



Scottish Institute for Research in Economics
Launch Conference
Monday 19 November 2007
Playfair Library, University of Edinburgh

11.00 – 11.30

Day registration, coffee/tea

11.30 – 12.45

Seminar 1

12.45 – 14.00

Buffet Lunch

14.00 – 15.15

Seminar 2

15.30 – 16.45

Seminar 3

16.45 – 17.30

Evening registration, coffee/tea

17.30 – 19.00

Welcome followed by
keynote address by Prof. Tim Besley

19.00 onwards

Reception, drinks and canapés

Seminar 1

Professor Guido Cozzi

(University of Glasgow)

Privatization of knowledge: did
the US get it right?

Seminar 2

Professors Maia Güell and

José V. Rodríguez Mora

(University of Edinburgh)

The names in Spain are mainly
not in vain: inter-generational
mobility and the information
content of surnames

Seminar 3

Professor Martin Chalkley

(University of Dundee)

Economics in tooth and jaw:
extracting performance from
dentists

Prof. Tim Besley (LSE and member of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee) will be the keynote speaker with his talk entitled '*Economics for Public Service Reform*'. Reform of public services is a pressing issue in the UK and elsewhere. This lecture will review what the economics of incentives and organizations offers to this debate. In trying to understand what makes public services different, it will develop a framework focusing on 3 M's: missions, motivation and matching. It will argue that these offer a novel take on how competition and incentives work in public service provision. It will also discuss some issues surrounding public versus private provision of public services and governance of service provision.

How to register?

via website:

www.econ.ed.ac.uk/sire/news.html

by phone:

0131 650 4066

by e-mail: contact the administrator:

gina.reddie@ed.ac.uk



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Please book via the internet to register your interest for this event, as well as your catering requirements. Every booking will be acknowledged. If you have not received a booking confirmation please contact the administrator.

If you require wheelchair access or any other special arrangements, please contact the administrator before 9/11/2007. Thank you.

Seminar Abstracts

Seminar 1

Professor Guido Cozzi (University of Glasgow)
Privatization of knowledge: did the US get it right?

Brilliant ideas, about new products and processes, are key to economic growth and international competitiveness. Such ideas often emerge from scientific discoveries which themselves have no immediate commercial value – so rewards may not be aligned to effort. Should basic research be publicly or privately funded? And, to foster innovation and growth, what kinds of discovery should be protected by intellectual property rights? Post 1980, the US intellectual protection regime has parted substantially from the European. Has the US chosen the better path?

Seminar 2

Professors Maia Güell and José V. Rodríguez Mora (University of Edinburgh)
The names in Spain are mainly not in vain: inter-generational mobility and the information content of surnames

Economic mobility, between generations, is notoriously difficult to measure. Although there are many cross-sectional data sets, there are few long panels. We propose an innovative solution, based on the idea that surnames act as a longitudinal marker. We measure the information content of surnames in a census of the Spanish population (of more than 40 million). We find that not only does family background matter, but it is mattering more – economic mobility, between generations, is *decreasing*. This trend is explained by an increase in assortative mating: like is pairing more with like. The hope is that our new method will be of use to non-economists too; e.g. in determining the importance of heredity for a medical condition.

Seminar 3

Professor Martin Chalkley (University of Dundee)
Economics in tooth and jaw: extracting performance from dentists

The performance of the NHS dental service has been a source of much public debate, and some discomfort for policy makers (not to mention patients). Changes to dentists' pay structures have been tried across the UK. Such policy shifts enable us to test our models of economic incentives, given that there is a huge and seldom-exploited data bank recording dentists' activity in minute detail. We have a number of findings. (1) Remuneration matters – dentists paid differently perform differently. (2) It matters whether patients have to co-pay – dentists do more for patients who co-pay less. What can this tell us about how health care should be delivered?