FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: KIWON KANG

I recently joined the Department of Economics as an assistant professor (fixed term) in January 2022. After earning my Ph.D. from the Economics Department in 2002, I worked at the International Studies and Programs (ISP) at MSU for 19 years until June 2021. Teaching and advising at ISP were both a valuable experience for me. I taught applied macroeconomics, entitled “Current Macroeconomic Issues in the U.S.,” for visiting scholars. Since 2004, I have been teaching EC 201 (Introduction to Microeconomics) and/or EC 202 (Introduction to Macroeconomics) for undergraduate students. Teaching both undergraduate students and visiting scholars has brought me wider insights and deeper understandings of how to effectively deliver my economics knowledge into a classroom audience. As the Economics Department has been my home for many years, I am pleased and grateful to be back where I began.

EC 201 & EC 202 Students will learn the basic knowledge of micro/macro issues and get a sense for a real economy by applying what they learned from the class into real life scenarios. Throughout the semester, they will practice on how to think and act like an economist. At the end of the semester, students will be able to speak and write in an articulate manner about the large range of economic problems and issues in the world.

My role is to guide students in the right direction. I emphasize three important points in my teaching style: inspiration, stimulation, and encouragement. During my teachings, I’d like to inspire students to learn while also stimulating them to explore new knowledge and connect ideas with their fields. Encouraging students to think and act like an economist has also always been a major goal of mine.

Something fun about myself is I have always been a crazy fan about MSU football and basketball. During my 25+ years at MSU, I was very lucky to be able to witness the celebration of the basketball team’s national championship in 2000, as well as the football team’s amazing victory in the 100th Rose Bowl in 2014. Experiencing the 2015 football Big Ten championship win live in person at Indianapolis will also always be a core memory of mine. My ‘little’ dream is to enjoy another two championships before I retire, and I believe that is possible. Go Green!
EC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: CHLOE MAJZEL

What is your graduate program and what do you do?
• I graduated from MSU with a dual BA in Economics and International Relations and minors in Asian Pacific American Studies and Chinese. At MSU, I held various leadership positions like the Vice President of Women and Minorities in Economics (WAMIE) and worked as an EC 202 UA. Currently, I am pursuing a double Master’s in International Affairs from the London School of Economics and Peking University.

How does your Economics Education help you succeed in grad school?
• I took EC 413 Economics of Asia and EC 310 Developmental Economics which gave me a solid foundation for my graduate courses. The first year of my program focuses on Asia/China in international affairs and my econ courses helped in my international political economy and national security courses. For my thesis, I plan to utilize the quantitative skills I gained from EC 499 Senior Seminar in Economics. As a JMC and econ BA student, I didn’t take a lot of quantitative courses, so the senior seminar taught me useful quantitative research methods.

What recommendations to you have for current EC students on the job, internship, or graduate school search?
• Don’t narrow your search to basic econ jobs like working at the Fed or research assistantships. The Career Services Network can provide great insight on jobs, internships, and graduate programs you might be interested in. Advisors and Career Consultants are an underutilized resource, and they are there to help you achieve your goals.
• If you are interested in government or nonprofit internships which are usually unpaid/underpaid, look for a fellowship programs that give you a stipend for the internship. I wanted to go to DC for summer internships and I looked for programs specifically catered towards minorities, but there are tons of summer internship programs like the PGPF Fiscal Internship program, the Fund for American Studies, and MSU Demmer Scholars.

Is there anything you would do differently if you had the chance?
• I regret being so intimidated by econ students and professors. In my econ classes, I was so intimidated and almost embarrassed that I did not have any interest in ever working at the Fed and knew nothing about interest rates. For the poster presentations in my senior seminar, I had zero background info for about 90% of my classmates’ topics. My interests are more in developmental economics, Asian economics, and immigration and I’m pretty sure my classmates knew nothing about my research topic either, as I wrote about immigration. Being of woman of color in economics is already very intimidating and not having any shared interests doesn’t help. I joined WAMIE because I care about diversity, equity, and inclusion within economics, and it helped me feel more comfortable in my econ classes because I knew there were other students who also didn’t fit the basic econ student profile. My advice to current students is to join WAMIE (it’s for everyone, not just women and minorities) and to expand your research interests because you can literally do anything with an econ degree.