

**Javier Gonzalez  
Curriculum Vitae**

**Address:** Department of Economics  
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**Education:**

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Pennsylvania, expected 2008  
M.A. in Economics, University of Pennsylvania, 2006  
M.A. in Economics, University of British Columbia, 2002  
B.A (hons.) in Economics, University of British Columbia

**Honors and Awards:**

British Columbia Provincial Scholarship, 1997  
Third Place, National Physics Olympiad, 1996  
Participant, Asian Pacific Mathematics Olympiad, 1996.  
First Place, National Mathematics Olympiad, 1995  
Second Place, National Mathematics Olympiad, 1994  
Excellence Scholarship, International Baccalaureate, ITESM-CEGS 1994-1996.  
Fifth Place, "State Best Grade 6 Student Contest", 1991.

**Dissertation Title: "Essays in Computational and Health Economics"**

**Abstract:** Cancer is the one of the leading causes of death. An average American has a 0.4566 probability of developing cancer during his or her life and a 0.2150 probability of dying from cancer. Currently, the recommended policies for cancer testing have the following general form: start testing at a certain age and then test every  $x$  years. Given the nonlinearity of the probability of developing cancer as a function of age, the currently recommended policies are not optimal. We search for policies that are more general and allow for varying lengths of time between tests.

We approach the issue as a life-cycle problem in which the agent decides to either pay for a test or consume the income. We develop a theoretical model in which the state-space is composed of three sets: an always observed state, an underlying state, and an observable state which could be null if the agent decides not to test.

We apply the model to colon and rectum cancer to obtain the optimal ages to perform colonoscopies. The currently recommended guideline for colonoscopy is to test at ages 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90. Our Monte Carlo simulation yields a cost/life-year saved of \$54,919.62 for the official policy. We ask the following: if we could reallocate 4 tests between the ages of 51 and 90, which ages for testing would give the lowest cost/life-year saved? Of the 91,309 possible policies 43,026, or 47%, have a better cost per life-year saved than the currently recommended guidelines. The policy with the lowest cost is to test at the ages of 50, 67, 71, 75, 78 with a cost of \$43,186.05 per life-year saved.

**Committee:** Petra Todd, Jose-Victor Rios-Rull, Dirk Krueger, John Knowles

**Research Interests:**

Javier Gonzalez

University of Pennsylvania

Health Economics, Computational Economics, Quantitative Macroeconomics,

**Teaching Interests:**

Major: Macroeconomics, Health Economics

Minor: Mathematical Economics, Quantitative Economics

**Research Paper:**

“Optimal Cancer Screening”, mimeo, University of Pennsylvania, 2007

**Research and Teaching Experience:**

Teacher Assistant, Managerial Economics with Prof. Albert Saiz, Spring 2007, 2008

Instructor, Public Finance, Fall 2006

Instructor, Public Policy Analysis, Summer 2006

Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Macro with Prof. Guido Menzio, Spring 2006

Instructor, International Trade, Fall 2005

Undergraduate Recitation Instructor, Introductory Macroeconomics with Prof. Gwen Eudey, University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2003, Spring 2004 and Fall 2004

Teaching Assistant, Public Finance with Professor Jon Kesselman, UBC, Spring 2002

Teaching Assistant, Labor Economics with Ana Ferrer, UBC, Fall 2001

**Work Experience:**

Economist. Bank of Canada, Research Department, Macroeconomics Division. Ottawa, ON, Canada, May-August 2004.

**Professional Activities:**

Institute of Computational Economics (ICE), University of Chicago, August 2007.

Canadian Economics Association meetings, Halifax, 2006.

American Economics Association meetings, Boston, 2006.

Canadian Economics Association meetings, Toronto, 2004.

**Presentations:**

Department of Economics, University of Pennsylvania, Oct. 2008.

Department of Health Care Management and Economics, The Wharton School, Nov. 2008.

**Additional Skills:**

Languages: Japanese, 2 years; German, 1 year; French, 2 years; Spanish, fluent.

Extensive programming experience in: FORTRAN95, STATA, MATHEMATICA  
MATLAB, GAUSS, EVIEWS, AMPL, GAMS.

**Employment Interests:**

Academic, Government and Private Sector

**Date of Availability:**

June 2008

**References:**

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