



Economics Department—Update

<http://academics.uww.edu/business/economics>

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RECENT FACULTY CHANGES

A Message from the Chair, Jeff Heinrich



Greetings! Thank you for taking some of your precious time to keep current with your alma mater. There are many things going on keeping our faculty busy which may interest you. We are sad to report that Dr. Mark Skidmore has taken an endowed chair position at Michigan State University, but nonetheless we wish the very best for him and his family. The Fiscal and Economic Research Center is quite busy as you can read later in this Update. This year we will be recruiting a new tenure-track faculty member whom we hope to take a central role in the activities and growth of the FERC. We also would like to thank Rex Westin and Kurt Andrae for the time they have been able to give as Economics Advisory Board members, and wish them well as they move on to other challenges.

The department is always seeking out new majors, and we have several efforts underway toward that end. Professors Ahmad and Welsch have been keeping the Whitewater Economics Society very active. Several scholarship opportunities have been reconfigured to better serve the needs of our majors. Most substantially, in the spring we commissioned a series of focus groups to ask students and advisors their perceptions of an economics degree. Though still underway, one clear message is that while many students like or even love economics, they are often deterred by a simple question...what jobs do economics majors get? Accounting majors get accounting jobs, marketing majors get marketing jobs, but where are the economist jobs? You can help us answer this question! Please contact us and tell us what you did with your degree. We would love to share those stories with prospective majors.

On a personal note, last spring I visited Cologne University of Applied Sciences in Cologne, Germany in connection with a new student exchange agreement we have with them. I must say, the convenience of the German rail system was very much appreciated. Rhine wine country and Roman ruins and very large bratwurst, great fun. We already have six students from Cologne on campus and are looking to encourage as many of our students to go there as we can. Aside from that, the chair job is a little disorienting to this newbie, but nothing has broken yet so it must be going well enough. Thank you, and we look forward to another productive year.

Thomas Schweigert—Fulbright Scholar



Tom is in a town called Kotor in a country called Montenegro, the "newest" country in the world. Montenegro was part of Yugoslavia until that country fell apart, when it became part of Serbia & Montenegro. After a referendum on independence a little over a year ago, it has been an independent country—with a population of less than a million people. The "old town" of Kotor is a walled, Medieval town that allows only pedestrian traffic. There are many churches (Catholic and Orthodox) some of which are close to a thousand years old. It is situated on the Bay of Kotor, but also surrounded by tall mountains. Before the creation of Yugoslavia after WWI, Kotor was part of the Habsburg Empire (Austria-Hungary), and before that it was part of the Venetian empire for several centuries.

He is at the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management where he will be doing research on tourism, both collaborating on ongoing projects as well as, hopefully, initiating some of his own research. In the spring he will teach a course on Economics of Globalization at the Faculty of Economics in Podgorica (formerly Titograd), the capital of Montenegro. Just so you know, the beaches are largely deserted, as that season is over, and will be now until May. So not much fun in the sun.

Benjamin Artz, Lecturer



Ben is currently working on his doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. He earned his M.A. in Economics in 2004 and his B.S. in Business Economics at Wisconsin Lutheran College in 2003. Ben's fields of study include Labor Economics and Industrial Organization. His specific research interests include job satisfaction, performance based workplace payment and merger activity in partially government owned industries. Ben is also a research fellow for the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute and does work for the College Board in examining advanced placement course syllabi. Ben grew up in northeast

Wisconsin and currently resides in Milwaukee. Go Packers!

