

ADAM BESTENBOSTEL

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EDUCATION

Texas A&M University (expected) May 2022
Ph.D. Economics

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 2009
B.S. Economics

RESEARCH FIELDS

Applied microeconomics, including labor, education, public, and law & economics

WORKING PAPERS

Do Grade Signals Drive the Gender Gap in STEM? Evidence From a Regression Discontinuity (Job Market Paper)

A common hypothesis for the gender gap in STEM, which is believed to drive much of the gender gap in earnings, is that women are more responsive to the negative grade signals that are common in STEM. I test this hypothesis by applying a regression discontinuity design to the underlying numerical scores of more than 21,000 university students in feeder courses in STEM and economics. Results indicate that letter grade thresholds (with no plus/minus modifiers in this context) have no effect on STEM major choice for either women or men. This is true even for susceptible subgroups, within particular majors, or at particular grade thresholds.

Economic WARNings: The Impact of Negative News on Racial Animus with Abigail Peralta

Racially charged rhetoric often surrounds layoff events, with specific minorities often blamed for the loss of “American jobs.” We examine whether information about impending mass layoffs causes racial animus. Our data consist of information on mass layoff notices linked to Google Search Trends and FBI Hate Crime Statistics. We compare outcomes across areas that vary in the timing of news of impending layoffs. Results indicate an increase in both racist internet searches (1.5 percent) and hate crimes (23 percent) following layoff notices.

Does It Matter Who Owns the Media? Evidence From Within-Market Media Ownership Consolidation with Meradee Tangvatcharapong

Media ownership has become more concentrated in recent years, leading to concerns over media integrity and the nature of the information being passed on to the public. In this paper, we study the impact of broadcast television ownership consolidation on ideological preferences. To do so, we use a difference-in-differences design to examine the impact of within-market consolidation on election outcomes. Results show that within-market consolidation shifted vote share towards Democrats by 3-4 percentage points for both presidential and senate elections, and that this effect persists for at least 12 years.

The Impact of Voter ID Laws on Turnout: Evidence From Texas

Debate continues over the advantages and drawbacks of voter ID laws. In this paper, I consider the impact of one of the strictest such laws, enacted just prior to the 2014 election in Texas. To identify effects, I use a difference-in-differences approach comparing turnout for people with and without permissible photo IDs over time. I do so using individual-level data matching voter history and state-issued IDs, accounting for ID issue date. Results show that registered voters who had not been issued a photo ID were no more or less likely to vote in the 2014 midterm election. In the 2016 presidential election, voters lacking ID were 7.6 percentage points less likely to turn out. I find no evidence of differential effects for minority groups.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Racial Bias in Police Investigations with Abigail Peralta

Exposure to Racial Diversity and Judge Behavior with CarlyWill Sloan

HONORS AND AWARDS

Department Participant for SEA Grad. Student Session and Award SEA Annual Conference, 2020
One nominee per department per year.

Private Enterprise Research Center Summer Fellowship Texas A&M University, 2018
Awarded competitively to second-year Ph.D. students.

Outstanding Teacher of the Year Weifang University, China, 2012

Rensselaer Leadership Award Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 2009
Given selectively in recognition of an outstanding record of academic and personal achievements, a strong commitment to excellence, and illustration of intellectual curiosity.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Games and Economic Behavior (ECON-459) Summer 2019
Instructor Texas A&M University
Overall instructor evaluation: 4.71/5 (department 2019 average: 4.43/5)
Class mean GPA: 3.00/4 (course 5-year average: 3.26/4)

Principles of Microeconomics (ECON-202) 2016-2020
Head T.A., 2,000 person online course Texas A&M University

Program Evaluation (ECON-470) Spring 2019
T.A. Texas A&M University

Introduction to Econometrics (ECMT-463) Fall 2018
Research paper T.A. Texas A&M University

Tutoring High School Math and Science (including calculus, algebra, geometry, chemistry) 2014-2015
Private tutor Seattle

English as a Second Language 2010-2013
Instructor Weifang University, China

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Conferences

WEAI 2019*, APPAM 2019*, SEA 2019*, ASSA 2020, WEAI 2020*, APPAM 2020*, SEA 2020*, SEA 2021*
(* denotes presentation)

Texas A&M Economics Student Mentor Program

2018-2021

REFERENCES

Mark Hoekstra (chair)
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