



School of Public Policy and Administration and Department of Economics
1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Canada, K1S 5B6
Tel: (613) 520-2600 x2630. Fax: (613) 520-2551
Email: stan_winer@carleton.ca
Web: www.carleton.ca/~winers

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Byeongju Jeong, CERGE-EI

Dear Professor Jeong,

I have read the draft dissertation by Fusako Tsuchimoto, *Essays on Social Institutions and Economics*. My brief report follows.

This dissertation consists of three papers on widely differing topics. All the papers are interesting and of professional quality, though the first two are, in my opinion, better than the third. I judge the work as a whole to be at the PhD level, of adequate quality for a dissertation defense.

I have seen this sort of disparate combination of papers in a PhD dissertation before, and although I don't think it is a good idea for the student to spread out so much at such an early stage, this nature of the work should not be a barrier to the defense. The fact that the essays are so different (political economy, law and economics, regulation of the environment) does mean that it is hard to get a sense of this student's ability to do extended or deeper work in at least one field.

I should also note that two of the papers are co-authored, one with the dissertation supervisor Libor Dusek. That paper, the middle one on the net effect of truth in sentencing laws in the U.S., is in my view the best of the three in terms of execution and prose. It is likely ready for submission to a good journal. I have no way of judging on my own the student's contribution to this paper. I assume that you do.

The first paper takes on the interesting and important question – especially for highly divided societies in Africa or the Balkans for example - of when and why people choose to form political coalitions in an ethnic dimension as opposed to an income dimension. The paper is sole authored. It is a good piece using a legislative bargaining approach, with clear links to the existing literature from which it is suitably differentiated. It will likely be published in a field journal without too much trouble. It would be useful for the student to take advice from a native English writer before the paper is sent off for review.

The third, co-authored paper (with Milan Scasny) is on the effect of regulation on emissions of various pollutants in the Czech Republic. It is a straightforward paper in terms of technical details. Its contribution is to study in a sensible way a large, detailed data set concerning types of emissions. There is enough in it I think to be part of a dissertation, as a third paper, although I think it is the least interesting of the three papers in terms of its contribution. I should add, however, that I am not an expert on environmental issues, having only recently worked in a narrow part of this huge field. Again, the paper could benefit from editing for English grammar.

My overall evaluation is that Ms. Tsuchimoto has produced two very good papers, and one that is adequate for dissertation purposes. I see no reason why, after editing for grammar, the dissertation should not go to defense. I wish her well in her future endeavors.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Winer
Canada Research Chair Professor in Public Policy