From the Department Chair . . .

New faculty

I am pleased to report that we already have two acceptances as new assistant professors. We also have several candidates who are considering offers from us. Joining us in the fall is Atila Abdulkadiroğlu who will receive his Ph.D. from the University of Rochester. He is a native of Turkey. He is a theorist with interests in mechanism design, dynamic contracting and the political economy. Also joining us is Ricky Lam, an Australian, from Yale University. He is interested in micro theory, psychology and economics and applied microeconomics.

I am also pleased to announce that Eric Schulz will be rejoining us this fall to assist with our undergraduate program. Eric is a 1993 graduate of our doctoral program, and latterly has been teaching at Williams College. Many of you may remember him from his sabbatical year here in 1997-98.

Recent honors

Congratulations to Bill Rogerson and Kiminori Matsuyama who have been elected fellows of the Econometric Society. In addition, two of our alumni were also elected fellows: Ken Burdett, a graduate of 1976 now at the University of Essex, UK, and Avner Grief, a graduate in 1989 now at Stanford University.

Eddie Dekel, who will be returning from Tel Aviv this fall, has been appointed an editor of Econometrica.

Rita Mendelsohn will be honored at a University luncheon on April 6 to mark twenty-five years of service to the University. Rita will be returning to work on March 8, having recovered from her fall earlier in the year.

Congratulations to Rosa Matzkin and her husband on the birth of their second child on March 2.

One of our undergraduate seniors, Megan McCarville, was awarded a Marshall Scholarship to pursue postgraduate study in England. This follows the success of another of our students, Leonardo Martinez, in 1999. We also had two students, Matt Burdy and Don Monson, advance to the final round of the competition for Rhodes scholarships.

Department ranked fourth in publications

A recent paper in the European Economic Review compared the publication record of leading European, Canadian and American universities. The study was based on publications in ten general-interest journals for 1991-96. The rankings were:

1. University of Chicago
2. Harvard University
3. MIT
4. Northwestern University
5. Princeton University
6. Univ. of Pennsylvania
7. Stanford University
8. Yale University
9. Columbia University
10. Univ of California at Berkeley

The leading Canadian University was the University of Toronto at #12, and the leading European University was LSE at #14. The full reference is Pantelis Kalaitzidakis, Theofanis P. Mimuneas and Thanasis Stengos “European Economics: An Analysis Based on Publications in the Core Journals” European Economic Review, 43:1150-1168 (1999).

New NU domain name

As of March 1, the University has changed its domain name from “nwu.edu”
to “northwestern.edu”. This will affect both e-mail addresses and web URLs. Both names will exist in parallel until 2004 when the former will be retired. However, new faculty and students joining this summer will only be reached on e-mail using the northwestern.edu domain.

Current indications are that the changeover is going well. As soon as you feel comfortable, I suggest you change the return address and signature in your e-mail program. Our website has already changed to reflect the new name, but the department will continue to use the nwu.edu domain name until the end of the academic year in most of our printed materials. These will be changed over the summer.

**Andersen construction**

The mild winter has allowed construction to proceed quite quickly on the new addition to Andersen Hall. The official completion date is December 2000, although we expect that this date is somewhat optimistic.

When the addition is completed, attention will turn to remodeling some of our existing Andersen Hall space, and the space in the connector building which KGSM alumni relations currently occupies. Therefore, completion of all work is unlikely before the summer of 2001. Until then, we will continue to occupy the space in Cresap.

I will keep you informed of any additional information regarding the anticipated completion of construction.

**New and renewed grants**

- **Joe Altonji**, Russell Sage Foundation, wealth gap between blacks and whites
- **Tim Conley**, NSF, econometrics using spatial models of interdependence
- **Jeff Ely**, NSF, economic theory
- **Bruce Meyer**, various foundations, the earned-income tax credit
- **Dale Mortensen**, NSF, modeling matched job-worker flows.

**Funding**

Again this year the WCAS Dean’s office has provided extra monies so that we could make good on our promise to fund all qualified students in years 2 through 4. As you know we have a “bulge” in student numbers is due to a higher prelim pass rates and lower attrition. To stay within the expanded budget constraint we have had to scramble in recent weeks to place some students as RAs.

