

Prof. Ngo Van Long—or simply “Long,” as he asks his colleagues to call him—is a leading world scholar in the economics of the increasingly linked fields of international, environmental and natural resource economics and he is also a recognized authority in the mathematical techniques of modeling dynamic games in economics. Economists believe much of life is a dynamic game—repeated interactions in which in many situations we react to one another’s previous gambits—“and all the men and women merely players.” So it’s important that we have good techniques at hand for analyzing these often very complicated event chains. Long’s work on the subject helps achieve that.

Perhaps the easiest way to summarize Long’s impact is to look at the publication statistics for economists compiled in real time by the Repec/IDEAS website run out of the University of Connecticut’s Department of Economics. It tracks the academic publications of more than 22,000 economists. The top-ranked economist is Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize-winner. Long is in the top 2.2 per cent. Immediately preceding him on the list is Caroline Hoxby, a named chair at Stanford and one of the world’s best-known labour and public economists. Immediately following him is Marcel Fafchamps, Professor of Development Economics at Oxford. Right after Prof. Fafchamps is Oliver Williamson, 2009 Nobel Laureate in Economics. This clearly is very distinguished company.

In the last 10 years, Long has published 50 refereed journal articles, 14 book chapters, one co-authored book and another co-edited book and he has eight working papers in hand and a third book in preparation. In one of the Department’s tenure cases this year, an external evaluator from a world top-five university suggested a good economist should aim to produce one high-

quality article per year. (Natural scientists may consider this rate of output feeble but social scientists will understand the considerable vetting and criticism our work goes through before reaching publication.) Long exceeds this goal by orders of magnitude.

Further testimony to the regard in which his work is held is that in the last few years Long has been editor, co-editor or member of the editorial board of no fewer than 12 journals, and that he has presented numerous papers, discussions, invited lectures and keynote addresses at conferences and institutions as far afield as Japan, India, New Zealand, France, Switzerland, China, Hong Kong, Ireland, Germany, Finland, the United States and many, many other places. Counting only the most prestigious assignments, since 2004 he has given 14 invited lectures, including six keynote or plenary addresses.

One could also go on about Long's record of attracting research money, the distinguished and in many ways path-breaking history of the inter-university research group on natural resources and the environment of which he is a founding member, and this group's role in organizing the upcoming 2010 World Congress in Environmental and Resource Economics. The University has recognized Ngo Van Long's contribution by making him a James McGill Chair. It is fitting that the Faculty of Arts now recognize his contribution with the Faculty Award for Distinction in Research.

William Watson

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