



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

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June 29, 2011

Dear New Graduate Student:

I want to take this opportunity to tell you again how glad we are that you have chosen Binghamton for study towards an advanced degree in economics. We have planned a program that we believe you will find both challenging and rewarding and that will provide the foundation for a fulfilling career.

I want to reinforce what you have may already have heard from my colleagues, your fellow students in our program, or perhaps your faculty advisors at your current institution – that a strong foundation in mathematical tools is essential for successful graduate study in economics. That foundation should include, at a minimum, the equivalent of a basic undergraduate course in statistics, the standard three-semester undergraduate sequence in calculus, and a semester of linear algebra. To further prepare you for the mathematical challenges you will face as you pursue your degree, we will offer a course beginning in mid-August that covers the essentials in calculus and linear algebra for entering students whose background is lacking in them, or who feel they could benefit from a review of this material even if they have already studied it. This course – ECON 503, Mathematical Analysis for Economists (“Math Boot Camp”) – will be *free of charge* to all new economics graduate students and is scheduled to meet 11 times before the semester starts as follows:

Monday, August 15 – Saturday, August 22

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Wednesday, August 24 – Saturday, August 27

All classes are currently scheduled 8:30 – 11:00 AM, although times will be adjusted to avoid conflicts with other campus orientation events. The class will continue to meet each Friday during the fall semester, 2:20-3:20. *NOTE:* These Friday classes will continue of the work begun in “Boot Camp” and are ***NOT*** intended as a review of material covered earlier.

A syllabus for this course is at http://www2.binghamton.edu/economics/graduate/new-grad-documents/ECON_503_Syllabus_2011.pdf and a diagnostic math test can be found at http://www2.binghamton.edu/economics/graduate/new-grad-documents/Diagnostic_Math%20Test_2009.pdf. We urge you to take the time to answer the questions on that exam. You do NOT need to return them to the department, but your ability to solve them, and your level of comfort with the mathematical skills required, should enable you to assess whether or not you should participate in this course.

In preparation, we recommend that you become as familiar as your time permits with the material and recommended textbooks for this course as detailed in the syllabus. If your summer schedule permits, you will also benefit from taking any of the courses enumerated above that you currently lack.

Best wishes for a relaxing and productive summer. All of us in the department are looking forward to welcoming you in August.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bong Joon Yoon".

Bong Joon Yoon
Director of Graduate Studies