Our analysis suggests that the “bulge” will be somewhat less severe next year. The Dean’s office has also agreed to allocate us 28 TAships for next year which is above our “normal” allotment of 25 but less than the 31.33 that we had available this year.

Therefore it is necessary for some of you serve as TAs in the MMSS program again next year. Moreover, it is imperative that you meet the criteria for being a TA on time, because we will not be allowed to change our TA roster after it is approved in September. Hence: 1) pass the TSE on time; 2) second years submit an acceptable field paper on time; 3) third years get admitted into candidacy before the department deadline on July 31.

**Economics picnic**

Each May the second year graduate students organize a Departmental picnic at Harms Woods, Skokie, for graduate students, faculty, staff and their families. Details will be circulated near to the time. I encourage all of you to participate in this annual event.

**Teaching Matters . . .**

**2000/01 course schedule**

We are still working on the teaching schedule for next year. The schedule of courses will be posted on our website at the end of March.

**Graduate Connection ■ 2**

**Course descriptions - spring 99/00**

**Economics 412-2**

Economic Theory and Method  
Professor Kim-Sau Chung  
MW 1-3  
215 PKS

This class covers implementation theory and its applications. We will use the mechanism-design tools introduced in Economics 414-1 and MEDS 465 (the classes taught by Professors Wolinsky and Baliga respectively) to address some real-life problems. The class will be organized around several notions of implementation. For each notion we will first go through the theoretical background, and then survey its applications in matching markets, auction design, incomplete contracts, affirmative action policy design, bank runs, pollution regulation, etc. We will also explore potential research topics.

**Economics 416-3**

Advanced Macroeconomics  
Professor Larry Christiano  
MW 9-11  
G32 ANN

**Topics in Monetary Economics.** The course will address various topics in monetary economics. These include (i) optimal monetary policy when the government has the ability to commit to its future policies; (ii) optimal monetary policy when it lacks the ability to commit; (iii) monetary policy when agents are heterogeneous; (iv) the operating characteristics of simple monetary policy rules, such as the Taylor rule; (v) the debate over price determination surrounding the “fiscal theory of the price level;” (vi) the implications for monetary policy of the zero bound constraint on the nominal rate of interest; (vii) various models of the monetary transmission mechanism.

The course is primarily issue-oriented: what is the optimal interest rate target for the monetary authority? how much price stability is desirable? etc. We will also review methodological tools, various equilibrium concepts, the notion of equilibrium determinacy and
indeterminacy, and computational techniques for deducing the quantitative properties of models.

**Economics 420-1**
American Economic History
Professor Joseph Ferrie
TTh 11-1 318 AAH

[Note room change from class schedule.] The second part of the graduate sequence in economic history examines the development of the American economy from colonial times to the present, with an emphasis on cleometric research and the evolution of markets and institutions. Topic include the growth and integration of labor, capital, and product markets, technological change, the evolution of the role of government, and long-run patterns in macroeconomic stability and distribution. Students participate in detailed discussions of previous research each week, and complete a substantial empirical research paper. There is no textbook; a course packet of required readings will be available for purchase.

**Economics 440-2**
Economics of the Labor Market
Professor Dale Mortensen
MW 11-1 LG76 TCH

This is the second quarter of a two-quarter sequence; the first course was taught by Professor Taber. The overall goal is to integrate theory and empirical work in labor economics with emphasis on wage and employment determination. In the first quarter, the topics covered included recent changes in the wage structure, the basic Roy model, equalizing wage differentials, discrimination, human capital and schooling. The topic coverage in the second quarter will include bilateral bargaining, labor contract, and monopoly models of wage determination, the effects and role of labor turnover, unemployment duration and incidence, dynamic labor demand, and the flows approach to the analysis of labor market equilibrium. The topics are viewed within the context of a general search and matching labor market equilibrium framework. Empirical content will emphasize studies based on worker unemployment and job duration data and matched worker-employer panel data.

Students who did not take 440-1 can register with the permission of the instructor. The course will also require an understanding of dynamic optimization techniques and elementary stochastic process theory at the level of Stokey and Lucas Recursive Methods in Economic Dynamics, (Harvard U.P., 1989). Evaluation will be based on problem sets and a final paper. A reading packet will be available.

