

THE ECONOMICS PhD AT CLARK UNIVERSITY

August 2008

Plan of Study:

The requirements for the Ph.D. include:

- a. Complete required courses in microeconomic theory, macroeconomic theory, quantitative methods and econometrics.
- b. Pass qualifying examinations in microeconomic and macroeconomic theory (the “write-off” exams).
- c. Complete courses in two fields of specialization: a major field and a minor field. (Each field requires a minimum of two courses.)
- d. Present a research paper, in poster format, in a department poster session. This paper is to derive from work in the major field of specialization.
- e. Satisfactorily complete two additional elective courses in economics or related areas (only one additional elective is required for students choosing the three-course Applied Spatial Analysis field).
- f. Pass all courses with a minimum grade of “B-“ as well as maintain a 3.0 GPA.
- g. Propose, write, and defend a doctoral dissertation.

During the first three semesters of the program, the student concentrates on economic theory and quantitative methods in preparation for the qualifying theory examinations. A qualifying examination in microeconomics is taken after the end of the first academic year, usually in June. A qualifying macroeconomic examination is taken prior to the start of the spring semester in January of the second year of the program. Students who fail a qualifying exam may retake it one time. The program is designed so that the Ph.D. degree can be earned in four years, as follows (although average time to completion for the past ten years is 6.5 years).

Year 1

Probability and Statistics (Econ 360)	Econometrics (Econ 365)
Mathematical Economics (Econ 371)	Micro Theory - Topics (Econ 302)
Micro Theory – Foundations (Econ 301)	Macro Theory (Econ 303)

Summer – Micro Qualifying Examination

Year 2

Macro Theory (Econ 304)	Major Field (course 2)
Major Field (course 1)	Minor Field (course 2) or Elective
Minor Field (course 1) or Elective	Elective

Winter – Macro Qualifying Examination

Year 3

Minor Field or Electives
Poster Presentation of Field Paper
Dissertation Proposal – Prospectus Presentation

Year 4

Dissertation Writing and Defense

Planning the Program:**Faculty Advisor:**

Upon entering the graduate program, all in-coming students are assigned the Director of Graduate Studies as their initial *faculty advisor*, who is responsible for permitting students to register for courses. The vast majority of first-year graduate students take the prescribed suite of courses, focusing on mathematics, statistics, and economic theory. One or more of the first year courses can be waived for students with exceptional preparation, after consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. During the second year of the program a student should choose a new *faculty advisor* in their area of planned research, who, in most cases, will subsequently become the chairperson of the dissertation committee. Only tenured or tenure-track faculty can serve as the *faculty advisor/dissertation chairperson*. This currently includes Professors Bae, Bokil, Brown, Geoghegan, Gray, Hong, Ickowitz, Zhang.

Fields of Specialization:

Field courses are begun in the second year, and completed by the end of the third year. Each field consists of two or three semesters of coursework. A student must designate a *Major Field* of specialization, in which a *field paper* is written (and subsequently presented in poster form in a department poster session) as well as a *Minor Field*. The Clark program regularly offers specialization in four fields, with two fields usually offered each academic year:

International Economics (Econ 307, Econ308)
 Applied Econometrics (Econ366a/b)
 Development Economics (Econ 328, 329)
 Applied Spatial Analysis (Econ357, Econ377, Econ359)

Other fields are occasionally offered and it is possible to combine related courses into a field, subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students must take both the *Major Field* and the *Minor Field* within the Economics Department. Successful completion of each field requires a passing grade (minimum of B-) in all field courses and completion of any other requirements designated by the professor responsible for the field.

The topic for the *Major Field Paper* is to be determined with the approval of the professor responsible for the *Major Field*. The completed *Major Field Paper* must be presented in poster format in a department poster session by the end of the seventh semester in residence. If this deadline is not met, the student moves to **nonresident status** until the paper is presented.

Electives:

The Ph.D. also requires two elective courses, except for students selecting the Applied Spatial Analysis as a Major or Minor Field; these students are required to take only one elective course. These may be taken within or outside of the Department of Economics. Elective courses within economics may be either stand alone electives or be taken from an economics department field course sequence that a student is not declaring as either a Major Field or Minor Field. Elective courses taken outside the economics department should be chosen to complement the major and minor fields. Elective courses taken outside of the Department require the **prior** approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Recent examples of electives from outside of

economics have included a finance sequence in GSOM (Portfolio Management, Finance 5311; Stock and Bond Valuation, Finance 5301; and Quantitative Techniques for Derivative Valuation, Finance 5302) and advanced mathematics courses from WPI. The potential for other electives exists in IDCE and Geography.

Department Seminar Series:

Registration in ECON395 “Department Colloquium” is required of all first and second year graduate students as well as all Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants. Attendance is mandatory.

