

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

NEWSLETTER 2019-2020



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

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IN THIS ISSUE

Chair's Message
Transitions
Administration News
Social Committee
Alumni, Faculty Profile
Graduate Students Profiles
Undergraduate Student Profile
News & Events
Awards & Scholarships
Seminars
Institute for Public Economics
Publications
Thanks to Donors

Welcome to the Department of Economics!
We have over 1000 undergraduate Majors and Honors students. We offer strong programs at both the MA and PhD levels. We teach in all fields of economics. We have 27 faculty members and a dozen contract instructors, most of whom have been with us for many years. Our faculty is dedicated to teaching and has one of the strongest research records in the country.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Rick Szostak



First the good news: We were able to hire another Assistant Professor this year. Benjamin Milner is receiving his PhD from the University of British Columbia. Ben will teach courses in both Canadian and European Economic History for us. Some of you may recall a time when this Department had three economic historians. More recently, we have not been teaching our economic history courses since I became Department Chair. I am excited to see our course offerings in the area rejuvenated. I thank Andrew McGee, Li Zhou, Bruno Wichmann, and Tom Spalding for their service on our hiring committee.

We have also hired Max Sties, who received a PhD from us several years ago, as a fulltime Lecturer to teach a variety of courses in macroeconomics and we have hired Linda Kerr and Anna Priemaza to teach our new Basic Writing in Economics course. We have developed this course over the last three years to ensure that all of our students have the writing skills needed to excel in our program. I thank Andrew Eckert, Valentina Galvani, and Abdul Aleem for their hard work (with Linda and Anna) in developing the curriculum for this course, and designing a writing competency test to determine who should take it.

We created a new 400-level “Projects” course this year where groups of students worked on projects suggested by government agencies or private firms. Tilman Klumpp supervised this course, and identified a handful of projects for students to work on. I was able to sit in on a couple of the virtual group presentations, and was quite impressed. The students appreciated the opportunity, and the “clients” were quite happy with the results. We had received some requests from outside the university during 2019 that stimulated us to develop this course.

This new course was in addition to several other new courses that I had announced last year. I have received very positive feedback on courses in indigenous economics, political economy, macroeconomic measurement, and money (a big-think course) that were offered for the first time this year. All were offered by faculty members hired in the last couple of years.

Next year we will pilot a practical course where three different instructors will introduce students to the programming languages Python, R, and SAS. I thank Jiatong Zhong and Sebastian Fossati for inspiring this course and Valentina Galvani for putting it together.

The last three years have been wonderful for this department. We hired seven new Assistant Professors, and three Lecturers, and were thus able to expand the breadth of our course offerings. The new courses either teach important skills or provide a broader perspective on the discipline. We have been rising up the world rankings of Economics departments as our young faculty members publish in excellent journals.

Inspired by a generous donor (“Rick; feel free to use the money for a social event”), I created a social events committee a year ago. Tilman Klumpp chaired the committee, aided by our three newest Assistant Professors, Jiatong Zhong, Laurel Wheeler, and Dodge Cahan. This committee organized (among other things) a canoe trip and barbecue for faculty, staff, and grad students on Labor Day, 2019. It was a great event. I thank the Edmonton Police Service for rescuing three canoes from the river after the wind came up. I have never seen such waves on that river, and am pleased to announce that everyone survived intact. Trish Graham designed and had t-shirts made to celebrate. I thank the committee, Holly Ridyard and Stu White, for organizing this great event.



Who knows when we will be able to hold such an event again? The coronavirus pandemic forced us to suddenly move all of our courses online in early March. We were able to organize a workshop just before the lockdown where Alexander Gainer, Valentina Kozlova, Andrew Wong, Abdul Aleem, and Valentina Galvani gave advice to colleagues on a variety of remote learning technologies. We were extremely fortunate to have this in-house expertise. Alex, in particular, has been an amazing source of support to the department during this time.

The transition online went smoothly. I have received no complaints from students. My colleagues mastered the new teaching format overnight. I suspect that we will continue to use these technologies even after things return to normal. Perhaps when it is thirty below next January a video lecture will seem a tempting alternative to a face-to-face lecture.



The university has recently announced that we will be delivering classes remotely again in Fall with the hope that to face-to-face teaching will resume in January. The university will make that decision in September.

The department devotes considerable effort to policing cheating in our courses. The move online posed distinct challenges here. We were able to use “remote proctoring” for some of our courses. Students wrote exams at home with their cameras on, and a combination of Artificial Intelligence and personal invigilation kept an eye on them. It is a little odd communicating with students in their homes, but the practice does strongly discourage cheating. The university moved to credit/non-credit grading rather than letter grades for Winter term, though instructors can still informally tell students how they performed.

The government has cut the university’s budget dramatically over the last year. The Faculty of Arts will handle most of its share of the cut by freezing most academic hiring and slashing the number of course sections taught by part-time instructors. We will nevertheless be allowed to hire another Assistant Professor during the next year. Since our courses are generally large we have at this point only been asked to reduce our course offerings next year by a couple of sections.

Trish Graham has announced that she will be retiring at the end of June. Trish has organized events, managed the website, and put together the newsletter for us for several years. We will very much miss Trish, but we wish her and her family the very best. They will be able to spend more time at their cabin in Northern Ontario. In the present budgetary environment we will not be able to replace Trish for awhile.

The government has also introduced performance measures for universities. The government is also limiting the university's ability to spend income it has earned in the past. For our department, this has meant that hundreds of thousands of dollars in research funding has been frozen.

Luckily I have been able to work from home throughout the pandemic. I have been spared both unemployment and the need to work in a dangerous environment. I worry that the pandemic and budget crisis are combining to decrease the quality of our teaching and research, but these are manageable worries.

I would like to close by thanking my colleagues and staff. This continues to be an incredibly easy department to chair. The pandemic showed the professionalism and collegiality that guides us. Stu White, Holly Ridyard, Trish Graham, Christina Smith, and Chelsi Hudson have kept the department humming along whether in person or now from home. We wish Chelsi the best as she takes maternity leave and welcome Rae Beaumont to the department to cover for her. I have not met Rae yet in person because of the pandemic but she has handled several issues very well since starting with us. Welcome!

