On behalf of the Economics department, I would like to invite you to apply for admission to the Class of 1960 Scholars program.

Class of 1960 Scholars participate in a series of specially designed seminars, presented by leading economists from academic, public policy, and nonprofit institutions. Participation in these seminars will provide you with opportunities to read and discuss cutting-edge research, and to experience the intellectual give-and-take that is an essential element of the research process. Research seminars will give you a chance to engage with economic issues in a setting that is quite different from the normal classroom environment. Post-seminar dinners will also allow you to interact informally with the visiting speakers, along with members of the Williams faculty.

Those chosen to be in the program join in the spring of the junior year, and participate for three semesters (junior spring, senior fall, and senior spring). There are typically three or four seminars per semester and you are encouraged to attend all of them if you can. The seminars span a wide range of topics within economics. The 90-minute talks are usually held at 4 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays.

Being a Class of 1960 Scholar requires a certain level of commitment. We do not require that you attend all of the talks, but you are expected to attend at least five of them over the course of the three semesters. In cases where papers are circulated in advance, we expect you to have read the paper before the seminar, and to come to the seminar prepared to ask questions or offer comments. You are also encouraged to discuss the paper with faculty members before the presentations. Study abroad and extracurricular commitments need not stand in the way of your participation, but you should not apply unless you can commit to attending at least five of the seminars, and two of the post-seminar dinners over the rest of your Williams career.

There is no minimum GPA requirement for the program. Academic achievement is one criterion for admission, but the invitation is open to any economics major with interest and enthusiasm, and a commitment to active and regular participation. While it is an especially worthwhile experience for those contemplating writing an honors thesis or applying to graduate school in economics or related fields, it will be a rewarding and fun experience for anyone interested in delving more deeply into economics.

If you are interested in being considered for the program, please send an email to Helen.A.McShane@williams.edu by noon on the last day of fall classes, Friday, Dec. 9, 2016. The email should indicate your name, SU box, and study abroad status or plans (if any). Please explain in the email why you wish to be considered for the Class of 1960 Scholars program.

I will send a reminder email in early December. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact me at snafzige@williams.edu.