

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

NEWSLETTER 2020-2021



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

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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 30 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



How did the Department weather the pandemic (so far)? Very ably and professionally, I am proud to say. My colleagues mastered the technologies of online teaching. They found ways to keep students engaged. They came up with strategies for patrolling cheating in online exams. There can be no doubt that many students – and instructors – missed the experience of face-to-face classrooms. And I am sure we did not prevent every instance of cheating. But I think the Department rose to the challenge well.

As you can imagine, this was a year when we needed to make a lot of decisions on the fly. I am immensely grateful to my Associate Chairs, Heather Eckert and Valentina Galvani for handling each new challenge with both professionalism and good humour.

I would also like to give special thanks to the instructors of our new ECON 109 Basic Writing in Economics course. They devoted considerable energy to piloting this new course successfully in difficult circumstances. Student feedback was very strong. And we look forward to seeing better writing (and reading comprehension) skills in our senior courses. I thank Abdul Aleem, Linda Kerr, and Anna Priemaza for teaching with such passion and dedication, and Andrew Eckert and Valentina Galvani for helping to shape these courses.

We were able to hire another Assistant Professor, Marco Brianti, this year. Marco is a macro-econometrician with a PhD from Boston College. He will be teaching undergrad econometrics in the Fall and a new grad course in financial econometrics in the Winter next year. I thank Sebastian Fossati, Chetan Dave, Barrie Scholnick, and Eddy Kent for serving on the hiring committee, and Holly Ridyard for managing the hundreds of applications and organizing virtual fly-ins of job candidates.

We have also hired Ashutosh Sarker to teach courses in energy and resource economics for us. Ashutosh has been teaching in Malaysia for several years and has published several articles in ecological economics.

I am thrilled to announce that a team from our Department won the Bank of Canada's Governor's Challenge this year. The competition involves making a proposal on monetary policies and answering questions. The judges are senior officials from the Bank of Canada. I warmly congratulate the five students on the team -- Austin Ference, Besindone Dumi-Leslie, Joseph Hoekstra, Robyn Taylor and Sam Grootelaar -- and I thank Malik Shukayev and Max Sties for mentoring the team.

The last four years have been wonderful for this Department. We hired eight 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.

The pandemic caused us to put a hold on both seminars (except for hiring seminars and our internal seminar series) and social events for the year. Our Social Events Committee did organize a trivia night in March in which over 40 instructors and grad students participated. This was a great event – in part because it gave us a chance to see each other after so many months in which the Department has been closed. I thank Laurel Wheeler, Jiatong Zhong, and Tilman Klumpp for organizing it. This is a very collegial Department and we have all missed the camaraderie.

The University plans a return to face-to-face teaching for Fall 2021. They have asked us to continue offering some courses online for students unable to attend in person. The University has contingency plans should the pandemic not be under control by September. We may be forced to teach all or most courses online again.

The government has cut the University's budget again this year. The University is hoping to save money by centralizing some administrative functions. I am hopeful as I write this that we will be able to maintain most of the excellent staff in our Department. I must sadly report that Stu White, Assistant Chair, was laid off in early July. Stu was a true professional to the very end, and prepared files and instructions for Lihong Yang who now provides administrative support to six social science Departments.

I reported last year that hundreds of thousands of dollars in research funding in the Department had been frozen. It remains frozen. Recent changes in how the province evaluates the University's budget should allow the funds to be unfrozen in the next year.

Speaking of "frozen," the University is upgrading the heating and air conditioning system in the Tory Building. This is long overdue. We were forced to purchase space heaters for several offices a couple years ago when the heating system failed to cope with a cold snap. We look forward to returning to even better offices than we left a year ago.

Still, as I said last year, I feel lucky. 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, Christina Smith, and Rae Beaumont have kept the Department humming along from home. I never did meet Rae in person, but she was both dedicated and innovative as she covered for Chelsi Hudson's maternity leave. We are pleased to welcome Chelsi back. I wish that I could spare these good people from the uncertainty that hangs over their jobs in the next months. And I wish we could have kept the office plants from dying.

