

# Mercer Core Fixed Income Fund

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1. Mercer U.S. Investments Update
2. Core Fixed Income Fund Design Process & Performance
3. Sub-Advisor Fund Performance and Positioning
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# Mercer U.S. Investments Update

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# Office Of The CIO

Advisory & OCIO



**Andrew McDougall**

*US Chief Investment Officer*

## Equity Portfolio Management

**Senior Portfolio Manager**



**Larry Vasquez**  
*Boston*

**Senior Portfolio Manager**



**Sean Chatburn**  
*Chicago*

**Portfolio Manager**



**Matt Parlengas**  
*Boston*

**Portfolio Manager**



**Justin Clinger**  
*Philadelphia*

**Portfolio Manager**



**DeJon Gonzalez**  
*New York*

**Portfolio Manager**



**Perry Maheras**  
*Boston*

**Investment Analyst**



**Liam Higgins**  
*Boston*

**Investment Analyst**



**Manvith Manchala**  
*New York*

**Investment Analyst**



**Ryan Wan**  
*Chicago*

**Senior Manager**



**Salonee Bhutra**  
*Mumbai*

## Fix Income Portfolio Management

**Portfolio Manager**



**Emma Koch**  
*Boston*

**Associate Portfolio Manager**



**Chris Chen**  
*Boston*

**Associate Portfolio Manager**



**Michael Cohen**  
*Boston*

**Associate Portfolio Manager**



**Andrea Vercruyssen**  
*Minneapolis*

## Manager Research

**Global Research Team**

200+ Research Specialists

## Additional OCIO Teams

**Portfolio Design, Analytics, & Risk (PDAR)**

Travis Simon  
Chinmay Goyal  
Adam Shanfeld  
Hasmik Vardanyan  
Parker Moses

**Segment Specific**

Shaum Shrinivas (NFP)  
Terrance Jones (NFP)  
Lisa Kots (Wealth)  
Tamara Larsen (Values Aligned/SI)

**Alternatives (HF, PC, PE)**

Matthew Vokes (Private Credit)  
Richard Pugmire (Private Equity)

**Alternatives (RA)**

Gurjeet Dosanjh (Real Assets)  
Laryssa Wynnchenko (Real Assets)

As of March 31, 2025.

# Core Fixed Income Fund

## Design Process & Performance



# What does Mercer Core Fixed Income Fund offer?

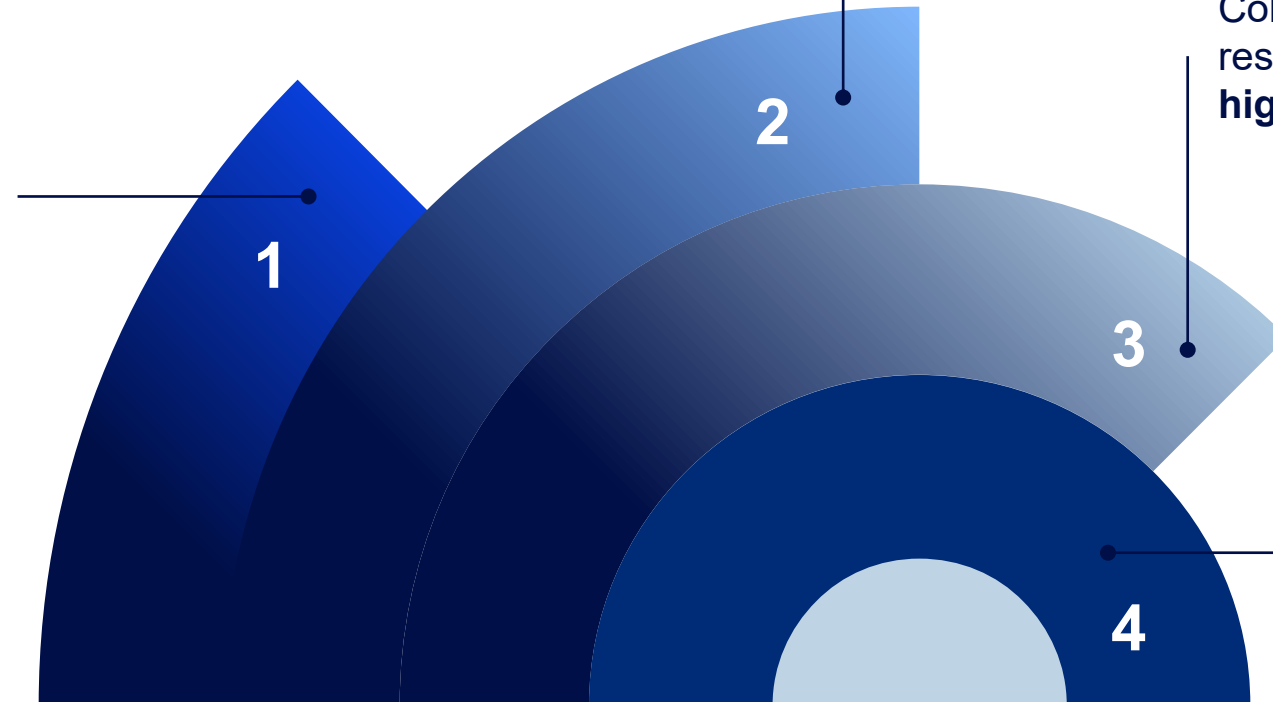
A solution that seeks to deliver attractive risk/return profiles **NOT** available in the market

## A Straight-forward Structure

Allocates to active strategies that are underpinned by investment styles that are **measurable, implementable** and that seeks to provide **diversification**

## A Defined Universe

**Analyzes the alpha potential** in market classes.  
**Determines the universes** where Mercer can add the most value



## Manager Selection

Collaborates with manager research to **find compelling and highly rated<sup>1</sup>** ingredients

## An Attractive Fee Delivered

**Use Mercer scale** to seek to negotiate attractive fee schedules with sub advisors<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Please see the Guide to Mercer's Investment Strategy Ratings: [https://www.mercer.com/assets/us/en\\_us/shared-assets/local/attachments/pdf-wealth-guide-to-mercers-investment-strategy-research-ratings-merc-2023.pdf](https://www.mercer.com/assets/us/en_us/shared-assets/local/attachments/pdf-wealth-guide-to-mercers-investment-strategy-research-ratings-merc-2023.pdf). The rating assigned to a strategy may or may not be consistent with its past performance. Although the rating reflects our expectations on future performance over a time frame appropriate for the particular strategy, we do not guarantee that these expectations will be fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> Fee savings cannot be guaranteed.

