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QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

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Placement Contacts

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Undergraduate Studies

B.B.A. (Honours), Economics, Nipissing University (with distinction) 2006

Graduate Studies

M.A., Economics, Queen's University 2007

Ph.D. (Candidate), Economics, Queen's University 2007–PRESENT
Thesis Title: "*Search and Information Frictions in Land and Housing Markets*"
Expected Completion Date: June 2012

References

Professor Allen Head
Queen's University
Dunning Hall, Room 234
(613) 533-6308
heada@econ.queensu.ca

Professor Huw Lloyd-Ellis
Queen's University
Dunning Hall 320 and 204
(613) 533-2276, (613) 533-2256
lloydell@econ.queensu.ca

Professor Amy Hongfei Sun
Queen's University
Dunning Hall, Room 309
(613) 533-2267
hfsun@econ.queensu.ca

Teaching and Research Fields

Macroeconomics, Applied Theory, Housing and Land, Development

Teaching Experience

Instructor

Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 222), Queen's University 2010

Teaching Assistant

Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 815), Queen's University 2011
Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 222), Queen's University 2007–2008
Introductory Economics (ECON 110/111/112), Queen's University 2006–2007
Labour Economics (ECON 2007), Nipissing University 2005
Statistical Methods for Economists (ECON 2126), Nipissing University 2005
Introduction to Economics I (ECON 1006), Nipissing University 2004

Head Teaching Assistant

Introductory Economics (ECON 110/111/112), Queen's University 2008–2010

Research Experience

Statistical Assistant

Statistics Canada Research Data Centre at Queen's University 2010–2011

Research Assistant

Arthur Sweetman and Casey Warman, Queen's University 2007
Chris Sarlo, Nipissing University 2004–2007
Glenn Brophey, Nipissing University 2005–2006

Scholarships and Awards

John Deutsch Institute Doctoral Stipend 2011
SSHRC Canadian Graduate Scholarship (Doctoral Scholarship) 2007–2010
Skelton-Clark Economics Fellowship 2010
W. Edmund Clark Scholarship 2010
Conference Travel Award, Queen's University 2009
Queen's Tri-Council Recipient Recognition Award 2007
SSHRC Canadian Graduate Scholarship (Master's Scholarship) 2006–2007
Governor General's Silver Medal for Highest GPA, Nipissing University 2006
President's Gold Medal, Nipissing University 2006

Professional Activities

Conference Presentations

“ <i>Information, Commitment, and Separation in Illiquid Housing Markets,</i> ” John Deutsch Institute Conference on Real Estate Dynamics, Kingston Canadian Economics Association Meeting, Ottawa	2011 2011
“ <i>Tenure Insecurity, Adverse Selection, and Liquidity in Rural Land Markets,</i> ” CIREQ Student Conference, Montreal Eastern Economic Association Conference, New York City Canadian Economics Association Meeting, Quebec City	2011 2011 2010

Discussions

Housing-Urban-Labor-Macro (HULM) Conference, Chicago Eastern Economic Association Conference, New York City Canadian Economics Association Meeting, Ottawa Canadian Economics Association Meeting, Quebec City	2011 2011 2011 2010
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Affiliations

American Economics Association (AEA)
Canadian Economics Association (CEA)
Canadian Macroeconomics Study Group (CMSG)
John Deutsch Institute (JDI)
Canadian Development Economics Study Group (CDESG)

Service

<i>President</i> Graduate Student Executive, Queen’s Economics Department	2009–2010
<i>Department of Economics Representative</i> School of Graduate and Professional Studies, Queen’s University	2009–2010

Research Papers

“*Information, Commitment, and Separation in Illiquid Housing Markets,*” (Job Market Paper)

I propose a model of the housing market using a search framework with asymmetric information in which sellers are unable to commit to asking prices announced ex ante. Relaxing the commitment assumption prevents sellers from using price posting as a signalling device to direct buyers’ search. Adverse selection and inefficient entry on the demand side then contribute to housing market illiquidity. Real estate agents that can improve the expected quality of a match can segment the market and alleviate information frictions. Even if one endorses the view that real estate agents provide no technological advantage in the matching process, incentive compatible listing contracts are implementable as long as housing is not already sufficiently liquid. The theoretical implications are qualitatively consistent with the observed trends in real estate brokerage: platform differentiation, endogenous sorting, and listing contract features that reinforce incentive compatibility.

“Tenure Insecurity, Adverse Selection, and Liquidity in Rural Land Markets,” (under review)

A theory of land market activity is developed for settings where there is uncertainty and private information about the security of land tenure. Land sellers match with buyers in a competitive search environment, and an illiquid land market emerges as a screening mechanism. As a consequence, adverse selection and an insecure system of property rights stifle land market transactions. The implications of the theory are tested using household level data from Indonesia. As predicted, formally titled land is more liquid than untitled land in the sense that ownership rights are more readily transferable. Additional implications of the theory are verified empirically by constructing a proxy variable for land tenure security and studying the differences between markets for unregistered land across Indonesian provinces. Regional land market activity is appropriately linked to the distribution of the proxy variable.

“From Engineer to Taxi Driver? Occupational Skills and the Economic Outcomes of Immigrants,” with Susumu Imai and Casey Warman (under review)

We examine the ability of male immigrants to transfer their occupational human capital using information from the O*NET and a unique dataset that includes both the last source country occupation and the first four years of occupations in Canada. We first augment a model of occupational choice and skill accumulation to derive predictions about the cross-border transferability of occupational human capital. We then test the empirical implications using the skill requirements of pre- and post-immigration occupations. We find that male immigrants to Canada were employed in source country occupations that required high levels of cognitive skills, but relied less intently on manual skills. Following immigration, they find initial employment in occupations that require the opposite. Regression analysis uncovers large returns to the quantitative skill requirements of Canadian occupations, but no returns to source country skill requirements. Finally, our empirical findings reveal that occupational skill gaps are detrimental to immigrants’ earnings.