I extend my best wishes to all of our alumni and friends. As always, please feel free to drop us a line and let us know how you are doing. I am always open to new ideas.

TRANSITIONS

The Department was very fortunate to hire one new faculty member, Benjamin Milner who will join us July 1, 2020.



Benjamin Milner
Assistant Professor
Research Areas:
Economic History,
Labour Economics, Equality

Benjamin Milner is a recent PhD graduate from the University of British Columbia. His research agenda focuses on questions relating to inequality and social mobility, often searching for answers in economic history. For example, his job market paper, "The Impact of State-Provided Education: Evidence from the 1870 Education Act", takes advantage of the limited and staggered roll out of public schooling in 19th century England to demonstrate how targeted education reform can improve social mobility, narrowing the gap in adult outcomes between better- and worse-off children.

Benjamin grew up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and is excited to be back on the prairies. In particular, after spending a number of years in Vancouver, he is eager to see the sun again and experience a real winter. He is a sports enthusiast, with a particular love for baseball (watching), ultimate frisbee (playing), and downhill skiing (mainly falling)."



Max Sties
Assistant Lecturer

Max Sties has been hired as a full time lecturer to teach a variety of courses in Macroeconomics. Max received his PhD from the Department of Economics, University of Alberta in 2017. His

dissertation was "Forecasting Recessions in a Big Data Environment".

He will be teaching ECON 399 - Introductory Econometrics Fall 2020, and Winter 2021 ; ECON 350 - The Economics of Public Expenditures Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 and ECON 102 - Introduction to Macroeconomics in Winter 2021.

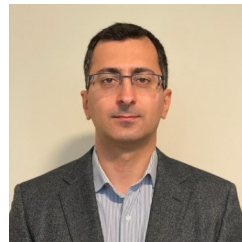
Linda Kerr and Anna Priemza have been hired to teach a new Basic Writing in Economics course. This course was developed to ensure that all of our students have the writing skills needed to excel in our program.



Linda Kerr received her PhD in Canadian and Imperial History from the University of Alberta . She is a Tutor with Athabasca University and also teaches courses at the University of Alberta. Linda has been hired as a Full Lecturer.



Anna Priemaza is a young adult author and a practicing lawyer in Edmonton, Alberta, where she lives with her husband. She has been hired as an Assistant Lecturer.



Aslan Behnamian
Lecturer

Aslan completed his PhD under the supervision of Professor Galvani in 2011 and joined Deloitte Touche in Montreal.

During his tenure at Deloitte, Aslan completed a graduate degree in accounting at McGill University. Aslan joined Alberta's Department of Energy in 2013; before being appointed as manager of economic research, he was manager of North American energy markets. He will be teaching ECON 442 - The Economics of Financial Markets in the Fall 2020 term.



Scott Ariat
Lecturer

Scott Ariat is a PhD candidate in the Department of Economics. He has a passion for applied economics. Scott also has a background in Psychology and has worked with various

non-profits in the area of service delivery. He will be teaching ECON 222 - Technology, Institutions and Economic Growth in the Fall of 2020.

ADMINISTRATION NEWS



Rae Beaumont
Interim
Undergraduate Advisor

Rae Beaumont joined the Department on April 14, 2020, for a one-year appointment to cover the Undergraduate Advisor position during Chelsi Hudson's second maternity leave. Rae has worked in student services on campus for over 20 years, in St. Joseph's College, the Office of the Registrar, and the Faculties of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Law. Rae is a military wife, whose husband served in deployments to Cyprus (1989), Kosovo (1999), Bosnia (2000) and Afghanistan (2002 and 2004-05). They collect military history and Inuit Art.



Trish Graham
Administrative Assistant
Retiring!

Trish Graham has decided to retire at the end of June from her position as Administrative Assistant. She says she has truly enjoyed her time in the Department of Economics and will cherish the relationships she has formed with faculty, students and co-workers. She is looking forward to new adventures in life and is especially thankful that she will be able to enjoy more family time at her cabin in NW Ontario.



Stu White
Assistant Chair
Administration

This past year has been a challenge in many ways. Stu says he is pleased that he was able to help Rick Szostak, Chair of the Dept. ensure that Economics emerged from the budget cutting process relatively intact. He also got over his initial apprehension and eventually decided that working remotely was a pretty good thing; especially being able to wear seal fur slippers all day.



Holly Ridyard
Executive Assistant

Holly writes that it has been a busy, gratifying year with lots going on. She has adjusted to the new "norm" of working from home (and quite enjoys it), but she sure misses seeing everyone.



Christina Smith
Graduate Advisor

2020 began with the final month of applications. The Graduate program received a total of 267 applications to the 3 graduate programs for Fall 2020 admission. Admission was offered to 85 of those applicants. To date 35 students accepted offers while 26 declined and another 23 had not yet responded.

Due to the Covid situation the deadline for applicants to accept or decline offers was extended from May 15 to August 1. Of those who accepted offers, 4 requested to have their admission deferred to Fall 2021 due to the Covid situation.



Working from home during the Covid environment has been different for Christina. She says she is missing the interaction with colleagues and more immediate responses to queries that you can get when you are face to face. She still comes to the office once a week for students to make appointments to drop off their keys and clean out their lockers. Christina is looking forward to getting back to normal.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

This year a social committee was formed to organize Department events. Committee members are: Dodge Cahan, Laurel Wheeler, Jiatong Zhong and Tilman Klumpp

"Fall 2019 saw an uptick in social events for the department. Things started off with a splash on Labour Day—more than 30 intrepid department members, family and friends undertook a 30 km, 5 hour, canoe odyssey down the North Saskatchewan River from Devon to Wilfrid Laurier Park. The weather turned out better than the gloomy forecast had predicted, and the scenery and warm sunshine were magnificent, though strong winds that picked up later in the day certainly provided a test of endurance. The day was not without incident—we are grateful to the Edmonton Police river patrol who were quick to rescue the unfortunate occupants of a couple canoes that capsized—but in the end we all made it back to shore and the event will go down as a great and memorable success. Meanwhile on shore, the rest of the department were enjoying a well catered barbeque in the park to see off the summer and welcome in a busy fall semester.

