

Yu (Sonja) Chen

University of Waterloo
Department of Economics
200 University Ave W
Waterloo, ON, Canada, N2L 3G1

Phone: +1 (226) 972-1125
Email: sonjachenyu@gmail.com
Homepage: <http://personal.uwaterloo.ca/y327chen/>

CITIZENSHIP

Chinese, Permanent Resident of Canada

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, University of Waterloo, Canada, 2010-2016 (expected).

M.A. Economics, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, France, 2010.

B.A. Economics, Shanghai University, China, 2007.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Macroeconomics, Labour Economics

WORKING PAPERS

"Adverse Selection in the Labour Market and the Demand for Vocational Education" (**Job Market Paper**)

In this paper, I show that displacement of high-school workers out of routine jobs can be understood as the labour-market response to an adverse selection problem. The adverse selection problem arises because employment contracts do not systematically discriminate against education, even though over-qualified workers are relatively more likely to quit those routine jobs. The labour market equilibrium penalizes high school graduates by inefficiently increasing their unemployment rate, in order to separate them from overqualified college graduates. In addition, the labour market response to the adverse selection problem creates a demand for post-secondary vocational education, which is valuable because it acts as an entry barrier to prevent college graduates from using some routine jobs as a stepping-stone towards better jobs.

"Skill Mismatch in Competitive Search Equilibrium", joint with Matthew Doyle and Francisco M. Gonzalez.

We provide a theory of why workers search for jobs where they have a comparative disadvantage. The core idea is that, in the presence of asymmetric information about workers outside options, the value of on the job search is higher for workers employed in such jobs. We use this insight to argue that the declining fortunes of educated American workers are a consequence of the reduction in the value of jobs involving mainly cognitive, but routine, tasks that are increasingly automated or off-shored.

WORK IN PROGRESS

"Skill Mismatch and the Slow labour Market Recovery"

In this paper, I examine the role of skill-mismatch on the dynamics of a labour market coming out of a recession. In a recession, workers are more likely to accept jobs with low match quality but search for better ones when the economy recovers. I construct a dynamic model where the fraction of mismatched, skilled workers within an economy depends on the length and depth of a recession. When the proportion of "poachable" skilled workers is disproportionately large, firms prefer to hire workers who are currently employed out unemployed workers. As a result, the persistence and duration of unemployment in a recovery depends on the level of mismatch accumulated during the recession. I calibrate the model to the U.S. labour market to identify to what extent the model can explain slow recovery phenomenon in the U.S. labour market.

"EI Changes, Match Quality and Occupational Mobility", joint with Stéphanie Lluís and Brian P. McCall.

We are interested in the impact of the Canadian Employment Insurance (EI) system on post-unemployment outcomes. In 2005, four pilot projects of the EI program were established to further increasing access to benefits while promoting labour force attachment. Using the Survey of Income and Labour Dynamics (SLID) data, we analyze the effects of the pilots on reemployment rates and the extent to which the pilots promote industry and occupational mobility between the jobs before and after unemployment. In addition, we are interested in analyzing the impact of the pilots on measures of match quality.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowships, 2013-2014

University of Waterloo Graduate Scholarship, 2010-2012

Erasmus Mundus Scholarship of European Commission, 2009-2010

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Adverse Selection in the Labour Market and the Demand for Vocational Education"

Canadian Economic Association Annual Meetings, Toronto, May 2015.
Presented under title "The employment rate of low-skilled workers".

"Skill Mismatch in Competitive Search Equilibrium"

Canadian Economic Association Annual Meetings, Vancouver, June 2014.

"Skill Mismatch and the Slow labour Market Recovery"

Canadian Economic Association Annual Meetings, Montreal, May 2013.
Presented under title "Unemployment in Recession and Recovery".

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, University of Waterloo

Francisco M. Gonzalez, 2013-2015

Stéphanie Lluís, 2012-2013

Teaching Assistant, University of Waterloo

Graduate Level

Microeconomics I, 2012

Summer Math Camp, 2012, 2013

Undergraduate Level

Mathematical Economics, 2014

Honour Advanced Macroeconomics, 2011, 2012

Honour Advanced Microeconomics, 2011

CERTIFICATION

Fundamentals of University Teaching program, 2015

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Stata, R, Matlab

REFERENCES

Professor Francisco M. Gonzalez (Supervisor)
University of Waterloo
Phone: 519-888-4567 x32136
Email: francisco.gonzalez@uwaterloo.ca

Professor Matthew Doyle
University of Waterloo
Phone: 519-888-4567 x35352
Email: m6doyle@uwaterloo.ca

Professor Philip A. Curry
University of Waterloo
Phone: (519) 888-4567 x32644
Email: pacurry@uwaterloo.ca