**Economics 450-2**
Industrial Organization and Prices
Professor Robert Porter
TTh 1-3 G32 ANN

An introduction to empirical analysis in industrial organization. Potential topics include production, technology and industry structure; price and quantity competition; price discrimination; entry, growth and turnover; product selection; advertising; cartels and collusion; auction markets; innovation and R&D. The emphasis will be on the estimation and testing of game theoretic models, and especially on recent developments in the field. Prerequisites Economics 450-1.

Evaluation by several problem sets and a final exam. The reading list will be selected readings, most in a course packet.

**Economics 481-3**
Econometrics
Professor Tim Conley
TTh 8:30-10:30 307 HRS

Topics in time series and spatial econometrics. This course is concerned with the study of econometric techniques using time series and spatially dependent cross section data. There are applications of these techniques in finance, macroeconomics, industrial organization, urban economics, and other fields as well.

**Economics 483**
Applied Econometrics: Cross Section
Professor Chris Taber
MW 1-3 272 KRG

This course is intended for students who plan to do applied work using cross sectional or panel data. It will cover many of the common econometric techniques that are available as well as some of the practical matters that arise in doing applied research. Some theoretical econometric topics will be covered as well. The grade will come from problem sets and a final exam. The problem sets will primarily involve empirical exercises. Topics will include Generalized Method of Moments, standard error corrections, discrete choice models, panel data, quantile regression, duration models, and discrete choice dynamic programming models.

**Finance 485**
Introduction to Finance
Professor Costas Skiadas
TBA 430 AAH

Organizational meeting on Monday, March 27th, at 5PM, Andersen 430. This course is an introduction to the theory of finance at the doctoral level. Topics will include arbitrage pricing, mean-variance portfolio theory, utility maximizing portfolios and notions of risk aversion, competitive equilibrium and representative agent pricing, the question of the objectives of the firm, and models with asymmetric information and/or imperfect competition. The basic arbitrage and competitive pricing models will be introduced in a static setting.
and will then be extended to a dynamic discrete-time framework.

**Finance 520-1**  
Econometrics of Financial Markets  
Professor Ravi Jagannathan  
T 9-12  
430 AAH

Students will be introduced to some of the commonly used econometric methods in the empirical financial markets area. The main texts will be Campbell, Lo and MacKinlay *The Econometrics of Financial Markets* (Princeton U.P., 1997) and Andrei Shleifer *Inefficient Markets An Introduction to Behavioral Finance -- Clarendon Lectures*. Readings will also be assigned from Hamilton *Time Series Analysis* (Princeton U.P., 1994).

**Finance 520-2**  
Asset Pricing in Dynamic Aggregate Models  
Professor Deborah Lucas  
W 3-6  
430 AAH

The fields of financial economics and rational expectations macroeconomics have been moving rapidly together in the past decade. This course will provide an overview of many of the leading dynamic models of asset pricing and financial intermediation in real and monetary economies. Considerable emphasis will be placed on the implications of incomplete markets, heterogeneous agents, and transactions costs. Technically, the course will emphasize the technique of dynamic programming and numerical simulation methods.

**MGR ES 449-2**  
Competitive Strategy  
Professor James Dana  
TTh 3-5  
619 LEV

The course will cover topics in the theoretical industrial organization that are relevant to Ph.D. students interested in research applications to business strategy. Broadly speaking, the course will study the bases of competitive advantage in a market; the conditions that facilitate sustainability of competitive advantage and lead to the persistence of profitability; the sources of heterogeneity among firms; innovation and the development of new sources of advantage over time; and the analysis of strategic commitment. Some attention will also be paid to the policy issues associated with these firm behaviors.

Specifically the course will emphasize topics including entry and exit, research and development, network externalities and standardization, product differentiation, strategic impacts of vertical integration/vertical restraints, and strategic impacts of horizontal integration. If time permits, the final part of the course will cover topics on strategic pricing and price and non-price allocation mechanisms under uncertainty. Specific topics will include pricing under demand uncertainty, inventories, search and advertising, and queuing.

**MGR ES 460-2**  
Foundations of Managerial Economics  
Professor Karl Schmedders  
TBA  
TBA

**Organizational meeting on Tuesday March 28 at 8:30AM in Leverone 561.** This course is an introduction to dynamic optimization. Topics include review of methods from functional analysis, dynamic programming under uncertainty, the principle of optimality, Euler equations, Markov processes; stochastic dynamic programming, policy functions and transition functions. The emphasis will be on studying the basic principles of dynamic programming and their application to a variety of problems from economics, management and operations research.