# Fixed Income Asset Classes: Defining the Universe

Asset class analysis informs decisions on where Mercer should compete

**Alpha Components**  
(aligned to risk profile)

**Low**  
Government/ Agency

**Moderate**  
High Grade Credit

**Moderate/High**  
Single Asset Class  
Opportunistic Credit

**High**  
Multi-Asset Sub IG Credit

Asset class	Insights <sup>1</sup>	Market Structure <sup>1</sup>	Alpha <sup>2</sup> potential
Short Duration	Low	High	Moderate
Core Aggregate	Low	High	Moderate
High Grade Credit	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Core Plus	Moderate	High	Moderate
Opportunistic Credit	High	Moderate	High

Color coding definition = light shade weak contribution to alpha conviction, dark shade strong contribution to alpha conviction

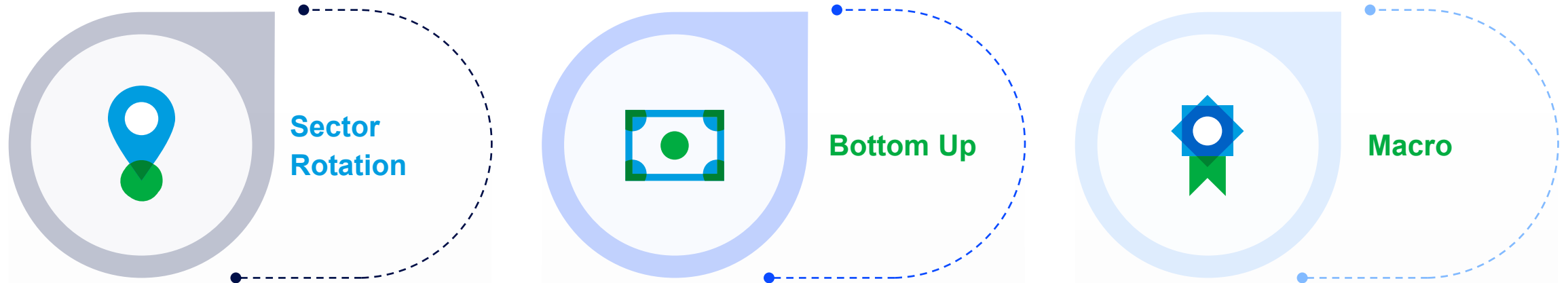
1) See pages 24-26 for important definitions.

2) Alpha defined as gross excess return over a qualified benchmark.

# Investment Grade Fixed Income (US Aggregate)

Manager investment styles

## Styles of investment within the core bond credit universe



### Key characteristics of each style

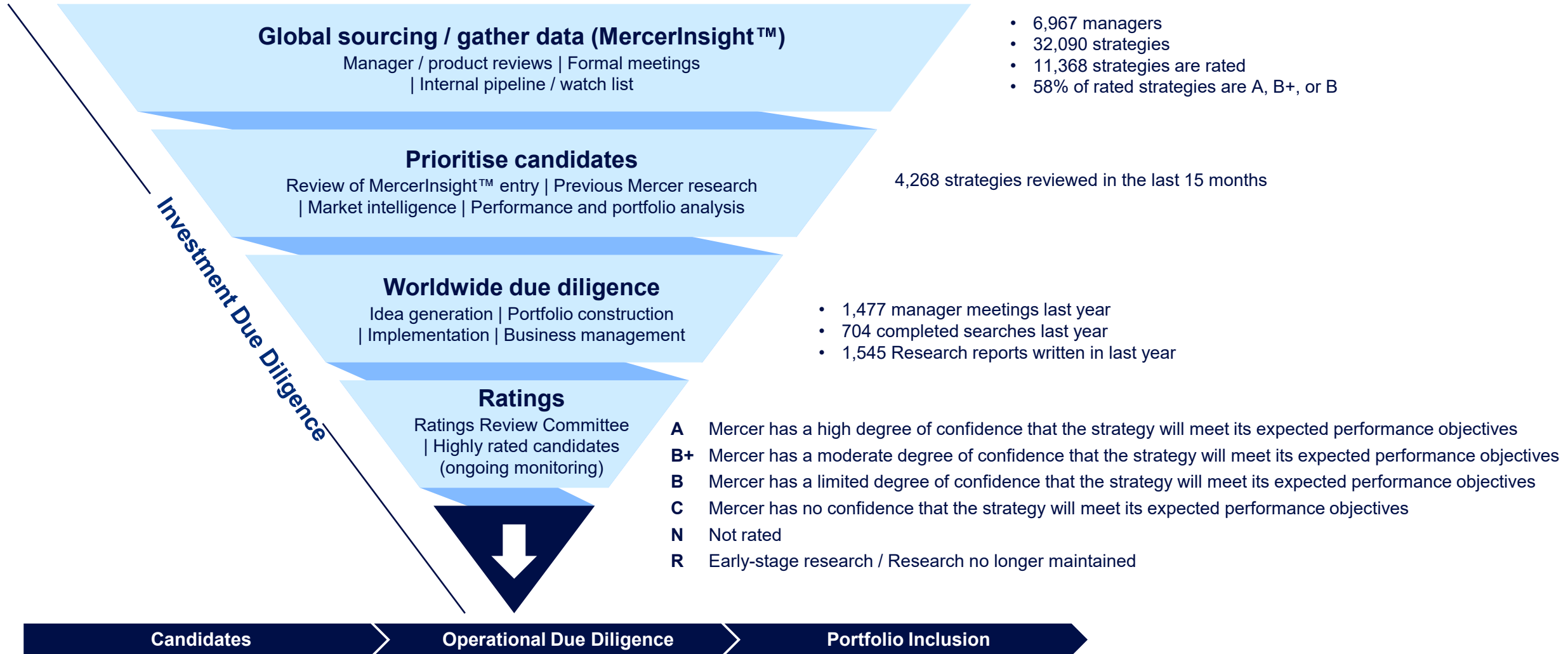
Spread-Oriented approach  
Market beta rotation emphasis  
Contribution to active risk from spread common factors

