

EconMatters

Message from the Chair

Hello, alumni and friends!

Winter is drawing to a close and warm days are ahead. As the academic year is coming to its end, I would like to recognize our graduate students who have been granted scholarships or bursaries in recognition of academic achievement or financial need.

Zihao Sheng is the first recipient of a new endowed scholarship, the Mildred and John Young Post-Graduate Scholarship. Chidimma Ezeobata has been awarded the Professor George A.B. Kartsaklis Memorial Scholarship, and Yu Jiang has been awarded the Zella Crowe Spencer Memorial Scholarship. C.H. Lu has received the Dr. Christian Marfels Memorial Graduate Bursary, and Ogudu Kalu Uko is the recipient of the Dr. Alasdair M. Sinclair Memorial Bursary.

We are so grateful to the families, friends, and alumni who have helped to fund these scholarships and bursaries. If you want to help support our students, particularly through bursaries that recognize financial need, you can visit giving.dal.ca. Thank you again to all donors.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that our former administrator, Monique Comeau, retired last summer. In this issue, we include a conversation I had with Monique in which she discusses the changes that took place during her more than four decades in the department.

This issue includes three alumni profiles: Lorraine Eden (PhD 1976), Kaylyn Fraser (BA Honours 2009), and Mico Schwartzentruber (MA 2012). I found all three profiles to be inspiring; thank you to Lorraine, Kaylyn, and Mico for sharing their experiences.

We are also proud to describe the research of two of our productive faculty members, Mevlude Akbulut-Yuksel and Weina Zhou, who give us a glimpse into their recent research in our Research Spotlight.

All the best,
Tess Cyrus
Associate Professor and Chair

News

- Maxwell Scholarship Award Recipients 2023-24
- Dr. Barry Lesser Honored in China
- U.L.G. Rao Memorial Prize in Economics
- BoC Governor's Challenge results

Congratulations!

- Mevlude Akbulut-Yuksel has been selected as the new W.R. Maxwell Chair in Economics starting July 1, 2024. The Maxwell Chair in Economics is awarded to recognize an outstanding contribution to the Department in the areas of research, teaching, and/or departmental service. The Chair is named in honour of W.R. Maxwell, a long-time member of the Department, and the term of the award is the duration of the awardee's career in the Department. Congratulations to Mev!
- Dozie Okoye has been promoted to Full Professor starting July 1, 2024. The Department committee, Faculty of Science committee, Dean of Science, and President were all unanimous in recognizing Dozie's outstanding research, mentorship, and service, all of which exceed expectations. Congratulations to Dozie!

A Conversation with Monique

Monique Comeau recently retired as the Economics Department administrator after having spent her entire career at Dalhousie. She started working in the Department in 1981 and, as administrator, served under 7 different Chairs. Chair Tess Cyrus interviewed Monique for this issue of EconMatters; excerpts of their conversation are below. This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Tess Cyrus (TC): I will start by asking where did you grow up and what is your educational and work background?

Monique Comeau (MC): I grew up in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and following high school, I took an administrative secretarial course through the Dartmouth Career College, a branch of Maritime Business College.

TC: How did you find the job at Dalhousie?

MC: An HR employee at Dalhousie had a connection to the business college, so every spring they would ask the college to pick one or two of their students to go for interviews, and they picked me.

TC: How many people were in your class in the business program?

MC: 30 to 35, I would say.

TC: So, you were at the very top of your class!

MC: I did well but not the top - good enough for a referral. I went to HR in the Henry Hicks Building for my skills testing. I got a call a month or so later for an interview for the Economics Department. And the rest is history.

TC: Tell me what the department was like in 1981.

MC: Two staff members worked in your office at 6220 University. The administrator's office was located on the main floor of 6206 University.

TC: And it was only the three of you? So that hasn't changed; we still have three staff members.

MC: Yes, the three of us. I would say the complement of faculty is the same to what you have now, with fewer part-time academics. And a comparable grad program – the grad program was quite robust.

TC: The three buildings weren't connected back then, or were they? So, to get to the administrator's office, you'd have to go outside?

