

Case Tatro — PhD Candidate

Department of Economics, Binghamton University

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Citizenship: USA

Education

Binghamton University

PhD, Economics

Binghamton, NY

2021–2026 (*anticipated*)

Hamilton College

BA, Economics

Clinton, NY

2014–2018

Research and Teaching Interests:

Economics of Education, Labor Economics, Environmental Economics, Applied Microeconomics

Dissertation Committee: David Slichter (chair), Ozlem Tonguc, Sulagna Mookerjee

Research

Job Market Paper.....

Should Value-Added Models Weight All Students Equally?

Abstract: Conventional value-added (VA) models estimate teacher quality as a simple average of the difference between students' actual and predicted standardized test scores. These models therefore implicitly assume it is just as important to raise test scores of lower-achieving students as it is to raise test scores of higher-achieving students. I consider whether a weighted average of residuals might be more useful. Using data from North Carolina, I find that teacher VA measures become more predictive of teachers' long-run impacts when the highest-achieving students are weighted more than the median student. Strikingly, even impacts on *low-achieving* students' long-run outcomes are best predicted by increasing the weight of impacts on *high-achieving* students' short-run outcomes. These differences in weights may reflect that either (i) in small samples some students are more informative about a teacher's overall VA than others or (ii) test-score effects for different students capture different aspects of teaching, and some of these aspects are more informative than others. I find empirical evidence supporting both explanations. In particular, the large weights for high-achieving students are partially but not completely explained by the fact that their residuals are less noisy.

Working Papers.....

Is the mortality gap between red and blue states caused by government? *In Preparation for Submission*

Abstract: Age-adjusted mortality rates are higher in "red" states, i.e., states with high support for the Republican Party. We ask whether this is due to state-level policies or simply due to confounding variables such as culture. We implement three research designs: a border county design, a regression discontinuity design, and a novel design exploiting the partisanship of distant parts of a state. Our point estimates suggest that Democratic state government slightly decreases mortality, but most estimates are insignificant, and in all designs we find that the correlation between partisanship and mortality is predominantly driven by confounding.

Works in progress.....

Is the Achievement Gap Between Red and Blue States Caused by Government?

Abstract: In the US, the general consensus is that Democrats exhibit greater support for education, including funding education more generously. Consistent with this fact, students in Democratic states score higher on standardized tests than Republican states. I implement two research designs and ask whether Democrats cause these differences in test scores through state-level policy. I find that Democrats do seem to increase test scores, although my estimates are imprecisely estimated. Further, despite the view that Democrats promote equity in education, I do not find that Democrats close achievement gaps between white and black students, male and female students, or rich and poor students.

The Effects of Accountable Advice

Abstract: The literature on advised decision making finds that a third-party advisor allows a decision maker to deflect blame for an unfair action and largely escape accountability for this unfair action. In the context of the consulting industry, we ask whether direct accountability of the third-party advisor, i.e. a consulting company, may change both the advice of a third-party advisor and ultimately whether or not the decision maker chooses a fair or unfair action. We answer this question by conducting a lab-experiment in which we vary whether the advisor is accountable or not. We find that direct accountability reduces the probability of both unfair advice and unfair action. We speculate that such accountability applied to the consulting industry may reduce the intrinsic value of firms hiring a consultant through this accountability channel but do not expect firms to no longer hire such agencies as a result..

Conference Acceptances and Presentations.....

- Econometric Society, 2024 North American Summer Meeting
- Canadian Economics Association, 2024 (Online)

Conference Attendances.....

- Center for Teaching and Learning Economics (CTALE), 2024 (Online)
- Southern Economic Association, 2024 (In-person)
- Teaching at Teaching Intensive Institutions, 2024 (In-person)

Teaching Experience & Training

Awards

- Campus-wide Graduate-Student Teaching Award, 2024

Instructor

- Environmental Economics, Fall 2025 (*in-person*)
- Microeconomic Theory, Summer 2024, Summer 2025 (*in-person*)

Teaching Assistant:

- Natural Resource Economics, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025 (*includes guest lectures*)
- Environmental Economics, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025 (*includes guest lectures*)
- Microeconomics (Ph.D.), Fall 2023 (*includes discussion sections*)
- Historical Perspectives of Economic Growth, Spring 2023 (*includes guest lectures*)
- International Monetary Policy, Fall 2022 (*includes guest lectures*)
- Macroeconomic Theory, Spring 2022 (*includes discussion sections*)
- Microeconomic Theory, Fall 2021 (*includes discussion sections*)

Department Tutor

- Ph.D. Microeconomics Comprehensive Exam Tutor, Summer 2023, Summer 2024

Evidence-Based Teacher Training

- Evidence-Based Teaching Institute (Attendee), Spring 2025
- Wicked Graduate Teaching Workshop (Guest Lecturer & Attendee), Fall 2024
- Scholarly Teaching (Student), Fall 2023

Services

2025-Present: SUNY Binghamton Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL) Advisory Board Member

2022 – 2025: Conference Organizer, Cliometrics Conference

2022 – 2025: Club Water Polo Graduate Student Advisor

2022 – 2024: President of the Economics Graduate Student Organization at Binghamton University

Skills

Languages: English (native)

Computer Skills: SQL (Advanced); Visual Basic (basic); SAS (proficient); STATA(advanced); R(proficient); Python (intermediate)

Interests

Economics Youtube Channel: In Case of Econ Struggles–Over 3,000 Subscribers, 400 Videos, and 350,000 views.

Hobbies: Swimming; Water Polo; Aviation Enthusiast