $([1 - \tau_C(s)]/\varphi(s))$.

221 If, as is usually assumed, the statutory corporate tax rate is state-independent (i.e.,
 222 $\tau_C(s) = \tau_C$), then the standard value additivity approach to valuing leverage holds if
 223 and only if the relative personal taxation of debt and equity income $\varphi(s)$ is state-in-
 224 dependent. By Proposition 2 this condition is also necessary and sufficient for a sin-
 225 gle price of risk for debt and equity returns (i.e., for parallel debt and equity SMLs).
 226 Proposition 3, therefore, means that the two standard tools of corporate finance:

- 227 • Adjusting the risk-free returns while keeping the price of risk equal across security
 228 classes, and
- 229 • Taking the effect of taxation to be independent of the payoff pattern of the firm's
 230 debt in APV share a common underlying implicit assumption—that the relative
 231 taxation of debt and equity income at the personal level are state-independent.

232 Note that Proposition 3 identifies the constant, K , in the APV method. When the
 233 corporate tax rate is state-independent and the conditions of Proposition 2
 234 hold— $\tau_C(s) = \tau$, $\varphi(s) = \varphi$, then:

$$\Delta V \equiv V_L - V_U = \left(1 - \frac{1 - \tau_C}{\varphi}\right) V_D = K V_D$$

236 3.3. *The price of risk and APV in an extended version of Miller (1977)*

237 In general, the marginal relative tax rates of debt and equity incomes need not be
 238 the same in all states. Consequently, Propositions 2 and 3 imply that the standard
 239 tools of corporate finance—unlevering betas and APV—cannot be applied. Yet, be-
 240 cause corporations adjust the amounts of debt and equity securities they issue, a
 241 state-by-state extension of Miller (1977) shows that $\varphi(s) = 1 - \tau_C(s)$ in all states.
 242 We call this the extended Miller equilibrium (EME).

243 **Proposition 4.** *In an EME if the statutory corporate tax rate is state independent (i.e.,*
 244 *$\tau_C(s) = \tau_C \forall s$), the debt and equity SMLs are parallel and the risk-free benchmark*
 245 *return for equity securities is the after-corporate-tax risk-free benchmark return for*
 246 *debt securities.*

247 Proposition 4 answers another question posed in the introduction: What are the
 248 relative risk-free benchmark returns of equity and debt securities? In an EME when
 249 the statutory corporate tax rate is state-independent, the risk-free benchmark return
 250 for equity securities is the risk-free benchmark return for debt securities *after corpo-*
 251 *rate tax*. In this case, the slopes of the equity and debt SMLs are equal.

252 4. Debt and equity SMLs with differential taxation

253 Next, we convert the state-preference setting into a standard CAPM setting where
 254 the pricing kernel is identified with a traded asset and the risk-return tradeoffs for
 255 debt and equity are estimable.

256 Assume that there exists a portfolio the return of which, \tilde{R}_{mE} , is perfectly corre-
 257 lated with the equity pricing kernel: $\tilde{M}_E = a + b\tilde{R}_{mE}$. We call this portfolio “the eq-
 258 uity market portfolio”. Using the equity market portfolio we can derive a standard
 259 CAPM:

$$\begin{aligned} E(\tilde{R}_E) &= Rf_E - \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_E, \tilde{R}_E) = Rf_E - \text{Cov}(a + b\tilde{R}_{mE}, \tilde{R}_E) \\ &= Rf_E - b\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mE}, \tilde{R}_E) \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

261 Since, in particular, this relation is true for the equity market portfolio itself, it
 262 follows that

$$E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) = Rf_E - b\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mE}, \tilde{R}_{mE}) \Rightarrow -b = \frac{E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) - Rf_E}{\sigma_{mE}^2} \quad (9)$$

264 where σ_{mE}^2 is the variance of the return of the equity market portfolio. Substituting
 265 into the expression for the pricing of equity securities gives the standard equity
 266 CAPM:

$$E(\tilde{R}_E) = Rf_E + \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mE}, \tilde{R}_E)}{\sigma_{mE}^2} [E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) - Rf_E] \equiv Rf_E + \beta_E \Pi_{mE} \quad (10)$$

268 where Π_{mE} is the risk premium on the equity market portfolio and β_E is the beta
 269 coefficient of the return of an *equity* security vis-à-vis the return of the *equity* market
 270 portfolio.