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, Marco Brianti who will join us July 1, 2021.



Marco Brianti
Assistant Professor

Marco Brianti is a recent Ph.D. graduate from Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts. His job market paper, "Financial Shocks, Uncertainty Shocks, and Monetary Policy Trade-Offs," clarifies that financial shocks and uncertainty shocks are two distinct sources of business cycle fluctuations that require different monetary policy interventions. His empirical results show that although both shocks are contractionary, financial shocks are inflationary, while uncertainty shocks generate deflation. A theoretical model is employed to rationalize this pattern and show that the monetary authority deals with different challenges in the face of the two shocks.

Dr. Brianti's research agenda includes several other projects that focus on the primary sources of business cycle fluctuations and their interaction with uncertainty, risk, and financial frictions. His research has been presented at international conferences, such as the Society for Economics Dynamics, Midwest Macro Meetings, as well as at the Board of the Federal Reserve, the Bank of England, and the Bank of Canada.

Marco grew up in the north of Italy, where he completed his undergrad studies. Before starting the Ph.D. program in the U.S., he has been an intern at the Bank of Italy in Rome, where he met his wife, Sara. Marco spends his free time playing sports and watching movies. He is looking forward to practicing winter sports and to exploring all the natural areas surrounding the city.



The Department has also hired Ashutosh Sarker to teach courses in energy and resource economics for us. Ashutosh has been teaching in Malaysia for several years and has published several articles in ecological economics.

It is with sadness that we announce that Dodge Cahan has left the Department for family reasons. He has taken a job with Amazon in Seattle. We enjoyed having Dodge with us for the past two years and wish him well.



SOCIAL COMMITTEE



Even with a global pandemic taking place, we were able to hold a Trivia Night for our faculty and grad students earlier this year, thanks to Zoom. Dinner was delivered to the staff and grad students participating. Fun was had by all!

All being well, the Department of Economics will be able to hold our Canoe trip and Picnic that was very successful in September 2019.



Timothy Huyer, (B.A. Hons)1995



My U of A economics degree has been, without a doubt, the foundation of my entire career, and it continues to be relevant to my work 25 years later.

My B.A. in Honors Economics secured my admission to the M.A. program at Queen's University. Moreover, my UofA courses, especially in econometrics, public finance and microeconomic theory, equipped me with the necessary grounding for me to succeed and complete my graduate degree.

From there, I began working at Ontario's Ministry of Finance. Ontario was, at this time, preparing to deregulate its electricity market. This involved transforming the essentially insolvent provincially owned Ontario Hydro into five different corporations, two of which (Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and Hydro One), now operate as commercial corporations.

My main contribution to this project was as the lead policy analyst in the development, negotiation and implementation of the Ontario Nuclear Funds Agreement (ONFA), a unique financial arrangement to fund the future costs of managing nuclear waste and decommissioning nuclear power reactors (20 of Canada's 22 nuclear power reactors are in Ontario, and nuclear power continues to provide roughly half of Ontario's electricity). The former Ontario Hydro had recorded an amount for its future nuclear waste management and decommissioning costs but had not set aside any actual funds to pay for these obligations, creating huge financial risks for electricity ratepayers and Ontario taxpayers. As a result of ONFA, sufficient funds had been contributed to the segregated funds to meet the expected costs by the start of 2017. At the end of 2020, the funds had over \$19 billion in assets.

While Ontario's efforts at electricity market restructuring have not always been successful, ONFA in particular stands out as a win. It also made it possible for OPG to privatize the Bruce Nuclear Generating Stations (where 8 reactors are located), bringing much needed capital investment and management expertise to Ontario's nuclear power sector, and to ensure that OPG could issue bonds on its own credit, without any government guarantee, as a commercial corporation with an investment-grade credit rating.

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While working in the Ontario Public Service, I obtained my Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Charter. Again, my prior studies in economics provided a solid basis for the program.