Masters Degree:

Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program may be awarded the M.A. degree upon satisfactory completion of twelve credits and the qualifying exams. In the case of students who do not continue toward the Ph.D., on recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies, the M.A. may be awarded upon satisfactory completion with a passing grade of twelve courses (including all required first year courses) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

Dissertation Prospectus:

During the third year of the program, the focus is on developing a thesis topic and writing a dissertation prospectus. The dissertation prospectus is a research plan for the dissertation. The prospectus is to be approved by the *faculty advisor*, who then becomes the chair of the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee consists of three professors, who can be chosen from the Economics Department, or other departments at Clark or other universities, with the approval of the faculty advisor. The faculty advisor approves the distribution of the dissertation prospectus to the dissertation committee. Upon approval of the committee, the dissertation prospectus is subsequently defended in an open presentation to the dissertation committee and other interested members of the community. The dissertation prospectus must be defended by the end of the ninth semester in residence. If this deadline is not met, the student goes on **non-resident status** until the prospectus is defended.

Dissertation Defense:

The fourth year of the program is spent in completion of the dissertation. Upon the approval by the faculty advisor of a completed draft of the dissertation, a copy of the dissertation is made available to the department. After a period of two weeks, to permit sufficient time for reading of the dissertation, the candidate defends the dissertation in an open presentation to the dissertation committee and other interested members of the community. Final approval of the dissertation is granted by the committee after consideration of any suggested changes. With approval of the department, three published articles in peer-reviewed economics journals may be substituted for the dissertation to satisfy the degree requirement.

A dissertation may not be defended if more than **five years** have elapsed since the passing of the preliminary examinations **without retaking the qualifying examinations in micro and macro theory**.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to the operation of a university. There are a number of types of violation of academic integrity: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of data, and falsification of results, among others. These types of actions poison the atmosphere of inquiry and learning and they will not be tolerated. (The subject of Academic Integrity is discussed in *The Blue Book: Academic Advising Handbook*, which is available on line at <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/aac/bluebook.pdf> -- page 23 ff.)

Each course has its own rules on permissible collaboration on assignments and projects. These should be spelled out by each professor. However, if no discussion on the subject takes place one should assume that no collaboration is permitted on any work, including: exams; homework assignments; papers; or any other assignments. The response to any violation of academic integrity may include: failure on the assignment; failure of the course; loss of funding and scholarship; expulsion from the University. This applies to both those knowingly providing information and to those presenting the work of others' as their own.

Financial Considerations:

Scholarships:

Scholarships are available for a limited number of well-prepared students. These appointments exempt their holders from full or partial tuition fees. These scholarships do not cover living expenses or other fees.

Teaching Assistantships:

The Economics Department has a limited number of Teaching Assistantships (TAs) that are granted on a competitive basis. Currently, the Department is allocated a total of nine TA-ships from the University, which, on average, results in three students in each of the first three years holding a TA-ship. It is highly unlikely for a student who is not allocated a TA-ship as an incoming student to receive a TA-ship in a future year. A student may hold a Teaching Assistantship for no more than three years. Continuation of a TA is predicated on satisfactory performance. Evaluation includes both progress in the program (grades in courses, progress towards a Prospectus or progress in dissertation research) and past performance as a teaching assistant. Teaching assistants are evaluated by the supervising professor and by participating students. For academic year 2008-2009, teaching assistantships offer \$12,000 annual gross income and remission of tuition. A TA is expected to work 17.5 hours per week grading papers, holding discussion sections, and assisting students during office hours.

The Economics Department has instituted a Teaching Mentoring program, in which qualified advanced graduate students are occasionally offered the opportunity to teach a course with advice and assistance from a faculty mentor.

Research Assistantships:

A limited number of research assistantships (RAs) are available. The number of RAs is dependant on the availability of funding from external grants. RAs can be full or part-time and for the academic year and/or summer months.

Other Financial Support:

Depending upon visa restrictions, some students are eligible to teach courses at local colleges, or work at on-campus jobs such as the library. However, the Economics Department has no influence on the hiring for these positions, and graduate students in other departments are also competing for these positions.

Non-Resident Status:

Non-resident status is for students who have completed all of their course work, including fieldwork and directed study. Typically, non-resident students are writing their theses with only occasional use of Clark facilities. A graduate student is moved to non-resident status if:

- The major field paper is not presented in poster form in a department poster session by the end of the seventh semester in residence, or;
- The dissertation prospectus is not defended by the end of the ninth semester in residence, or;
- The dissertation is not defended by the end of the eleventh semester in residence, or;
- A dissertation is defended but not submitted within the semester it was defended in, or;
- By the request of the student.

The student will then be responsible for paying non-resident fees, currently \$200/semester, \$400/year for the first 3 years; and \$400/semester, \$800/year for any time after that.

There is a department form for non-resident status, available from the department secretary, which must be renewed each year.

Clark University Graduate School:

The Dean of the Graduate School is Professor Nancy Budwig. For further information on additional Clark University rules and regulations, go to the Clark University Graduate Student Handbook which can be found at: www.clarku.edu/graduate/current/handbook.pdf.

Advising, Assistance, and other Tips:

Professor Geoghegan is the Director of Graduate Studies and is available for consultation on any questions concerning the graduate program. For the 2008-2009 Academic Year, she will be on half sabbatical, so will only be on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Appointments can be arranged via email to jgeoghegan@clarku.edu.

Other faculty members are also resources for information and advice. Cindy Rice, the department secretary, can provide a great deal of assistance about day-to-day administrative questions.

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In addition, there is a great deal that can be learned from other fellow graduate students, as they often have faced similar questions about course material and the challenges of carrying out independent research.

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