I'll analyze each candidate against the job requirements and rate them for the Entry-Level Quantitative Analyst position at Cascade Ridge Capital.

Job Requirements Analysis

Key criteria:

- Strong mathematical foundation (calculus, linear algebra, probability, statistics)
- Data analysis and modeling experience
- Communication skills (explaining complex ideas simply)
- Technical tools (Excel, Python/R/MATLAB preferred)
- Collaborative abilities
- Interest in finance/quantitative decision-making

Candidate Ratings

Candidate 1: Alex Martinez - Rating: 7/10

Strengths:

- Excellent GPA (3.78) with rigorous coursework (Real Analysis, Numerical Analysis)
- Relevant projects (stochastic modeling, optimization)
- Proven communication skills through tutoring
- Python and MATLAB experience

Weaknesses:

- Limited practical work experience beyond tutoring
- Basic Pandas skills
- No finance exposure

Candidate 2: Jordan Kim - Rating: 9/10 ⭐

Strengths:

- Direct relevant experience: financial data analysis internship at credit union
- Analyzed loan performance and default risk (directly applicable)
- Strong technical toolkit: Python (Pandas, NumPy, Matplotlib), SQL, Excel
- Research experience with presentations (communication skills)
- Data Science minor demonstrates commitment to quantitative analysis
- Portfolio and regression projects show finance interest

Weaknesses:

- Slightly lower GPA (3.61)
- Statistics coursework mentioned but less pure math depth than Candidate 1

Candidate 3: Taylor Nguyen - Rating: 6/10

Strengths:

- Finance industry experience (Regional Investment Services)
- Understands financial operations and terminology
- Client-facing communication skills
- Currently working in relevant environment

Weaknesses:

- Lowest GPA (3.32)
- Limited technical skills (basic Excel only)
- Minimal quantitative analysis experience
- Lacks programming skills entirely

Candidate 4: Sam Patel - Rating: 6.5/10

Strengths:

- Strongest technical skills (Python, C++, MATLAB, Monte Carlo)
- Options pricing project shows finance interest
- Math + CS background provides computational strength
- Advanced quantitative methods (numerical linear algebra)

Weaknesses:

- Resume itself notes "little evidence of teamwork or communication"
- No finance work experience
- Teaching assistant role but limited communication skill demonstration
- Resume "lacks clear explanation of impact"

Candidate 5: Morgan Lee - Rating: 7.5/10

Strengths:

- Business analytics internship with cross-functional collaboration
- Worked with finance and operations teams
- Cost optimization modeling (directly relevant)
- Data visualization for non-technical audiences (key job requirement)
- Balanced technical and communication skills

Weaknesses:

- Only "introductory" Python skills
- Less mathematical depth than top candidates

Final Ranking

1. **Jordan Kim** (9/10) - **RECOMMENDED HIRE**
2. Morgan Lee (7.5/10)
3. Alex Martinez (7/10)
4. Sam Patel (6.5/10)
5. Taylor Nguyen (6/10)

Recommendation

Jordan Kim is the best candidate for this position. They offer the ideal combination of:

- **Directly relevant experience** analyzing financial data and risk patterns
- **Strong technical skills** that match the job requirements
- **Proven communication abilities** (research presentations, stakeholder reporting)
- **Demonstrated interest in finance** through internship and projects
- **Collaborative experience** working with senior analysts

While Alex Martinez has stronger pure mathematics credentials and Sam Patel has superior programming skills, Jordan's real-world financial data analysis experience, combined with solid quantitative skills and proven ability to communicate results, makes them the most job-ready candidate who can contribute immediately while continuing to develop.