I then decided to turn my career a different direction and so went back to Queen's University, this time to study law. Once again, my background in economics helped ensure my success. Economics helped me to understand some types of law, such as contracts law, property law and competition law, as they are largely built on economic concepts. But perhaps more importantly, after having survived such courses as econometrics, law courses seemed comparatively easy!

From law school, I went to work for the federal public service. Since 2011, I have been legal counsel at the Department of Finance. I work with economists, providing them advice on the legal implications of proposed policy initiatives, whether they are contained within a Budget or whether they are standalone measures. I have worked on housing finance, including helping draft the rules for what mortgages are eligible for mortgage insurance, a number of privatizations (some which have yet to be finalized), proposals to reduce credit card acceptance fees, regulation of banks, some international trade issues and lots of other files. Because of my training in economics, I can better understand my clients and make sure that my advice answers their questions in ways they can understand. More importantly, my economics background helps me propose legally workable solutions to policy problems that might not be apparent to my clients. I can see how my work has made a difference on a number of important policy initiatives and have benefitted Canadians.

I may in the years ahead make another major job or career shift. I can't predict what will come next for me (I never mastered forecasting skills, whether in economics or in any other context). But I am sure that wherever the road takes me, I will continue to call upon the base of knowledge and the skills I gained at the U of A.

FACULTY PROFILE
CORINNE LANGINIER



Corinne Langinier is a Professor in the Department of Economics. She graduated with a doctoral degree from Toulouse School of Economics (France). Before joining the Department of Economics at the University of Alberta in 2008, Corinne held faculty positions at Concordia University in Montreal and Iowa State University in Ames (USA). She has been a visiting fellow at Toulouse School of Economics, INRA in Grenoble, the Departments of Economics in Rennes and Pau, France. Corinne is currently the Director of the Institute for Public Economics and the Director of the University of Alberta Economists group. She has been a member of the *Canadian Journal of Economics* editorial board, and since 2019, she is an editor of the *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics*.

Corinne's main research fields are Industrial Organization and Economics of Innovation with applications to different contexts such as the Internet, biotechnology, Information and Communication Technology industries and agricultural markets. Corinne has conducted theoretical and empirical studies on

Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) with several co-authors and has gained a solid institutional knowledge of the functioning of patent systems.

Her first set of contributions were aimed at understanding the private incentives of firms to patent and, in particular, their strategic behaviour while patenting or renewing a patent. She recently had access to a unique Canadian patent dataset thanks to a collaboration with Industry Canada (while supervising a Ph.D. student) and could study the determinants of locational patenting behaviour of Canadian firms.

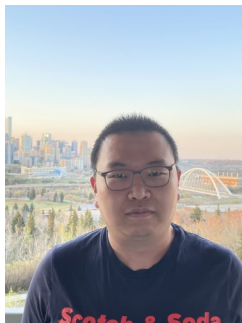
Second, her contributions have been focused on the functioning of the patent system to better understand the process by which patents are granted. Corinne has studied the behaviour of patent applicants who often have a better knowledge about their innovation and, thus, have an incentive not to reveal all the information they have about it. She has also studied the behaviour of patent examiners who have their own agendas, which are sometimes at odds with the economic welfare of society. In a recent empirical contribution, she shows that the mobility of patent examiners is linked to the way they work at the patent office.

Third, she has also been studying the impact of IPRs in different markets. For instance, in the Internet, she has studied the problem of third-party liability (called contributory infringement) in the context of a network. In the Information and Communication Technology industries, she has been wondering what role inventors and imitators have. Corinne has also been working on problems linked to innovation in agricultural and biotechnology markets. In particular, she studied how the incentives to invest in a seed innovation differ depending on the type of available property rights (patent or Plant Breeder Rights).

