

Dreyfus Variable Investment Fund: International Value Portfolio



Prospectus
May 1, 2017

Initial Shares
Service Shares

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Fund Summary

Investment Objective

The fund seeks long-term capital growth.

Fees and Expenses

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the fund. These figures do not reflect any fees or charges imposed by participating insurance companies under their Variable Annuity contracts (VA contracts) or Variable Life Insurance policies (VLI policies), and if such fees and/or charges were included, the fees and expenses would be higher.

Annual Fund Operating Expenses (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)		
	Initial Shares	Service Shares
Management fees	1.00	1.00
Distribution and/or service (12b-1) fees	none	.25
Other expenses	.38	.36
Total annual fund operating expenses	1.38	1.61
Fee waiver and/or expense reimbursement*	(.52)	(.50)
Total annual fund operating expenses <i>(after fee waiver and/or expense reimbursement)</i>	.86	1.11

**The fund's investment adviser, The Dreyfus Corporation, has contractually agreed, until May 1, 2018, to waive receipt of its fees and/or assume the direct expenses of the fund so that the expenses of none of the classes (excluding Rule 12b-1 fees, shareholder services fees, taxes, interest, brokerage commissions, commitment fees on borrowings and extraordinary expenses) exceed .86%. On or after May 1, 2018, The Dreyfus Corporation may terminate this expense limitation at any time.*

Example

The Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the fund for the time periods indicated and then hold or redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the fund's operating expenses remain the same. The Example does not reflect fees and expenses incurred under VA contracts and VLI policies; if they were reflected, the figures in the Example would be higher. The one-year example and the first year of the three-, five- and ten-years examples are based on net operating expenses, which reflect the expense limitation by The Dreyfus Corporation. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
Initial Shares	\$88	\$386	\$706	\$1,612
Service Shares	\$113	\$459	\$829	\$1,869

Portfolio Turnover

The fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover may indicate higher transaction costs. These costs, which are not reflected in annual fund operating expenses or in the Example, affect the fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the fund's portfolio turnover rate was 108.21% of the average value of its portfolio.

Principal Investment Strategy

To pursue its goal, the fund normally invests at least 80% of its net assets, plus any borrowings for investment purposes, in stocks. The fund normally invests substantially all of its assets in the stocks of foreign companies (i.e., organized under the laws of countries other than the U.S.), including those located in emerging market countries. The fund ordinarily invests most of its assets in securities of foreign companies which The Dreyfus Corporation considers to be value companies. The fund's investment approach is value oriented and research driven. In selecting stocks, the

portfolio managers identify potential investments through extensive quantitative and fundamental research. Emphasizing individual stock selection rather than economic and industry trends, the fund focuses on three key factors:

- **value**, or how a stock is valued relative to its intrinsic worth based on traditional value measures
- **business health**, or overall efficiency and profitability as measured by return on assets and return on equity
- **business momentum**, or the presence of a catalyst (such as corporate restructuring, change in management or spin-off) that potentially will trigger a price increase near term to midterm

Principal Risks

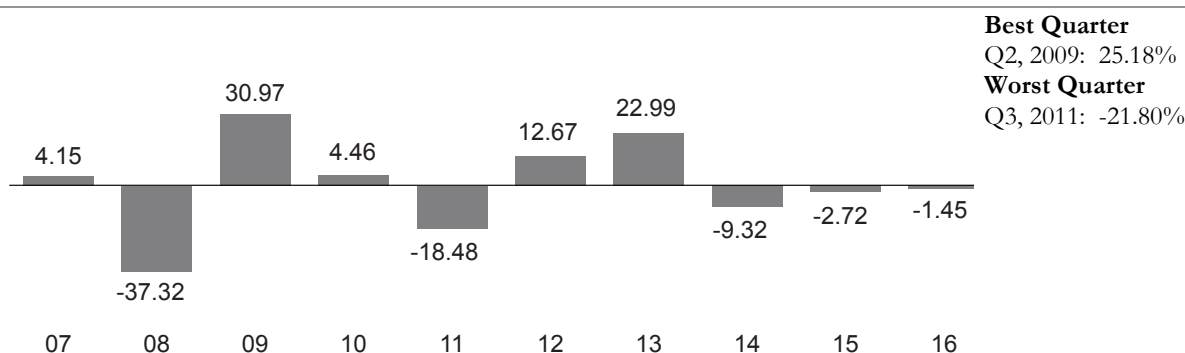
An investment in the fund is not a bank deposit. It is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or any other government agency. It is not a complete investment program. The fund's share price fluctuates, sometimes dramatically, which means you could lose money.