Relative Value  
Credit-catalyst approach  
Lower tracking error

Complexity premium  
Trading approach  
Higher tracking error  
Use of directional duration and curve active risk

**Blending of approaches may offer enhanced specialism and diversification**

# Assess Manager Potential: Manager Research Process



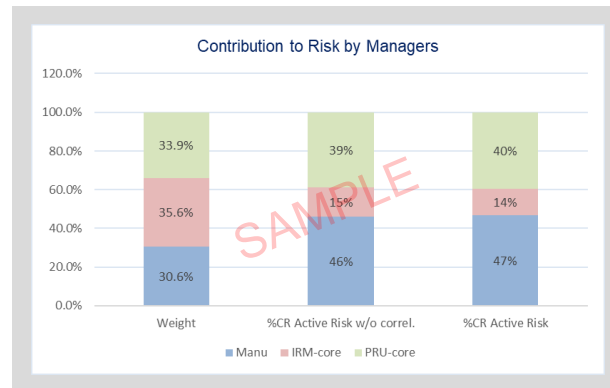
\*Manager and Strategy Statistics as of December 31, 2025, includes sub advised strategies. Please see the [Guide to Mercer's Investment Strategy Ratings](#)

# Construction and Monitoring

## Barra Risk Analytics

Risk Decomposition					
	Port	Core FI	Manu	IRM-core	PRU-core
	Bmk	US Agg	US Agg	US Agg	US Agg
Act. Risk Cont.	Total Risk	0.56	0.90	0.26	0.68
	Term Structure	0.19	0.15	0.09	0.36
	Spread	0.31	0.65	0.15	0.24
	Implied Vol	0.03	0.10	(0.00)	0.02
	Selection Risk	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.01
	Currency Risk	0.01	0.00	-	0.05

## Performance Characteristics



## Monitoring

- Trading, compliance and performance updates
- Quarterly manager calls/meetings with direct access to investment team
- Mercer manager research onsite review schedule
- Market cycle informs on risk and allocations
- Mercer innovation leads to structural enhancements

## Manager Decision Drivers

Performance outside of expectations

Investment team turnover

Firm stability

## Asset Allocation Decisions

Market monitoring

Risk sourcing & measurement

New investment idea

Data shown here is for illustrative purposes. Please see the Guide to Mercer's Investment Strategy Ratings: [https://www.mercer.com/assets/us/en\\_us/shared-assets/local/attachments/pdf-wealth-guide-to-mercers-investment-strategy-research-ratings-merc-2023.pdf](https://www.mercer.com/assets/us/en_us/shared-assets/local/attachments/pdf-wealth-guide-to-mercers-investment-strategy-research-ratings-merc-2023.pdf)

# Mercer Core Fixed Income Fund

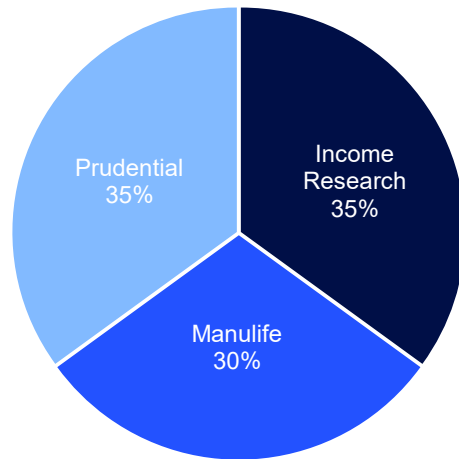
## Overview and Performance

**Investment Objective:** The investment objective of the Fund is to provide total return, consisting of both current income and capital appreciation.

### Benchmark: Bloomberg U.S. Aggregated Bond Index

	Y3	I
Ticker	MCFIX	MCFQX
Portfolio Assets	\$1,519.4 Million	\$15.7 Million
Gross Expense Ratio	0.37%	0.62%
Net Expense Ratio	0.14%	0.39%
New Investors	Open	Open
Fund Inception	8/15/2005	12/27/2021

### Manager Allocations<sup>1</sup> and Style Bias



■ Bottom Up ■ Sector Rotation ■ Macro

### Periodic Performance (%)

As of March 31, 2026

	3 Month	Year-to-Date	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year	Inception
Y3 Shares	-0.16	-0.16	4.74	4.23	0.60	2.26	3.41
I Shares	-0.22	-0.22	4.41	3.94	--	--	-0.07
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index	-0.05	-0.05	4.35	3.63	0.31	1.70	3.18

### Calendar Year Performance (%)

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Y3 Shares	7.79	2.04	6.43	-13.69	-1.15	9.49	9.68	-0.49	4.28	3.52
I Shares	7.39	1.79	6.27	-13.99	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index	7.30	1.25	5.53	-13.01	-1.54	7.51	8.72	0.01	3.54	2.65

The performance data quoted reflects past performance and does not guarantee future results. The investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than return data shown herein. Performance shown is net of fees and assumes the reinvestment of dividend and capital gain distributions. For more information including performance current to the most recent month-end, please call 1-800-346-2510.

Mercer Investments LLC (the "Advisor") has contractually agreed, until at least July 31, 2026, to waive any portion of its management fee that exceeds the aggregate amount of the subadvisory fees that the Advisor is required to pay to the Fund's subadvisors.

The Gross Expense Ratio is taken from the most recent Annual Financial Statement and represents the total operating expense excluding the impact of these waivers while the Net Expense Ratio includes the impact of these waivers.