Her latest research interest lies in green innovations. Given increasing environmental concerns and the growing environmental consciousness of citizens globally, developing green technologies has become a key policy initiative of international organizations and national governments. Thus, gaining a better understanding of the role of patents in enhancing innovation in less polluting technologies becomes essential. In a recent contribution, she studies the impact of different patent policy tools in the presence of environmentally friendly consumers and in conjunction with environmental policy instruments on emission levels. One interesting finding is that the introduction of patents results in a paradox whereby increasing emission tax beyond a certain level leads to an increase in the emission, which may be avoided by reducing the patenting cost.

Corinne's research has been published in leading journals such as *RAND Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, *Review of Industrial Organization*, *Canadian Journal of Economics*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Journal of Economic Surveys*, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*.

GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILES



Liang Ma

Liang is a PhD student of Economics student here at the University of Alberta.

Liang is in his fifth year of the Ph.D. program in the department. He is originally from China and obtained his Master degree from

the University of New Brunswick.

Liang's research interests lie in the areas of monetary economics and financial economics. His current project studies the real economic impact of unconventional monetary policies by using high-frequency financial data.

His career goal is to work as a researcher in a think tank or financial institution. In his free time, Liang enjoys watching movies and traveling with friends. His favorite place in Alberta is the Upper Kananaskis Lake in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park.



Liam Lerat

Liam is a Masters of Arts in Economics student at the University of Alberta.

Liam is entering the second year of his MA in Economics and Finance program. Prior to coming to the University of Alberta, Liam completed his BA

(Honors) in Economics at the University of Regina.

Liam's main research interests are financial economics and economic growth. He is particularly interested in growth and recovery in financial markets from economic and financial shocks, including foreign exchange, bonds, and derivative markets. This interest stems from studying the great depression of the 1930's and the 2008 financial crisis, as well as from his work in a treasury and capital markets setting.

Liam aims to work in the public sector or a major financial institution where he can continue analyzing the economics of financial markets. He hopes one day to work at the Bank of Canada. Outside of the classroom, Liam is an avid sports player. He enjoys hockey, lacrosse, and played university level football in Regina. He also enjoys cooking, hiking and camping.



Natasha Ting

Natasha is a Master of Arts in Economics student at the University of Alberta, after graduating from the same Department with an Honours B.A. in Economics in 2020.

Natasha is from the tropical peninsular of Malaysia. From her internships and work experiences in 3 different continents, she picked up practical

issues in the global movement for sustainable development. Her ideas come otherwise from articles, books, and occasional gaffes of her professors.

Natasha aspires to become an economist to study questions in environmental, resource and financial economics. Her career aspiration is to make policies and remove market friction in at least one sector and one region. She enjoys reading, watching nature documentaries, writing jokes, commenting on news commentaries, and playing music. She has stopped dry running her old hobby of snorkelling and now enjoys a good powder day on the ski slope.

UNDERGRADUATE PROFILE MATTHEW ACKMAN



My name is Matthew Ackman and I graduated from the University of Alberta's Honors Economics program in April 2020, shortly after the COVID-19 situation first took hold. Immediately following graduation I began my new role at the Bank of Canada as a research assistant, where I've been working (remotely) ever since. The competencies I developed while studying at the University of Alberta have been immensely helpful in securing a job at such a renowned institution, but also in helping me excel in my current role. I am very proud to represent my alma mater among my new colleagues.

While a student in Economics, I received a Roger Smith Undergraduate Research Award and had the opportunity to work with Dr. Valentina Galvani. From this research we published an article in 2021. I had the opportunity to serve on the U of A's Governor's Challenge Team under the supervision of Drs. Malik Shukayev and Max Sties. The Department's new Projects course was an opportunity for me to be a member of a student team that was urged to patent a process that we developed.

I work with a team of around twelve economists in the Bank's Financial Stability Department, in one of the teams formed in response to the great recession. We work very closely with major policy cycles in both monetary and fiscal contexts. Working in such an analytical space, we regularly employ a myriad of technical methods to proprietary datasets in search of new insights on the Canadian economy. This has allowed me to bring my Python programming abilities, a skill I developed working with Dr. Galvani during my undergrad, to new heights.