- *Risks of stock investing.* Stocks generally fluctuate more in value than bonds and may decline significantly over short time periods. There is the chance that stock prices overall will decline because stock markets tend to move in cycles, with periods of rising prices and falling prices. The market value of a stock may decline due to general market conditions or because of factors that affect the particular company or the company's industry.
- *Foreign investment risk.* To the extent the fund invests in foreign securities, the fund's performance will be influenced by political, social and economic factors affecting investments in foreign issuers. Special risks associated with investments in foreign issuers include exposure to currency fluctuations, less liquidity, less developed or less efficient trading markets, lack of comprehensive company information, political and economic instability and differing auditing and legal standards. Investments denominated in foreign currencies are subject to the risk that such currencies will decline in value relative to the U.S. dollar and affect the value of these investments held by the fund.
- *Emerging market risk.* The securities of issuers located or doing substantial business in emerging market countries tend to be more volatile and less liquid than the securities of issuers located in countries with more mature economies. Emerging markets generally have less diverse and less mature economic structures and less stable political systems than those of developed countries. Investments in these countries may be subject to political, economic, legal, market and currency risks. The risks may include less protection of property rights and uncertain political and economic policies, the imposition of capital controls and/or foreign investment limitations by a country, nationalization of businesses and the imposition of sanctions by other countries, such as the United States.
- *Value stock risk.* Value stocks involve the risk that they may never reach their expected full market value, either because the market fails to recognize the stock's intrinsic worth or the expected value was misgauged. They also may decline in price even though in theory they are already undervalued.
- *Liquidity risk.* When there is little or no active trading market for specific types of securities, it can become more difficult to sell the securities in a timely manner at or near their perceived value. In such a market, the value of such securities and the fund's share price may fall dramatically. Investments that are illiquid or that trade in lower volumes may be more difficult to value. Investments in foreign securities, particularly those of issuers located in emerging markets, tend to have greater exposure to liquidity risk than domestic securities.
- *Portfolio turnover risk.* The fund may engage in short-term trading, which could produce higher transaction costs.

Performance

The following bar chart and table provide some indication of the risks of investing in the fund. The bar chart shows changes in the performance of the fund's Initial shares from year to year. The table compares the average annual total returns of the fund's shares to those of a broad measure of market performance. The fund's past performance is not necessarily an indication of how the fund will perform in the future. More recent performance information may be available at www.dreyfus.com.

Performance information reflects the fund's expenses only and does not reflect the fees and charges imposed by participating insurance companies under their VA contracts or VLI policies. Because these fees and charges will reduce total return, policyowners should consider them when evaluating and comparing the fund's performance. Policyowners should consult the prospectus for their contract or policy for more information.

Year-by-Year Total Returns as of 12/31 each year (%)**Initial Shares**

Average Annual Total Returns (as of 12/31/16)

	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Initial Shares	-1.45%	3.80%	-1.30%
Service Shares	-1.58%	3.56%	-1.54%
MSCI EAFE Index reflects no deductions for fees, expenses or taxes	1.00%	6.53%	0.75%

Portfolio Management

The fund's investment adviser is The Dreyfus Corporation (Dreyfus).

The fund is managed by a team of portfolio managers employed by Dreyfus and The Boston Company Asset Management, LLC (TBCAM), an affiliate of Dreyfus. The team consists of Mark A. Bogar, CFA, James A. Lydotes, CFA, and Andrew Leger, who serve as the fund's primary portfolio managers, positions they have held since November 2015. Mr. Bogar is a senior managing director, portfolio manager and head of the global equity team at TBCAM. Mr. Lydotes is a managing director, portfolio manager and senior research analyst at TBCAM. Mr. Leger is a director and senior research analyst at TBCAM.

Purchase and Sale of Fund Shares

Fund shares are offered only to separate accounts established by insurance companies to fund VA contracts and VLI policies. Individuals may not purchase shares directly from, or place sell orders directly with, the fund. The VA contracts and the VLI policies are described in the separate prospectuses issued by the participating insurance companies, over which the fund assumes no responsibility. Policyowners should consult the prospectus of the separate account of the participating insurance company for more information about buying, selling (redeeming), or exchanging fund shares.

Tax Information

The fund's distributions are taxable as ordinary income or capital gains. Since the fund's shareholders are the participating insurance companies and their separate accounts, the tax treatment of dividends and distributions will depend on the tax status of the participating insurance company. Accordingly, no discussion is included as to the federal personal income tax consequences to policyowners. For this information, policyowners should consult the prospectus of the separate account of the participating insurance company or their tax advisers.

Payments to Broker-Dealers and Other Financial Intermediaries

If you purchase shares through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as an insurance company), the fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of fund shares and related services. To the extent that the intermediary may receive lesser or no payments in connection with the sale of other investments, the payments from the fund and its related companies may create a potential conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your financial representative to recommend the fund over the other investments. This potential conflict of interest may be addressed by policies, procedures or practices adopted by the financial intermediary. As there may be many different policies, procedures or practices adopted by different intermediaries to address the manner in which compensation is earned through the sale of investments or the provision of related services, the compensation

rates and other payment arrangements that may apply to a financial intermediary and its representatives may vary by intermediary. Ask your financial representative or visit your financial intermediary's website for more information.

Fund Details

Introduction

Fund shares are offered only to separate accounts established by insurance companies to fund VA contracts and VLI policies. Individuals may not purchase shares directly from, or place sell orders directly with, the fund. The VA contracts and the VLI policies are described in the separate prospectuses issued by the participating insurance companies, over which the fund assumes no responsibility. Conflicts may arise between the interests of VA contract holders and VLI policyholders (collectively, policyowners). The board will monitor events to identify any material conflicts and, if such conflicts arise, determine what action, if any, should be taken.

