Career Mobility, Productivity and Occupational Choices

Li Feng
Department of Finance and Economics, Texas State University

2:00 pm in Derr 238
April 15, 2011

Abstract: This talk examines the career mobility of Florida public school teachers. Specifically, we investigate the productivity of teachers in improving student’s achievement scores, i.e., value-added scores for teachers who change school or change their professions. We focus on the new occupational choices made by former teachers. These occupational choices are important for devising policy intervention such as combat pay. In particular, policy makers are interested in what occupations are the most attractive occupations for former teachers, how much are they earning in these professions, and are teachers’ salaries competitive when compared to these professions.

Consistent with earlier literature, we find that high quality teachers are less mobile than low quality teachers. When teachers do change professions, these former teachers do not necessarily make more money. In certain professions, they make more while they make less in others. The productivity in teaching is also rewarded in other professions.

Dr. Li Feng is an Assistant Professor in Economics. She received her PhD from Florida State University. Her research interests include Economics of Education, Educational Policy and Labor Economics. She has conducted research on how classroom assignment, opportunity wages, and relative working conditions affect teacher attrition and mobility. Her current research focuses on the impact of school accountability on teacher mobility and quality.