This Department's support in preparing me for this role, from new technical skills to interview prep, have been instrumental in landing a job at my dream employer right out of graduation. I'd like to thank all those involved, as well as encourage current undergraduate students interested in this line of work to pursue the Bank of Canada's recruitment process.

NEWS



Chetan Dave speaks to Akshay Tandon of CTV News about the drop in the Canadian economy. [Watch the interview here.](#)



Rick Szostak has published *Making Sense of World History*, the first ever open-access world history text.

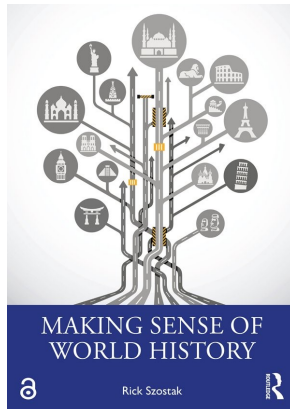
Not only is this the first ever open-access world history text, but it's also the first ever world history text

written by an economist. There is more economic history in it than in other world history texts.

Making Sense of World History helps students to understand the key themes of world history within a chronological framework stretching from ancient times to the present day. The textbook is available [online](#) (or in print).

The Open Access version of this book has been made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives 4.0 license.

In April 2021 it was announced that Rick Szostak's book named Outstanding Book in Humanities and Social Sciences for 2020.



Corinne Langinier speaks with Philippe de Montigny (former UofA Honors Econ Grad) of CBC regarding a recent case in which Panasonic settled a suit regarding collusion in the pricing of electronic components. [Watch the interview here.](#) (Article is in French)



David Brown awarded Canada Research Chair for his work with renewable energy and emerging technologies in the electric power sector.

Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Energy

Economics and Policy are awarded by the Canadian government to attract and retain some of the world's most accomplished and promising minds. They recognize outstanding researchers who are acknowledged by their peers as current or emerging world leaders in their fields.

Brown's research analyzes the design of electricity markets, focusing on how to efficiently incorporate renewable energy and emerging technologies, which can drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The electricity industry is a complex web of markets and infrastructure that has been built iteratively since the early 1900s. As Brown explains it, the nature of renewable energy creates certain barriers to integrate these resources into the existing system. This has the potential to disrupt the reliable supply of electricity to consumers.

"My research program analyzes existing and proposed policies targeted at alleviating those barriers," Brown explains. "This work has the potential to improve the operation of electricity markets, design regulatory policy to keep up with the quickly changing technological environment, and reduce the emissions intensity of the electricity sector, thereby contributing to the achievement of climate change targets."

"It is truly an honor to be named a Canada Research Chair among so many great researchers in the CRC program," says Brown. "The CRC will provide me with the additional time and resources to focus on my research and fund graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Canada attracts really talented graduate students from around the world and I am excited to get to work with them."

NEWS (cont'd)

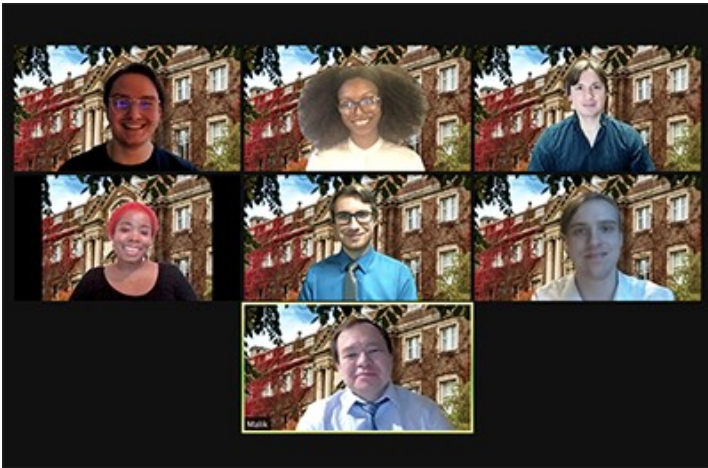


Assistant Professor Laurel Wheeler discusses the implications of COVID-19 for the Indigenous gaming industry. [Read story here.](#)

Assistant Professor Chetan Dave was interviewed by *Investment Executive* for his comments on the province's 2021 Budget. The article, "Alberta hopes higher oil prices will power recovery" can be found [here.](#)



U of A Economics Majors Crowned National Champions of the Bank of Canada Governor's Challenge.



