**Teaching Tool 15 – Possible Benchmarks for Investment Plans**

**Personal Finance: Another Perspective**

One of the key decisions for an Investment Policy Statement is your choice of benchmarks. It is critical that you pick a benchmark that appropriately reflects the asset class performance that you desire to track. The symbols to the right are the index ticker symbols.

**Equity Benchmarks**

Equity indices vary depending upon the market capitalization, type, and geographic location of the companies you are trying to follow. Following are a few of the more followed equity benchmarks with their Ticker symbols.

**U.S. Large-cap Indices:**

S&P 500 SPX

Dow 30 Industrials INDU

Russell 1000 RIY

Russell Top 200 R200

**U.S. Mid-cap Indices**

S&P 400 MID

Russell Mid-cap RMC

**U.S. Small-cap Indices:**

Russell 2000 RTY

Russell Small Cap Completeness RSCC

S&P 600 Small-cap SML

**Total Market Indices:**

Wilshire 5000 Total Market TMW

S&P Super-composite 1500 SPR

Russell 3000 RAY

**International/Regional:**

MSCI Europe, Australia, and Far East MXEA

MSCI World MXWO

S&P Global 1200 Index SPINGLOB

MSCI world Free ex-US GDUEACWZ

**Emerging Markets**

MSCI Emerging Markets MXEF

S&P/IFC Emerging Markets Free IDRICOTD

**Bond Benchmarks**

Bond benchmarks vary depending on the maturity and issuer of the bonds. One of the easiest places to find the Bond Indexes is in the Interest Rates and Bonds section of the Wall Street Journal. The major Bond Index categories are listed below. While some of the Lehman Brother indices are the most followed, they are not available through our subscription to Bloomberg.

**US Treasury Securities** from Lehman Brothers—see WSJ:

Short-term Treasury (Lehman) GSUS13

Intermediate Treasury (Lehman) GSUS35

Long-term Treasury (Lehman) GSUS10+

Composite Treasury (Lehman) GSUSMN

**Broad Market (Corporate)**:

US Aggregate (Bank of America) BACSBMRT

US Corporate (Credit Suisse) LUCI

US Investment Grade (Citigroup) USBIG

**High Yield and Yankee Bonds**

High Yield (Salomon Smith Barney) SBI

Yankee Bonds (Salomon Smith Barney) SBCYSY

SSMB Index (Salomon Smith Barney) SSBHYIND

**Mortgage Backed Securities**:

Ginnie Mae BGGNMA

Fannie Mae MTGIFNTR

Freddie Mac MTGIFHTR

**Municipals:**

Bond Buyer Muni BBWK1YR

10 Year General Obligation BBWK11GO

10-20 Year General Obligation BBWK20GO

Revenue Bonds BBWK2025RV

**Real Estate Benchmarks**

Real estate is a difficult asset class to cover. An easier way to gain access to this asset class is through Real estate investment trusts or REITs. Generally, most real estate benchmarks are benchmarks of Real Estate Investment Trusts.

**Real Estate Investment Trusts:**

Dow Jones Equity REIT RCIT

Bloomberg REIT Index BBREIT

S&P REIT Index SPREIT

MSCI US REIT RMS

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