The fund currently offers two classes of shares: Initial shares and Service shares. Policyowners should consult the applicable prospectus of the separate account of the participating insurance company to determine which class of fund shares may be purchased by the separate account.

While the fund's investment objective and policies may be similar to those of other funds managed by the investment adviser(s), the fund's investment results may be higher or lower than, and may not be comparable to, those of the other funds.

Goal and Approach

The fund seeks long-term capital growth. To pursue its goal, the fund normally invests at least 80% of its net assets, plus any borrowings for investment purposes, in stocks. The fund normally invests substantially all of its assets in the stocks of foreign companies, including those located in emerging market countries. The fund ordinarily invests most of its assets in securities of foreign companies which Dreyfus considers to be value companies. Foreign companies are those companies (i) organized under the laws of a foreign country; (ii) whose principal trading market is in a foreign country; or (iii) that have a majority of their assets, or that derive a significant portion of their revenue or profits from businesses, investments or sales outside the United States. The fund may invest in companies of any size. The fund invests principally in common stocks, but its stock investments also may include preferred stocks and convertible securities, including those purchased in initial public offerings (IPOs) or shortly thereafter.

The fund's investment approach is value oriented and research driven. In selecting stocks, the portfolio managers identify potential investments through extensive quantitative and fundamental research. Emphasizing individual stock selection rather than economic and industry trends, the fund focuses on three key factors:

- **value**, or how a stock is valued relative to its intrinsic worth based on traditional value measures
- **business health**, or overall efficiency and profitability as measured by return on assets and return on equity
- **business momentum**, or the presence of a catalyst (such as corporate restructuring, change in management or spin-off) that potentially will trigger a price increase near term to midterm

The fund typically sells a stock when it is no longer considered a value company, appears less likely to benefit from the current market and economic environment, shows deteriorating fundamentals or declining momentum or falls short of the portfolio managers' expectations.

Although not a principal investment strategy, the fund may, but is not required to, use derivatives, such as options, futures and options on futures (including those relating to stocks, indexes and foreign currencies), forward contracts and swap agreements, as a substitute for investing directly in an underlying asset, to manage currency risk, to increase returns or as part of a hedging strategy. Derivatives may be entered into on established exchanges or through privately negotiated transactions referred to as over-the-counter derivatives. A derivatives contract will obligate or entitle the fund or underlying fund to deliver or receive an asset or cash payment based on the change in value of the underlying asset. When the fund and certain underlying funds enter into derivatives transactions, they may be required to segregate assets or enter into offsetting positions, in accordance with applicable regulations. The fund also may engage in short-selling, typically for hedging purposes, such as to limit exposure to a possible market decline in the value of its portfolio securities.

Investment Risks

An investment in the fund is not a bank deposit. It is not insured or guaranteed by the FDIC or any other government agency. It is not a complete investment program. The value of your investment in the fund will fluctuate, sometimes dramatically, which means you could lose money.

- *Risks of stock investing.* Stocks generally fluctuate more in value than bonds and may decline significantly over short time periods. There is the chance that stock prices overall will decline because stock markets tend to move in cycles, with periods of rising prices and falling prices. The market value of a stock may decline due to general market conditions that are not related to the particular company, such as real or perceived adverse economic conditions, changes in the general outlook for corporate earnings, changes in interest or currency rates or adverse investor sentiment generally. A security's market value also may decline because of factors that affect the particular company, such as management performance, financial leverage and reduced demand for the company's products or services, or factors that affect the company's industry, such as labor shortages or increased production costs and competitive conditions within an industry.
- *Foreign investment risk.* To the extent the fund invests in foreign securities, the fund's performance will be influenced by political, social and economic factors affecting investments in foreign issuers. Special risks associated with investments in foreign issuers include exposure to currency fluctuations, less liquidity, less developed or less efficient trading markets, lack of comprehensive company information, political and economic instability and differing auditing and legal standards. Investments denominated in foreign currencies are subject to the risk that such currencies will decline in value relative to the U.S. dollar and affect the value of these investments held by the fund. To the extent the fund's investments are focused in a limited number of foreign countries, the fund's performance could be more volatile than that of more geographically diversified funds.
- *Emerging market risk.* The securities of issuers located or doing substantial business in emerging market countries tend to be more volatile and less liquid than the securities of issuers located in countries with more mature economies, potentially making prompt liquidation at an attractive price difficult. The economies of countries with emerging markets may be based predominantly on only a few industries, may be highly vulnerable to changes in local or global trade conditions, and may suffer from extreme debt burdens or volatile inflation rates. Transaction settlement and dividend collection procedures also may be less reliable in emerging markets than in developed markets. Emerging markets generally have less diverse and less mature economic structures and less stable political systems than those of developed countries. Investments in these countries may be subject to political, economic, legal, market and currency risks. The risks may include less protection of property rights and uncertain political and economic policies, the imposition of capital controls and/or foreign investment limitations by a country, nationalization of businesses and the imposition of sanctions by other countries, such as the United States.
- *Value stock risk.* Value stocks involve the risk that they may never reach their expected full market value, either because the market fails to recognize the stock's intrinsic worth or the expected value was misgauged. They also may decline in price even though in theory they are already undervalued.
- *Liquidity risk.* When there is little or no active trading market for specific types of securities, it can become more difficult to sell the securities in a timely manner at or near their perceived value. In such a market, the value of such securities and the fund's share price may fall dramatically. Investments that are illiquid or that trade in lower volumes may be more difficult to value. Investments in foreign securities, particularly those of issuers located in emerging markets, tend to have greater exposure to liquidity risk than domestic securities.
- *Portfolio turnover risk.* The fund may engage in short-term trading, which could produce higher transaction costs.

