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Our Mission

To provide curricula that promote critical thinking skills and enhance decision making abilities, which help students become productive and informed citizens. Our faculty will engage in research to create and disseminate new knowledge, develop quality-teaching skills, maintain high professional standards, and actively serve the University and Community.

Our Vision

To develop outstanding Economics, International Business, and Business Analysis programs with faculty that is recognized for excellence in instruction, research, and service.

Letter from the Chair

Welcome to the Fall 2008 Edition!!

When we decided to publish a newsletter, we knew space would be a premium because of all the catching up we had to do, and we wondered if we would “downsize” later on. I’m pleased to report that so many things are happening that we’re still having problems getting them all in.



Puebla Summer Camp 2008

In this issue we welcome a new addition to our faculty, say farewell to one of our star students and to one of our star instructors, report on faculty grants and awards, and update you on our research accomplishments during the past year.

We’ll also give you a report on our very successful conference last Spring and on our record enrollment for our Puebla field study program, and as part of our regular features, list our graduates and our scholarship recipients.

All of these accomplishments are due to the outstanding faculty and staff that I’m privileged to Chair. This issue marks the first anniversary of our newsletter and my first anniversary as Chair, and I can say that I have the best job in the University. Our faculty are wonderful teachers, excellent researchers, and a great bunch of people to work with. Please visit our website at http://www.shsu.edu/~eco_www/ and get an idea for yourself of their qualifications, their research and teaching interests, and the many ways that they contribute to make us the best department in a great University.

Sincerely,

Don Freeman

About SHSU Economics and International Business

The Department of Economics and International Business is one of four academic units of the College of Business Administration (COBA) at Sam Houston State University. The department offers courses that lead to majors and minors in **ECONOMICS** as well as in **INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS** for the undergraduate program in business administration. It also offers graduate courses that are part of the Master of Business Administration curricula.

Graduates 2008

We are pleased to announce our Summer and Fall 2008 graduates:

Chelsea F. Blumrick
Rene O. Casallas
Krystina B. Clifton
Marycruz Deleon
Jacob R. Feldman
Matthew G. Hagan
Marisol Martinez
Steven M. Rehm
Peter J. Solana
Felipe A. Bascur
Andrea M. Broussard
Chad E. Carter
Sara Chilcoat
Daniel E. Clayton
Shannon L. Dudman
Ryan K. Iwaniak
Donald R. Jefferson
Eric W. Meyer
James Eric Mingle
Yelena Nemchinova
Daniel T. Ott
Yekaterina Petrova
Michael S. Pulvino
Brittney D. Slade
Aaron J. Turley
William A. Vyoral
Wang Bo
Brian Werley

2008-2009 Tutors

We are pleased to announce that we have new tutors for BAN and ECO classes. The hours are 2-5 pm on Monday through Friday. All tutoring is held in Room 304. We have a very able cadre of tutors this semester: Kacee Brown, Mitchell Graff, Justin Shackelford, Karla Vyoral, and Jadrian Wooten. We hope you have a good experience working with them.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Dr. Doug Berg is new Assistant Dean for the College and Programs Assessments

We are very excited to announce that the College of Business Administration (COBA) has appointed Professor Doug Berg as the new Assistant Dean for the College and Programs Assessment. As part of his new job, Dr. Berg will coordinate all assessment activities and outcome measures for the College. Based on his work, he will provide all the necessary information and documentation for all accreditation needs. Dr. Berg will also be responsible for assessments and outcomes measures at TUC and perform other duties at TUC as needed.

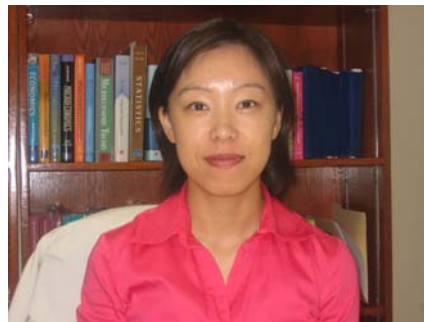
Because of his new responsibilities, Professor Berg had a class load reduction. We are very excited about his new appointment and wish him luck!