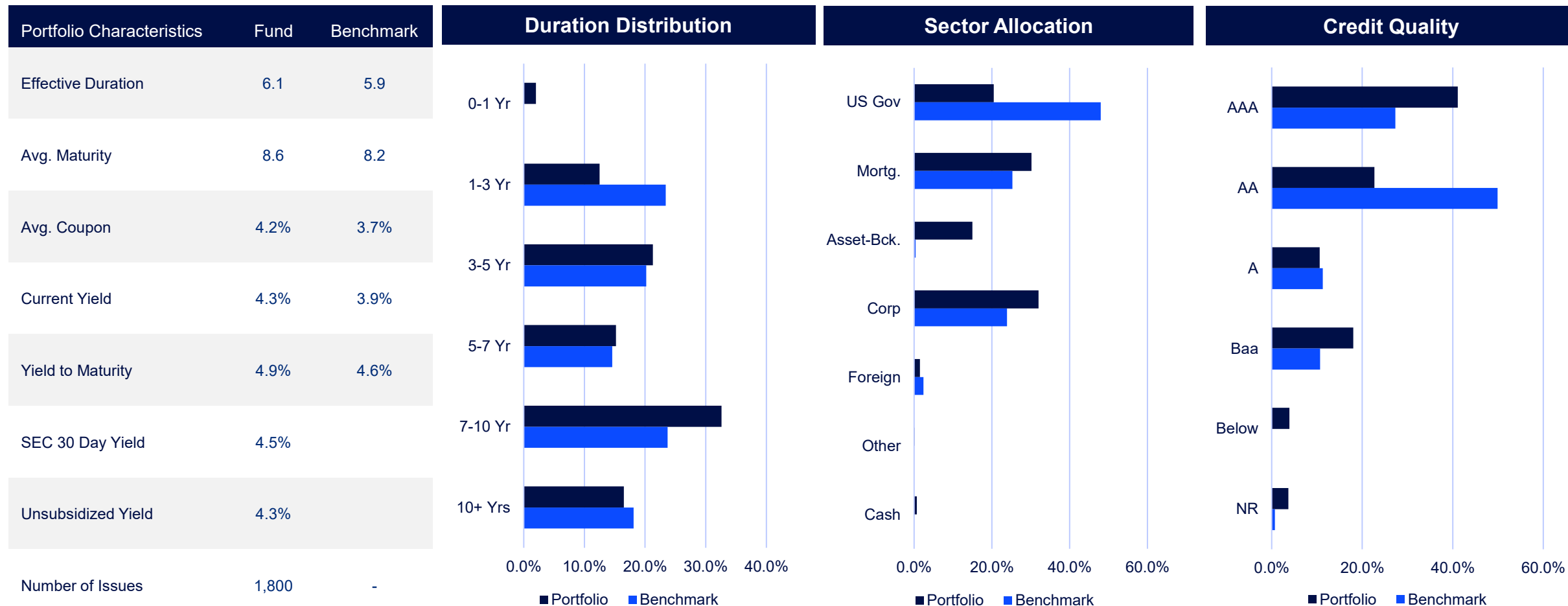
A 2.00% redemption fee applies to shares owned less than 30 days.

Class Y-3 shares generally are available only to "Institutional Investors" which include, but are not limited to "Institutional Accounts" as defined under the rules of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. ("FINRA").

<sup>1</sup>Allocations are as of the date listed and are subject to change. The managers identified do not represent all of the managers selected or recommended for all clients. It should not be assumed that allocation to the managers identified was or will be profitable.

# Mercer Core Fixed Income Fund

## Portfolio Characteristics and Exposures



Please see characteristic definitions in Important Notices at the end of this presentation.

Credit quality ratings using S&P rating symbols (with AAA being the highest and D the lowest) are calculated by MSCI BarraOne and reflect the credit quality of the underlying bonds in the fund portfolio and not that of the Fund itself. BarraOne uses the highest available from S&P and Moody's, as well as JCR and R&I credit ratings depending on the underlying currency of the bonds from a variety of data vendors. BarraOne utilizes bond quality mapping and assigns the rating with the highest priority. If no agency rating is available, the Fund will assign a rating of not rated (NR). Bond quality ratings are subject to change. Allocations are subject to change.

# Fund and Subadvisor Performance and Positioning

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# Mercer Core Fixed Income Fund & Subadvisor Performance

As of March 31, 2026

Fund/Strategy	Market Value (\$M)	QTD	YTD	1 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr	SI	SI Date
<b>Core Fixed Income – Gross</b>	<b>1,519.4</b>	<b>-0.12%</b>	<b>-0.12%</b>	<b>4.90%</b>	<b>4.38%</b>	<b>0.75%</b>	<b>2.55%</b>	<b>3.71%</b>	<b>Gross / Class Y3 15 Aug 2005</b>
<b>Core Fixed Income Fund Class Y3 – Net</b>	<b>1,519.4</b>	<b>-0.16%</b>	<b>-0.16%</b>	<b>4.74%</b>	<b>4.23%</b>	<b>0.60%</b>	<b>2.26%</b>	<b>3.41%</b>	
<b>Core Fixed Income Fund Class I – Net</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>-0.22%</b>	<b>-0.22%</b>	<b>4.41%</b>	<b>3.94%</b>			<b>-0.07%</b>	
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate		-0.05%	-0.05%	4.35%	3.63%	0.31%	1.70%	2.08%	<b>Class I 27 Dec 2021</b>
Value Add*		-0.07%	-0.07%	0.55%	0.75%	0.44%	0.85%	1.63%	
<b>IR&amp;M – Gross</b>		<b>-0.09%</b>	<b>-0.09%</b>	<b>4.60%</b>	<b>3.96%</b>	<b>0.58%</b>	<b>2.33%</b>	<b>2.62%</b>	<b>03 April 2014</b>
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate	<b>539.3</b>	-0.05%	-0.05%	4.35%	3.63%	0.31%	1.70%	2.08%	
Value Add		-0.04%	-0.04%	0.25%	0.33%	0.27%	0.63%	0.54%	
<b>PGIM – Gross</b>	<b>539.4</b>	<b>0.03%</b>	<b>0.03%</b>	<b>5.03%</b>	<b>4.53%</b>	<b>0.78%</b>	<b>2.37%</b>	<b>2.66%</b>	<b>03 April 2014</b>
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate		-0.05%	-0.05%	4.35%	3.63%	0.31%	1.70%	2.08%	
Value Add		0.08%	0.08%	0.68%	0.90%	0.47%	0.67%	0.58%	
<b>Manulife – Gross</b>	<b>462.6</b>	<b>-0.24%</b>	<b>-0.24%</b>	<b>5.04%</b>	<b>4.67%</b>	<b>0.94%</b>		<b>2.81%</b>	<b>01 Jun 2016</b>
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate		-0.05%	-0.05%	4.35%	3.63%	0.31%		1.69%	
Value Add		-0.19%	-0.19%	0.69%	1.04%	0.63%	0.00%	1.12%	