We also saw the beginning of what we hope will become a new social tradition. During the semester, the department organized three breakfasts. While sharing bagels and coffee, faculty members and graduate students talked about their research and life in an informal, relaxed environment.

In March of 2020, everything was set to go for the last major social event of the calendar—an ice skating party at the Edmonton Downtown Community Center. Alas, it was not to be and the event was called off in the name of social distancing, but we certainly hope to reactivate the plan in the not too distant future!"



ALUMNI PROFILE

Brian Lewis, MA Economics, 1986



I was really pleased to find the 2018-19 department newsletter in my inbox last year. It was great to read about the latest developments, including the very many teaching and research accomplishments of the graduate students and faculty.

It was a long time ago when I left University of Alberta to take up a lecturing position at Wilfrid Laurier University. My plan was to take a one- or two-year break before taking on Ph.D. studies in earnest. Towards the end of those two years, I decided the academic life wasn't for me. Quickly I found my way into a job in the Ontario Ministry of Treasury and Economics and have not looked back since.

For the last several years, I've held the position of Chief Economist and Assistant Deputy Minister of Economic Policy in the Ontario Ministry of

Finance. This is really a dream job for me. It is quite a privilege to lead a large, diverse, talented and highly dedicated team of economists that provide advice to the government on a wide range of issues. The ability to bring numbers to bear on real economic problems was something that very much appealed to me when I was a graduate student, and I get to do that pretty much every day.

I often say that my greatest fear is being bored, and I can say that has never happened in this job! There is always something interesting happening in the global economy, always a compelling public policy challenge that needs solutions, always interest in our best advice. The job has never been more interesting – or more daunting – than it has been this year as we grapple with the unprecedented impact COVID-19 is having on economies around the globe. The work being done and advice we offer feels especially important in these challenging times.

As for life outside of work, I am happily married, with no children. I have a few outlets outside of economics including, running, when not injured, and playing guitar in the department's band of rock'n'roll economists "The Invisible Hands." I stay in touch with a few fellow department alumni, including Bruno Amara, who recently retired from the Ministry of Finance, and Ross Philips, who is currently a Chief Financial Officer in the oil sector.

I really feel fortunate to have received a first-rate education in economics at the University of Alberta. Every day in my job, I am applying what I learned from professors in the department, including Labour Economics (Shmuel Sharir), Tax Policy (Bev Dalhby), Public Finance (Mel McMillan) and Public Policy (Mike Percy, Ken Norrie). It was great to hear that the department's good work continues, so please keep these newsletters coming!

FACULTY PROFILE

TILMAN KLUMPP



Tilman Klumpp is a Professor in the Department of Economics. Originally from Stuttgart, Germany, Tilman obtained an MA and a PhD degree in Economics from the University of Western Ontario in 2003. He taught at Indiana University (USA) and Emory University (USA), before moving to the University of Alberta in 2012.

Much of Tilman's research is spurred by contemporary public policy issues, viewed through the lens of economics. This perspective has led Tilman to investigate questions that lie at the intersection of economics with sociology, political science, and the law. A good example

of this approach is Tilman's research on how regulations of political speech affect elections. In 2015, he was awarded a multi-year SSHRC grant to advance this line of inquiry.

One contribution within this programme analyzes the electoral effects of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United decision. In this controversial ruling, the Court affirmed that corporations and labor unions in the United States hold the same First Amendment right as individuals do, including the right to spend unlimited resources on independent political advertising. Together with his collaborators Hugo Mialon and Michael Williams, Tilman examined if Citizens United changed election outcomes in the U.S. states. Half of the states had previously banned independent political advertising by corporations and unions, and were forced to lift these bans following the 2010 decision. In these states, the authors found that the probability that Republican candidates are elected to state legislative office increased by an average of four percentage points. Moreover, the ruling led to an increase in the reelection probabilities of Republican incumbents, and to a decrease in number of Democratic candidates running for office.

In another project, the same authors look at a wave of voting rights reforms that occurred in the United States in the 2000s. Most U.S. states restrict voting by convicted felons, in some cases for life. These restrictions affect predominantly racial minorities, who tend to vote Democratic at higher rates than white Americans. Starting in 2000, several states undertook reform efforts that restored the voting rights of ex-felons who had completed their sentences. At the time, researchers hypothesized that such reforms could translate into enough additional votes for Democratic candidates to change the outcomes of national elections. Tilman and his coauthors estimate that the true effects of voting rights restoration are more modest. For example, one result of this research is that a counterfactual nationwide reform in 1998 would not have changed any House majority in in following eight U.S. Congresses.

On the instruction side, Tilman teaches in the Department's undergraduate and graduate programs. He has taught courses in public economics, microeconomic theory, law and economics, and others. In his spare time, Tilman enjoys skiing, bicycling, golf, and exploring Edmonton's River Valley. Tilman is married to Xuejuan Su, who is an Associate Professor in the Department (and a frequent coauthor of Tilman's).

GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILES



Stephen Tearoe

Stephen is a Master of Arts in Economics student here at the University of Alberta, where he also received his BA in honors Economics.

Throughout his studies Stephen's main interests have been public policy, game theory, political economy and monetary policy. He became interested in coding and economic programming after competing in the 2019 Governor's Challenge, hosted by the Bank of Canada. He has developed these programming skills in his coursework and in his own time, and strongly encourages others to pursue these practical skills.

While completing his Master's coursework Stephen was a teaching assistant for the Department of Economics. He has now completed all of the coursework and is an Intern Credit Analyst with ATB Financial. He is exploring the possible benefits that machine learning may have in predicting the probability of default in ATB's loan portfolios.

Stephen would like to work in the public sector, but he would also love to become an instructor and teach the practical skills used in the industry. Stephen enjoys woodworking, learning about new technology, discussing politics, making music with friends, reading good books, and weekends spent in the mountains.



Francis Chiparawasha

Francis will be starting the fourth year of his Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Alberta in the Fall 2020 term. He is originally from Zimbabwe and received his Masters degree from the University of Winnipeg.

Francis' research interest is in Macroeconomics. He is mainly interested in understanding how households smooth their consumption when they experience loss of income due to different factors such as job displacement, and occupational disability. His research extends to investigating the optimal level of unemployment insurance and social benefits. That is, balancing the desire to support families exposed to income risk against incentives for people to look for work after a job loss.