271 Assuming that there is also a portfolio the returns of which are perfectly correlated
 272 with the debt-market pricing kernel, we get a similar relation for the debt market:

$$\begin{aligned} E(\tilde{R}_D) &= Rf_D - \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_D, \tilde{R}_D) = Rf_D + \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mD}, \tilde{R}_D)}{\sigma_{mD}^2} \Pi_{mD} \\ &\equiv Rf_D + \beta_D \Pi_{mD} \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

274 where Π_{mD} is the risk premium on the debt market portfolio and β_D is the beta
 275 coefficient of the return of a *debt* security vis-à-vis the *debt* market portfolio.

276 Recall that the SMLs of the two markets will, in general, have different intercepts
 277 and different slopes. Using Propositions 2, 4, and 4, we can relate the pricing param-
 278 eters of the two SML equations:

279 **Proposition 5.** *In an EME in which the corporate tax rate is state independent, the*
 280 *SMLs of equity and debt securities are: The equity SML:*
 281 $E(\tilde{R}_E) = Rf_D(1 - \tau_C) + \beta_D \Pi_{mE}$ **The debt SML:** $E(\tilde{R}_D) = Rf_D + \beta_D \Pi_{mE}$ *Note that risk*
 282 *premiums are measured relative to the equity market portfolio in both markets,*
 283 $\Pi_{mE} = E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) - Rf_E(1 - \tau_C)$, *and that both betas are estimated vis-a-vis the equity*
 284 *market portfolio.*

285 Proposition 4 characterizes the relation between the risk-free returns of equity and
 286 debt when the EME holds: $Rf_E = (1 - \tau_C)Rf_D$. Proposition 5 further shows that, un-
 287 der the same conditions, the slopes of the equity and the debt SMLs are *both*
 288 $\Pi_{mE} \equiv E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) - Rf_D(1 - \tau_C)$.⁷

289 5. Calculating the weighted average cost of capital

290 One of the basic tools of corporate finance is the unlevering of the rates of returns
 291 of debt and equity to compute the WACC. The WACC is used to estimate the cost of

⁷ Hamada and Scholes (1985) suggest an after-tax equity SML which is similar to that of Proposition 5; Taggart (1991) also presents a similar equity SML. Neither of these papers has the capital markets equilibrium characterization which underlies our results, nor do these papers examine the case of risky debt. Sick (1990) obtains results similar to Proposition 4, although not in a general equilibrium framework.

292 capital with which projects are evaluated. An equivalent computation is to unlever
 293 the betas of debt and equity and use an “asset” beta and an “asset” SML to estimate
 294 the cost of capital. Obviously, an “asset” SML exists only if the SMLs of debt and
 295 equity securities are parallel: If the price of risk is different for debt and equity no
 296 single price of risk applies to all “unlevered” betas.

297 In the preceding sections, we derive the necessary and sufficient for the price of risk
 298 to be the same in the debt and equity markets and, as a special case, the SML equa-
 299 tions when corporations may adjust the mix of debt and equity securities they issue,
 300 i.e., in an EME. These SML equations allow us to derive the correct way to unlever
 301 equity and debt betas and estimate the cost of capital using the unlevered beta and
 302 the asset SML:

303 **Proposition 6.** Consider a firm financed with a proportion $x_E = E/(E + D)$ of equity
 304 and $x_D = 1 - x_E$ debt, where E and D denote the values of the equity and debt, re-
 305 spectively. In an EME with a state-independent statutory corporate tax rate, the equity
 306 and debt betas are unlevered to an asset beta by:

$$\beta_{\text{Assets}} = x_E \beta_{\text{Equity}} + x_D \beta_{\text{Debt}} (1 - \tau_C)$$

308 Furthermore, the asset SML used in calculating the required return on the assets rel-
 309 ative to asset betas is the equity SML:

$$E(\tilde{R}_{\text{Assets}}) = R_{fD}(1 - \tau_C) + \beta_{\text{Assets}} \Pi_{mE}$$

311 Thus, the risk-free benchmark return to determine expected returns on assets is the
 312 same as the equity risk-free benchmark—the after-*corporate*-tax risk-free return on
 313 debt securities. Note that the debt and equity betas are both estimated relative to
 314 the *equity* market portfolio. Hence, the estimated *debt* beta is “inflated” compared
 315 to the beta that would have been estimated against the return of the *debt* market
 316 portfolio. Accordingly, when averaged with the equity beta to estimate the asset
 317 beta, the inflated debt beta is deflated back by $(1 - \tau_C)$.