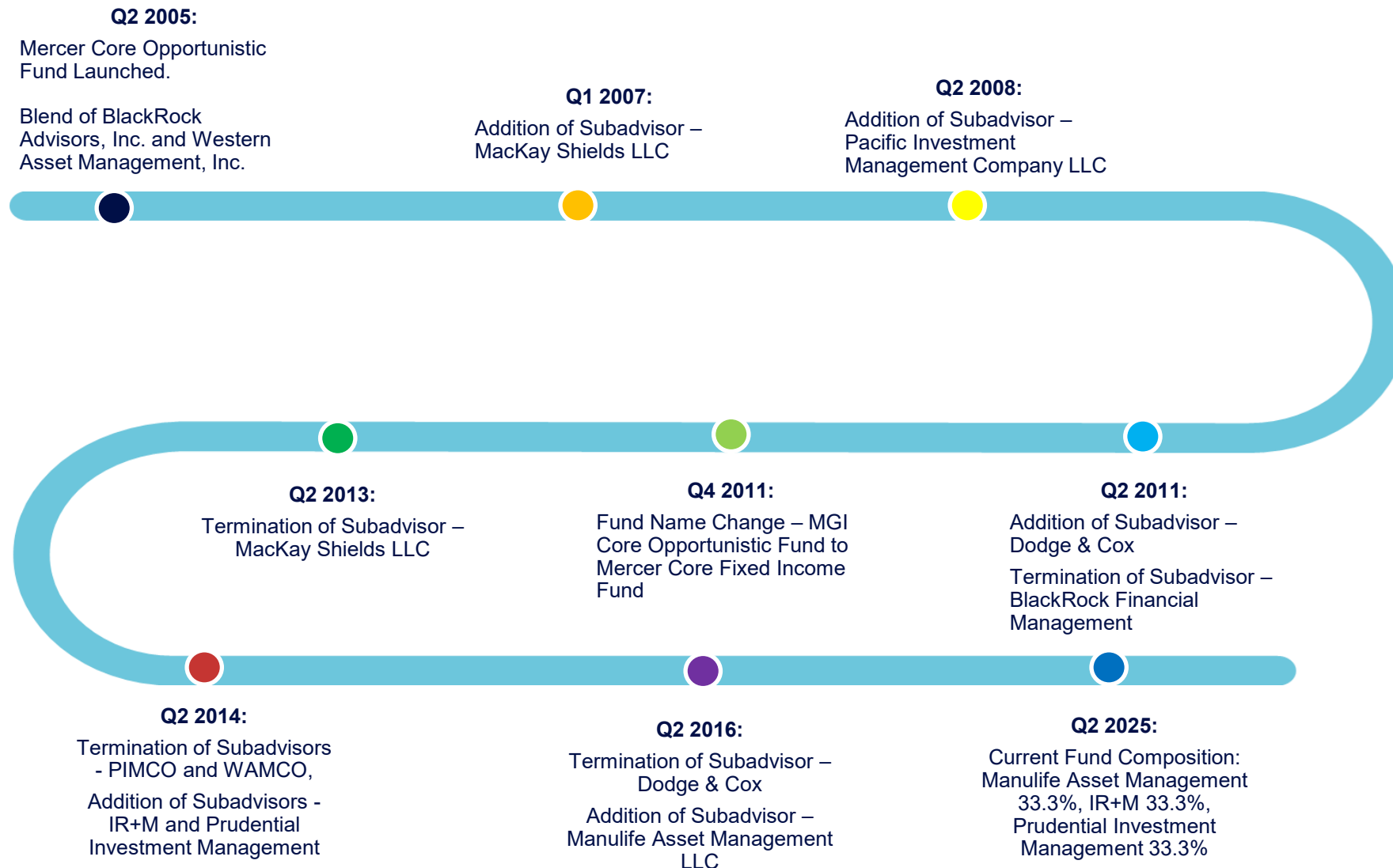
The performance data quoted represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Performance shown is net of fees and assumes the reinvestment of dividend and capital gain distributions. See important performance disclosures on page 11. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. For the most recent month-end performance, please call (800) 346-2510. Please see the following link for information on indexes: <https://www.mercer.com/content/dam/mercer/attachments/private/nurture-cycle/gi-investment-management-index-definitions-mercer.pdf>. One cannot invest directly in an index.

Investors should consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses carefully before investing. For a prospectus with the above information and other information about the Fund, please call (800) 346-2510 or visit our website at <https://www.mercer.com/en-us/solutions/investments/delegated-solutions/>. Read the prospectus or summary prospectus carefully before investing.

\*Value add using Core Fixed Income – Gross of Fees

Includes only current subadvisors as of the date reflected. Subadvisor performance is gross of fees. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

# Core Fixed Income Fund – Portfolio Evolution Timeline

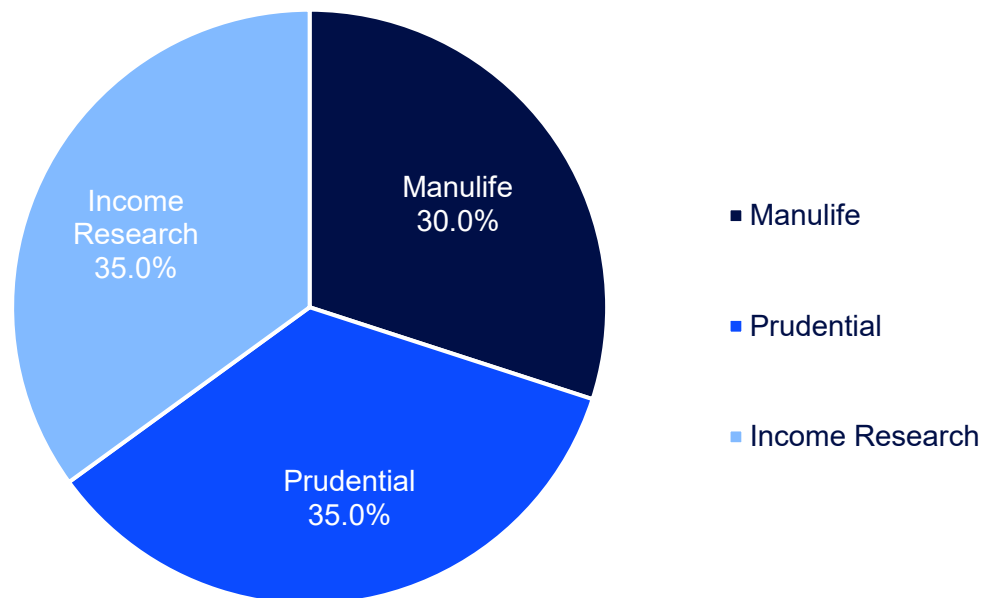





# Sub-Advisor Investment Summary

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# Core Fixed Income Portfolio