In addition to the principal risks described above, the fund is subject to the following additional risks that are not anticipated to be principal risks of investing in the fund:

- *Small and midsize company risk.* Small and midsize companies carry additional risks because the operating histories of these companies tend to be more limited, their earnings and revenues less predictable (and some companies may be experiencing significant losses), and their share prices more volatile than those of larger, more established companies. These companies may have limited product lines, markets or financial resources, or may depend on a limited management group. Other investments are made in anticipation of future products, services or events whose delay or cancellation could cause the stock price to drop. The shares of smaller companies tend to trade less frequently than those of larger, more established companies, which can adversely affect the pricing of these securities and the fund's ability to sell these securities. Some of the fund's investments will rise and fall based on investor perception rather than economic factors.
- *Foreign currency risk.* Investments in foreign currencies are subject to the risk that those currencies will decline in value relative to the U.S. dollar or, in the case of hedged positions, that the U.S. dollar will decline relative to the currency

being hedged. Currency exchange rates may fluctuate significantly over short periods of time. Foreign currencies, particularly the currencies of emerging market countries, are also subject to risks caused by inflation, interest rates, budget deficits and low savings rates, political factors and government intervention and controls.

- *Market sector risk.* The fund may significantly overweight or underweight certain countries, companies, industries or market sectors, which may cause the fund's performance to be more or less sensitive to developments affecting those countries, companies, industries or sectors.
- *Short sale risk.* The fund may make short sales, which involves selling a security it does not own in anticipation that the security's price will decline. Short sales expose the fund to the risk that it will be required to buy the security sold short (also known as "covering" the short position) at a time when the security has appreciated in value, thus resulting in a loss to the fund. Short positions in stocks involve more risk than long positions in stocks because the maximum sustainable loss on a stock purchased is limited to the amount paid for the stock plus the transaction costs, whereas there is no maximum attainable price on the shorted stock. As such, theoretically, stocks sold short have unlimited risk. The fund may not always be able to close out a short position at a particular time or at an acceptable price. The fund may not always be able to borrow a security the fund seeks to sell short at a particular time or at an acceptable price. Moreover, if the lender of a borrowed security requires the fund to return the security to it on short notice, and the fund is unable to borrow the security from another lender, the fund may have to buy the borrowed security at an unfavorable price, resulting in a loss. Thus, there is a risk that the fund may be unable to engage in short selling due to a lack of available stocks or for some other reason. It is possible that the market value of the securities the fund holds in long positions will decline at the same time that the market value of the securities the fund has sold short increases, thereby increasing the fund's potential volatility.
- *Derivatives risk.* A small investment in derivatives could have a potentially large impact on the fund's performance. The use of derivatives involves risks different from, or possibly greater than, the risks associated with investing directly in the underlying assets, and the fund's use of derivatives may result in losses to the fund. Derivatives in which the fund may invest can be highly volatile, illiquid and difficult to value, and there is the risk that changes in the value of a derivative held by the fund will not correlate with the underlying assets or the fund's other investments in the manner intended. Certain derivatives have the potential for unlimited loss, regardless of the size of the initial investment. Certain types of derivatives, including over-the-counter transactions, involve greater risks than the underlying assets because, in addition to general market risks, they are subject to liquidity risk, credit and counterparty risk (failure of the counterparty to the derivatives transaction to honor its obligation) and pricing risk (risk that the derivative cannot or will not be accurately valued). Future rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) may require the fund to alter, perhaps materially, its use of derivatives.
- *Leverage risk.* The use of leverage, such as entering into futures contracts and forward currency contracts, or lending portfolio securities, may magnify the fund's gains or losses. Because many derivatives have a leverage component, adverse changes in the value of the underlying asset can result in a loss substantially greater than the amount invested in the derivative itself.
- *IPO risk.* The prices of securities purchased in IPOs can be very volatile. The effect of IPOs on the fund's performance depends on a variety of factors, including the number of IPOs the fund invests in relative to the size of the fund and whether and to what extent a security purchased in an IPO appreciates or depreciates in value. As a fund's asset base increases, IPOs often have a diminished effect on such fund's performance.
- *Other potential risks.* The fund may lend its portfolio securities to brokers, dealers and other financial institutions. In connection with such loans, the fund will receive collateral from the borrower equal to at least 100% of the value of loaned securities. If the borrower of the securities fails financially, there could be delays in recovering the loaned securities or exercising rights to the collateral.