318 In an EME, the risk-free rate for free cash flows is the one suggested by Ruback
 319 (1986). Proposition 6 generalizes his result for all patterns of asset, debt, and equity
 320 cash flows, and derives the correct unlevering equation for betas. It further shows
 321 that this risk-free rate and unlevering relation are conditional on the existence of
 322 an EME.

323 6. Concluding remarks

324 We analyze the risk-return tradeoff for stocks and bonds when their income
 325 streams are differentially taxed. We characterize the risk-free returns, risk measures,
 326 and risk prices in the debt and equity market segments.

327 When assets are differentially taxed there are typically constraints on investor asset
 328 holdings that inhibit tax arbitrage across asset classes. Such restrictions induce mar-
 329 ket segmentation, which generically leads to differential pricing of risk-free and risky

330 cash flows. Moreover, asset-holding constraints mean that the first-order conditions
331 of unconstrained asset demands no longer describe the risk-return tradeoff since non-
332 zero shadow prices are typically associated with these constraints. Nonetheless, we
333 derive necessary and sufficient conditions under which the price of risk in the debt
334 and equity market segments is the same, i.e., the debt and equity SMLs are parallel.
335 We also show that the conditions under which the SMLs are parallel are closely re-
336 lated to the conditions under which the standard APV method of valuing leverage
337 holds: Under these conditions, it is appropriate to compute the tax effect of leverage
338 based on debt value alone.

339 The conditions necessary for equality of the price of risk in the debt and equity
340 markets and for the application of APV obtain when corporations adjust their secu-
341 rity offerings in an equilibrium that extends Miller (1977) to an uncertain
342 world—EME. We show that, in an EME, the risk-free return for equity securities
343 is the after-corporate tax yield to maturity of a risk-free debt. We also show that,
344 in an EME, the risk premiums of *both* equity and debt securities are the product
345 of the asset betas measured relative to the *equity* market index and the risk premium
346 of this index.

347 Finally, we consider the cost of capital with which investments are evaluated. We
348 show that, in an EME, the asset cost of capital is computed-off the *equity* SML. We
349 also show that to convert equity and debt betas to an asset beta (i.e., to “unlever”
350 equity beta) one needs to use a weighted average beta estimate in which debt beta
351 is deflated by one minus the corporate tax rate.

352 7. Uncited references

353 Aivazian and Callen, 1987, Bosshardt, 1984, Dybvig and Ross, 1986.

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359 Appendix A. Proofs of propositions

360

361 **Proof for Proposition 1.** Using a technique first introduced by Beja (1972), we rewrite
362 the price of a risky equity security that has a before-personal-tax payoff vector \tilde{Q}_E as:

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$$\begin{aligned}
 V_E &= \sum_s P_E(s) Q_E(s) = \sum_s \pi(s) \frac{P_E(s)}{\pi(s)} Q_E(s) = E \left[\left(\frac{P_E(s)}{\pi(s)} \right) Q_E(s) \right] \\
 &= E \left(\frac{P_E(s)}{\pi(s)} \right) E(\tilde{Q}_E) + \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\tilde{P}_E}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{Q}_E \right) = \frac{1}{Rf_E} E(\tilde{Q}_E) + \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\tilde{P}_E}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{Q}_E \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

364 Bringing Rf_E inside the parentheses and using $\tilde{R}_E = \tilde{Q}_E/V_E$ to get the equity pricing
 365 kernel, $\tilde{M}_E \equiv (Rf_E \tilde{P}_E)/\tilde{\pi}$, gives the equity market SML. \square