Sahar Bahmani, Lecturer



Sahar is from the Milwaukee area, graduating class of 1999 from Nicolet High School. She graduated from UW-Madison with her bachelor's degree in May 2003 in economics and political science. She obtained her master's degree in economics from UW-Milwaukee in December 2004 and she will graduate with her PhD in economics from UW-Milwaukee this December 2007. She has taught at UW-Milwaukee, MATC, Ottawa University and Cardinal Stritch University and this is the start of her 5th year of teaching. Her research areas lie within macroeconomics and monetary economics as well as economic development. Her hobbies include

playing piano and tennis as well as working out and spending time with her parents, brother and fiancé.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH CENTER NEWS
Director, Mark Eiswerth, Ph.D.
Christie Kornhoff, Administrative Assistant



Mark Eiswerth, Candi Kolosso, and Chris Kornhoff have been conducting a project to design and implement a survey of citizens in Bayfield County, Wisconsin. The purpose of the survey project has been to collect key data elements necessary to educate stakeholders and citizens on 1) the economic importance of surface waters in Wisconsin and 2) the potential adverse economic effects from the continued spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). In addition to Mark, Candi and Chris, the project team includes other specialists based at UW – Stevens Point, UW-Madison, and UW-Extension in Bayfield County. The survey has been implemented and the data collected. The team is currently summarizing the results and will begin to develop materials useful for public education.

Wes Enterline and Mark Eiswerth have been working along with specialists at UW-Extension/Stevens Point to develop a literature review of studies on the economics of lakes and rivers. The intended result of this project will be a web-based information resource, hosted by UW-Extension, that provides easy access to a summary of such studies.



David Welsch and Alex Trapp have been examining all school districts in Wisconsin. The purpose of the study is to measure efficiencies and inefficiencies in school districts and examine what types of policies school districts can implement to improve their performance. The data has been collected and the team is beginning to examine the results which will aid public school districts and the Wisconsin Department of Education in improving K-12 education in the state of Wisconsin.



Russ Kashian has been conducting a number of studies throughout the region. With the assistance of **Dan Biemel** and **Tom Budenz**, he has been modeling and analyzing the industrial makeup of Industrial Parks throughout Walworth, Rock and Jefferson County. The goal of this study is to determine, through input output analysis, the impact new firms will have on the regional labor market.

Dr. Kashian is also conducting a study of the economic impact the Irvin Young Auditorium has on the Whitewater economy. **Becky Johnson** assisted entering data for analysis.

FERC also worked closely with the Aurora Foundation, developing a database of potential supporters for the Foundation. **Amanda Guthrie** and **Becky Johnson** sorted data from various sources to complete the database.

In a similar fashion, Dr Kashian analyzed the economic impact of the Forest Product industries in Langlade County.



Through a grant from CUNA, Dr. Kashian and **Dr. Yamin Ahmad** conducted a “duration analysis” examining the anticipated conversion timetable for former credit unions that changed their charter. The analysis estimated how many months it would take for these newly chartered mutual savings banks to convert to publicly traded financial institutions.

Note: The Fiscal and Economics Research Center is associated with the University of Wisconsin-Extension. The Center’s goal is to provide applied economic research expertise to communities and stakeholders in the state with primary focus on southern Wisconsin. FERC offers employment opportunities to Economics majors and minors in research, data collection and analysis to give them real world applications of economic techniques.

ALUMNI NOTES

Patrick Brown, 2006—Patrick is a Sales Representative with Haack & Associates, Inc.

Jason Walenstein, 2003—Jason owns his own business that trains and develops coach leadership as well as promoting financial education.

Kevin Selch is an Economist for international Trade Policy in Canada. He travels monthly to Geneva, Switzerland as part of Canada’s delegation to the WTO Doha Round negotiations on the non-agricultural market access. Kevin returned to campus October 29th and spoke to several economics classes and at the Economics Society members.

To view this newsletter, or past newsletters, please go to our website at: <http://www.uww.edu/cobe/departments/economics/index.html>
Click on the Fiscal and Economic Research Center link to see all projects.

Scholarship Donations: Donations may be sent to: UW-W Foundation, Economics Scholarship OR Friends of Economics, Economics Department, C4003, UW-Whitewater, 800 W. Main St., Whitewater, WI 53190. Thank you for your continued support.