

Áureo **De Paula** (Ph.D., Economics, Princeton, 2006) is Assistant Professor of Economics. He was a speaker at the *Review of Economic Studies* European Tour in 2005 and served as a banking consultant in Brazil before studying for his Ph.D.

**Scientific Accomplishment.** De Paula defended his dissertation last year. Various papers are in submission and development, but as with many newly minted economists, there is a substantial lag to publication.

**Present and Future.** De Paula's research comprises methodological and empirical projects. The methodological research brings together literatures in the statistical survival analysis and economic modeling, especially on multi-person decision problems (i.e. games). He has three working papers available on his website, One, on "Inference in a Synchronization Game with Social Interactions," which is from his Ph.D. thesis, was instrumental as identifying de Paula as a researcher of interest to the PSC. This paper is an application of microeconomic theory and methods to what are variously contagion and social learning processes; the empirical example pertains to Union desertions in the US civil war. He has eight other papers in progress. Two of the empirical projects are in direct connection to population studies and involve, respectively, the behavioral responses to the spread of AIDS in rural Africa and the analysis of undocumented migration to the United States. In research carried out jointly with **Todd**, data collected by the Malawi Diffusion and Ideational Change Project (led by **Watkins, Kohler, and Behrman**) are used to analyze individual reactions to HIV prevalence in Malawi. Using standard techniques in individual decision making models (dynamic discrete choice) as well as more recent methodologies in the game theoretical literature in Economics, de Paula and Todd seek to characterize and quantify the "elasticity" of sexual behavior as well as other economically relevant variables to the AIDS epidemic in that country. Dynamic discrete choice models are also employed to characterize and quantify important aspects of undocumented migration from Mexico to the United States. This project uses data from the Mexican Migration Project, which was formerly housed at the PSC. The main focus of this project is to utilize information on payments made to coyotes, smugglers that transport migrants across the border, to infer the willingness-to-pay by potential immigrants in relation to the probability of success in border crossing. This dimension of the problem is used to make counterfactual experiments on potential migratory policies on both countries.

**PSC and Research.** Funds from the PSC's development core were instrumental in recruiting de Paula to Penn. Since his arrival, he has been an active participant in the PSC. Interactions through the colloquium series and elsewhere have been important in introducing him to the availability of population data relevant to his work, and his ongoing collaboration with **Todd** on the Malawi project attests. This work has also been supported by a Trio grant. As this and similar work moves forward, he will benefit from the Best Practices core, since he will soon be encountering issues of data access and confidentiality in overseas settings that are atypical of those typically encountered in academic economics. De Paula's presence has benefited the PSC in reinforcing the integration of a signature research theme, networks in population, and harmonizing it with current micro economic theory. He has also added to our methodological strength in stochastic methods, in particular, econometrics. De Paula's recruitment into the PSC, and growing involvement with the PSC and with population research, are prime examples of the strong leverage possible from an organized population center such as the PSC, and especially a targeted development core. He will serve on the Statistical Methods unit of the Methods section of the Development Core, and will also be part of the initiative in networks in population.