Under adverse market conditions, the fund could invest some or all of its assets in the securities of U.S. issuers, U.S. Treasury securities and money market securities. Although the fund would do this for temporary defensive purposes, it could reduce the benefit from any upswing in the market. During such periods, the fund's investments may not be consistent with its principal investment strategies, and the fund may not achieve its investment objective.

The participating insurance companies and their separate accounts are the shareholders of the fund. From time to time, a shareholder may own a substantial number of fund shares. The sale of a large number of shares could impact the fund's net asset value and adversely affect remaining fund shareholders.

Management

The investment adviser for the fund is The Dreyfus Corporation, 200 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10166. Founded in 1947, Dreyfus manages approximately \$240 billion in 160 mutual fund portfolios. For the past fiscal year, the fund paid Dreyfus an investment advisory fee at the annual rate of .48% of the fund's average daily net assets. A

discussion regarding the basis for the board's approving the fund's investment advisory agreement with Dreyfus is available in the fund's semiannual report for the six-month period ended June 30, 2016. Dreyfus is the primary mutual fund business of The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation (BNY Mellon), a global financial services company focused on helping clients manage and service their financial assets, operating in 35 countries and serving more than 100 markets. BNY Mellon is a leading investment management and investment services company, uniquely focused to help clients manage and move their financial assets in the rapidly changing global marketplace. BNY Mellon has \$29.9 trillion in assets under custody and administration and \$1.6 trillion in assets under management. BNY Mellon is the corporate brand of The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation. BNY Mellon Investment Management is one of the world's leading investment management organizations, and one of the top U.S. wealth managers, encompassing BNY Mellon's affiliated investment management firms, wealth management services and global distribution companies. Additional information is available at www.bnymellon.com.

The Dreyfus asset management philosophy is based on the belief that discipline and consistency are important to investment success. For each fund, Dreyfus seeks to establish clear guidelines for portfolio management and to be systematic in making decisions. This approach is designed to provide each fund with a distinct, stable identity.

The fund is managed by a team of portfolio managers employed by Dreyfus and TBCAM. The team consists of Mark A. Bogar, CFA, James A. Lydotes, CFA, and Andrew Leger, who serve as the fund's primary portfolio managers and are jointly and primarily responsible for managing the fund's portfolio. Mr. Bogar is a senior managing director, portfolio manager and head of the global equity team at TBCAM, where he has been employed since August 2007. He also has been employed by Dreyfus since November 2008. Mr. Lydotes is a managing director, portfolio manager and senior research analyst at TBCAM, where he has been employed since February 2005. He also has been employed by Dreyfus since December 2009. Mr. Leger is a director and senior research analyst at TBCAM, where he has been employed since June 2014. Prior thereto, he was employed for more than five years as a research analyst at BlackRock, Inc. He also has been employed by Dreyfus since October 2015. Messrs. Bogar, Lydotes and Leger have been primary portfolio managers of the fund since November 2015, and manage the fund in their capacity as employees of Dreyfus.

The fund's Statement of Additional Information (SAI) provides additional portfolio manager information, including compensation, other accounts managed and ownership of fund shares.

MBSC Securities Corporation (MBSC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dreyfus, serves as distributor of the fund and of the other funds in the Dreyfus Family of Funds. Any Rule 12b-1 fees and shareholder services fees, as applicable, are paid to MBSC for financing the sale and distribution of fund shares and for providing shareholder account service and maintenance, respectively. Dreyfus or MBSC may provide cash payments out of its own resources to financial intermediaries that sell shares of funds in the Dreyfus Family of Funds or provide other services. Such payments are separate from any sales charges, 12b-1 fees and/or shareholder services fees or other expenses that may be paid by a fund to those financial intermediaries. Because those payments are not made by fund shareholders or the fund, the fund's total expense ratio will not be affected by any such payments. These payments may be made to financial intermediaries, including affiliates, that provide shareholder servicing, sub-administration, recordkeeping and/or sub-transfer agency services, marketing support and/or access to sales meetings, sales representatives and management representatives of the financial intermediary. Cash compensation also may be paid from Dreyfus' or MBSC's own resources to financial intermediaries for inclusion of a fund on a sales list, including a preferred or select sales list or in other sales programs. These payments sometimes are referred to as "revenue sharing." From time to time, Dreyfus or MBSC also may provide cash or non-cash compensation to financial intermediaries or their representatives in the form of occasional gifts; occasional meals, tickets or other entertainment; support for due diligence trips; educational conference sponsorships; support for recognition programs; technology or infrastructure support; and other forms of cash or non-cash compensation permissible under broker-dealer regulations. In some cases, these payments or compensation may create an incentive for a financial intermediary or its employees to recommend or sell shares of the fund to you. This potential conflict of interest may be addressed by policies, procedures or practices that are adopted by the financial intermediary. As there may be many different policies, procedures or practices adopted by different intermediaries to address the manner in which compensation is earned through the sale of investments or the provision of related services, the compensation rates and other payment arrangements that may apply to a financial intermediary and its representatives may vary by intermediary. Please contact your financial representative for details about any payments they or their firm may receive in connection with the sale of fund shares or the provision of services to the fund.

