

Occasional Lecture Series

Rules versus Discretion: The Challenges of Enforcing Environmental Regulations

by

Professor Yo Nagai, lecturer in the Department of Economics

Violations of environmental regulations are so widespread that it is hard to believe that the regulatory agencies are doing a good job. When full compliance is not attainable, should agencies be allowed to enforce more lenient, implicit standards? Although such an approach is more flexible, and so could be more efficient, it has one serious problem, a lack of transparency. Without explicit criteria, how can we evaluate agency performance? This is the real challenge. In this talk, Professor Nagai will introduce a simple statistical test to address this issue and evaluate agency performance from different angles.

Issues to be addressed include:

Environmental Enforcement

- EPA two-year enforcement summary
- Different enforcement approaches
- Marginal deterrence

Pearson's chi-square test

- Racial profiling
- Environmental justice
- Agency capture

Place: Wildlife 258
Date/Time: Friday, April 21, 2006 / 3:30-4:30, followed by the Economics Department Alumni Reception and Major Awards Presentations in Nelson Hall East 119 from 5:00-6:00

Yo graduated from UC Berkeley with Highest Distinction in General Scholarship and is currently in the process of finishing his doctoral degree in economics at the University of Michigan. After living in the United States for 14 years, he will be returning to Japan at the conclusion of this term.