Manager Target Allocations - As of March 31, 2025



Manager	Style	Summary
<b>Manulife</b>	 Spread Oriented	Seeks to add value through a combination of in-depth fundamental analysis and business cycle evaluation.
<b>Prudential</b>	 Top Down	Deeply resourced team of credit specialists covers full universe. Rigorous analytical portfolio construction and research-driven subsector and security selection.
<b>Income Research</b>	 Bottom Up	Mid-sized bond boutique focused solely on US investment grade universe. Selective screening of universe to identify high quality and niche bonds.

Allocations are as of the date listed and are subject to change. The managers identified and described do not represent all the managers selected or recommended for all client accounts. It should not be assumed that allocation to the managers identified was or will be profitable. Please see Important Notices for further information.

# Investment Team Biographies

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# Emma Koch

## Fixed Income Lead



Emma is a Portfolio Manager within Mercer's US Investments business, based in Boston. She leads Portfolio Management for Fixed Income, managing over \$50bn in discretionary client assets and is responsible for total performance outcomes. Emma is also a voting member of several governance committees, including Asset Allocation Investment, Manager Strategy and Selection, and the Defined Benefit Investment Committee. Emma also co-chair's Mercer's US Fixed Income Strategic Research Team, which is responsible for generating fixed income market thought leadership content.

Prior to joining Mercer, Emma was an Executive Director at J.P. Morgan on the institutional interest rate derivatives sales desk. Most recently, Emma managed the Boston rates sales team, where she and her team advised institutional investors on opportunities in global fixed income markets. In this role, she focused on actionable idea generation, implementation, and thoughtful trade execution to help her clients achieve their goals. She holds specific subject matter expertise in developed market government bonds, interest rate derivatives, and the impact of evolving economic data and monetary policy on global macro markets. At J.P. Morgan, Emma was a Senior Women's Forum Board member (2018-2020) and helped launch the Junior Women in Markets group in 2009.

Emma graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Pennsylvania with a BS in Economics. She resides in Cohasset, Massachusetts with her husband and their four children.

# Travis Simon

Portfolio Design, Analytics & Risk Lead



Travis Simon leads the Portfolio Design, Analytics & Risk team and is based in Minneapolis. In this role, he works to develop and enhance portfolio construction and management across the investment platform. He is a member of the US Asset Allocation and Manager Selection Committees and an advisor to Economics and Dynamic Asset Allocation team. Travis is a voting member of the Firm's Insurance Investment Committee. He is also the lead for the Derivatives Risk Management Committee. Travis has designed and used propriety asset allocation and risk measurement tools to devise strategic and tactical positioning to the evolving environment. Travis led development on Mercer's proprietary enterprise risk modeling module ("CARE model") which integrates a healthcare entity's investments with its operations, debt structure, pension, and philanthropic development efforts.

Prior to joining Mercer in 2011, Travis worked for RBC Capital Markets' transfer department and government bond desk's pricing and accounting programs. Travis developed several technical systems to increase the efficiency and accuracy of his team's daily processes.

Travis earned a B.S. in finance from Minnesota State University, Mankato. He is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) charterholder and sits on the Education Committee for the CFA Society of Minnesota. He lives in Mendota Heights, Minnesota with his wife and 4-year-old son.

# Andrea Vercruysse

## Fixed Income



Andrea Vercruysse is a Senior Investment Analyst within Mercer's US Fixed Income Portfolio Management Team. Based in Minneapolis, Andrea joined the team in December 2024. As a member of the US Investments team, Andrea is responsible for leading and growing the fixed income portfolio management infrastructure/toolkit. She is the primary point of contact for Portfolio Design Analytics & Risk and acts as the teams' main operational risk liaison within Mercer's broader ecosystem. Andrea actively collaborates with asset class portfolio managers and analysts to lead the portfolio construction section of solution deep dives and proposals to the manager strategy and selection committee.

Prior to joining Mercer, Andrea was a Senior Treasury Analyst specialized in data and reporting for global corporate treasury at Cargill, Inc. She was the owner of data management strategy related to the new treasury management system deployments in US, Canada, EMEA and Asia Pacific. Andrea also solely developed and implemented new valuation policy across global Treasury's portfolio. Prior to Cargill, Andrea spent 11 years working at Wells Fargo, where her last role was an Account Management Supervisor within the Data Control Group at the hedge fund administrator: Wells Fargo Global Fund Services.

Andrea holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Music from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD.

# Michael Cohen

## Fixed Income



Michael Cohen is an Investment Analyst within Mercer's US Investments business. Based in Boston, Michael joined the team in 2024 from Nokia Investment Management Co. His primary role involves providing analytical support for investment recommendations and portfolio construction for the fixed income portfolio management team. Michael actively collaborates with portfolio managers and various asset class analysts to gather valuable information and insights for investment analysis. Additionally, he plays a crucial role in supporting the reporting and risk oversight functions within our business.

Prior to joining Mercer, Michael was a Private Equity Analyst for Nokia's Pension Plan. Michael was responsible for investing and monitoring the Pensions allocation to Private Equity through fund investments. Prior to Nokia, Michael worked at HarbourVest Partners as a Senior Portfolio Data Analyst within the Portfolio Analytics and Operations groups.

Michael holds a Bachelor's degree in Finance from the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire and is actively pursuing Level II of the CAIA.