366 **Proof for Proposition 2. Sufficiency:** Assume that $\varphi(s) = \varphi$ for every state s . Then

$$\begin{aligned}
 E(\tilde{R}_D) &= Rf_D - \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\tilde{P}_D}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_D \right) Rf_D = Rf_D - \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\varphi \tilde{P}_D}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_D \right) \frac{Rf_D}{\varphi} \\
 &= Rf_D - \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\tilde{P}_E}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_D \right) Rf_E = Rf_D - \text{Cov} \left(\frac{\tilde{P}_E Rf_E}{\tilde{\pi}}, \tilde{R}_D \right) \\
 &= Rf_D - \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_E, \tilde{R}_D)
 \end{aligned}$$

368 *Necessity:* Assume that the SMLs are parallel (with possibly different intercepts).
 369 This means that the risk premium of any debt security can be determined by using
 370 either the debt or the equity kernel:

$$E(\tilde{R}_D) - Rf_D = \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_E, \tilde{R}_D) = \text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_D, \tilde{R}_E)$$

372 In particular, this is true for a state- s debt security. Let $1_D(s)$ be a debt security that
 373 pays off \$1 in state s only. For this security the covariance of its payoff with the
 374 equity market kernel is

$$\text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_E, 1_D(s)) = \text{Cov} \left(\frac{P_E(s) Rf_E}{\pi(s)}, 1_D(s) \right) = P_E(s) Rf_E - \pi(s)$$

376 Similarly, the covariance of this security's payoff with the debt market kernel is:

$$\text{Cov}(\tilde{M}_D, 1_D(s)) = P_D(s) Rf_D - \pi(s)$$

378 Equating these expressions shows that $\varphi(s) = (P_D(s)/P_E(s)) = (Rf_E/Rf_D)$ for all s .

379 **Corollary.** The equity and debt pricing kernels are $M_E(s) = (P_E(s) Rf_E)/\pi(s)$,
 380 $M_D(s) = (P_D(s) Rf_D)/\pi(s)$. Since under the conditions of the corollary $P_D(s) = \varphi P_E(s)$,
 381 the result follows immediately from the definitions of the risk-free rates. \square

382 **Proof for Proposition 3.** Let the firm's after-corporate-tax cash flows in state s be
 383 denoted by $FCF(s)$ and the state- s payments to the debt holders be denoted by
 384 $CF_D(s)$. Then, the value of the unlevered firm is

$$V_U = \sum_s P_E(s) FCF(s)$$

386 and the value of the levered firm is:

$$V_L = V_E + V_D = \sum_s P_E(s) \{FCF(s) - CF_D(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]\} + \sum_s P_D(s) CF_D(s)$$

388 A simple manipulation gives:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta V &\equiv V^L - V^U = \sum_s CF_D \{P_D(s) - P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]\} \\ &= \sum_s CF_D P_D(s) \left\{ 1 - \frac{P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]}{P_D(s)} \right\} \end{aligned}$$

390 *Sufficiency*: If $1 - ((P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]/P_D(s)) = K \forall s$, then above equation simplifies
391 to:

$$\Delta V = \sum_s CF_D P_D(s) \left\{ 1 - \frac{P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]}{P_D(s)} \right\} = \sum_s CF_D P_D(s) K = KV_D$$

393 *Necessity*: If $\Delta V = KV_D$ for all debt payoff patterns, then it is also true for debt state
394 securities, $1_D(s)$. The impact of issuing this security on the value of the firm is:

$$\Delta V = \sum_s 1_D(s) P_D(s) \left\{ 1 - \frac{P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]}{P_D(s)} \right\} = P_D(s) - P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]$$

396 By assumption $\Delta V = KV_D$. Since the value of a state- s debt security is $P_D(s)$, we get:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta V = P_D(s) - P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)] &= KP_D(s) \Rightarrow \left\{ 1 - \frac{P_E(s)[1 - \tau_C(s)]}{P_D(s)} \right\} \\ &= K \quad \forall s \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

Proof for Proposition 4. The equality of the price of risk result directly from Prop-
399 osition 2 and the corollary to Proposition 4. The relation between the risk-free re-
400 turns follows from:

$$\begin{aligned} Rf_D &= \frac{1}{\sum_s P_D(s)} = \frac{1}{\sum_s \varphi(s) P_E(s)} = \frac{1}{\varphi \sum_s P_E(s)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \tau_C) \sum_s P_E(s)} \\ &= \frac{1}{(1 - \tau_C)} Rf_E \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