His third research interest is in Monetary policy. He uses Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (DSGE) models to understand the potential role of monetary policy in either reducing or amplifying the problem of income inequality.

His career goal is to remain in academia or work in research-based think tanks where he can have the opportunity to continue sharing knowledge. In his spare time, Francis enjoys running, biking, working in the garden, and watching soccer.



Boris Ortega Moreno

Boris obtained his Bachelor degree at the University of Chile and his Masters degree at the University of Amsterdam.

After working and traveling around Australia he decided to pursue a PhD in the University of Alberta. His main areas of interest are environmental and energy economics. Under the supervision of Andrew Eckert and David Brown, he is currently analyzing the effects of policy incentives for the development of renewable energy on electricity markets.

Boris enjoys outdoor time in his garden as well as discovering the beautiful Canadian nature. So far, his favorite is Waterton Lakes National Park.

UNDERGRADUATE PROFILE BRITT FERGUSON



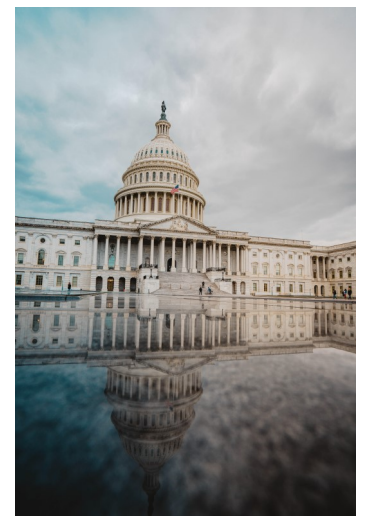
My name is Britt Ferguson and I am an Economics undergraduate student at the University of Alberta. Upon entering my third year in the program, I was chosen to participate in an internship for the Embassy of Canada to the United States in Washington, D.C. With support from the Department of Economics, I embarked to D.C. this past January of 2020.

During my time at the Embassy I was stationed to work in the trade department. My duties included supporting my supervisor, the First Secretary of Defense Trade Policy, and her work pertaining to defense & security trade and bilateral relations between Canada and the United States. Although I am not able to disclose many details due to the classified nature of the work, I had the opportunity to

assist on files pertaining to the Defense Production Act (DPA), National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Fiscal Year 2021 Defense Budget, all of which directly affect Canadian industry and our exports into the U.S. defense industrial base.

Living in Washington gave me the opportunity to explore the history, arts and culture embedded into the capital. D.C. is an incredible epicentre of free museums, galleries, and live music. My personal favourite was the National Gallery of Art, and I would often find myself walking across the street from the Embassy to eat lunch sitting in front of Monet and Van Gogh paintings. Another highlight of my time included taking advantage of the student rate for live performances of the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center.

I am incredibly grateful to the wonderful economics program that we have at the University of Alberta. I truly believe that the breadth of knowledge and experience from the faculty, as well as the quality of courses offered in the department helped prepare me for this experience. My comprehension of the U.S. economy, bilateral trade relations and other macroeconomic phenomena learned through my undergraduate degree equipped me with the tools needed to be successful during the course of my internship. I am especially grateful to Scott Beesley, whose course in international development inspired me to transfer into the department and who encouraged me to pursue internships outside of traditional avenues. I am also grateful to Valentina Galvani, my advisor through this process who both supported and helped prepare me for this experience.



The Embassy of Canada in D.C. traditionally runs Winter, Summer and Fall internship opportunities, and I encourage all students looking for a once in a lifetime experience to reach out to the undergraduate advisor of Economics for more information. I would also encourage fellow students to look for other opportunities in [Global Affairs Canada](#).

NEWS



Corinne Langiner, has been appointed as editor of the CJAE (Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economic for a three-year term, beginning July 1, 2019.

[Read Full Story](#)

Corinne is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics and also the Director of the Institute for Public Economics.

The CJAE publishes a range of theoretical, applied and policy-related contributions in agricultural, resource, and environmental economics. Topics include: agri-food, agri-business, policy, resource utilization and environmental impacts.



Expert Panel to Assess Minimum Wage Includes Joseph Marchand

[Read the full article.](#)

On September 26, 2018, Joseph Marchand presented a seminar as part of the IPE Workshop series "Still Thinking about Minimum Wage increases in Alberta: Theoretically, Empirically, and Regionally". He was interviewed by Kieran Leavitt from the Star Metro Edmonton and Brennan Doherty from the Star Metro Calgary.



Beyza Ural-Marchand publishes two new papers in 2019

Beyza Ural-Marchand, Associate Professor in the Dept. of Economics published two papers last year, one in Quantitative Economics and the other in Review of Income and Wealth.

[Read more and link to her papers.](#)



Claudia Landeo discusses her theoretical work on the design of optimal law enforcement policies with ordered leniency at the Annual Meeting of the American Law and Economics Association

[Read Full Story](#)

On May 18, 2019, Professor Claudia Landeo presented her paper "Optimal Law Enforcement with Ordered Leniency" (co-authored with Professor Kathryn Spier) at the Annual Meeting of the American Law and Economics Association held at New York University.

This paper theoretically studies the design of optimal enforcement policies with ordered leniency to detect and deter illegal short-term activities committed by groups of injurers.



David Brown appointed as the President of the Canadian Association for Energy Economics

The CAEE is an affiliate of the International Association for Energy Economics. The CAEE operates to increase the understanding of how energy and economics relate to each other. The organization holds meetings, webinars, and conferences, which cover energy topics in Canada, and discuss how these topics relate to the broader issues of the global energy scene.

[CAEE website](#)



Canadian Association for Energy Economics
Association canadienne de l'économie de l'énergie

NEWS (cont'd)

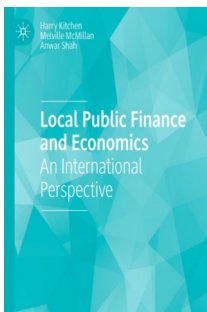


Mesbah Sharaf publishes new study "Does income inequality increase violence against women?"