Doug Berg

A New faculty member has joined the Department. Welcome to Dr. Lirong Liu

Dr. Lirong Liu has joined the Department of Economics and International Business as a tenure-track faculty member this Fall semester. Dr. Liu received her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

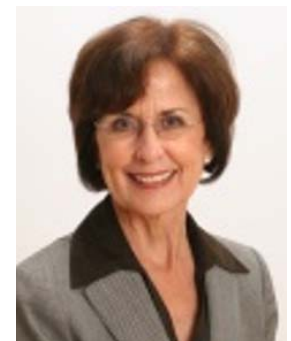


Lirong Liu

Dr. Liu also holds an MS in Statistics from the same university and an MS in Economics from Kent State University. Dr. Liu is originally from China. She holds a B.A. in Economics from Jilin University in China. Dr. Liu's research interests include natural resource valuation, environmental policy, industrial organization, and applied econometrics. She has published an article in the Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, a leading journal in her field. She has presented her research findings at professional conferences across the United States.

Farewell and Best Wishes to Dr. Marilyn Buttler

One of our star instructors, Dr. Marilyn Buttler, has left the Department of Economics and International Business. Dr. Buttler holds an MBA (2001) and a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership (2008), both from SHSU. In the fall of 2008, she began a new position in the College of Education, Department of Leadership and Counseling as a Clinical Professor. In her new duties, she will be teaching in a graduate program preparing educators for administrative/instructional leadership, designing new educational programs, and recruiting for existing ones. Dr. Buttler was hired in the Fall of 2008 as a full-time faculty member of the Department of Economics and International Business at SHSU. During the more than five years in the Department, she taught Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and the Essential of Economics. Additionally, she taught SAM 136 to business students, mentored the Smith-Hutson scholars, and coordinated the inaugural COBA Business Fair and Dress for Success. We will sure miss her!



Marilyn Buttler

Scholarships & Awards

Faculty Scholarship

Michael Hall (Eco)
Christopher Yancy (Eco)
James Eric Mingle (Eco)
Megan Schratwieser (IB)
Mario Diaz (IB)
Jim Shane Dixon (IB)

William B. Green Scholarship

Maria Ayala (IB)

Armstrong Foundation Award

Rita Davis (Eco)
Luis Esquivel (IB)

Outstanding Seniors

Stephanie Emig (Eco)
Magdalena Manzano (IB)

Outstanding Juniors

Leigha Lawson (IB)
Kelsey Wiley (Eco)

Wall Street Journal Award

Zachary Bethune

Our Students on the Go... They go to Grad School

Two of our recent students are currently attending Graduate School. Maggie Manzano and Eduardo Emmerich are both enrolled in Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Services. Maggie is currently working on a Master's degree on Public Administration while Eduardo is in the second year of his Master's on International Economic Development.

STUDENT NEWS



Zachary Bethune

One of Our Students Awarded an NSF Fellowship and on his way to Grad School

Zachary Bethune (BBA in Economics, 2008) was awarded a fellowship from the National Science Foundation (NSF), administered through the American Economic Association (AEA), to support preparatory work for Zach's candidacy in the Economics Ph.D. program beginning fall, 2008, at Texas A&M University.

The AEA Summer Training Program, which began in 1974, seeks to prepare talented undergraduates for doctoral programs in Economics and related disciplines by offering a unique opportunity for students to gain technical skills in Economics, and to conduct research with prominent faculty.

Preference is given to members of underrepresented minority groups historically disadvantaged in the US context, and who have demonstrated financial need. The purpose of the Minority Scholarship is to increase the number of African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans with doctorates in Economics. The fellowship for the Summer Training Program provides Zach with travel, tuition, room and board, and a \$3600 stipend for his summer work at the University of California, Santa Barbara, the host institution. The total value of the fellowship was approximately \$12,000. Zach was one of only 22 participants in the summer training program chosen from a nationwide pool of applicants and one of just six participants who were enrolled in the Advanced level of the program, designed for exceptionally well-prepared students who show the greatest potential for graduate work.

In addition to the NSF fellowship, Zach has also been awarded an assistantship for graduate study in Economics by Texas A&M University. His support will include a full tuition scholarship and a stipend to cover living expenses for four years of study toward the Ph.D.

OUR STUDENT WORKERS

Meet our Students!