MC: That's right, we went outside; the houses were linked later. Staff equipment included typewriters, a photocopier, and a gestetner machine (a duplicating machine used for large "print" jobs). Mary, my co-worker, had a self-correcting typewriter so I needed to be careful and try to not make too many typos with mine because fixing them was a tedious process. This helped my typing skills – as did the reams of numeric tables I typed for Christian Marfels over the years. I didn't mind because I loved to type, and he happily kept me busy. Equations were done by changing font balls back and forth (from text to symbol) - another tedious process. Eventually a computer terminal was set up in the main office, followed soon by personal computers.

TC: So, what would you do on the terminal as opposed to the typewriter?

MC: Typing, which cut back on typos. We had to go to the Killam Library to pick up our printouts.

TC: Back in the 1980s, did the secretaries get computers before the faculty?

MC: We staff may have had them first, but they soon started popping up throughout the department.

TC: So, you secretaries had to do all the typing for the faculty?

MC: Yes, we did most of their typing. External messages were sent via a telex machine located in the Killam Library basement.

TC: I don't know what that is.

MC: A telex machine was the forerunner for faxing, emailing, or texting.

TC: Couldn't you call on the phone to convey a message?

MC: Long distance was costly so we would send important messages via telex. Funding confirmation for graduate students to their consular offices, for example. Snail mail was too slow for important correspondence. We "shared" our photocopier with two other departments. Budgets were tight.

TC: It's interesting how much has stayed the same. The buildings are all the same, there are still three staff members. The number of faculty is about the same, the same number of grad students. But then the jobs of the secretaries have really changed because they're not spending their days typing on behalf of the faculty - but their days are very full, nonetheless. You would think things like computers would make everything easier at the office, but it also means there are just more new tasks that must be done, so everything still takes the same amount of time.

MC: It sure does. In the 80s, we didn't have timetable requests for classroom issues, DalOnline, Navigator for calendar edits, or FAMIS for work orders. Students would line up to register for their classes and pay their tuition. Long lines. But they managed and we managed. Students learned, graduated, and got jobs, and the department kept on ticking.

TC: So how did you end up as the department administrator?

MC: Mary left Economics for Medicine. I interviewed and got the vacated position. Jura went on an extended leave sometime later, so I subbed in for her. The administrator position was eventually posted, I interviewed and was the successful candidate. I started the position mid-way through a fiscal year and recall worrying what would happen if the budget didn't balance. Would the Chair have to go to the Dean and say that we needed more money? It didn't (and still doesn't) work that way and I worried for nothing!

TC: Your advice to Jodi and me has been it'll be fine, it'll be fine.

MC: Yes, because it always is fine, it always works out.

TC: So, what did you enjoy the most and the least about being the department administrator?

MC: What I enjoyed the most - the people. I really did. And what I liked the least – the maintenance of the houses. Issues ranged from it's too cold, it's too hot, there's a flood, there's a radiator leaking, there's a mouse in the basement, and so on and so forth! These three houses certainly keep staff busy!

TC: What are you most proud of from your time at Dalhousie?

MC: My relationships that I had with all the chairs - I got along well with them as well as the faculty and staff - we never had any serious issues. I also had good relationships elsewhere on campus. So, my relationships and navigating them, I would say that I'm most proud of.

TC: What are the biggest changes you saw over the years in either in Dalhousie in general, or in the Economics Department in particular?

MC: I would say it would be the new tools for staff to use to make their jobs "easier." If you just look at the job descriptions of the staff positions, there are so many programs that they need to know - those weren't around in the 80s! And the work done to the houses themselves – they are in much better condition than 40+ years ago.

TC: What is one thing that faculty or students could do to make the job easier for the staff?

MC: Submit items in a timely fashion! Staff always handle these “emergencies” with grace and diplomacy.

TC: It's true, you did. OK, can we list the chairs that you worked under?

MC: Bob Comeau, Erwin Klein, Barry Lesser, Lars Osberg, Kuan Xu, Talan İşcan, and yourself, Tess Cyrus. And there were acting chairs too. I won't name all in case I forget someone.

TC: OK. Can you give me one word for each of those? Bob Comeau, give me one word for Bob as chair.

MC: Kind.

TC: That's very nice! All right, Erwin Klein, give me a word.

MC: Funny. He had a good sense of humour. He would keep us laughing.

TC: OK, Barry Lesser.

MC: Dedicated. So dedicated.

TC: Oh, heck yeah. I was going to say energetic.

MC: That too... Hard-working, dedicated. So devoted.

