

2026 Current Issues in Alternatives Spring Symposium

Friday, March 27, 2026
The Carolina Inn, 211 Pittsboro St., Chapel Hill, NC

8:00–8:30am

Buffet Breakfast Available (Outside Chancellors' Ballroom)

8:30–10:00am

Chancellors' East

Session I: Drivers of Private Markets

Welcome & Session Chair: Greg Brown, *UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School & IPC*

What Drives Private Equity Performance?

This paper examines how private equity funds generate returns by separating performance into three components: selecting companies, timing exits and improving firms during ownership. Using data on thousands of buyout transactions over several decades, the study shows that these sources of performance differ across funds. Investment selection varies relatively little, while exit timing appears more systematic and potentially learnable. In contrast, operational improvement shows the greatest variation, suggesting that hands-on value creation is where firms differ most.

Reiner Braun, *Technische Universität München - School of Management*

Mark Jansen, *University of Utah*

Victor Lyonnet, *University of Michigan*

Constantine Yannelis, *University of Cambridge*

How Do Global Investors Make Decisions? Evidence from VC and PE

This paper studies how venture capital and private equity investors make decisions globally. It documents the growing globalization of private capital and shows that while returns are highest in developed markets, performance relative to public markets in many emerging economies is also strong. Drawing on a global survey conducted with the International Finance Corporation, the study reflects insights from more than 1,300 investors across 105 countries managing about \$1.5 trillion in assets. The results show that investors emphasize company traction, financial performance, and country- and region-specific risks.

Emanuele Colonnelli, *University of Chicago - Booth School of Business*

Marcio Cruz, *International Finance Corporations (IFC); World Bank*

Josh Lerner, *Harvard Business School & NBER*

Mariana Pereira-Lopez, *World Bank*

The Subjective Beliefs and Portfolio Allocations of Institutional Investors

We study how subjective beliefs shape the portfolio allocations of institutional investors. Linking the multi-asset allocations of U.S. public pension funds to the long-term capital market assumptions of their consultants, we examine the extent to which differences in subjective expected returns, volatilities, and correlations map into differences in portfolio weights. We find that pension fund allocations are significantly linked to belief-implied mean-variance efficient allocations across pension funds, across asset classes, and over time.

Aleksandar Andonov, *University of Amsterdam & CEPR*

Spencer J. Coutts, *University of Southern California*

Andrei S. Goncalves, *The Ohio State University - Fisher College of Business*

Johnathan A. Loudis, *University of Notre Dame - Mendoza College of Business*

Andrea Rossi, *University of Arizona*

10:00–10:30am

Break

10:30–12:00pm
Chancellors' East

Session II: Current Issues in Private Markets

Session Chair: Robert Harris, *UVA Darden School*

Buyout Fund Exits & Distributions

We summarize key findings from IPC's annual white paper on buyout fund exits and distributions. Specifically, we develop models using aggregated, fund-level, and deal-level data to better understand the historical determinants of distributions. Using these models, we estimate how much of the decline in distributions from funds since 2022 can be attributed to cyclical factors that were observable prior to the current episode. Our results suggest that much of the recent decline in distributions is cyclical, although a non-trivial portion remains unexplained.

Greg Brown, *UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School & IPC*

Wendy Hu, *MSCI*

Christian Lundblad, *UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School & IPC*

William Volckmann, *Institute for Private Capital*

The Lending Technology of Direct Lenders in Private Credit

We compare the lending technology of direct lenders, banks, and finance companies using a unique data set on secured borrowing by U.S.-based private middle market firms. Borrowers of direct lenders differ from those of traditional lenders: they are younger, more likely to operate in intangible-capital industries, and more often located in large U.S. cities. These differences reflect the focus of direct lenders on private equity-owned firms; they play little role in industries and cities with limited private equity presence. Direct lenders also differ from banks in their lending approach: they have minimal branch networks, are geographically distant from borrowers, emphasize firm continuation value after default, and specialize in certain industries.

Young Soo Jang, *Pennsylvania State University - Smeal College of Business*

Dasol Kim, *Office of Financial Research, US Department of the Treasury*

Amir Sufi, *University of Chicago - Booth School of Business & NBER*

Venture Fraud

This paper examines fraud in U.S. venture capital-backed startups using the first comprehensive dataset of venture fraud cases. It finds that VC-backed firms are more likely to face fraud charges than comparable non-VC-backed firms. The analysis links this pattern to governance features that have become more common in recent years, including stronger founder control, more complex investor structures, and weaker oversight in hot funding markets. Fraud is significantly more likely in founder-controlled firms, and entrepreneurs involved in fraud often go on to raise capital again, suggesting limited market discipline. Overall, the findings highlight rising governance risks in venture-backed firms and their broader economic and social consequences.

Alexander Dyck, *University of Toronto - Rotman School of Management*

Freda Fang, *University of Toronto - Rotman School of Management*

Camille Hebert, *University of Toronto - Rotman School of Management*

Ting Xu, *University of Toronto - Rotman School of Management*

12:00–1:45pm
Chancellors' West

Luncheon

Session Chair: Christian Lundblad, *UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School & IPC*

Keynote Presentation: Private Equity Continuation Vehicles: A Model of Strategic Asset Transfers

Victoria Ivashina, *Harvard Business School*

1:45pm

Concluding Remarks & Adjourn

Sponsored by:



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