**MGR ES 460-3**  
Foundations of Managerial Economics  
Professor Alvaro Sandroni  
TBA

This is a course on decision theory and will focus mainly on axiomatic theories of individual decision making under risk and uncertainty. First the course will briefly explore utility theory under certainty and the notion of preferences and their representation. Then we will study in detail the classic theories of decision under risk and uncertainty: von Neumann and Morgenstern, Anscombe and Aumann, and Savage. This will take roughly half the course and constitutes a basic grounding in the subject.

From here we will explore a selection of topics that expand on the classical work in various directions and are nearer to the current research frontier. These topics may include (1) Allais’ Paradox, Prospect Theory, Machina’s approach; (2) Ellsberg’s paradox, uncertainty and ambiguity aversion; (3) Dynamics, Bayesian updating, dynamic consistency, preferences over the timing of the resolution of risk/uncertainty; (4) Notions of belief and probability in decision making; (5) finite-state models.

The course will be part lecture, part prepared presentations by students, and discussion by everyone. Evaluation will be by problem sets and an in-class presentation. The required text is David Kreps *Notes on the Theory of Choice* (Westview Press) and selected papers.

**Registration problems**

Some of you may have had some problems registering for 501 or other 500 level seminar series. An initial problem was that CAESAR did not permit students to take these courses more than once. This problem has now been rectified. However,
others of you may have received error messages such as “A required related class also needs to be selected” or “Non-associated related class component; student not enrolled in class.” The registrar has yet to figure out why CAESAR is giving these errors. We will keep you informed by e-mail when this is sorted out.

2000/01 quarter dates

Fall: Mon Sept 18 - Fri Dec 8
Winter: Wed Jan 3 - Fri March 16
Spring: Mon March 26 - Fri June 8

501 Seminar . . .

The seminar will meet on Wednesday and Thursdays as needed at 5PM in Leverone 165. There will be one presentation each day and the seminar will last for one hour including the question-and-answer period. The seminar must conclude by 5:55PM as the room is needed for a KGSM class at 6PM. The sign-up sheet for the Spring Quarter is now available in the Graduate Secretary's office. Professor's Eichenbaum and Christiano will be organizing the seminar.

For admission to candidacy students need to make two 501 presentations. Typically these are made in the third year, one in the Fall and the other in Winter or Spring. Therefore third-year students should have already have presented the paper they submitted last summer.

Third-year students should be making plans for their second presentation. Remember that failure to make two presentations by the end of the spring quarter will prevent you from being admitted to candidacy, and hence receiving fourth-year funding.

Please remember that you need two faculty members to read your paper and attend the seminar before “signing off” on the form available from the Graduate Secretary’s office. Attendance at 501 seminars is compulsory for all third year students. Permission for absence should be requested from the organizers. You should also register for 501 all year but register on a P/N basis. Letter grades will not be given.

Second-year students should start attending some 501 seminars so that they can appreciate the acceptable standard for paper presentations. The 501 requirements, and practical information, are available on our web page.

Second-year students are reminded that appointment to a Teaching Assistantship in your third year requires you to (a) have passed all your preliminary examinations by the June sitting of your second year, and (b) completed at least one field paper which is certified as acceptable by a faculty member by July 31. While certification by a faculty member is required, presentation at the 501 seminar is not. The presentation of the paper can be in the fall quarter of your third year.

From the Director of Graduate Studies . . .

Information on funding opportunities

I have established a web page that presents information on funding opportunities for graduate students, other than the TA and RA opportunities within the Department. The web page is updated regularly and contains links to other web sites and PDF documents that give further information and contain application forms for you to download. The web page can be accessed from the “Information on the Ph.D. program” subpage of the Department's web site. I have also highlighted some upcoming deadlines in the Funding section of this newsletter.

2000 spring prelim dates

Wed June 14  Macroeconomics
Wed June 21  Econometrics
Wed June 28  Microeconomics
All examinations will be held 1PM - 4PM.
Location to be announced.
March 2000

sitting, have passed the TSE, and have completed an approved field paper by July 31.

