

Professor Margaret A Abernethy  
Dean



MEMORANDUM

To: Chair  
Planning and Budget Committee

From: Professor Margaret Abernethy  
Dean, Faculty of Economics and Commerce

Date: March 1, 2005

Subject: **Professorial Fellow Position**

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I attach a letter from the Head of Department, Economics proposing the establishment of a new Professorial Fellow position. Our Faculty Executive has endorsed the proposal and concurs with the academic arguments and the statement about our ability to resource the position.

I therefore recommend that the Planning and Budget Committee endorse the proposal for the establishment of a new Professorial Fellow Position.



Margaret A Abernethy  
DEAN

Encl.

Office of the Dean  
Faculty of Economics and Commerce  
The University of Melbourne  
Victoria 3010 Australia  
T: +61 3 8344 5311 F: +61 3 8344 3647  
E: dean.ecomfac@unimelb.edu.au  
W: www.ecom.unimelb.edu.au

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

Exec C'ttee  
Meet No. 01/05  
Item No. 13

Professor Margaret Abernethy  
Dean  
Faculty of Economics and Commerce

February 14, 2005

Dear Maggie,

The Department of Economics is seeking approval to advertise a fixed-term Professorial Fellowship position. The position would be for 1 year extendable by mutual agreement to 2 years.

The rationale for this position is to compensate for Professor Peter Bardsley taking on the role of Director of the ARC Network grant on Economic Design from 2004-08 during which time he will have a reduced role within the Department of Economics. The position will be funded by a 50% buy-out of Professor Bardsley's time in the ARC Network grant. It has been decided to use the funds to seek a full-time appointment (instead of for example half-time over 5 years) as it is believed this will attract the strongest group of candidates.

It is expected that an appointment to the Professorial Fellow would have as main responsibilities to provide research leadership and conduct research in the field of microeconomic theory, and to undertake teaching duties in that field.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Jeff Borland  
Head  
Department of Economics

Department of Economics  
The University of Melbourne Victoria 3010 Australia  
Telephone: +61 3 8344 5289 Fax: +61 3 8344 6899  
World Wide Web URL - <http://www.economics.unimelb.edu.au>



## **University of Melbourne**

### **Faculty of Economics and Commerce**

#### **Professorial Fellow in Economics (Fixed-term)**

##### **1. Proposal**

The Department of Economics is seeking to advertise a fixed-term Professorial Fellow position for 1 year (extendable to 2 years by mutual agreement).

##### **2. Rationale**

The rationale for this position is to compensate for Professor Peter Bardsley taking on the role of Director of the ARC Network grant on Economic Design from 2004-08 during which time he will have a reduced role within the Department of Economics. The position will be funded by a 50% buy-out of Professor Bardsley's time in the ARC Network grant. It has been decided to use the funds to seek a full-time appointment (instead of for example half-time over 5 years) as it is believed this will attract the strongest group of candidates.

It is expected that an appointment to the Professorial Fellow would have as main responsibilities to provide research leadership and conduct research in the field of microeconomic theory, and to undertake teaching duties in that field.

##### **3. Objectives of Department of Economics**

The Department's objectives are:

- (i) To produce high-quality research of two types: contributions to international knowledge that are publishable in internationally leading general and field journals, and international quality research on the Australian economy and economic policy issues;
- (ii) To offer high quality teaching and training in both undergraduate and graduate programs; and
- (iii) To make significant contributions to the economics profession and to the Australian community.

Department of Economics  
The University of Melbourne  
Victoria 3010 Australia  
T: +61 3 8344 5289 F: +61 3 8344 6899  
W: <http://www.economics.unimelb.edu.au>

#### **4. Selection criteria**

##### **Essential**

- To have the capacity to make a significant contribution to the objectives of the Department of Economics;
- A distinguished international reputation and outstanding research record in the field of microeconomic theory;
- Ability to provide high quality academic leadership – for example, in research activities through the Economic Theory Centre in the Department; in development of the Department’s teaching program; and in supporting and mentoring junior academic staff;
- Ph.D in economics or a related discipline area;
- Demonstrated ability to plan and teach both graduate and undergraduate subjects taught by the Department of Economics;
- Demonstrated capacity to provide high quality supervision for graduate students; and
- Good inter-personal and communication skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to raise funds from competitive grants and other sources to support research.

##### **5. Key responsibilities**

- Undertake research on economics, and participate in research activities of the Department such as its seminar program;
- Teaching in undergraduate and graduate coursework programs, and supervision of undergraduate Honours and postgraduate students undertaking research projects or degrees;
- Provide academic leadership within the Department – for example, in research activities through the Economic Theory Centre in the Department; in development of the Department’s teaching program; and in supporting and mentoring junior academic staff;
- Make applications for competitive external research grants;
- Contribute to economics profession through activities such as conference organization; and
- Perform administrative duties within the Department.

##### **6. Conditions of Appointment**

The successful applicant will be responsible in his/her position to the Head of the Department of Economics. The salary for a Professor is currently \$113,600. There is four weeks paid annual leave per year. In addition to the base salary there is a 17% employer contribution to superannuation, and an annual leave loading payable (\$881). Staff may undertake up to thirteen days per quarter approved outside work and consultancies. Other information on entitlements and responsibilities of Professorial Fellows can be found in ‘General Information for Professors and Professorial Fellows’.