The fund, Dreyfus and MBSC have each adopted a code of ethics that permits its personnel, subject to such code, to invest in securities, including securities that may be purchased or held by the fund. Each code of ethics restricts the personal securities transactions of employees, and requires portfolio managers and other investment personnel to comply with the code's preclearance and disclosure procedures. The primary purpose of the respective codes is to ensure that personal trading by employees does not disadvantage any fund managed by Dreyfus or its affiliates.

Shareholder Guide

Your Investment

Fund shares may be purchased or sold (redeemed) by separate accounts of participating insurance companies. Policyowners should consult the prospectus of the separate account of the participating insurance company for more information about buying or selling fund shares.

Service shares are subject to an annual Rule 12b-1 fee of 0.25% paid to the fund's distributor for distribution, advertising and marketing, and servicing and/or maintaining accounts of holders of Service shares. Because the Rule 12b-1 fee is paid out of the fund's assets on an ongoing basis, over time it will increase the cost of your investment and may cost you more than paying other types of sales charges.

Dreyfus calculates fund NAVs as of the scheduled close of trading on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) (usually 4:00 p.m. Eastern time) on days the NYSE is scheduled to be open for regular business. Your order will be priced at the next NAV calculated after your order is received in proper form by the fund's transfer agent or other authorized entity. "Proper form" refers to completion of an account application (if applicable), satisfaction of requirements in this section (subject to "Shareholder Guide—General Policies") and any applicable conditions in "Additional Information About How to Redeem Shares" in the SAI. Authorized entities other than the fund's transfer agent may apply different conditions for the satisfaction of "proper form" requirements. For more information, consult a representative of your financial intermediary. When calculating NAVs, Dreyfus values equity investments on the basis of market quotations or official closing prices. Dreyfus generally values fixed-income investments based on values supplied by an independent pricing service approved by the fund's board. The pricing service's procedures are reviewed under the general supervision of the board. If market quotations or official closing prices or valuations from a pricing service are not readily available, or are determined not to reflect accurately fair value, the fund may value those investments at fair value as determined in accordance with procedures approved by the fund's board. Fair value of investments may be determined by the fund's board, its pricing committee or its valuation committee in good faith using such information as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. Under certain circumstances, the fair value of foreign equity securities will be provided by an independent pricing service. Using fair value to price investments may result in a value that is different from a security's most recent closing price and from the prices used by other mutual funds to calculate their net asset values. Over-the-counter derivative instruments will be valued based on values supplied by an independent pricing service approved by the fund's board. Futures contracts will be valued at the most recent settlement price. Forward currency contracts will be valued using the forward rate obtained from an independent pricing service approved by the fund's board. Foreign securities held by the fund may trade on days when the fund does not calculate its NAV and thus may affect the fund's NAV on days when investors will not be able to purchase or sell (redeem) fund shares.

Investments in certain types of thinly traded securities may provide short-term traders arbitrage opportunities with respect to the fund's shares. For example, arbitrage opportunities may exist when trading in a portfolio security or securities is halted and does not resume, or the market on which such securities are traded closes before the fund calculates its NAV. If short-term investors in the fund were able to take advantage of these arbitrage opportunities, they could dilute the NAV of fund shares held by long-term investors. Portfolio valuation policies can serve to reduce arbitrage opportunities available to short-term traders, but there is no assurance that such valuation policies will prevent dilution of the fund's NAV by short-term traders. While the fund has a policy regarding frequent trading, it too may not be completely effective to prevent short-term NAV arbitrage trading, particularly in regard to omnibus accounts. Please see "Shareholder Guide — General Policies" for further information about the fund's frequent trading policy.

The processing of redemptions may be suspended, and the delivery of redemption proceeds may be delayed beyond seven days, depending on the circumstances, for any period: (i) during which the NYSE is closed (other than on holidays or weekends), or during which trading on the NYSE is restricted, (ii) when an emergency exists that makes the disposal of securities owned by the fund or the determination of the fair value of the fund's net assets not reasonably practicable, or (iii) as permitted by order of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the protection of fund shareholders. For these purposes, the Securities and Exchange Commission determines the conditions under which trading shall be deemed to be restricted and an emergency shall be deemed to exist.

Participating insurance companies will provide pass-through voting privileges to all policyowners so long as the SEC continues to interpret the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, as requiring pass-through voting privileges for

policyowners. Participating insurance companies will vote by proxy, in the same proportions as the voting instructions received from policyowners: (1) fund shares as to which no timely instructions are received; (2) fund shares owned exclusively by the relevant participating insurance company or its affiliates; and (3) fund shares held in a separate account representing charges imposed by the relevant participating insurance company. As a result of this proportionate voting policy, the voting of a small number of policyowners may determine whether a proposal is approved, depending on the number of shares attributable to policyowners that provide instructions and to policyowners that do not. Additional information regarding voting instruction rights is provided in the prospectus or statement of additional information for the VA contracts or VLI policies.

General Policies

The fund is designed for long-term investors. Frequent purchases, redemptions and exchanges may disrupt portfolio management strategies and harm fund performance by diluting the value of fund shares and increasing brokerage and administrative costs. As a result, Dreyfus and the fund's board have adopted a policy of discouraging excessive trading, short-term market timing and other abusive trading practices (frequent trading) that could adversely affect the fund or its operations. Dreyfus and the fund will not enter into arrangements with any person or group to permit frequent trading.