Third year students

To be eligible for funding you must be admitted to doctoral candidacy by July 31. In addition to the dissertation proposal, you must have completed your coursework including two field paper presentations in the 501 seminar. I will remind you that 501 only meets during term time, and seminars must be completed by 6PM, and will not specially convene for purposes of presenting a paper that is completed late. We cannot guarantee funding for any part of next year to students who are admitted to candidacy late.

Training for new T.A.s

The University runs a half-day training session for new T.A.s. It will be held on the morning of Wednesday September 13th, which is during the week before classes start. The Department regards your attendance as mandatory. If you believe that you will be serving as a T.A. for the first time next year, please arrange your schedules so that you are available in Evanston on that date.

If you expect to be a TA next year, you will have to be in Evanston until Monday lunchtime on December 11 to complete grading duties. If you are making holiday travel arrangements, please ensure that you remain in Evanston until this date. In addition you will need to be back in Evanston by Tuesday night, January 2 for the start of classes.

Fall quarter T.A. course allocations

By tradition, the forms that allow T.A.s to indicate their preferences for classes are circulated immediately after Labor Day to your boxes in the Main Office. Completed forms have to be returned by September 15 because we do not know enrollment in 201 and 202 until enrollment closes that afternoon. Classes start the following Monday.

Field course meeting

An orientation session for students entering their second year will be held on Friday September 15 from 1:30PM to 4PM, in a location to be announced. The session will discuss the 501 requirement, funding criteria, and include presentations on each of the field course sequences that you can take in both the Economics Department and KGSM.

From the Graduate Secretary's Office . . .

Important dates

April 7 is the last day to file the Application for Admission to Candidacy at the Graduate School if you expect to receive the Master's Degree in June.

April 7 is the deadline for submitting the "Application for a Degree" to permit you to participate in the June Commencement ceremony and receive your diploma.

May 12 is the deadline for submission of completed dissertation and all supporting materials to be turned in to the Graduate School. This deadline is for students who expect to receive the Ph.D. degree in June.

May 19 is the last day for receipt of “Final Examination Report" and any "Change of Grade" forms for 499 Projects or 590 Research. This pertains to students who expect to receive a master's degree to be awarded in June.

September 13 is the last day for students to be admitted to candidacy for the start of the fall quarter. Admittance after this date means that you will pay medium rate tuition for both the fall and the subsequent three quarters.

Graduate Connection ■ 6

Commencement arrangements

Commencement will be held on Friday evening June 16 at Ryan Field (a.k.a. Dyche Stadium). Late in April students expecting to graduate in June will receive an order form for academic costume from the E.R. Moore Company and a pamphlet providing information about Commencement, including ticket information and an invitation to the Graduate School Reception.

Funding . . .

Transportation dissertation awards

The Transportation Center offers a stipend plus tuition award to eligible students who are in the final twelve months of their thesis research. Research in the area of transportation, broadly defined, and public utilities is eligible. Applications, including letters of support from your faculty advisor, are due with Diana Marek at the Transportation Center by March 31. For further details talk to Ian Savage.

Research related expenses

Research grants are provided by The Graduate School to support research activities, including acquisition of data and travel. Maximum one-time grant is $1,500. Applications are submitted by the Department on your behalf. There are three rounds of awards a year. The deadlines to getting your materials to the DGS are October 7, January 7, and April 7. He requires that you have the approval of your advisor. Awards are announced six weeks after receipt of applications. More details are given on the funding web page.

Research assistantships

Many faculty members hold research grants that permit advanced graduate students to be hired as research assistants. The usual process by which these positions are filled is informal contact between graduate students and the faculty member.
March 2000

The Director of Graduate Studies does not normally act as a clearing-house for these positions. However, he would like to be informed when an appointment is made, as it will help him when allocating departmental support.

Summer jobs

Summer research assistant positions are often available from individual faculty with research funding. There is no Departmental assignment of these positions. The best way to go about obtaining such a job is to advertise! Prepare a one-page resume introducing yourself to faculty, emphasizing the useful skills (computer experience, etc.) you have. Distribute these resumes in faculty mailboxes toward the end of Spring Quarter. Be sure to include faculty in the KGSM departments of MEDS, Finance, and Management and Strategy in your mailing. Kellogg faculty are often long in research funding and short on students to spend it upon.

