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**SEX:** F

**CITIZENSHIP:** U.S.

**EDUCATION:**

B.A., Linguistics, Stanford University, 1998

Master of Pacific and International Affairs (M.P.I.A.), The Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS), University of California, San Diego (UCSD), 2004\*

\* Graduated with Distinction

**DOCTORAL STUDIES:** Department of Economics, UCSD

DATES: 2004-2010

THESIS TITLE: Essays in Labor Economics and the Economics of Education

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 2010

THESIS COMMITTEE AND REFERENCES:

Julie Cullen (Chair)	Julian Betts	Nora Gordon
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**DESIRED TEACHING AND RESEARCH:**

Primary Fields: Labor Economics, Economics of Education, Applied Microeconomics, Applied Econometrics

Secondary Fields: Public Economics, Urban Economics

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

- 2008-2009: Lecturer, UCSD Economics Department  
Undergraduate Courses: Principles of Microeconomics, Market Imperfections and Policy  
  
Lecturer, UCSD IR/PS  
Graduate Course: Econ Prep (an accelerated Principles of Microeconomics course for incoming master's students)
- 2005-present: Teaching Assistant, UCSD Economics Department  
Undergraduate Courses: Principles of Microeconomics, Market Imperfections and Policy, Intermediate Microeconomics, Econometrics, Applied Econometrics, Urban Economics, Labor Economics
- 2003-2004: Teaching Assistant, UCSD IR/PS  
Graduate Courses: Quantitative Methods, Business and Government in the Global Economy, Managerial Decision Making

**RELEVANT POSITIONS HELD:**

- 2008-present: Senior Teaching Assistant, UCSD Economics Department  
Instrumental in completely redesigning the Economics Department TA training program; asked to serve an additional year to implement the new program.
- 2004-2008: Editorial Assistant to Dr. Takeo Hoshi, UCSD IR/PS  
Edited papers on topics ranging from health insurance to contract theory for the *Journal of the Japanese and International Economies*.
- 2005-2006: Research Assistant to Dr. Takeo Hoshi, UCSD IR/PS  
Prepared and analyzed data from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) on the institutional characteristics of Eastern European and Central Asian banks.
- 2003-2004: Research Assistant to Dr. Ellis Krauss, UCSD IR/PS  
Prepared and analyzed data on the career paths of Japanese politicians. Data used in Pekkanen, Robert, Nyblade, Benjamin, and Krauss, Ellis S. "Electoral Incentives in Mixed Member Systems: Party, Posts, and Zombie Politicians in Japan," *American Political Science Review*, May 2006, 100(2), pp. 183-193.

**HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND FELLOWSHIPS:**

- 2008-2009: Department of Economics Teaching Assistant Excellence Award Winner
- Summer 2008: UCSD Summer Graduate Teaching Fellow
- 2007-2008: Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Excellent Teaching Award Winner  
The Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Teaching Awards recognize a select number of faculty and graduate students who have made extraordinary contributions to UCSD as teachers. In 2007-2008, eight faculty members and three graduate students campus-wide were selected as winners and honored with a monetary award and a citation from Senator Barbara Boxer.

**RESEARCH:**

Information Capital and Early-Career Wages (Job-Market Paper)

Abstract: Traditional human capital theory posits that the larger the stock of a worker's human capital, the more productive the worker will be and the more the worker will earn. Information capital, the knowledge that individuals possess about the labor market and about their aptitudes and tastes for different levels of education and types of employment, is another component of an individual's skill set that affects productivity and wages. In this paper, I define one measure of information capital: labor-market knowledge captured by 12<sup>th</sup> graders' understanding of the educational requirements of the jobs they hope to hold at age 30. I demonstrate that inaccurate labor-market information affects wages through decreased job tenure, driven by individuals entering and leaving postsecondary school as they come to an accurate understanding of the educational requirements of their chosen jobs. I find that poor labor-market knowledge affects workers well into their twenties: despite having higher grades and test scores, workers who were mistaken about educational requirements in high school earn wages no higher than workers in similar jobs who were not. I also investigate the role of high school guidance counselors and vocational education faculty in students' information-capital acquisition, and show that schools can influence students' career aspirations and labor-market knowledge.

Combination Classes and Educational Achievement (Submitted)

Abstract: This paper determines the effect of membership in a K-1 or 1-2 combination class in first grade on student achievement. I address the selection that occurs at all three levels of implementing a combination class. In order to control for any systematic differences between schools that offer combination classes and those that do not, I conduct a within-school analysis using school fixed effects. I find little evidence of meaningful nonrandom assignment of teachers to combination classes. There is, however, evidence that 1-2 students are positively selected based on ability. Using a rich set of covariates, I am able to control for the variables influencing selection. Estimates of the effect of combination class membership in first grade on reading and general knowledge test scores are not significantly different from zero. The estimate of the effect on math scores for first graders in 1-2 combination classes is positive and significant, indicating that 1-2 students can be expected to outperform single-grade students by one-seventh of a standard deviation. This result is not sensitive to functional-form assumptions. In addition, I find no evidence that first-graders in schools offering combination classes perform worse than first-graders in schools that do not offer such classes. Therefore, I conclude that combination classes may be a Pareto-improving option for school administrators.

Do Parents Really Care About Test Scores? School Quality, Neighborhood Demographics, and Household Location Choice (In Progress)

Abstract: Do parents really care about test scores when choosing a place to live? The answer could be no for two reasons. One, parents do care about school quality, but test scores are a poor measure of school quality. Two, parents do not care about school quality; all they care about are neighborhood demographics. In this paper, I compare the residential location choices of households with children to households without children. I find that parents in the San Francisco Bay area do care about test scores, but that the importance of test scores diminishes as other neighborhood characteristics are considered.

Occupation-Specific Returns to Noncognitive Skills (In Progress)

Abstract: Noncognitive skills or personality traits such as self-esteem and locus of control, or the degree to which individuals feel they can control events that affect them, are important contributors to a worker's productivity. Using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 Cohort, Geocoded Data (NLSY79 Geocode), I investigate how much these noncognitive skills contribute to wage differentials across occupations, over and above traditional ability measures such as IQ as measured by AFQT score.

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**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:**

“Peers, Parents, or Schools? Alignment of Educational and Career Goals in High School and Postsecondary Outcomes,” All-UC Labor Conference, University of California, Riverside, September 2009

**PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

Conference participation: NBER Summer Institute, Labor Studies Program, Cambridge, MA, July 2009