TC: OK, Lars Osberg.

MC: One word to describe Lars? Intelligent, but that's an obvious one because we all know he is. I would say creative - he always has a research project on the go. Lars would drop in every morning and say.... anything for me to sign? When Erwin was Chair, I was so new in the position, and then Barry was so knowledgeable, and his term as Chair was long, so I relied on him. Then Lars became Chair, and he relied on me.

TC: Kuan Xu.

MC: Oh, Kuan – hard-working. He only wanted what was best for his students and for the department. He was serious about his teaching and research along with his role as Chair during his term.

TC: All right, Talan İşcan.

MC: Oh, he is a person of integrity. He is a by-the-book kind of guy, one of those people you would never want to disappoint but at the same time brings out the best in you, so you don't disappoint. We had an exceptionally good rapport!

The thing is, I could have easily stayed working in Economics for the next 10 years. It's just that there's a time to leave.

TC: I was devastated when you said you're going to retire just as I became Chair!

MC: I was truly bummed about not getting to spend more time with you in your role as Chair. Although it's normal to have reservations, I now know I was ready because although I miss you all, I'm not worrying about how things are going because the Department is in exceptionally capable hands and so I've closed that chapter.

TC: Do you have goals for retirement? What do you intend to do with the rest of your years?

MC: My goals aren't lofty. I want to travel. I want to learn to sew (and I have started), to pick up my knitting and crocheting again. I joined a gym class. I want to enjoy spending quality time with my family and friends and not having to get up at 5:30 am for my morning walks anymore! It's a full life.

TC: Is there anything that I have neglected to ask that you wanted to talk about?

MC: I think you've covered everything, Tess. If I could add anything it would just be to say that Economics was my home away from home and it was an honour and privilege to be employed there. I will never forget the Department or its people - faculty, staff, and students. Economics will always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you, Tess.

TC: Thank you, Monique.

Alumni Profiles

Lorraine Eden, PhD with Distinction, 1976

Dr. Lorraine Eden is Professor Emerita of Management and Adjunct Professor of Law at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, USA. She is Dean of the Fellows of the Academy of International Business (AIB) for 2020-2023 and a member of the United Nations Tax Committee's Subcommittee on Transfer Pricing for 2022-2025.

A Canadian by birth and naturalized US citizen, Dr. Eden studied economics at Mount Allison (Honors BA 1970), McGill (MA 1973) and Dalhousie (PhD with Distinction, 1976). She held tenured appointments at Mount St. Vincent, Brock and Carleton universities in Canada before moving in 1995 to Texas A&M University where she taught courses on transfer pricing, multinational enterprises (MNEs) and the economics of international business. She founded the Transfer Pricing Aggies program at Texas A&M, which has trained and placed hundreds of graduate students in transfer pricing and international tax careers.

Dr. Eden's research interests intersect economics, international business and public policy. Her core research topics are: transfer pricing (the pricing of related party transactions), MNE strategies and structures, and MNE-state relations. Her nearly 21,000 Google Scholar Citations place her research in the top two percent of the world's most-cited research scientists. Her books include *Taxing Multinationals* (1998), *Multinationals in North America* (1994), *Retrospectives on Public Finance* (1991), *Multinationals and Transfer Pricing* (1985, 2017), *The Ethical Professor* (2018), *The Economics of Transfer Pricing* (2019), and *Research Methods in International Business* (2020). Dr. Eden's current research explores how transfer pricing policies and MNE strategies and structures are changing in the digital economy.



She served two terms on the Academy of International Business (AIB) Executive Board including as 2017-2018 AIB President. In 2001, Dr. Eden founded WAIB (Women in the Academy of International Business). She was elected an AIB Fellow in 2004; honored with the AIB President's Award in 2012 and the inaugural WAIB Woman of the Year award in 2016. She has many years of experience as a journal editor, including as Editor-in-Chief (2008-2010) of the Journal of International Business Studies, the top journal in international business. In 2019, she was awarded JIBS 50th Anniversary Gold Medals for her scholarly and service contributions to the journal.