The fund also reserves the right to:

- refuse any purchase or exchange request, including those from any participating insurance company, individual or group who, in Dreyfus' view, is likely to engage in frequent trading
- change its minimum investment amount
- delay sending out redemption proceeds for up to seven days (during unusual market conditions or very large redemptions or excessive trading)
- "redeem in kind," or make payments in securities rather than cash, if the amount redeemed is large enough to affect fund operations (for example, if it exceeds 1% of the fund's assets)

Any securities distributed in kind will remain exposed to market risk until sold, and you may incur taxable gain when selling the securities.

Transactions in fund shares are processed by the participating insurance companies using omnibus accounts that aggregate the trades of multiple policyowners. Dreyfus' ability to monitor the trading activity of these policyowners is limited because their individual transactions in fund shares are not disclosed to the fund. Accordingly, Dreyfus relies to a significant degree on the participating insurance company to detect and deter frequent trading. The agreement with the participating insurance company includes obligations to comply with all applicable federal and state laws. All participating insurance companies have been sent written reminders of their obligations under the agreements, specifically highlighting rules relating to trading fund shares. Further, all participating insurance companies have been requested in writing to notify Dreyfus immediately if, for any reason, they cannot meet their commitment to make fund shares available in accordance with the terms of the prospectus and relevant rules and regulations.

Dreyfus supplements the surveillance processes in place at participating insurance companies by monitoring total purchases and redemptions of fund shares on a periodic basis. If Dreyfus identifies patterns that may be indicative of frequent trading of large amounts, Dreyfus contacts the participating insurance company for assistance in disaggregating selected omnibus trades into their component parts. When this process identifies multiple roundtrips (i.e., an investment that is substantially liquidated within 60 days), Dreyfus instructs the participating insurance company to temporarily or permanently bar such policyowner's future purchases of fund shares if Dreyfus concludes the policyowner is likely to engage in frequent trading. Dreyfus also may instruct the participating insurance company to apply these restrictions across all accounts under common ownership, control or perceived affiliation. In all instances, Dreyfus seeks to make these determinations to the best of its abilities in a manner that it believes is consistent with shareholder interests.

In addition to applying restrictions on future purchases or exchanges, Dreyfus or the participating insurance company may cancel or reverse the purchase or exchange on the business day following the transaction if the participating insurance company's surveillance system identifies the account as one that is likely to engage in frequent trading. Dreyfus may also instruct the participating insurance company to cancel or reverse the purchase or exchange on the following business day if the trade represents a significant amount of the fund's assets and Dreyfus has concluded that the account is likely to engage in frequent trading.

To the extent the fund significantly invests in foreign securities traded on markets that close before the fund calculates its NAV, events that influence the value of these foreign securities may occur after the close of these foreign markets and before the fund calculates its NAV. As a result, certain policyowners may seek to trade fund shares in an effort to

benefit from their understanding of the value of these foreign securities at the time the fund calculates its NAV (referred to as price arbitrage). This type of frequent trading may dilute the value of fund shares held by other policyowners. The fund has adopted procedures designed to adjust closing market prices of foreign equity securities under certain circumstances to reflect what it believes to be their fair value.

Although the fund's frequent trading and fair valuation policies and procedures are designed to discourage market timing and excessive trading, none of these tools alone, nor all of them together, completely eliminates the potential for frequent trading.

Distributions and Taxes

The fund earns dividends, interest and other income from its investments, and distributes this income (less expenses) to shareholders as dividends. The fund also realizes capital gains from its investments, and distributes these gains (less any losses) to shareholders as capital gain distributions. The fund normally pays dividends and capital gain distributions, if any, annually. Fund dividends and capital gain distributions will be reinvested in the fund unless the participating insurance company instructs otherwise. Each share class will generate a different dividend because each has different expenses.

Since the fund's shareholders are the participating insurance companies and their separate accounts, the tax treatment of dividends and distributions will depend on the tax status of the participating insurance company. Accordingly, no discussion is included as to the federal personal income tax consequences to policyowners. For this information, policyowners should consult the prospectus of the separate account of the participating insurance company or their tax advisers.

Participating insurance companies should consult their tax advisers about federal, state and local tax consequences.

Exchange Privilege

Policyowners may exchange shares of a class for shares of other funds offered by the VA contracts or VLI policies through the insurance company separate accounts subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the prospectuses of such VA contracts or VLI policies. Policyowners should refer to the applicable insurance company prospectus for more information on exchanging fund shares.

Financial Highlights

These financial highlights describe the performance of the fund's shares for the fiscal periods indicated. "Total return" shows how much your investment in the fund would have increased (or decreased) during each period, assuming you had reinvested all dividends and distributions. These financial highlights have been derived from the fund's financial statements, which have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, whose report, along with the fund's financial statements, is included in the annual report, which is available upon request. Keep in mind that fees and charges imposed by participating insurance companies, which are not reflected in the tables, would reduce the investment returns that are shown.