Ryan



Sonha and Marcela



Heather

Know our Faculty

Dr. Donald Freeman
Dr. Ulyses Balderas
Dr. Douglas Berg
Dr. Edward Blackburne
Dr. Donald Bumpass
Dr. Marilyn Butler
Dr. Viera Chmelarova
Dr. Mark Frank
Dr. Fidel Gonzalez
Dr. Darren Grant
Dr. William B. Green
Dr. Natalie Hegwood
Dr. John Miller
Dr. Mitchell Muehsam
Dr. Valerie Muehsam
Dr. Lirong Liu
Dr. Hiranya Nath
Dr. Troy Quast
Dr. Isabel Ruiz
Dr. George Samuels
Dr. Markland Tuttle
Dr. Carlos Vargas-Silva

Great News!!!

Dr. Hiranya Nath:

In Spring 2008, Dr. Nath has been invited to be a member of the editorial board of the **International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing**, being published by Inderscience Publishers (www.inderscience.com), UK.

Dr. Mark Frank

Has been awarded a Faculty Development Leave (sabbatical) for the Fall 2008. The award allows Dr. Frank to devote his energies to the completion of an income inequality data set that will provide annual measures for each of the states over the past century. He will be able to further his research that will enhance the quality of our department's research output.

FACULTY NEWS



Carlos Vargas-Silva

Inter-American Development Bank Award

Dr. Carlos Vargas-Silva, who joined the department in September, 2007 as an assistant professor, has won the prize for best dissertation on migrant remittances in a competition sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C. The prize carries with it an award of \$5,000; the publication of a paper in the inaugural issue of a new journal, *Remittances and Development*, published by the Bank and a consultancy assignment with the Bank. He will travel to Washington D.C. in November of 2008 to accept the award.

Dr. Vargas-Silva's dissertation contains three essays that examine important aspects of the economics of immigration, with one essay devoted specifically to the relationship between remittances, the payments that migrants send from the host to the home country, and economic conditions in the home country. Dr. Vargas-Silva is recognized as a leading researcher in the economics of immigration, with several journal articles and numerous conference presentations since the completion of his doctorate in economics at Western Michigan in December, 2006.

Robert Woods Johnson Foundation Grant

Two faculty members from the Department of Economics and International Business, Dr. Fidel Gonzalez and Dr. Troy Quast, have been awarded a grant from the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation. The grant, in the amount of \$10,000, will sponsor research into how economic growth affects mortality for Hispanics and Native Americans. Drs. Gonzalez and Quast will be part of a team consisting of researchers from Sam Houston State University and the University of New Mexico. Money from the grant will sponsor student assistants on the project, travel to conferences, and data acquisition.

The researchers will eventually submit their findings to leading journals in the field of health economics. It is hoped that the research sponsored by this grant will eventually expand into a broader investigation into the factors that determine mortality rates for US minorities.



Fidel Gonzalez

Faculty Grants from the Office of Research and Special Programs at SHSU

The Office of Research and Special Programs at SHSU has granted two Faculty Research Grants to the Department of Economics and International Business. The Faculty Research Grant is a highly competitive internal grant and only ten were awarded – university wide – for the summer of 2008.

Of the two grants awarded to our Department, the first grant funded the project: "Crime and Remittance Transfers" by Dr. Carlos Vargas Silva. Dr. Vargas-Silva's research work resulted in a publication in the *Eastern Economic Journal*. The second grant was awarded to Dr. Isabel Ruiz for the project entitled: "Financial Integration: Evidence for the Latin American/U.S. Foreign Exchange Markets." Dr. Ruiz has published her research in the journal, *Applied Financial Economics*.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Ulyses Balderas

Inflation and Relative Price Variability in Mexico: The Role of Remittances, (with H. Nath), ***Applied Economics Letters***, Vol. 15, No.3, 181-185, 2008.

Don Freeman

Non-White Poverty and Macroeconomy: The Impact of Growth, (with G. Hoover and W. Enders), ***American Economic Review***, P&P, Vol. 98, No. 2, 398-402, 2008.

Lirong Liu

Regulation with Direct Benefits of Information Disclosure and Imperfect Monitoring, (with M. Evans and S. Gilpatric), ***Journal of Environmental Economics and Management***, forthcoming.

Hiranya K Nath

Information Services in the US Economy: Value, Jobs and Management Implications, (with U. Apte and U. Karmarkar), ***California Management Review***, Vol.50, No. 3, 12-30, 2008.