Dr. Eden has been a Fulbright Scholar and Pew Fellow at Harvard University and a Dunning Research Professor at the University of Reading, UK. In 2019, she was honored as a Tribute Scholar by the European International Business Academy and received the Medal of the City from Rennes, France. In 2022, she received the

Outstanding Service to the Global Community Award from the International Management Division of the Academy of Management. In 2023, she received the International Federation of Scholarly Associations of Management (IFSAM) Award for Excellence in Societally Relevant Management Scholarship.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Eden has advised governments, businesses and international organizations on transfer pricing and the strategies and structures of multinationals. She is an affiliated expert with the Analysis Group, where she consults on transfer pricing controversy, and a frequent speaker at transfer pricing and international tax conferences. Dr. Eden can be reached at leden@tamu.edu. She maintains a website at voxprof.com and LinkedIn page at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lorraine-eden/>.

Kaylyn Fraser, BA Honours, Economics & French, 2009

I graduated from Dalhousie University in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics and French.

When I was applying to universities for my undergraduate degree, I already had an intention to study either economics or geography, after they had been my favourite courses during high school. I chose universities to apply to based on my understanding of their economics and geography programmes – and I was particularly familiar with Dalhousie's as my mother completed a master's degree in environmental studies and resource economics there in the 1980s. I applied to 13 universities for my undergraduate degree – six in Canada, six in the United Kingdom, and one in Norway – and ultimately decided that Dalhousie was the university for me.



As I looked into the required coursework for earth sciences and economics, I also very quickly realised that economics was more for me!

As I organised my course schedule throughout my undergraduate degree, I took as many economics, French and Spanish courses as I could, as I had an ambition to pursue an international career working in an economics or policy role. I particularly enjoyed courses I completed in economic history, health economics, and the economics of disaster relief – in addition to one course taught in the Spanish department on the economic history of Latin America. Beyond these, I also thoroughly enjoyed the Friday afternoon seminars delivered in the Economics Department by visiting lecturers and researchers. Collectively, these events and interests led me to apply for masters' degrees in development economics and health economics at universities in Canada and abroad.

Following Dalhousie, I moved to Europe, to complete a double-degree masters programme between Sciences Po Paris (The Paris Institute of Political Studies) and the London School of Economics (LSE). My first master's degree (awarded by Sciences Po) was in Economics and Public Policy, with a focus on development economics and health economics. My second master's degree (awarded by LSE) was in Economic History, with a focus on the economic history of various emerging markets (e.g., Indian Economic History, African Economic History, etc.) as well as the economic history of epidemics and migration. I originally learned about this double degree masters' programme from one of the Dalhousie Economics Department guest lectures – when Professor Chris Minns from the LSE delivered a talk.

I completed my masters programme in autumn 2011 and started working for Cambridge Economic Policy Associates (CEPA), a boutique economics, finance and policy consultancy in London, United Kingdom. CEPA works across various areas, and I was fortunate to be able to specialise in emerging markets advisory work, where I supported public and private sector clients in the agriculture, global health, and infrastructure sectors. A large share of my work was for the World Bank Group and various United Nations agencies, which gave me insight into how multilateral organisations work, as well as access to emerging debates and topics in the development finance landscape. One such topic was 'blended finance', which grew considerably in visibility and importance in the years leading up to 2015, with the launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, in 2015, the multilateral development banks co-wrote and published a paper called "From Billions to Trillions: Transforming Development Finance", which put blended finance front and centre in the development finance agenda.

One of my clients while at CEPA was AgDevCo, a specialist impact investor in African agribusinesses. AgDevCo was founded in 2009 as a pioneering response to a severe food security crisis in Africa. African agriculture had long been the recipient of grant funding, but AgDevCo was established to prove that a unique investment approach could catalyse the development of a bankable and commercial agriculture sector across the continent, and in turn reduce a long-running dependency on grant funding. In particular, AgDevCo pioneered a financing instrument called 'patient capital' – a type of long-term debt or equity that prioritises sustainable development alongside financial returns.

I left CEPA in 2018 to join AgDevCo as a technical assistance manager and later became the head of its Technical Assistance Facility. I remained based in London, but had the opportunity to work with agribusinesses across sub-Saharan Africa to strengthen their engagement with smallholder farmers through outgrower and extension programmes. Blended finance is central to AgDevCo's business model – AgDevCo itself is a blended finance vehicle (it is funded by a mix of government funding and investment capital) and it deploys blended finance by offering its investee businesses investment capital integrated with technical assistance. This role allowed me to further my understanding of best practice, well-governed blended finance.