	<i>Year Ended December 31,</i>				
Initial Shares	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Per Share Data (\$):					
Net asset value, beginning of period	10.04	10.55	11.82	9.82	8.96
Investment Operations:					
Investment income--net ^a	.18	.18	.19	.18	.20
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(.33)	(.45)	(1.27)	2.04	.93
Total from Investment Operations	(.15)	(.27)	(1.08)	2.22	1.13
Distributions:					
Dividends from investment income--net	(.19)	(.24)	(.19)	(.22)	(.27)
Payment by affiliate	.00 ^{b,c}	-	-	-	-
Net asset value, end of period	9.70	10.04	10.55	11.82	9.82
Total Return (%)	(1.45) ^c	(2.72)	(9.32)	22.99	12.67
Ratios/Supplemental Data (%):					
Ratio of total expenses to average net assets	1.38	1.38	1.29	1.25	1.28
Ratio of net expenses to average net assets	.85	.83	.99	.95	1.19
Ratio of net investment income to average net assets	1.87	1.66	1.68	1.71	2.19
Portfolio Turnover Rate	108.21	147.24	45.43	57.30	45.97
Net Assets, end of period (\$ x 1,000)	17,241	21,814	33,147	42,421	35,568

^a Based on average shares outstanding.

^b Amount represents less than \$.01.

^c The fund received proceeds from a class action settlement from BNY Mellon. This payment had no impact on total return.

	<i>Year Ended December 31,</i>				
Service Shares	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Per Share Data (\$):					
Net asset value, beginning of period	10.04	10.55	11.82	9.82	8.95
Investment Operations:					
Investment income--net ^a	.13	.17	.16	.16	.16
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(.29)	(.47)	(1.28)	2.03	.95
Total from Investment Operations	(.16)	(.30)	(1.12)	2.19	1.11
Distributions:					
Dividends from investment income--net	(.16)	(.21)	(.15)	(.19)	(.24)
Payment by affiliate	.00 ^{b,c}	-	-	-	-
Net asset value, end of period	9.72	10.04	10.55	11.82	9.82
Total Return (%)	(1.58) ^c	(2.98)	(9.57)	22.69	12.42
Ratios/Supplemental Data (%):					
Ratio of total expenses to average net assets	1.61	1.63	1.54	1.50	1.53
Ratio of net expenses to average net assets	1.10	1.08	1.24	1.20	1.43
Ratio of net investment income to average net assets	1.41	1.53	1.40	1.47	1.77
Portfolio Turnover Rate	108.21	147.24	45.43	57.30	45.97
Net Assets, end of period (\$ x 1,000)	26,862	18,566	23,038	32,104	33,660

^a Based on average shares outstanding.

^b Amount represents less than \$.01.

^c The fund received proceeds from a class action settlement from BNY Mellon. This payment had no impact on total return.

NOTES

For More Information

International Value Portfolio

A series of Dreyfus Variable Investment Fund

More information on this fund is available free upon request, including the following:

Annual/Semiannual Report

Describes the fund's performance, lists portfolio holdings and contains a letter from the fund's manager discussing recent market conditions, economic trends and fund strategies that significantly affected the fund's performance during the last fiscal year. The fund's most recent annual and semiannual reports are available at www.dreyfus.com.

Statement of Additional Information (SAI)

Provides more details about the fund and its policies. A current SAI is available at www.dreyfus.com and is on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The SAI is incorporated by reference (and is legally considered part of this prospectus).

Portfolio Holdings

Dreyfus funds generally disclose, at www.dreyfus.com under Products, (1) complete portfolio holdings as of each month-end with a one month lag and as of each calendar quarter end with a 15-day lag; (2) top 10 holdings as of each month-end with a 10-day lag; and (3) from time to time, certain security-specific performance attribution data as of a month end, with a 10-day lag. From time to time a fund may make available certain portfolio characteristics, such as allocations, performance- and risk-related statistics, portfolio-level statistics and non-security specific attribution analyses, on request. Dreyfus money market funds generally disclose, also at www.dreyfus.com under Products, their complete schedule of holdings daily. A fund's portfolio holdings and any security-specific performance attribution data will remain on the website at least until the fund files its Form N-Q or Form N-CSR for the period that includes the dates of the posted holdings.

A complete description of the fund's policies and procedures with respect to the disclosure of the fund's portfolio securities is available in the fund's SAI and at www.dreyfus.com.

To Obtain Information

By telephone. Call 1-800-DREYFUS (inside the U.S. only)

By mail.

The Dreyfus Family of Funds
144 Glenn Curtiss Boulevard
Uniondale, NY 11556-0144
Attn: Institutional Services Department

On the Internet. Certain fund documents can be viewed online or downloaded from:

SEC: <http://www.sec.gov>

Dreyfus: <http://www.dreyfus.com>

You can also obtain copies, after paying a duplicating fee, by visiting the SEC's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC (for information, call 1-202-551-8090) or by E-mail request to publicinfo@sec.gov, or by writing to the SEC's Public Reference Section, Washington, DC 20549-1520.

This prospectus does not constitute an offer or solicitation in any state or jurisdiction in which, or to any person to whom, such offering or solicitation may not lawfully be made.

SEC file number: 811-05125