(New study published in *The European Journal of Development Research*) [Full Article](#)

Violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights and a global health problem with severe adverse consequences on women and children. Although the literature is rich in studies on the determinants of violence against women, little attention has been given to the potential impact of income inequality on violence against women.

In his paper "Does Income Inequality Increase Violence Against Women? An Instrumental Variable Approach" published in *The European Journal of Development Research* Mesbah Sharaf and his coauthors Ahmed Rashad (Government of Dubai) and El-Hussien Mansour (City University of New York), investigate the impact of the state income inequality on violence against women in India, a country where violence against women is one of the highest in the world. The study uses data on a nationally representative sample of 69,704 women from the third National Family Health Survey for India, conducted in 2005-2006.



Melville McMillan Co-Authors Book Joined by Harry Kitchen, Trent University and Anwar Shah, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC
"Local Public Finance and Economics An International Perspective" [\(Free Preview\)](#)

Globalization and the information revolution have highlighted the catalytic role of local governments for improving economic and social outcomes at the local level as well as growing the national economy by enhancing international competitiveness. This comprehensive account of local public finance and economics brings together principles and better practices for improving quality and access of local public services provision.

The volume covers assignment of responsibilities; jurisdictional design; local service delivery; local regulation; local self-financing options such as income, sales, property and environmental taxation, user charges and fees; infrastructure finance options; and higher order government financing of local governments. The treatment is non-technical and suitable for a wide variety of audiences including scholars, instructors, students, media, policy advisers and practitioners.



Applying the scientific methods to labour markets
Joseph Marchand
[Full Article](#)

Joseph Marchand recalls finding himself in a lab on the fifth floor of the University of Alberta's Biological Sciences building, surrounded by hundreds of bottles of bacteria. The labour economist made sure not to touch anything (or put down his coffee cup) as graduate students from the Stein-Sauvageau lab explained how they were studying and genetically engineering bacteria to convert a greenhouse gas — methane — into a useful product — jet fuel.

"It's great to witness the scientific method at work. They are using bacteria as an input to production, much like a workforce, altering their conditions to make them more productive," he says. "That's fundamentally and methodologically similar to some of the empirical methods of labour economics, but our treatment and control groups are made up of hundreds of thousands of workers within each local labour market. We obviously couldn't fit all of those people in one lab — let alone into one container."



NEWS (cont'd)



Joseph Marchand Associate Professor, Economics shares his perspective -COVID 19 - a global problem in our own backyard.

Article published in the U of A Folio April 2020

[Read full story](#)

While Morck has an eye on global and national pandemic policies, U of A economist Joseph Marchand has been contemplating Alberta's unique situation in the mix.

It's a perspective that changes while he fields calls from politicians and research collaborators, and as daily briefings and policy announcements pour in. And it dovetails with his five-year project with the U of A's Future Energy Systems project, in which Marchand is studying how changes to the energy sector affect the job market.

In addition to COVID-19, Alberta has also begun experiencing the effects of an oil price war between Russia and Saudi Arabia that rendered Western Canadian Select cheaper than a latte.

While the two nations reached a partial detente, the crisis facing the global energy market could easily outlast the immediate threat of the pandemic, Marchand said. This makes any pandemic-related economic interventions in places like Alberta far more fraught and crucial. With government revenues dependent on oil royalties, every price adjustment has massive implications for the entire province.

"The virus is a short-run problem, possibly medium run. Oil is definitely a short-run problem, and I would assume medium run as well," Marchand said. "But this could actually be a harbinger of a long run problem"

"If I'm a provincial policy maker, you take all the federal government is doing and you say, what can we do to ramp things back up once the virus is dying down?" said Marchand. "There's definitely room there to do things."



Alexander Cheung, MA Economics student researches loss in labour productivity from Opioid Crisis in Roger S Smith 2019 Research Project.

In the summer of 2019 Alexander Cheung, MA Economics student, developed a research project under a 2019 Roger S. Smith Researcher Award. His project title was, "Loss of Life and Labour Productivity: The Canadian Opioid Crisis".

Abstract:

Since 2016, over 11,500 Canadians have lost their lives to opioid overdose. However, it is estimated that nearly 70% of these victims were gainfully employed in the 5 years before they died. Furthermore, most victims were males aged 30-39 meaning that the average victim forfeited 22 years of labour productivity. This research project measured the losses in labour productivity from this crisis using a Human Capital model adapted for the Canadian labour market. The total losses amount to approximately \$4.73 Billion dollars. While past losses are irreversible, future public policy interventions will likely alter the trajectory of future losses.

[Read more](#)



STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

GRADUATE AWARDS



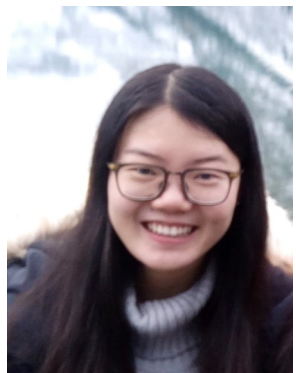
AN ANGUS SINCLAIR ABELL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP KELVIN KARKOH-AMPOMAH

Endowed by: Amy Ross Cogswell Abell BSc Pharmacy '36, in memory of her husband Angus Sinclair Abello, BA Economics '37. Awarded to a student with superior academic achievement entering the third year of study for a Bachelor of Arts with an Honors in Economics.



CORE PRIZE IN ECONOMICS HESHENG XING

Each year the Core Prize in Economics is awarded to a graduate student completing their Masters degree in the Department of Economics. The Core Prize in Economics is awarded to the student who achieves the highest overall GPA in the 4 core courses in their program. The 4 core courses are ECON 503 (Microeconomic Theory I), 581 (Macroeconomic Theory I), 598 (Econometric Theory and Applications) and 599 (Applied Econometrics).



ECONOMICS SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ALBERTA MA SCHOLARSHIP IN ECONOMICS YUQING WANG

Endowed by: The Economics Society of Northern Alberta . Awarded annually to a student registered full-time in a MA degree program in the Department of Economics who achieve superior academic standing (minimum grade point average of 3.5) in the Fall term of the first year of program registration. The scholarship is intended to provide financial support to the recipients during the completion of the Directed Research Project.