We are very pleased to announce that the team from our Economics Department has won this year's Bank of Canada "Governor's Challenge." This academic year, 22 teams from across the country had entered the competition. Five teams survived the first round in November 2020. These teams would normally have travelled to Ottawa for the final round, but this year competed online. Each team gave a presentation on the economic outlook for Canada and made a monetary policy recommendation to a panel of senior central bank officials. The panel then asked them questions. The five team members: Austin Ference, Besindone Dumi-Leslie, Joseph Hoekstra, Robyn Taylor and Sam Grootelaar are all Economics Majors. The team was guided by two faculty advisors from the Department of Economics, Malik Shukayev and Max Sties. Elevated economic uncertainty and remote participation made this annual competition particularly challenging this year. Congratulations to the University of Alberta team and their faculty advisors!

See the Bank of Canada story [here.](#)

Valentina Galvani, Associate Professor, and her Former Ph.D. student Lifang Li (now an Assistant Professor of Finance at Xi'an Jiaotong University) published an article on momentum investing in the *Review of Finance*. This journal is ranked in the Financial Times'



Top 50 Journals List, used by the Financial Times (FT) in compiling the FT Research rank, which is used in their Global MBA, EMBA and Online MBA rankings. Read the paper at 10.1093/rof/rfab004 and see her work on her website at <https://apps.ualberta.ca/directory/person/vgalvani>.

Former Honors Student, Matthew Ackman, discusses the implication of taxing securities transactions on liquidity.



Many economists have, in recent years, advocated some sort of tax on financial transactions in order to reduce financial market volatility. What is the implication of taxing securities transactions on liquidity? For insights take a look at this paper ([https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S2405-8440\(21\)00521-1](https://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S2405-8440(21)00521-1)) by Matthew Ackman, a former Economics Honors student (Class of 2019), now at the Bank of Canada. The article is co-authored with U of A Economics Associate Professor, Valentina Galvani. The paper grew out of a Roger Smith Undergraduate Research project undertaken by Matthew under the supervision of Professor Galvani in 2018.

by Matthew Ackman, a former Economics Honors student (Class of 2019), now at the Bank of Canada. The article is co-authored with U of A Economics Associate Professor, Valentina Galvani. The paper grew out of a Roger Smith Undergraduate Research project undertaken by Matthew under the supervision of Professor Galvani in 2018.

STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

GRADUATE AWARDS



CORE PRIZE IN ECONOMICS
MAARIJ REHMAN

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
DIAN HONG

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
LIANG MA**

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
MAARIJ REHMAN

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
VICTOR ANIM-OPARE, CHRISTIAN OFOSU-KWARKYE, HUAN YANG AND KENNETH ZIMMER

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.

STUDENT AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS



AN ANGUS SINCLAIR ABELL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
XINYI ZHANG

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
BESINDONE DUMI-LESLIE

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
NATHAN BECKER

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
XIAORAN SHI

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
XINYI ZHANG

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
ANDRIY KRUGLIAK

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
AUSTIN FERENCE

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
BRET ALLINOTT

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
BRET ALLINOTT

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

There were no Macro or Micro Seminars held after March 2020.

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.

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ECONOMICS



From the Director, Corinne Langinier

Due to the pandemic and the exceptional circumstances associated with it, we had a relatively quiet year. We are expecting to resume our in-person events in 2021-2022. Nevertheless, the IPE hosted online workshops on issues as diverse as the corporate bond market and provincial debt sustainability in Canada. These online workshops were well attended by faculty members, students and outsiders.

