



Media Advisory

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John Asker Joins Columbia Economics

Economist John Asker was appointed Professor of Economics July 1, 2018. He joins the Department after serving as Professor of Economics at the University of California, Los Angeles 2014-2018.

Professor Asker's research investigates topics related to antitrust policy, cartel behavior, vertical restraints, auction design, firm-level productivity and the effects of industry subsidies. To investigate these issues, he employs a mix of theoretical and empirical methods. "My research is aimed at understanding elements of how allocation, production and exchange work in industries is characterized by market power, complex vertical structure and an active government presence," explains Asker. "Using a combination of empirical and theoretical tools, I aspire to contribute to our understanding of how these factors shape economic policy at the industry level, at both a normative and positive level. Each of my projects involves some combination of the study of market power, regulation, and vertical market structures," he adds.

Asker will also serve as the first Director of the Department's Industrial Organization Initiative (IOI). The IOI will use its resources for activities that promote IO at Columbia. Activities may include helping finance short-term visitors and conferences, and supporting research and training of faculty and students.

Professor Asker's work has been published in journals such as the *American Economic Review*, the *RAND Journal of Economics*, the *Journal of Public Economics* and the *Journal of Political Economy*. He is also co-editor of *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics* and a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University, and a B. Ec (Hons) from the Australian National University.

About Columbia | Economics

The Department of Economics offers a general economics major, in addition to five interdisciplinary majors structured to suit the interests and professional goals of a heterogeneous student body. All of the undergraduate programs have different specific requirements but share the common structure of core theoretical courses that provide the foundation for higher-level elective courses culminating in a senior seminar. Graduate students receive training within an outstanding research environment, supported by members of faculty who are leading research in their fields.

In 2017, the Department offered 42 undergraduate courses. A total of 4765 students were enrolled, 742 in the Department's majors. The M.A. program provides a technical and rigorous approach to the study of economics. In addition, the doctoral program receives approximately 1,000 applications each year for an incoming class of roughly 25 students. The Department has played a prominent role in the development of economic thought. It will continue to through its faculty and students, and contribute to a better understanding of economic activities and the elaboration of policy.

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