# Fixed Income Asset Class Disclosures

# Qualitative criteria

## Overview

The table below outlines the factors and questions that we believe investors should consider when judging the potential for consistent, long-term excess returns from active management:

Principle	Insights Availability of better information or better judgment over the available information	Market Structure Pool of investment opportunities
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Information flow</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How fast is that information disseminated?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Degree of institutionalisation</b> What level of sophistication does a 'typical' investor exhibit in a particular marketplace, do they have access to quality research or information on a security?</li> <li>• <b>Non-profit maximizing participants</b> For example, regulations, taking positions to meet other goals (e.g., liability driven investors)</li> <li>• <b>Efficient trading</b> Do highly efficient trading and settlement systems exist in the market in order to effectively capture opportunities?</li> <li>• <b>Presence of market inefficiencies</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Market liquidity</b> Ideally, a market should have sufficient liquidity that positions can be efficiently implemented</li> <li>• <b>Correlation</b> Level of differentiation in stocks/sectors in a market, that is, low correlation amongst securities in a market is ideal from an active management perspective</li> <li>• <b>Market structure / concentration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of investable securities</li> <li>• Ideally, a market should not be highly concentrated in a small number of large names, so positions taken by active managers are more symmetric in nature</li> <li>• Not overly dependent on single sectors or securities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Fixed Income markets universes and indices used

Product Category	Category	Index	Mercer universe
Global Fixed	Developed	Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index	Global Fixed Unhedged Broad Market/Aggregate
Global Government	Developed	FTSE WGBI Index	Global Fixed Unhedged Sovereign
Global Credit	Developed	Bloomberg Global Aggregate Credit Index	Global Credit Unhedged
Global High Yield	Developed	ICE BofA ML Global High Yield Index	Global Fixed High Yield
US Core Fixed	Regional	Bloomberg US Aggregate Index	US Fixed Core Investment Grade
US Government	Regional	Bloomberg US Government Index	US Fixed Government
US Credit	Regional	Bloomberg US Corporate Investment Grade Index	US Fixed Credit
US High Yield	Regional	Bloomberg US Corporate High Yield	US Fixed Income, High Yield

Please see the following link for more information on indices: <https://www.mercer.com/content/dam/mercerc/attachments/private/nurture-cycle/gl-investment-management-index-definitions-mercerc.pdf>

# Fixed Income markets universes and indices used

Product Category	Category	Index	Mercer universe
European Aggregate	Developed	ICE BofAML Euro Broad Market Index	Europe Fixed (Govt & Non-Govt)
European Credit	Developed	ICE BofAML Euro Corporate	Europe Fixed (Non-Govt)
European High Yield	Developed	ICE BofAML European High Yield Constrained Index	Europe Fixed (High Yield)
European Sovereign	Developed	JP Morgan EMU Government	Europe Fixed – Govt
European ABS	Developed	Bloomberg Euro Aggregate ABS	Europe Structured Credit
U.K. Sovereign	Regional	ICE BofAML Gilt All Stocks Index	UK Fixed (Govt)
U.K. Aggregate	Regional	50/50 FTSE Gilts AllSt/Markit iBoxx NG Index	UK Fixed (Govt & Non-Govt)
U.K. Credit	Regional	ICE BofAML Sterling Non-gilt	UK Fixed (Non-Govt)
Swiss Fixed Income	Regional	Swiss Bond Index AAA-BBB	Swiss Fixed Income
Canadian Fixed Income	Regional	FTSE Canada Universe Bond	Canadian Fixed Income
Canadian Core Plus Fixed Income	Regional	FTSE Canada Universe Bond	Canadian Core Plus Universe
Canadian Long-Term Fixed Income	Regional	FTSE Canada Long Term	Canadian Long-Term
Australian Fixed Income	Regional	Bloomberg Ausbond Composite Bond Index 0+ years	Australian Fixed Income
New Zealand Fixed Income	Regional	S&P/NZX NZ Government Bond Index	New Zealand Fixed Income
Japan Fixed Income	Regional	Nomura BPI Overall Index	Japanese Bond Universe
Asia Credit	Regional	JP Morgan Asia Credit Index	Asian Fixed Income - Hard Currency Universe
Singapore Bonds	Regional	Markit iBoxx ALBI Singapore Index	Singapore Fixed Income Universe
Hong Kong Dollar Bonds	Regional	Markit iBoxx ALBI Hong Kong Index	Hong Kong Fixed Income Universe

Please see the following link for more information on indices: <https://www.mercer.com/content/dam/mercerc/attachments/private/nurture-cycle/gl-investment-management-index-definitions-mercerc.pdf>

# Important Notices

**Must be preceded or accompanied by fund's prospectus. Investors should carefully consider the fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing. To obtain a prospectus that contains this and other information, please visit <https://www.delegated-solutions.mercer.com/content/dam/mercero-subdomains/delegated-solutions/USGeneralFundDocuments/us-2017-mutual-funds-class-Y-prospectus-with-supplements-1.pdf> or call 1-800-346-2510. Please carefully read the prospectus, and if available, summary prospectus, before investing.**

References to Mercer shall be construed to include Mercer LLC and/or its associated companies.

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# Important Notices

## Risks Factors

The Fund is subject to the risks associated with the underlying bonds and other fixed income securities including credit, prepayment, call and interest rate risk. As interest rates rise, the value of the Fund can go down and an investor can lose principal. The Fund may invest in foreign securities which may expose the Fund to adverse currency and exchange rate fluctuations, political, social and economic risks. Investing in derivatives (such as futures, options or swaps) and high yield bonds (also known as 'junk' bonds) may cause the Fund to experience greater volatility and less liquidity. Derivatives may be more sensitive to changes in market conditions and may amplify the risk of loss for the Fund. The Fund may experience high portfolio turnover which could result in higher transaction costs and capital gains. There can be no assurance that any fund will achieve its objective.

## Key Terms

**Alpha** - Reflects how a Fund did relative to what would be expected given the Fund's beta and the performance of its benchmark. For example, alpha of 1.4 means the Fund outperformed its estimated return by 1.4%.

**Beta** - The Fund's sensitivity to market changes using its benchmark as an approximation of the market, beta greater than 1 is more volatile, beta less than 1 is less volatile.

**Tracking Error** - A measure of active risk relative to the benchmark. Reflects the standard deviation of the difference between the portfolio return and benchmark return.

