

Brandeis University

Department of Economics

October 2007 Newsletter for Majors and Minors

Now that most midterm exams are past, we're already thinking ahead to next "spring"—as we officially call the semester that begins on January 15.

Spring pre-registration

Pre-registration begins Tuesday October 30. A list of all spring Economics classes with links to preliminary syllabi for most courses is posted on the Econ website (http://www.brandeis.edu/departments/economics/undergrad_courses081html.html).

As usual, we expect many courses to be full during pre-registration. Students who wish to register for a course that is already full should be sure to place themselves on the "Demand List" for the course. We use these lists to add students to the courses when and if places become available later on, with preference usually given to seniors and others who have already completed more Econ courses. We also guarantee that anyone on the Demand List who does not get into the desired course will receive a place the next time the course is offered.

Students who have questions about spring courses or academic requirements for the Econ major and minor should contact Professor Coiner (coiner@brandeis.edu) or Nicole Haefner (nhaefner@brandeis.edu), the Academic Administrator for Economics.

Math requirement for Econ 80a and Econ 82b

Students enrolling in the intermediate micro or intermediate macro courses must have demonstrated basic proficiency in calculus. Every student planning to enroll in Econ 80a or Econ 82b must satisfy this requirement in one of three ways: a) completing Math 10a with a grade of C- or better; b) scoring at least 4 on the AP Mathematics AB test, or at least 3 on the AP Mathematics BC test; or c) passing a placement exam administered by the Economics Department at the beginning of each semester.

Econometrics requirement for Econ majors

Econometrics is a required course for all majors who entered Brandeis in fall 2006 or later. Students can satisfy this requirement by taking Econ 184b or, for those with good math skills, Econ 185a or Econ 215a, both of which require a knowledge of linear algebra. We expect to offer Econ 184 each semester. Econ 185a and Econ 215a will be offered in alternate years. Econ 185 will be offered in spring 2008 but not in spring 2009. Econ 215a will next be offered in spring 2009.

New faculty

Students will find several new faces among faculty teaching spring Econ courses.

Microeconomic Theory (ECON 80a s2) and Economics of the Middle East (ECON 122a) will be taught by Nader Habibi, Henry J. Leir Professor of the Economics of the Middle East, who joined the Brandeis faculty this year. Professor Habibi earned his Ph.D. in economics at Michigan State University in 1987 and has previously taught at several other universities including Yale, Bilkent (Turkey), and Bu Ali Sina (Iran). Before coming to Brandeis, he was managing director of regional analysis for the Middle East and North Africa at Global Insight, an international economic forecasting and consulting firm.

Prof. Elif Sisli Ciamarra will teach Corporate Finance (ECON 174a). Prof. Sisli Ciamarra, a specialist in financial economics, is a new member of the IBS faculty. She received her Ph.D. from New York University earlier this year.

Dr. Jasmine Chen will teach Game Theory (ECON 181b). Dr. Chen earned her Ph.D. in international economics and finance from the Brandeis International Business School in 2006. She has previously taught at Bryant University and the Middlesex School.

Visiting Professor Andrew Seltzer, who is offering American Economic History this semester, will teach two sections of Econometrics (ECON 184b). Prof. Seltzer is on the faculty of the Department of Economics at Royal Holloway, University of London. In addition to Royal Holloway, he has taught previously at the University of Illinois, where he received his Ph.D. in 1994. He has also taught at the University of Melbourne and the University of Sydney.

Advising

Prof. Coiner, the Undergraduate Advising Head, has prepared a detailed memo that answers many of the basic questions students may have about their academic program (<http://www.brandeis.edu/departments/economics/files/advisingmemo-websiteversion%207-31-07.pdf>). This memo can also be accessed from the Economics Department website (click on "Advice for Students"). Please take time to read it before meeting with your advisor or Prof. Coiner.

Department activities

Our three UDRs (Nikhil Agarwal '08, Rona Peltzer '08, and Zach Seeskin '08) have helped to organize three successful events so far this year.

At *Life after Brandeis* on October 9, eight recent alumni returned to campus to discuss their experiences in post-graduation jobs and graduate school and respond to career questions from current majors. Marcia Katz, Senior Associate Director of IBS Career Services, was on hand to provide a professional perspective on job search.

The internship information session on October 18 with Prof. Dolbear and Jessica Paquin provided details on the requirements for receiving academic credit for an internship in economics, business, or finance, as well as tips for finding internships.

At the annual *Meet the Majors* event on October 25, Prof. Coiner provided information about majoring in Economics, as well as special considerations for those planning to study abroad or to combine the Econ major with the Business minor. Holly Chase, IBS Assistant Dean of Admissions, explained application procedures for the IBS BA/MA program, which allows Brandeis undergraduates to earn an MA in international economics and finance with one additional year of study.

The next UDR-organized event will be a talk at 6:30 on Thursday November 15 by Prof. Cecchetti. His topic will be "Market Liquidity and Short Term Credit: The Financial Crisis of August 2007." The UDRs will provide more information closer to the date.

For the spring, the UDRs are planning an information session for juniors about the Senior Honors Program. They are also interested in receiving suggestions for other types of events for Econ majors and minors.

Finally...

We hope this will be a productive, satisfying, and enjoyable year for all our students. We especially urge senior majors to take full advantage of the spring course offerings in the Economics Department.

Rachel McCulloch
Chair