JOHN GARRETT GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN UNITED STATES STUDIES SEYEDSAHAAB HOSSEINY

Endowed by Frank W Peers as a tribute to his friend and classmate (Arts 1936) John Garrett who graduated with first-class honors and who was a Rhodes Scholar from Alberta in 1937.

One scholarship awarded annually on the basis of superior academic standing (equivalent to a grade point average of 3.5 or greater) and research potential to a student registered full-time in a graduate degree program in either the Department of Economics or Political Science. The scholarship will be awarded alternately between the Department of Economics and the Department of Political Science for the study of problematic aspects of Canada-United States relations, or for the dissemination of scholarly information in this field of study.

STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

GRADUATE AWARDS (cont'd)



MAURICE, MARY, AND MAX STEWART GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN ECONOMICS AFSANA ADIBA

Endowed through a bequest from the estate of Max Douglas Stewart in honour of Maurice Howard Stewart, born in 1889, and Mary Penn (Ritchie) Stewart, born in 1891, and their sons, Max Douglas Stewart, born in 1919 in Edmonton, Professor of Economics at the Royal Military College of Canada, the University of Alberta, and Wilfrid Laurier University, and Maurice Bruce Stewart, born in 1932 in Edmonton, winner of the Governor-General's Gold medal at the University of Alberta, and Professor of Physics at Willamette University, Salem, Oregon.

Awarded annually to a student who is registered full-time in a graduate degree program in the Department of Economics at the University of Alberta and who received the highest standing in the final year (minimum A-) of a Bachelor's degree. Preference will be given to a graduate of the Wilfrid Laurier University or a graduate of another Ontario University or a student whose permanent residence in the two years immediately preceding the end of their final Bachelor's degree examinations was in either Bruce County or Grey County in Ontario.



RESEARCH PRIZE IN ECONOMICS SHADI MERHEJ

Each year the Research Prize in Economics is awarded to a graduate student completing their Master's degree in the Department of Economics. The Research Prize in Economics is awarded to the student who writes the best research paper in ECON 999.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA DOCTORAL RECRUITMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The purpose of this scholarship is to recruit superior students at the doctoral level who have the potential to contribute to the University of Alberta's community and research.



HAOYU WANG FENGYI WANG SEYEDSAHAAB HOSSEINY SIRUI QIU



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA DOCTORAL RECRUITMENT SCHOLARSHIPS FRANCIS CHIPARAWASHA

The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) holds a one-time competition for University of Alberta Graduate Fellowships to provide timely funding for graduate students in anticipation of a delay in the announcement of Government of Alberta Graduate Scholarship funding. This is a temporary replacement for the previous QEII award.

STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS



AN ANGUS SINCLAIR ABELL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP JONATHAN BRISEBROIS

Endowed by: Amy Ross Cogswell Abell BSc Pharmacy '36, in memory of her husband Angus Sinclair Abello, BA Economics '37.

Awarded to a student with superior academic achievement entering the third year of study for a Bachelor of Arts with an Honors in Economics.



ARCHIBALD FORSTER MCGOUN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FEILING LU

Funded by: Mrs. IW Long of Edmonton, Alberta

Awarded annually to a student with superior academic achievement entering the second, third, or fourth year of the honors program in Economics.



BALDER VON HOHENBALKEN MEMORIAL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS MIKALA ZUBRECKI

Endowed by: Friends and colleagues in memory of the late Dr. Balder von Hohenbalken of Edmonton, Alberta

Awarded annually to a student with superior academic achievement entering the second, third, or fourth year of the honors program in Economics.



DR. MANMOHAN SINGH PRIZE IN ECONOMICS AUSTIN FERENCE

Endowed by: Friends in recognition of Dr. Manmohan Singh receiving an honorary degree from the University of Alberta in June 1997.

Awarded annually to a student with superior academic achievement in the Faculty of Arts majoring in Economics. Recipients will be selected on the basis of academic standing in Economics 213 (An Introduction to the Economics of Developing Countries).



DR. MILTON F. BAUER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP ANDRIY KRUGLIAK

Endowed by: Friends and colleagues in memory of the late Dr. Milton F Bauer of Edmonton, Alberta.

Awarded annually, on the basis of academic merit, to a student proceeding to the fourth year of the honors program in Economics at the University of Alberta.

STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS (cont'd)



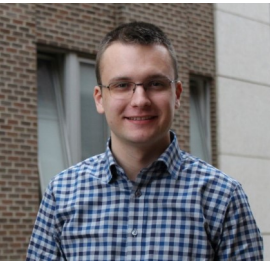
DUNCAN ALEXANDER MacGIBBON MEDAL IN ECONOMICS AHMED YALI

Endowed by: the late Dr DA MacGibbon of Hamilton, Ontario. Awarded annually to the student convocating with highest distinction from Honors Economics.



ECONOMICS SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ALBERTA SCHOLARSHIP EVAN ODDLEIFSON

Endowed by: the Economics Society of Northern Alberta
Awarded annually to a student with superior academic standing enrolled in the third or fourth year in the Faculty of Arts, and majoring in Economics. Recipient will be selected on the basis of academic standing. Preference will be given to students with financial need.



EMERSON AND TANG FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP TREVOR SULLIVAN

Endowed by: The Honorable David Emerson and Mrs. Theresa Emerson
Awarded to a student with superior academic achievement entering any year of study for a Bachelor of Arts with a major or minor in Economics. Selection based on academic achievement in courses taken in Economics and demonstrated involvement in sports. Preference given to a student from rural Alberta.



KD VERVILLE SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AUSTIN FERENCE

Funded by: KD Verville
Awarded annually to a student with superior academic achievement entering their second, third, or fourth year of the Honors Economics program. Recipients will be selected on the basis of academic standing on a minimum of 24 credits taken during an academic year. Preference will be given to those student leaders who actively participate in furthering Canadian democracy through involvement in Provincial or Federal politics, or the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. Since this Scholarship is based on Adam Smith Capitalism, financial need is not and will not be taken into consideration.

SEMINARS

MACRO SEMINARS



October 4, 2019 [PDF](#)

Diego Restuccia
(University of Toronto)
"Are Small Farms Really Farms
Really More Productive than
Large Farms?"