**Effective Duration** - A measure of the price sensitivity of bonds, particularly useful for bonds with embedded options (e.g., callable bonds, puttable bonds, and mortgage-backed securities).

**SEC 30 Day Yield** - A calculation methodology that has been standardized by the SEC that allows for fair comparisons between funds. This calculation assumes that all the income that has accrued over the past 30 days will continue for the next 12 months. Fund expenses are deducted, and then this annualized income amount is divided by the fund's net asset value at the end of the period. The calculation includes the impact of fee waivers and expense reimbursements.

**Unsubsidized Yield** - A calculation of the SEC 30 Day Yield that excludes the impact of any fee waivers and expense reimbursements.

**Wtd. Average Maturity** - The weighted average time to maturity of all debt securities held in the Fund.

**Avg. Coupon** - The weighted average coupon of all debt securities held in the Fund.

**Current Yield** - The weighted average current yield of all debt securities held in the Fund.

**Yield to Maturity** - The weighted average yield to maturity of all debt securities held in the Fund.

# Important Notices

## **Mercer universes**

Mercer's universes are intended to provide collective samples of strategies that best allow for robust peer group comparisons over a chosen timeframe. Mercer does not assert that the peer groups are wholly representative of and applicable to all strategies available to investors. One cannot invest directly in a Mercer Universe.

Please see the following link for information on indexes: <https://www.mercer.com/content/dam/mercercapital/attachments/private/nurture-cycle/gi-2018-investment-management-index-definitions-mercercapital.pdf>

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# Important Notices

## ***Measurement methodology***

For most investment strategies that we research, we arrive at a rating on a four tier scale in which the possible ratings are A, B+, B and C. When we formulate short lists of candidates for clients to consider in manager searches, these are generally drawn from the list of strategies rated A within the relevant product category. We first began maintaining formal ratings on this basis in 1995, replacing less formal methods in place, and have extended this to cover all product categories that we actively research, over the period since.

Our methodology for measuring the performance of our ratings entails calculating the average performance of the strategies that we rated A within each product category each quarter, based on the ratings as they stood at the end of the previous quarter. Therefore there is no element of hindsight in the analysis. We then compound these quarterly results together to calculate performance over longer periods. Finally, we subtract the return for an appropriate and widely accepted benchmark index for the product category concerned to calculate value added. We also calculate a risk-adjusted measure of the value added known as the information ratio.

In essence, this methodology tracks the performance of a hypothetical Mercer client that is assumed to split its money evenly between all of the strategies rated A by Mercer within the product category concerned. This hypothetical client is assumed to have reviewed its manager line-up at the end of each quarter, based on the Mercer ratings as they stood at that point in time. A typical client would not invest in all strategies in all of the categories, as some may not be relevant to a particular client for a variety of reasons. Therefore the actual added value of strategies selected by a client would vary from the results depicted here. The average value added for each product category is detailed in this report.

Three types of strategy are excluded from the analysis. Firstly, we exclude strategies that are sub-advised by other investment managers, to avoid double-counting. Secondly, where a manager offers two variants of what is essentially just one strategy, we only include one of these in the analysis (we used to use the one with the longer track record but in 2011 we assigned the decision on which track record to use to the researcher responsible for the strategy), once again to avoid double counting. Thirdly, if a strategy's track record relates to a benchmark that is materially different to the benchmark used in the analysis for the product category concerned, it will be excluded from the analysis to avoid distortions that could arise solely as a result of the non-standard benchmark.

Where a manager offers equity strategies in a typical long only format and a variant which includes the ability to short we only include the long-only version.

For some product categories, where the use of custom benchmarks is prevalent, there is no single widely accepted benchmark that can be used as a basis for this analysis. We therefore use a slightly different methodology for these categories. In these cases we carry out the analysis by first calculating value added each quarter for each track record relative to its custom benchmark, then calculating the average of these value added figures each quarter, and then compounding the quarterly value added figures to calculate value added over longer periods.

We have carried out these calculations for most of the product categories where we both maintain ratings and for which we have reliable performance data (currently 73 categories), going back in each case to when we first had a reasonable spread of ratings for the product category concerned.

# Important Notices

## ***Some important caveats***

All of the value added figures have been calculated by Mercer, but are based upon performance data provided to Mercer by the investment managers concerned. Mercer generally does not independently verify the performance information provided by investment managers.

The methodology described above does not allow for transaction costs that an investor would have incurred if it had actually changed its panel of investment managers every quarter in line with changes to the list of products rated A by Mercer within the product category concerned. In practice, the turnover of managers incurred by such an investor would have averaged about 15% per annum (the actual averages since inception for each product category are shown in the final section of the results). We have not attempted to estimate the transaction costs that would have been incurred as this would require assumptions on a number of factors, including the investor's cash flow position and how the changes had been implemented.

All investment performance data used was reported gross of investment management fees and certain other expenses, such as custody and administration. All the value added figures are also quoted before deduction of such fees. The figures are however net of all transaction costs that the managers concerned have incurred within their investment portfolios. Performance shown assumes the reinvestment of dividends and capital gains distributions. A client's return would be reduced by the advisory fees and any other expenses it may incur in the management of its account. Actual fees may vary depending on, among other things, the applicable fee schedule, portfolio size and/or investment management agreement. Further information regarding investment advisory fees are described in our Form ADV, Part 2A. As described above, the results of the analysis are based on performance data provided to Mercer by the investment managers concerned and other sources. While this information is believed to be reliable, no representations or warranties are made as to the accuracy of information presented, and no responsibility or liability, including for consequential or incidental damages, can be accepted for any error, omission or inaccuracy in this information.

We have endeavored to obtain performance data for all investment products that have ever been rated A by Mercer for inclusion in the analysis, but in some cases this has not been possible. Where data could not be obtained, we have no option but to exclude the product from the analysis. We will continue to endeavor to obtain missing data for future updates of the analysis. This may result in some changes to the historic figures in future updates of the results.

As always, past performance cannot be relied on as a guide to future performance. Whilst Mercer commits considerable resources to manager research, in an effort to maximize the value added through our manager research recommendations, we do not provide any guarantees as to the future performance of the investment strategies that we recommend to our clients.