

# Department of Economics Student Profile

## May 2017

**Luc Clair, B.Sc., M.A., Ph.D.**



I am currently a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Economics at Memorial University. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Pure Mathematics and Economics and a Master of Arts in Economics from Memorial University. I successfully defended my PhD in Economics thesis from McMaster University and plan to graduate in the Spring of 2017. I recently accepted an assistant professor position in the Department of Economics at the University of Winnipeg with a joint appointment at St. Boniface Research Hospital, set to begin in August of 2017.

I started my academic career studying pure mathematics at Memorial University. Unable to pick a minor, a friend recommended economics. My interest in economics theory began simply as an application of the methods I learned in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. I was surprised to learn of the ubiquity of economic thought in my everyday life. Economics is the study of scarce resources and how they are managed. Every choice we make about our time, our energy, or our physical resources is a tradeoff: whatever activity we devote our resources to, we must give something up and every activity we pursue comes with a benefit and a cost. The applicability of economic theory to solve problems in multiple (unrelated) areas from the use of health care resources to international monetary policy expanded my career choices. Soon after, I changed my major to a double major of pure mathematics and economics.

After receiving my BSc, I participated in a program offered by the French embassy in Canada where I taught English at a high school in the north of France. Upon my return, I worked at the St. John's Board of Trade where I worked as a policy analyst. This position offered me many of opportunities to interact with business leaders and policy makers. I learned about issues important to the business community and the impact of government policies on this community. While at the Board of Trade, I found that my interest in statistical analysis was growing. I concluded that the best option to ameliorate my analytical skills was to attend graduate school in economics.

I returned to MUN in the fall of 2011 as a student in the graduate program in the Department of Economics. This was an intensive program designed to teach advanced skills for policy analysis, including econometrics, cost-benefit analysis, and economic theory. As part of my research project supervised by Dr. Doug May, I studied the determinants of length of stay in a rehabilitation hospital in St. John's. This research introduced me to the emerging field of health economics, i.e. the study of health care resource allocation.

To pursue my interest in health economics, I enrolled in the PhD Economics program at McMaster University, one of the premiere institutions on this subject in Canada. There, my research focused on developing state-of-the-art econometric methods for analyzing data collected using complex sampling techniques and applied these methods to study health care equity.

After finishing my thesis, I was thrilled to be invited back to Memorial University as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Economics. I continue to study matters concerning health care equity, specifically the effects of supplemental health insurance on the use of mental health care services and mental health pharmaceuticals.

The Department of Economics at MUN has had a profound impact on my academic career and my choice of research. I am grateful for the opportunities presented to me by the Department and for the guidance I have received from the faculty and staff over the years.