Funding listserv set up

The Graduate School has established an email mailing list, called “Gradfunding” to distribute information about funding opportunities for graduate students. Because this is quite new, the Department cannot tell whether this service will be very useful to economists. However, if you choose to subscribe, you will receive an announcement about fellowship and grant opportunities once a week on Fridays. To subscribe send an email message to listproc@piranha.acns.nwu.edu leaving the subject line empty and with the message body of one line: subscribe Gradfunding Yourfirstname Yourlastname

You will receive a confirmation email message when you have been added to the mailing list successfully. If this does not prove to be interesting to you, you can unsubscribe from the mailing list by sending an e-mail to the same address with the message body of one line: unsubscribe Gradfunding

From the Director of Graduate Placement . . .

It looks like the nation’s record-setting 4.0 percent unemployment rate has spilled over into the academic job market for economists. I can never recall such a large percentage of the students having so many fly-outs, or so many offers so early, or so many accepted offers by the end of February. The following have already accepted positions:

Marco Battaglini Princeton University
Andrew Cohen University of Virginia
Li Cui University of Oregon
Jean-Pierre Dubé University of Chicago
Tricia Gladden Louisiana State University
Mark Manuszak Carnegie Mellon University
Charles Moul Washington University, St Louis

Other students are currently deciding between their many offers.

Students who are thinking about going on the market next year should attend an introductory meeting that is tentatively scheduled for early May. Please watch for announcements. As usual, the meeting is primarily oriented towards those considering going on the market in the Fall, but all students in the third year and beyond are welcome.

If you intend to be on the market, please be aware of some important dates for this fall. Your draft job market paper will need to be in the hands of your Ph.D. committee members by October 1. Your vita must be ready by October 13, and your packet including recommendations letters should be assembled by Nov. 3.

From the Director of Graduate Admissions . . .

The first round admission decisions are now complete. Graduate students can help improve our program by actively helping in the recruitment of prospective students.

First, on Friday, March 31, we will have an open day. Current students can help by coming to meet the prospective students, and let them know the greatness of our program.

Second, after March 10, current students are welcome to get the names of prospective students who have been admitted from Mercedes Thomas and to get in touch with them via e-mail or telephone.

Notes . . .

Office accommodations for 2000/01

Offices and carrels

As discussed in the Chair’s column, most graduate carrels will continue to be on the first floor of the Cresap building. Allocations for next year are based on long-standing priorities that the Department has set for the allocation of the quality and quantity of space:

1. Departmental Lecturers
2. Research Assistants
3. Holders of distinguished dissertation fellowships from NU or elsewhere
4. Teaching Assistants
5. University College Lecturers

Other advanced graduate students will be accommodated where space permits. This does mean that some incumbents who will not fall into the above categories next year may be evicted. However, we suspect that we should have sufficient space for all who qualify. However the quality of space will depend on the above priority order.

It is clearly in the interests of those students receiving Research Assistantships or Dissertation Fellowships to inform Ian Savage and Joe Ferrie. The new space allocations will be announced about Labor Day, and people move in and out between then and the start of classes.

If you are leaving us this summer, please return your keys to the Graduate Secretary when you depart, and leave us a forwarding address.

Personal copy accounts

Graduate students can obtain a personal account on our copy machines. You will be billed at the end of each month at 5¢ a copy. To obtain an account please send an
e-mail to the Assistant Chair <ipsavage@northwestern.edu> with your name and a 5-digit number to be used as your personal access code (the number must not start with a 0).

Employment opportunity

We have received a request from a lady in Winnetka who is looking to hire a person with knowledge of international trade and international finance to lead a weekly discussion of global economic issues for a group of ladies in Winnetka. The group includes ladies in business as well as homemakers. They are looking to get a greater understanding of trade issues, the IMF etc.

They were thinking of perhaps 6 to 8 meetings of a couple of hours a time in April/May. Time and day, as well as remuneration package, open to negotiation. If this is of interest please see Ian Savage.

TA Room

Please be considerate of other TAs and graduate students when holding office hours. You should not meet with students in your own carrel room as this is disruptive to the research work of your fellow students. Please also remember that the TA room works best for one-on-one conversations with students. Holding a large review session will make it impossible for fellow TAs to work with other students. If you can predict this in advance, you can contact Lily Strong in the Registrar’s to reserve a classroom for well-attended office hours before exams.

Next Graduate Connection

Volume 6, number 1 will be published immediately after Labor Day.