

Masanori Kuroki

Curriculum Vitae

Department of Economics
University of California, Riverside
3111 Sproul Hall
Riverside, CA 92521, USA

Japanese citizen
US green-card holder
Mobile phone: +1-909-456-0704
Email: mkuro002@ucr.edu

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Economics – University of California, Riverside, expected 2011
- M.S., Economics – California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 2004
- B.S., Economics – California State University, Bakersfield, 2002

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

DISSERTATION TITLES

“Essays on Well-Being in Japan”

Committee: David Fairris (co-chair), Todd Sorensen (co-chair), Mindy Marks, and Aman Ullah

DISSERTATION CHAPTERS

- “Deregulations of Temporary Employment and Workers’ Perceptions of Job Insecurity in Japan”
- “Does Social Trust Increase Individual Happiness in Japan?”
- “Suicide and Local Unemployment in Japan: Evidence from Municipal Level Suicide Rates and Age-Specific Suicide Rates”

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Instructor for Labor Economics, University of California, Riverside, Summer 2010.
- Teaching Assistant - University of California, Riverside, 2007-present: Introduction to Macroeconomics, Introduction to Microeconomics, Intermediate Macroeconomics, Intermediate Microeconomics, Introduction to Capitalism

PUBLICATIONS

- “Suicide and Local Unemployment in Japan: Evidence from Municipal Level Suicide Rates and Age-Specific Suicide Rates”, *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 2010, 39(6), 683-691.
- “An Analysis of Economic Integration of Asian Countries for Currency Unification”, with Safarzadeh, M. R. and Falatoon, H. *Central Business Review*, Winter/Summer 2007, No. 1-2, 26-31.
- “Does economic and political integration of Asian countries justify currency unification?”, with Safarzadeh, M. R. and Falatoon, H. *International Review of Economics and Business*, 2005, 52(4), 537-560.

AWARDS

- Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, UC Riverside, 2009-2010
- UC Riverside Economics Department Reader of the Year Award, 2008-2009
- Dr. Ho Scholarship Award, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona: 2003
- Wall Street Journal Student Award, California State University, Bakersfield: 2002

RESEARCH GRANTS

Mini-Grant for Cross-Campus Collaborative Graduate Student Research, *the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE)*, May 2010.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Research Assistant to David Fairris and Erik Jonasson, Summer 2010.
- Grader: Labor Economics, Public Finance, Urban Economics

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONSE

- “Suicide and Local Unemployment in Japan: Evidence from Municipal Level Suicide Rates and Age-Specific Suicide Rates”
 - Singapore Economic Review Conference (August 2009)
 - All UC Labor Conference, Poster Session (September 2009)
- “Does Social Trust Increase Individual Happiness in Japan?”: The joint conference of the International Association for Research in Economic Psychology (IAREP) and the Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics (SABE), Cologne, Germany (September 2010)

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent), Japanese (Native)

SOFTWARE SKILLS

STATA, Microsoft Office

REFERENCES

Dr. David Fairris
Professor of Economics
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
University of California, Riverside
Phone: +1-951-827-7750
Email: david.fairris@ucr.edu

Dr. Richard Arnott
Distinguished Professor of Economics
Graduate Advisor
University of California, Riverside
Phone: +1-951-827-1581
E-mail: richard.arnott@ucr.edu

Dr. Todd Sorensen
Assistant Professor of Economics
University of California, Riverside
Phone: +1-951- 827-1475
Email: todd.sorensen@ucr.edu

Dr. Mindy Marks
Assistant Professor of Economics
University of California, Riverside
Phone: +1-951-827-4164
Email: mindy.marks@ucr.edu

Dissertation Abstract
Three Essays on Well-Being in Japan

This dissertation is comprised of three papers on well-being in Japan and aims to examine three important measures of well-being: perceptions of job insecurity, self-reported happiness, and suicide.

The first paper in this dissertation is titled “Deregulations of Temporary Employment and Workers’ Perceptions of Job Insecurity in Japan.” This paper examines whether the expansion of temporary agencies contributes to a rise in perceptions of job insecurity among workers in Japan, where non-regular employment, such as part-time and temporary positions, as the proportion of the workforce has increased in recent years. I exploit the temporary staffing deregulation of 2004, which allowed temporary agency staffing for production line work in the manufacturing sector. Using difference-in-differences (DD) methodology, I identify the impact of the law change as the difference between the change in the perceptions of job insecurity of low-skilled manufacturing workers (treatment group) and the change in the perceptions of job insecurity of other nonmanufacturing low-skilled workers (control group). I find that the temporary agency staffing deregulation significantly contributed to the rise in job insecurity among low-skilled manufacturing workers.

The second paper is titled “Does Social Trust Increase Individual Happiness in Japan?” This paper tests the hypothesis that social trust is valuable intrinsically by using individual happiness data from Japan. Economists are mainly interested in trust as being growth enhancing, but whether trust is well-being enhancing is underexplored. While racial diversity makes measuring social trust at a certain geographically defined area difficult, Japan provides a good case study because of its ethnically homogeneous population. I address the problem of reverse causality by instrumenting social trust with residential stability as social trust should be higher for a stable community and lower for a high-turnover community. I find that social trust has positive and significant effects on individual happiness. The instrumental variables approach suggests that causality runs from social trust to happiness.

The third paper is titled “Suicide and Local Unemployment in Japan: Evidence from Municipal Level Suicide Rates and Age-Specific Suicide Rates.” This paper studies the link between suicide and unemployment in Japan, where suicide has drawn much attention from researchers, policymakers, and the general public. I use two semi-aggregate level panel data: community level suicide rates and age-specific suicide rates. The data at the semi-aggregate level, such as cities, towns, or villages, is ideal for policymakers because the destructive effect of unemployment should not be limited to individual level as it may operate at community level. The results from fixed-effects models show that an increase in the unemployment rate significantly contributed to the male suicide rate during the period 1985-2007, and prime age working men aged 35-64 are the most vulnerable group.