Trade, Foreign Direct Investment and Growth: Evidence from Transition Economies, ***Comparative Economic Studies***, forthcoming.

Inflation and Relative Price Variability in Mexico: The Role of Remittances (with U. Balderas), ***Applied Economics Letters***, Vol. 15, No.3, 181-185, 2008

Fidel Gonzalez

Precautionary Principle, Robustness and Optimal Taxes for a Stock Pollutant with Multiplicative Risk, ***Environmental and Resource Economics***, Vol. 41, No.1, 2008.

Determinants of Housing Expenditure in Mexico, ***Applied Economics Letters***, forthcoming

Housing Demand in Mexico, (with M. Fontenla), ***Journal of Housing Economics***, forthcoming

Troy Quast

Did Federal Regulation Discourage Facilities-Based Entry into US Local Telecommunications Markets? ***Telecommunications Policy***, forthcoming

Isabel Ruiz

Common Volatility Across Latin American Foreign Exchange Markets, ***Applied Financial Economics***, forthcoming.

Remittances, Institutions and Growth: A Panel Semi-Parametric Approach, (with C. Vargas-Silva, and E. Shukralla), ***International Economic Journal***, forthcoming.

Monetary Policy and International Remittances, (with C. Vargas-Silva), ***The Journal of Developing Areas***, forthcoming.

Darren Grant

Sanctions and Recidivism: An Evaluation of Physician Discipline by State Medical Boards, (with K. Alfred), ***Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law***, 32(5), 2007

Grades as Information, ***Economics of Education Review***, 26(2), 2007

Carlos Vargas-Silva

Are Remittances Manna from Heaven? A look at the Business Cycle Properties of Remittances, ***The North American Journal of Economics and Finance***, forthcoming.



Crime and Remittance Transfer, ***Eastern Economic Journal***, forthcoming.

Remittances, Institutions and Growth: A Panel Semi-Parametric Approach, (with I. Ruiz and E. Shukralla), ***International Economic Journal***, forthcoming

Monetary Policy and International Remittances, (with I. Ruiz), ***The Journal of Developing Areas***, forthcoming.

Fall 2008 Seminar Series

Thursday, Sept. 4 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

"The Simple Economics of Thresholds: Grades as Incentives" Darren Grant and Bill Green, SHSU

Thursday, Oct. 9 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

"The Confusing Time Series Behaviour of Real Exchange Rates: Are Asymmetries Important?" David G. McMillan, University of St. Andrews

Friday, Oct. 24 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.

"Macroeconomic Analysis of Obesity in the U.S." Pere Gomis-Porqueras, University of Miami

Fall 2008 Brown Bag Seminar Series

We are excited to announce that starting Fall of 2008 we are having a Brown-Bag seminar series. The aim of the series is to

Friday, Sept. 19 12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

"Do Changes in Income Affect Mortality? The Case of Mexico." Troy Quast and Fidel Gonzalez, SHSU

Friday, Nov. 7 12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

TBA, Hiranya Nath, SHSU

Friday, Nov. 21 12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

TBA, Mark Frank, SHSU

All Seminars are held in Room # 139 at the Smith Hutson Building

DEPARTMENT EVENTS

Regional Trade Agreements, Migration and Remittances Conference

The Department of Economics and International Business in collaboration with the Gibson D. Lewis Center for Business Research and Economic Development (CBED) at the College of Business Administration, Sam Houston State University, organized a Conference on Regional Trade Agreements, Migration, and Remittances on April 12-13, 2008. Dr. Mauricio Cárdenas, the Executive Director of Fedesarrollo, an independent think-tank research institute in Colombia, delivered the keynote speech. Dr. Pia Orrenius, Senior Economist and Policy Advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas,

Dr. Susan Pozo, Professor of Economics at Western Michigan University, and Dr. Kamal Saggi, Dedman Distinguished Collegiate Professor of Economics at Southern Methodist University attended the conference as invited speakers. Scholars from Colombia, Mexico, and different parts of the United States presented their papers in the topic areas of the conference.



Consuls of Colombia, Mexico and Costa Rica

The Consul Generals of Mexico and Costa Rica and the Consul of Colombia (based in Houston) participated in a panel discussion on challenges and opportunities of free trade in Latin America.

