



Penn Economics Graduate Group

TO: All Incoming Graduate Students in Economics and Interested Wharton Ph.D. Students

FROM: Kenneth Burdett, Director of Graduate Studies

DATE: April 11, 2008

RE: **MATHEMATICS PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE ECONOMICS Ph.D. PROGRAM**

In our program, first year economic theory courses and econometrics courses are pre-requisites for most of the subsequent courses. These first year courses take a certain amount of mathematics skills as a pre-requisite. Your success in the first year of our program depends heavily on how comfortable you are with the needed mathematical tools. In order to assist the first year students in our program, we offer two courses, 897 and 898. 897 is a non-credit course offered during the summer prior to the start of the first year courses. 898 is offered during the fall term of the first year.

This year, Econ 897- the "Summer Math Institute" (also known as "Math Camp") is scheduled to begin on July 14 and end on August 22, 2007. Students can satisfy the math pre-requisite requirements either by taking Economics 897 and Economics 898 and obtaining a grade of B or better, or by taking waiver examinations in these courses given August 27 (897) and to be announced (898).

During the last five to six years, the majority of entering students chose to take 897 during the summer and they found it an extremely useful experience. Not only did they learn a great deal of mathematics, but they also developed good cooperative spirits in the class, and this was of substantial help in their success after the regular fall term began in September.

Every year there are several students who *should* have taken 897 but did not. They find the first year significantly more difficult than their classmates who had taken 897. Your presumption should be that you will take 897, unless you have a **STRONG** mathematics background.

Please return the registration form for Econ 897 and/or the form indicating that you intend to take a waiver examination **by June 15**,

The tuition for this course is \$1,995. We recognize that it is a substantial financial burden for most students. On the other hand, we believe that the past experience indicates that it is *worth the cost for many students*. We have limited funds for providing partial financial assistance to Econ students in need, but our resources are quite constrained.

Some Ph.D. programs in the Wharton School also recommend that their incoming students take 897 and they will be admitted to this course upon the recommendation of their advisors. *Wharton Ph.D. students who need financial aid for this purpose should apply to the Ph.D. Coordinator of their Wharton Department.*

In order to let you judge whether or not you would benefit from the summer course, we are making available the syllabi for 897 and 898, as well as sample waiver examinations. You can take the waiver examination for 898 usually right before or on the start of the class and then decide whether or not to take the course during the fall term depending on your result from the waiver examination. On the other hand, since 897 is given prior to the start of the fall term, if you choose not to take it and then do not pass the waiver exam in 897 given on August 27, upon your arrival, you will have to study the material in 897 on your own.