In 2021, I joined the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to lead its first-ever specialist blended finance function. The EBRD is a multilateral development bank, established in 1991, to foster what it calls 'transition impact', which involves supporting economies to become more competitive, well-governed, green, inclusive, resilient, and integrated. Today, the EBRD works in more than 40 countries from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, to Central and Eastern Europe, to Central Asia. The EBRD will soon expand to sub-Saharan Africa. Blended finance enables the EBRD and other multilateral development banks to take on more risk, unlock more impact, and mobilise more private capital towards the SDGs. For instance, blended finance has been critical to enable EBRD to continue investing at scale in Ukraine, following Russia's invasion of the country in February 2022.

Each role I have had to date has been challenging and rewarding in its own respect. Each role has also been quite different one to the next, which has allowed me to work in a wide range of contexts, with people from a wide range of cultural and professional backgrounds, and on a large diversity of projects. The common thread throughout each of these roles has been blended finance – a topic rooted in microeconomics. In its most basic sense, blended finance is about mixing different types of money (public subsidy and private capital) to influence decisions for good (impact).

As an individual, I am very passionate about the catalytic potential of blended finance to meet many of the world's greatest challenges. For instance, the financing needs of emerging markets to achieve a zero-carbon transition by 2030 is in the trillions of dollars. The scale of this financing need means that the bulk of the capital must come from the private sector. However, private capital is traditionally risk adverse. Blended finance is key to rebalancing risks and returns, to mobilise this private capital at scale.

I am very grateful to Dalhousie University, and particularly the Economics Department, for the solid foundation it provided me in Economics – and especially microeconomics and development economics. I continue to feel a strong affinity with the Department. My career to date feels both very aligned to what I hoped my undergraduate degree would help me to achieve, while also surprising – I didn't expect to be living abroad, working in a fairly finance-heavy role, in a large development bank. I very much recognise that the people-centric, high-quality education I had at Dalhousie was instrumental in my career path and professional development. I remain very grateful for all the support and teaching I received from my excellent professors – including Dr Teresa Cyrus, Dr Melvin Cross, Dr Talan Iscan, Dr Ian McAllister, Dr Lars Osberg, Dr Shelley Phipps, Dr Kuan Xu, and many others.

Mico Schwartzentruber, MA 2012

After finishing the last exam of my MA program back in the spring of 2012, I can distinctly remember feeling that I'd reached the limits of my academic potential. It was clearly time to try out my new degree in the job market rather than think about doing a PhD. At the time, I didn't fully appreciate how valuable both the degree and the skillset would be. I was just relieved to get through that econometrics exam and hopeful for what lay ahead.



When I started the program, 2 years prior, Prof. Cross and Lesser were definitely taking a chance by admitting someone who hadn't completed a full undergraduate econ degree with a transcript that reflected how much fun I had those first few years out of high school. Before applying for grad school, I had gone back to school to improve my grades and developed an interest in economics.

The extra year allowed me to complete my pre-requisites while taking some of the grad level electives and get some experience as a TA. In any case, I was grateful for the opportunity and determined to make the most of it.

Moving from Toronto to Halifax and going from UofT class sizes over a thousand, to the Dal Econ Department was a welcome change. You had a chance to make real connections with the profs. I have fond memories of how excited Prof. Giusto would get when explaining microsimulation modeling; how Prof. Cyrus would weave competing theories into a lecture that I never wanted to miss; how Prof. Kuan would transpose matrices with his hands as if by magic; learning about the prisoners dilemma from Prof. Rosenblum in a way that had me trying to talk to friends about it; and how Prof. Yuksel would patiently explain micro concepts to me while I still sat there with a puzzled look on my face.

The small grad classes were typically an equal mix of Canadian and international students. Lively class discussion, lots of study sessions, and extra curricular events really brought us all together. I'm terrible at keeping in touch, but those friendships meant a lot to me.

I really enjoyed the breadth of subjects that graduate courses were offered in, learning how economic principles could be applied to. In Prof. Phipps' labour economics class, our assignments were in the form of policy briefs and I found this played to my strengths.