On October 26, 2020, Valentina Galvani, Associate professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Alberta, presented a workshop named "Some investors know: evidence from the corporate bond market." Professor Galvani talked about how some investors enjoy an informational advantage over others. She explained that the effects of this asymmetric information are in full display in the corporate bond market, where institutional investors dominate. Consistently, the returns on bonds traded mainly by institutional investors predict same-issuer equities returns, whereas bonds traded by small investors lag equities. Furthermore, information travels fast for bonds on which institutions concentrate but much slower, if at all, for bonds traded by retail investors. Retail investors pay higher transaction fees and tend to place the wrong bets. From the issuers' perspective, small and medium-sized firms struggle to get information to bond investors and pay the price for this. Professor Galvani explained this issue in the context of Canada and informed us that Canadian and Albertan governments have policy tools to alleviate these disadvantages.



On November 4, 2020, Trevor Tombe, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Calgary and Research Fellow at The School of Public Policy, presented a workshop whose title was "Provincial Debt Sustainability in Canada: Demographics, Federal Transfers, and COVID-19." As one of the most decentralized federations globally, the sustainability of Canada's public debt depends on the fiscal health of its provinces. Years of steadily rising provincial debt, a severe economic shock from COVID-19, and mounting healthcare costs from ageing populations all create pressures. Professor Tombe explored how significant these long-term fiscal challenges are, what they depend on, and how provinces differ.

He also proposed policy options available to both provincial and federal governments, focusing on reforms to federal transfers. To accomplish this, Professor Tombe presented a paper that describes a simple yet powerful approach to quantify long-run fiscal gaps that build on the literature but clarifies and simplifies some common results. It combines this flexible and easily computable model with readily available and regularly updated data to construct a projection of government finances. He finds that despite a large debt increase due to COVID-19, while the federal government is solidly sustainable, most provincial governments are not. Modest reductions in health spending growth combined with increases in revenue growth are sufficient to overcome this challenge in all but the oil-producing provinces. Of course, public finances will be buffeted by currently unknowable future developments, both positive and negative, so the path of future debt cannot be known with certainty. This analysis is nonetheless valuable as it shows that we have both the data and the tools to measure and manage our long-term fiscal challenges today.

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David Brown, Jay Zarnikau and Chi-Keung Woo, “Does Locational Marginal Pricing Impact Generation Investment Location Decisions? An analysis of Texas’s wholesale electricity market”, *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, (58)2, No 1, pages 99-140, 2020.

David P. Brown and **Andrew Eckert**, “Imperfect Competition in Electricity Markets with Renewable Generation: The Role of Renewable Compensation Policies”, *The Energy Journal*, 41(4), pages 61-88, 2020.

Richard Boampong and **David Brown**, “On the Benefits of Behind-the-meter Rooftop Solar and Energy Storage: The importance of retail rate design”, *Energy Economics*, 86(C), 2020.

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Chetan Dave and James Feigenbaum, “Precautionary Learning and Inflationary Biases”, *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 24(5), pages 1124-1150, 2020.

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Corinne Langinier and Amrita Ray Chaudhuri, “Green Technology and Patents in the Presence of Green Consumers”, *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, 7(1), pages 73 - 101, 2020.

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Joseph Marchand and Jeremy G. Weber, “How Local Economic Conditions Affect School Finances, Teacher Quality, and Student Achievement: Evidence from the Texas Shale Boom”, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 39(1), pages 36-63, 2020.

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Brian Dollery, Harry Kitchen, **Melville McMillan** and Anwar Shah, "Local Public, Fiscal and Financial Governance" in *Springer Books* from Springer, 2020, (ISBN: 978-3-030-36725-1).

Mesbah Sharaf and Ahmed Rashad, "Does Precarious Employment Ruin Youth Health and Marriage? Evidence from Egypt using longitudinal data", *International Journal of Development Issues*, 19(3), pages 391-406, 2020.

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