## **Background Information**

### **THE UNIVERSITY**

The University of Melbourne is one of Australia's oldest and most prestigious universities. It was founded in 1853 and commenced teaching its first students in 1855. The University has now over 32,000 students including about 6,500 pursuing higher degrees and diplomas and is supported by almost 5,500 staff. It is an international research-based university offering undergraduate and postgraduate education of the highest quality. The University itself is centrally located in 19 hectares of landscaped grounds about 2.5 kilometres north of the centre of the City of Melbourne.

### **THE DEPARTMENT**

The Department of Economics at the University of Melbourne is generally ranked (along with ANU) as one of the top two economics departments in Australia. At the start of 2003 the Department of Economics will have 44 full time academic staff – 12 Professors; 11 Associate Professors; 16 Senior Lecturers; and 5 Lecturers. This includes 5 full-time academic staff in the Centre for Actuarial Studies which is located within the Department.

The Department of Economics is within the Faculty of Economics and Commerce. Other departments are Accounting and Business Information Systems, Finance, and Management; and the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, a research-only institute that undertakes a wide range of research and consultancy projects for government and private sector clients.

### **RESEARCH**

#### Objectives

The Department's objective is to produce high-quality research of two types: contributions to international knowledge that are publishable in internationally leading general and field journals, and international quality research on the Australian economy and economic policy issues. There is a strong emphasis within the Department on encouraging a good research culture and promoting collaboration, and on providing a friendly and supportive atmosphere. The Department has research centers in Economic Theory, Macroeconomics, Micro-econometrics, Asian Economics, and Actuarial Studies.

#### Seminars and Conferences

There are four active weekly seminar series within the Department - one for visitors, an economic theory workshop, a micro-econometric workshop and a macro breakfast. As well, the Melbourne Institute has a regular seminar series for external speakers, and a labour economics workshop series.

In Australia each year there are two major conferences – the Australasian Econometric Society Meetings, and the Economic Society Conference. As well, there are regular annual workshops in economic theory, macroeconomics, labour economics, applied micro-econometrics, health economics.

#### Funding

Any new member of the Department of Economics should have no trouble accessing some amount of research funds for their first several years. There is a competitive research grant scheme within the Faculty of Economics and Commerce, and for Early Career Researchers within the University, that are intended to provide research funds to new staff. Additional research funds can be sought from the Australian Research Council through a range of competitive grants schemes. The Department has an excellent established track record in attracting grants.

#### Travel and visitors, and study leave

Staff are encouraged to travel, both domestically and internationally. Travel support is provided by the Department for at least one Australian and one international conference per 2 years where a paper is being presented. In addition, research funds can be used to fund further travel. Staff are encouraged to invite colleagues to visit the Department. For example, the Faculty of Economics and Commerce has a Distinguished Fellow Scheme to fund visitors to the University for up to 3 months.

### **TEACHING**

#### Undergraduate and graduate programs

The main teaching of the Department is in the Bachelor of Commerce Degree, and the graduate M.Comm. and Ph.D programs. (As well, there is some teaching in professional graduate programs such as the Master of Applied Commerce.)

Students in the B.Comm. undergraduate degree in their first year are required to take Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Statistical Methods (out of eight subjects) which are taught by the Department. In the second and third years of the degree the Economics Department offers 'core courses' in Micro, Macro and Econometrics (necessary for a specialization in economics, or to be able to go on to the fourth 'Honours' year of study), as well as a wide range of optional units. A great strength of the teaching program at Melbourne is the quality of students. About 90% of the top 10% of high school students in the state of Victoria study as undergraduates at the University of Melbourne.

Many of the best students in economics will continue their studies to an Honours year. The Honours year teaching program comprises Micro, Macro, Econometrics and a research essay (as a double subject; many of which are subsequently published in refereed journals), as well as several optional subjects. Each year several students from the Honours year would go on to graduate study, and other Honours graduates accept jobs with leading government and private sector employers such as the Reserve Bank and Commonwealth Treasury.

The Ph.D program consists of one year of coursework (Micro, Macro, Econometrics, Thesis Workshop plus three optional subjects), generally followed by 2-3 years of dissertation research. Each year about 4-5 students commence the Ph.D program. (This is an area where the Department will be seeking to expand in the next few years.) Students who complete the Ph.D obtain jobs at other Australian universities, or as professional economists in government or business.

#### Objective

The Department places a high value on teaching quality. Its objective is to offer excellent teaching in both undergraduate and graduate programs, to offer a set of subjects that meet the requirements of students and are up-to-date with developments in the disciplines of Economics and Econometrics, and to seek to be innovative in methods of teaching. Specialist staff are employed within the Faculty of Economics and Commerce to assist in developing and improving teaching.

#### Responsibilities

Teaching loads are very low by international standards. The normal teaching load is two subjects per year. Each subject comprises two lectures per week, and in the case of small subjects at third year and higher level, one or two tutorials per week, taught over a twelve week teaching semester. Teaching assistants and tutors are appointed to assist with large classes. There is generally also a requirement to act as an advisor to several Honours students writing research essays, and staff are encouraged to act as Ph.D supervisors. In the initial years after hiring, teaching responsibilities would generally be in the third or Honours years of the undergraduate program, or in the graduate program (where class sizes would be smaller than in the first two years of the undergraduate program), and an attempt is made to match teaching with the main research interests of each member of staff.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

The Department provides excellent working conditions and support for staff. All staff are provided with state of the art computing facilities and excellent IT support (4 full-time IT staff). There is excellent administrative support within the Department, providing full office facilities (& administrative staff).