November 1, 2019 [PDF](#)

Joaquin Lopez
(University of Memphis)
"Entrepreneurship and Rent-
Seeking under Credit
Constraints"



November 8, 2019 [PDF](#)

Damba Lkhagvasuren
(Concordia University)
"The Role of a Persistent Match
Shock for Sectoral Mobility and
Wages"



November 22, 2019 [PDF](#)

Laura Pilossoph
(Federal Reserve Bank of New York)
"Latent Heterogeneity in
Marginal Propensity to
Consume"



January 31, 2020 [PDF](#)

Ronald Wolthoff
(University of Toronto)
"Search, Screening and Sorting"

Organized by the appointed Department representative, the Macro/Micro Economic Seminars are held throughout the academic year. The Guest Speakers are from all over the world, allowing our Department the opportunity to have leading edge economic research topics shared with our staff and students. These interactions also open the opportunity for research collaboration.

MICRO SEMINARS



October 21, 2019 [PDF](#)

Toomas Hinnosaar
(Collegio Carlo Alberto)
"Price Setting on a Network"



October 25, 2019 [PDF](#)

Amine Ouazad
(HEC Montreal)
"Market Frictions, Arbitrage,
and the Capitalization of
Amenities"



March 6, 2020
(no abstract available)

Lucija Muehlenbachs
(University of Calgary)
"Cash versus In-Kind Settle-
ments: Implications or
Environmental Protection"

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ECONOMICS



From the Director, Corinne Langinier

Due to the exceptional circumstances created by Covid-19 and the implication of the pandemic, we had to postpone some public events of the Institute for Public Economics to a later date. Nevertheless, the IPE hosted two Hanson Lectures, one in person in September 2019, and one online in May 2020, and workshops on issues as diverse as the Economics of Happiness, and Carbon and Corporate Taxation and Public Expenditures.

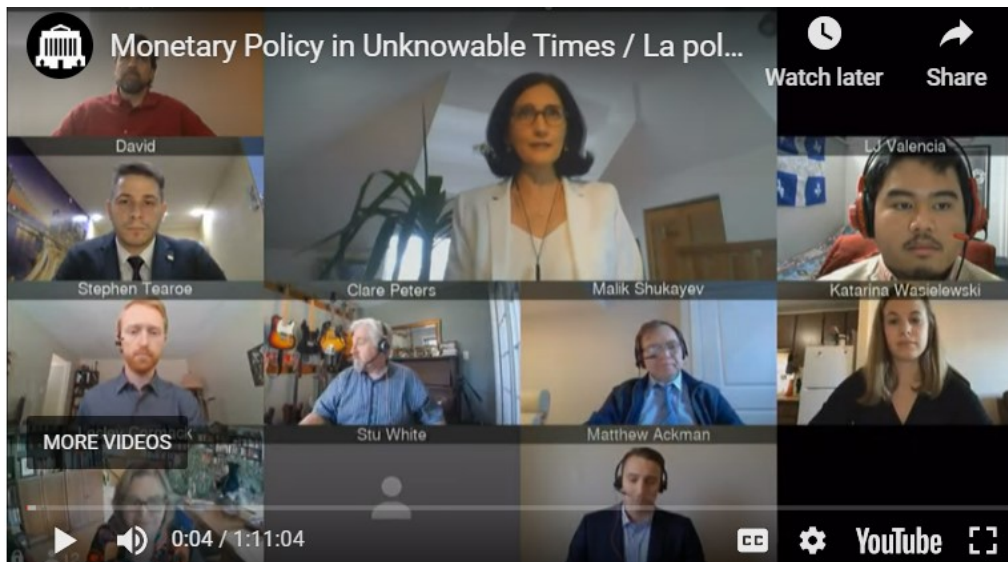
On September 30, 2019, it was an honor to receive Professor Daniel Trefler, the J. Douglas and Ruth Grant Chair in Competitiveness and Prosperity at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, who presented the 2019 Eric J. Hanson Memorial Lecture. The title of Professor Trefler's talk was "Populism, Inequality, and Globalization: From the Rialto to Wall Street." Professor Trefler explored the conditions that have weakened the economic, political, and social pillars of liberal democracy and fueled a populist response. At the end of the talk, our young colleague Jiatong Zhong, Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics, sat with Dan Trefler and asked him questions. This new format was a great success and gave some more intimate vibe to the talk. Jiatong Zhong did an excellent job.



On May 25, 2020, we experienced our first Eric J. Hanson Memorial Lecture online. It has been a long tradition to have the governor of the Bank of Canada give a Hanson Lecture in the last few months of his tenure. After former governors of the Bank of Canada David A. Dodge and Mark Carney (who gave the 2008 and 2013 Hanson Lectures, respectively), it was an honor to have Stephen Poloz deliver the 2020 Eric J. Hanson Memorial

Lecture. The title of his talk was "Monetary Policy in Unknowable Times," a timely issue. Governor Poloz talked about uncertainty, which has always been a factor in monetary policymaking. Events of the past decade—capped by the current coronavirus pandemic—have moved uncertainty from an economist's technicality to the policymaker's main preoccupation. His lecture illustrated the evolution of monetary policymaking through several case studies. Governor Poloz discussed efforts underway to make risk management more rigorous and suggested how the lessons of the past decade could be applied during the pandemic recovery period. The online version of the talk required the help of IT technicians from the University of Alberta and the Bank of Canada who did a great job as the lecture was a success. [Link to lecture](#)

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ECONOMIC (cont'd)



The format of the Hanson Lecture was different from the previous Lectures. With the help of Malik Shukayev, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics, students prepared questions, and Professor Shukayev also moderated questions after the talk. We are incredibly grateful to our five former and current students from the Department of Economics (Matthew Ackman, David Kalashnikov, Stephen Tearoe, LJ Valencia, Katarina Wasielewski) who did an excellent job in coming up with great questions and who made the Lecture very lively. The Lecture was followed by more than 130 University of Alberta guests, and many more at the Bank of Canada. For those who missed the Lecture live, a Webcast of the Lecture has been uploaded at the Bank of Canada.