After graduating, I got my foot in the door with the Provincial Government here in Halifax, and landed a role as a policy analyst with Municipal Affairs. When I joined, they were in the midst of reviewing the fiscal framework between municipalities and the provinces, including the provincial version of equalization – lots of opportunities for economic analysis! I'd like to think my colleagues with MPAs picked up as much from my excel sheets as I did from their strategic planning, policy analysis and stakeholder relations. Overall, working in the public service has far exceeded my expectations. I've had incredibly talented and dedicated colleagues who find joy in their work and experienced leaders who supported me through advice and opportunity.

In a relatively small province, having fewer people to work on the same range of issues means you have incredible variety in your projects - no two days are the same. Since graduating I've worked on the fiscal viability of municipalities, the impact of short-term rentals on housing availability, quantifying the cost of any new proposed legislation, and the capped assessment program to name a few. Currently, I'm leading a team that provides advice and analysis on improving the quality and access of care to older Nova Scotians. As a public servant, you generally have to pride yourself on the advice you give and leave the decision making to elected officials, but seeing the advice lead to investments that will have a significant impact on seniors in this province is super rewarding.

The Dal Economics program opened up these opportunities and in large part, prepared me to be successful in them. I'm grateful for the friends I made studying in basement of the econ building, the grad lounge, the Killam stacks, and grungy apartments. I'm grateful for the professors that truly cared and encouraged us along the way. And I hope anyone thinking of applying finds some inspiration from my story.

Research Spotlight: Mevlude Akbulut-Yuksel

"Exposure to Economic Distress during Pregnancy and Birth Outcomes," published in 2024 in Journal of Labor Research (with Seyit Cilasun, Erdal Tekin and Belgi Turan).

Economic recessions pose significant challenges with far-reaching and long-lasting effects, particularly on vulnerable populations. Among these groups, infants born in emerging and developing countries are especially susceptible to the consequences of economic turmoil. This vulnerability is often compounded by limited access to healthcare and weaker welfare safety net systems, which can exacerbate their vulnerability. The stress and anxiety resulting from financial insecurity and uncertainty can also have detrimental effects on maternal and infant health. Furthermore, recessions often precipitate an increase in poverty, which, in turn, is associated with a range of adverse health outcomes for pregnant women and infants. These consequences encompass malnutrition and an elevated susceptibility to infectious diseases.

In this study, we investigate the impact of the 2008-2009 economic recession in Turkey on birth outcomes, exploring the crisis as a natural experiment. Our methodology leverages the variation in the crisis's intensity across provinces, as indicated by provincial GDP levels across birth cohorts. Analyzing the birth history data from the 2008 and 2013 Demographic Health Surveys, we demonstrate that the economic turmoil adversely affected birthweight and other birth outcomes. Notably, our analysis reveals that children of mothers from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as indicated by educational attainment, are disproportionately affected by economic fluctuations. This disparity suggests that the detrimental effects on birth outcomes during economic downturns may stem from financial constraints encountered by mothers with lower socio-economic status. Additionally, we explore changes in fertility and abortion practices in response to economic pressures, examining variations across different maternal demographics. Our findings indicate a significant role for selective fertility in linking the economic crisis to birth outcomes, with a noticeable reduction in childbirth rates during the economic downturn, particularly in less affluent provinces. Concurrently, there was a decrease in abortion rates, suggesting a broader shift in reproductive behavior during times of economic hardship. These outcomes emphasize the critical need to understand economic crises' effects on infant health and to implement targeted interventions for protecting vulnerable groups, aiming to lessen socio-economic disparities and their adverse effects on infant well-being.

Research Spotlight: Weina Zhou

“The Spillover Effects of Parental Verbal Conflict on Classmates' Cognitive and Noncognitive Outcomes,” published in 2023 in *Economic Inquiry* (with Andrew J. Hill, Montana State University).

Students experiencing conflict at home are known to exhibit disruptive behaviors in the classroom. This study shows that children exposed to Interparental Verbal Conflict (IPVC) exert negative spillovers on their peers. We find that being assigned to classes where more classmates experience IPVC in their family environments reduces mental wellbeing, self-confidence, and social engagement, and increases the likelihood of problem behaviors. Contrary to some of the existing literature, effects on test scores are minimal and not statistically significant. We also find that students of higher quality parents—parents who are more communicative and invest more time in their children—are less affected by negative classmate influences. This is some of the first evidence that parents may be able to insulate their children directly or indirectly from negative peers.