

MICHAEL KIRKER
<http://michaelkirker.net>
mkirker@uchicago.edu

Office Contact Information

1126 E. 59th Street – Saieh Hall for Economics
Chicago, IL 60637

Placement Director: Professor Ufuk Akcigit, uakcigit@uchicago.edu, (773) 702 0433

Graduate Student Coordinator: Robert Herbst, fherbst@uchicago.edu, (773) 834 1972

Personal Information: New Zealand citizen

Education

The University of Chicago, 2011 to present

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics

Thesis Title: “Firm Productivity Growth and its Relationship to the Knowledge of New Workers”

M.A., Applied Macroeconomics and Trade & Growth, *University of Chicago*, 2012

B.C.A. (Hons), Economics, Econometrics, Money & Finance, First-class honours, *Victoria University of Wellington*, 2008

Thesis Advisors:

Professor Nancy Stokey
University of Chicago
nstokey@uchicago.edu

Professor Robert Lucas, Jr.
University of Chicago
relucas@uchicago.edu

Professor Francisco Buera
Washington University at St Louis
fjbuera@wustl.edu

Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Applied Macroeconomics, Trade & Growth

Secondary fields: Monetary Policy

Teaching Experience:

Spr, 2013 & 14 ECON 332: Theory of Income III, University of Chicago, Teaching Assistant for Professor Cassey Mulligan

Wtr, 2017 ECON 24720: Inequality: Origins, Dimensions & Policy, University of Chicago, Teaching Assistant for Allen Sanderson

Wtr, 2016 College Core Tutor, University of Chicago

Spr, 2015 ECON 200: The Elements of Economic Analysis, University of Chicago, Teaching Assistant for Grace Tsiang

Wtr, 2014 & 15 ECON: 198: Introduction to Microeconomics, University of Chicago,

Teaching Assistant for Allen Sanderson

Wtr, 2014 & 15 ECON 199: Introduction to Macroeconomics, University of Chicago,
Teaching Assistant for Allen Sanderson

Research Experience and Other Employment:

2015-16	New Zealand Treasury, Visiting Researcher
2012-13	Booth Business School, Research Assistant
2008-11	Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Economic Analyst/Senior Analyst in Research Team and Modelling Team
2006-07	New Zealand Treasury, Summer Internship, Macroeconomic Policy Group

Publications:

Floetotto, M., Kirker, M., Stroebel, J. (2016). “Government Intervention in the Housing Market: Who Wins, Who Loses?”, *Journal of Monetary Economics*, vol 80

Albertini, J., Kamber, G., Kirker, M. (2012). “An Estimated Small Open Economy Model with Frictional.”, *Pacific Economic Review*, vol 17(2)

Research Papers:

“Firm Productivity Growth and its Relationship to the Knowledge of New Workers” (Job Market Paper)

Using linked employer-employee data, productivity growth at a firm is related to the firm's exposure to outside knowledge, proxied by the difference between the hiring firm's productivity and the productivity of the new worker's previous employer. The estimated relationship is compared to the predictions implied by both the knowledge spillover and worker quality channels. While not a causal relationship, the multi-factor productivity results are consistent with the predictions of a worker quality channel in which positive assortative matching between workers and firms acts as a signal of the unmeasured worker quality that will benefit the hiring firm. When firm productivity is measured in terms of labor productivity, support is also found for the knowledge spillovers occurring from more to less productive firms through the labor mobility channel. Further investigation suggests that this knowledge spillover pertains to production technology knowledge, allowing the firm to operate at higher levels of capital intensity, and not multi-factor productivity knowledge, that would allow the firm to operate its current inputs more efficiently.

“Learning Through Hiring: Labor Mobility as a Channel for Endogenous Growth”

Firm-level analysis suggests that labor mobility is one of the channels through which productive knowledge can spillover between firms. However, the macro-level implications of this channel for both aggregate growth and the distribution of firms has received less attention. This paper embeds a search-and-matching labor model within an endogenous growth framework so that the job-to-job

transition of workers act as a channel through which knowledge diffuses between firms, generating long-run growth. Within the model, the rate at which firms are exposed to new knowledge and the distribution of new knowledge they learn from are both endogenously determined by the labor market. This model is calibrated to match firm-level and aggregate-data facts for New Zealand. Counterfactual analysis suggests that knowledge spillover through the labor mobility channel has significant effects on the long-run growth of an economy and on the dispersion of firm-level productivity. However, it appears to have little impact on the distribution of firm size within the economy.

“What Drives Core Inflation? A Dynamic Factor Analysis of Tradable and Nontradable Prices”

Reserve Bank of New Zealand Discussion Papers Series, DP2010/13

“Does Natural Rate Variation Matter? Evidence from New Zealand”

Reserve Bank of New Zealand Discussion Papers Series, DP2008/17