

STUDENT PUT A CLASSICAL SPIN ON ECONOMICS

If you've always felt the only thing lacking from the William Tell Overture was lyrics incorporating basic economic principles, then Jeannie Gillmore has the competition for you.

Gillmore, who shares instruction duties with professor Michael Parkin in his Principles of Microeconomics course, wanted to inject a little playfulness into the world of economics. She was inspired by the YouTube sensation "The Mom Song," where a mom reduces a day's advice to her children into lyrics sung over William Tell Overture.

So Gillmore challenged her students to take the overture, known by many as the theme to the Lone Ranger television series, and perform lyrics explaining economic principles over the top of it. The songs were presented as videos and entered into a contest.

"It doesn't matter how badly you sing," she says, "just so long as you learn something about the economics."

In its second go-around, previously presented in April, the contest generated 209 entries from two sections of the class. TAs and fourth-year students viewed the entries and made the first cut; Gillmore then narrowed the field to six. On Dec. 1, the six remaining entries were presented to the full class and a panel of distinguished judges.

Among that panel, which included Parkin and fellow economics colleagues, was perhaps the most popular judge, Gary Bennett, Pearson Education Canada editorial director, who provided the competition's grand prize: iPads for each winning team member.

Judges marked each video on a scale of one-to-five in two categories, artistic merit and economic content. Their scores, along with class votes, decided the winner. In the end, Group 60, comprised of Kara Gabriel, Tyler Benning, Julie Flesch and Alexa Sturm, took top honours.

All finalists are currently posted to YouTube.