Proof for Proposition 5. When corporate tax is state-independent, $\tilde{R}_{mD} =$
403 $\tilde{R}_{mE}/(1 - \tau_C)$. Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mD}, \tilde{R}_D)}{\sigma_{mD}^2} [E(\tilde{R}_{mD}) - Rf_D] &= \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mE}/(1 - \tau_C), \tilde{R}_D)}{\sigma_{mD}^2} [E(\tilde{R}_{mE})/(1 - \tau_C) \\ &\quad - Rf_E/(1 - \tau_C)] = \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_{mE}, \tilde{R}_D)}{\sigma_{mD}^2} \\ &\quad \times [E(\tilde{R}_{mE}) - Rf_E] \end{aligned}$$

405 Since $Rf_E = Rf_D(1 - \tau_C)$, this established the result. \square

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406 **Proof for Proposition 6.** Let $CF_A(s)$ denote state- s cash flow before debt payments and
 407 and before corporate taxes. Hence, $FCF(s) = CF_A(s)(1 - \tau_C)$. Let $CF_D(s)$ denote
 408 state- s debt cash flows. The value of equity and debt is given by:

$$V_D = \sum_s P_D(s)CF_D(s) = \sum_s (1 - \tau_C)P_E(s)CF_D(s)$$

$$V_E = \sum_s P_E(s)CF_E(s) = \sum_s P_E(s)(FCF(s) - (1 - \tau_C)CF_D(s))$$

411 A simple summation shows that in an EME the value of the firm is invariant to
 412 leverage:

$$V_F = V_D + V_E = \sum_s P_E(s)FCF(s)$$

414 This implies that firm value can be derived assuming the firm is all equity fi-
 415 nanced—from free cash flows valued by the *equity* state prices:

$$E(r_A) = Rf_E + \beta_{\text{Assets}} \Pi_{ME} \quad \text{and} \quad \beta_{\text{Assets}} = \frac{\text{Cov}[(FCF/(V_E + V_D)), R_{ME}]}{\text{Var}(R_{ME})}$$

417 Next estimate β_{Assets} by averaging β_{Debt} and β_{Equity} . Compute the betas of the debt
 418 and the equity:

$$\beta_{\text{Debt}} = \frac{\text{Cov}((CF_D/V_D), \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})} = \frac{1}{V_D} \frac{\text{Cov}(CF_D, \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})}$$

$$\beta_{\text{Equity}} = \frac{\text{Cov}((CF_E/V_E), \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})} = \frac{1}{V_E} \frac{\text{Cov}(FCF - CF_D(1 - \tau_C), \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})}$$

421 We want to compute β_{Assets} by averaging the debt and the equity β s, using market
 422 values in the weights:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{V_E}{V_D + V_E} \beta_{\text{Equity}} + \frac{V_D}{V_D + V_E} K \beta_{\text{Debt}} &= \left(\frac{1}{V_D + V_E} \right) \left[\frac{\text{Cov}(FCF - CF_D(1 - \tau_C), \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})} \right] \\ &\quad + K \left(\frac{1}{V_D + V_E} \right) \left[\frac{\text{Cov}(CF_D, \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})} \right] \end{aligned}$$

424 This should equal $\beta_{\text{Assets}} = \text{Cov}[(FCF/(V_E + V_D)), R_{ME}]/\text{Var}(R_{ME})$, which is true for
 425 all beta estimates if and only if $K = (1 - \tau_C)$:

$$\beta_{\text{Assets}} = \left(\frac{V_E}{V_D + V_E} \right) \beta_{\text{Equity}} + \left(\frac{V_D}{V_D + V_E} \right) \beta_{\text{Debt}} (1 - \tau_C)$$

427 Accordingly, the expected return on the assets is given by:

$$E(\tilde{R}_A) = Rf_E + \frac{\text{Cov}(\tilde{R}_A, \tilde{R}_{ME})}{\text{Var}(\tilde{R}_{ME})} \Pi_{ME} = Rf_D(1 - \tau_C) + \beta_{\text{Assets}} \Pi_{ME} \quad \square$$

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