Participation of our students - the undergraduate students, in particular - as volunteers and attendees was very encouraging and undoubtedly an important highlight of the event. Papers and presentations from the conference can be accessed at:

http://www.shsu.edu/~eco_hkn/SHSUConference2008.htm

Research articles selected from the presentations at the conference will be published in a special issue of the *Journal of Business Strategies* (a journal published semi-annually by the Gibson D. Lewis Center for Business Research and Economic Development) in Spring 2009.



Students participating at the event

Testimonials from 2008 Students

"Completely immersed in another culture, the SHSU Puebla program allowed me to develop a better understanding and appreciation for life in all aspects. I enhanced my bilingual capabilities while learning International Macroeconomics & Finance, forged a valuable connection with my Home-Stay family, and developed an everlasting bond with my classmates."
(Christopher Yancy)

"It was an absolutely amazing educational and cultural experience. I would totally recommend it to anyone who likes to have fun, meet new people and learn all within the backdrop of the Mexican culture and tradition!"
Isioma Okwuwa (MS in Accounting, 2009)

"The Puebla Program is a life changing experience, it relates academics, business and cultural spaces opening your mind to a new world, helping you expand your knowledge and networks." (Mario Diaz 2009)

"It was a summer of personal growth." (Eric Mingle)

"What I liked the most about the field trip was all the business trips we took especially the tour to the VW plant" (Maria Ayala, 2009)

"I learned more about supply and demand while negotiating with local merchants than in any classroom. Puebla should stand for:

Provides superior marketability

Unforgettable culture and sites

Emerged into the Spanish language

Business contacts and potential employers

Life long friends and memories

Active learning

(Ethel Monroy)

Study Abroad Program in Puebla



PUEBLA SUMMER SCHOOL

The College of Business Administration Study Abroad Program takes place in the month of June during our Summer I session. Students have the opportunity to stay with families or in a hotel. In addition, during the weekends they get to travel to other places like Mexico City, Teotihuacán, Tlaxcala, and Cuetzalan, among others.

This past summer was the 12th consecutive year we have taken our students to Puebla for an unforgettable study abroad experience. Seventeen business students (both graduate and

undergraduate) were enrolled in two courses: *International Economics and Finance*, and a *Seminar in Small Business Management*.

Some of the students took these classes as electives and others were able to substitute them for other classes within their degree programs.

This year was an exciting 28 day journey in which students gained academic knowledge from their classes but in addition they were immersed in the life and culture of Mexico. Students returned home with new friends and a different appreciation for their own culture and that of another country.

Besides getting to know many people, the students visited places they barely imagined existed. Several business field trips were scheduled to complement the academic component taught in the classroom. Some of those visits included the Volkswagen Plant, Johnson Controls and the Big Cola Company. Speakers were invited to give their different perspectives on the business environment in Mexico.

Not all our time was spent studying in Puebla. We also had several recreational field trips during the weekends. We visited the Teotihuacán Pyramids, a major archaeological site of pre-Columbian America. We also visited pre-colonial rural paintings in Cacaxtla and several other places of interest in Mexico City such as the Museum of Anthropology, the Chapultepec Castle, and Frida Kahlo's house. Finally, we had a field trip to the rainforest where some students had the opportunity to swim in waterfalls, hiking trails and rappelling.

Would you like to join us next year? The College of Business Administration (COBA) study abroad program at SHSU is one of the least expensive options in the market. Last year the average cost of the program including airfare, transportation and lodging for 28 days was \$1670 for students staying with families (meals included) and \$1970 for students staying in a hotel (no meals included). In addition, there is financial support from the Office of International Programs and from COBA. In the past, scholarships have ranged from \$500 to \$1200.

Don't think it twice: enroll in the Puebla Field School 2009 today. It's an experience you will never regret. For additional information, contact Dr. Ulyses Balderas at 936-294-4759 or via email at eco_jub@shsu.edu

Information

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isabel.ruiz@shsu.edu

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Tell Us About You!

Our SHSU majors would like to know what you are doing, and so would we. Information concerning who you work for and what your current position is gives our graduating seniors valuable information upon their entry into the job market. Our students can also benefit from any internship opportunities your company may provide.

Please keep us updated with articles or information about you for inclusion in our next newsletter.

One of our main goals is to maintain lines of communication between all of our alumni and current students, and to keep you informed of the latest developments in the Economics Department.

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Employer _____

Current Job Position _____

E-mail _____