The IPE workshop series hosted several talks. On October 28, 2019, Emilson Silva, Professor at Alberta School of Economics at the University of Alberta, presented “Regional Competitiveness, Carbon and Corporate Taxation and Public Expenditures.” Professor Silva talked about globalization that has increased the movement of capital and trade, helping multinational enterprises to explore new markets. Jurisdictions around the world face political pressure to regulate dirty industries by imposing a carbon tax, create a cap-and-trade market for emission permits, or limiting production directly through quantity restrictions. However, they also face political pressure to attract foreign investment to facilitate job creation and economic growth and to use its tax revenue to provide public goods. This tension creates interesting trade-offs, which need to be thoroughly analyzed. Professor Silva presented a theoretical model where two independent jurisdictions (nations) compete to attract foreign investment (MNEs) and provide public goods. In their arsenal of instruments, there are subsidies supplied to entrant MNEs, and carbon and corporate income taxes.

On November 18, 2019, Haifang Huang, an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Alberta presented, “Economics of Happiness: a Macroeconomist’ Observations.” Professor Huang reviewed the literature and present empirical observations on the economic determinants of subjective well-being or happiness, mostly from a macroeconomic perspective. He talked about topics that included debates on the relationship between economic growth and happiness, the well-being effects of employment, job security, and income growth, the impact of growth engines such as international trade, automation, and creative destruction. It also reviewed the empirical evidence on the links between economic outcomes, happiness, and election outcomes.

PUBLICATIONS

A full list of Faculty publications is available on the Department of Economics website. [LINK](#)

Dana Andersen and Pinar Gunes, "The Role of Adolescent Health in Adult SES Outcomes", *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, 18(2):16, 2018.

David P. Brown and David E.M. Sappington, "Employing cost sharing to motivate the efficient implementation of distributed energy resources," *Energy Economics*, Elsevier, vol. 81(C), pages 974-1001, 2019.

Tilman Klumpp and Xuejuan Su, "Price-quality competition in a mixed duopoly," *Journal of Public Economic Theory*, Association for Public Economic Theory, vol. 21(3), pages 400-432, June, 2019.

Stuart Landon and Constance Smith, "Managing Uncertainty: The Search for a Golden Discount-Rate Rule for Defined-Benefit Pensions," *C.D. Howe Institute Commentary*, C.D. Howe Institute, issue 530, January, 2019.

Melville McMillan, "Provincial Public Infrastructure Spending and Financing in Alberta: Searching for a Better Course," *SPP Research Papers*, The School of Public Policy, University of Calgary, vol. 12(10), March, 2019.

Andrew McGee and Peter McGee, "After The Tournament: Outcomes And Effort Provision," *Economic Inquiry*, Western Economic Association International, vol. 57(4), pages 2125-2146, October, 2019.

Gloria L. Bernal and Jeffrey Penney, "Scholarships and student effort: Evidence from Colombia's Ser Pilo Paga program," *Economics of Education Review*, Elsevier, vol. 72(C), pages 121-130, 2019.

Yuko Imura and Malik Shukayev, "The extensive margin of trade and monetary policy," *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, Elsevier, vol. 100(C), pages 417-441, 2019.

Zhanar Bimurat & Darkhan U. Abdibekov & Dulat N. Shukayev & Yekaterina R. Kim and Malik D. Shukayev, "Sensitivity of optimal portfolio problems to time-varying parameters: simulation analysis," *Journal of Asset Management*, Palgrave Macmillan, vol. 20(5), pages 395-402, September, 2019.

Ahmed Shoukry Rashad and Mesbah Fathy Sharaf, "Does maternal employment affect child nutrition status? New evidence from Egypt," *Oxford Development Studies*, Taylor & Francis Journals, vol. 47(1), pages 48-62, January, 2019.

Mesbah Fathy Sharaf & Ahmed Shoukry Rashad & Elhussien Ibrahim Mansour, "Son Preference and Child Under nutrition in the Arab Countries: Is There a Gender Bias against Girls?," *Middle East Development Journal*, Taylor & Francis Journals, vol. 11(2), pages 205-230, July 2019

Ahmed Shoukry Rashad and Mesbah Fathy Sharaf and Elhussien Ibrahim Mansour, "Does Public Health Insurance Increase Maternal Health Care Utilization in Egypt?," *Journal of International Development*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., vol. 31(6), pages 516-520, August, 2019.

PUBLICATIONS (cont'd)

Ahmed Shoukry Rashad and Mesbah Fathy Sharaf and El Hussien Mansour, "Does Income Inequality Increase Violence Against Women? An Instrumental Variable Approach," *The European Journal of Development Research*, Palgrave Macmillan; European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), vol. 31(4), pages 779-808, September, 2019.

Paul R. Masson and Malik D. Shukayev, "Are Bygones Not Bygones? Modeling Price-Level Targeting with an Escape Clause and Lessons from the Gold Standard," *World Scientific Book Chapters*, in: *Macroeconomic Modelling and Monetary and Exchange Rate Regimes*, chapter 11, pages 385-417, World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd..2019

Vincenzo Andrietti and Xuejuan Su, "The Impact of Schooling Intensity on Student Learning: Evidence from a Quasi-Experiment," *Education Finance and Policy*, MIT Press, vol. 14(4), pages 679-701, Fall, 2019.

Beyza Ural Marchand, "Inequality and Trade Policy: The Pro-Poor Bias of Contemporary Trade Restrictions," *Review of Income and Wealth*, International Association for Research in Income and Wealth, vol. 65(S1), pages 123-152, November, 2019.

THANKS TO DONORS

The Department of Economics gratefully acknowledges all of our donors for their contributions towards helping pursue it's mandate of excellence in teaching. Donations may be designated for a particular purpose. The following are examples of active donation accounts:

Archibald Forster McGoun Memorial Scholarship in Economics

Department of Economics Fund

Balder Von Hohenbalken Book Prize in Economics Fund

KD Verville Scholarship for Academic Excellence in Honors Economics

Faculty of Arts - Dept. of Economics - Chair Enhancement Fund

E.J. Hanson Memorial Lecture Fund



For information on donating to any of these or for further information on giving opportunities, please contact:

Dr. Rick Szostak, Chair, Dept. of Economics

economic@ualberta.ca

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