

# Alex E. Combs

---

Assistant Professor  
University of Georgia · Athens, GA 30602  
✉ [Alex.Combs@uga.edu](mailto:Alex.Combs@uga.edu) | Updated: Jul. 2, 2023

---

## Research and Teaching Interests

**Substantive:** Public Budgeting and Finance, K-12 and Post-Secondary Finance, State and Local Taxes, State Financial Aid

**Methods:** Causal Inference

## Education

Ph.D., University of Kentucky (Public Policy & Administration)	2018
M.A., University of Kentucky (Public Administration)	2014
B.A., Eastern Kentucky University (Political Science)	2009

## Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Policy Department of Public Administration and Policy, University of Georgia	2020-Present
Visiting Assistant Professor Department of Public Administration and Policy, University of Georgia	2019-2020
Post-Doctoral Researcher & Instructor Martin School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Kentucky	2018-2019

## Research

### Peer Reviewed Publications

- [2] Combs, A.E., & Foster, J. (2021). The effects of homestead exemptions for seniors and disabled people on school districts. *Rural Education Finance and Policy*, special issue of *AERA Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2332858420988712>
- [1] Combs, A.E., Foster, J., & Toma E.F. (2018). Local response to school finance equalization: Wealth or place? *Public Finance and Management*, 18(3).

### Under Review & In Preparation

- [9] Combs, A.E. State Sales Tax Revenue Generated by Daily K-12 School Operations: Insights From COVID School Closures
- [8] Combs, A.E. The Impact of School Board Governance and Membership on the Distribution of District Funds to Schools
- [7] Buerger, C., Combs, A.E., Afonso, W. Plugging the Tax Leak: An Analysis of North Carolina's Local Sales Tax Redistribution Policy

- [6] Combs, A.E. & Kim, Saerim. School District TEL Severity and the Finances of Education-Supporting Nonprofits: Crowding-out Community Support to Supplement School Revenues
- [5] Combs, A.E. Fiscal Illusion Under the Cover of Property Tax Limits: School District Revenue Response to a Reordering of Tax Levy Options
- [4] Combs, A.E. The Expenditure Response of Higher Education Institutions to Changes in State Subsidies and Simulated Impacts on Graduation Rates
- [3] Combs, A.E. The Impact of Distance for Students Seeking an Associate or Bachelor's Degree at In-State Public Institutions
- [2] Combs, A.E. High School Student Achievement and College Enrollment in the Absence of School Improvement Interventions: Evidence from Kentucky
- [1] Combs, A.E., Foster, J., & Troland E. Can State Oversight Improve Local Property Assessments? Evidence from Education Finance Reform in Kentucky

### Other Publications

- [1] Combs, A.E., Foster, J., & Troland, E. The Role of Property Assessment Oversight in School Finance Inequality. Finance and Economics Discussion Series. *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*. <https://doi.org/10.17016/FEDS.2023.024>

### Grants

- [1] Busbee Endowment Seed Grant (collaborative). \$13,200 2021.

### Conference Presentations

- [14] School District TEL Stringency and Education-Supporting Nonprofit Revenues: Crowding Out Community Support to Supplement School Revenues. 2023  
Korean Association of Public Administration
- [13] School District TEL Stringency and the Finances of Education-Supporting Nonprofits: Crowding Out Community Support to Supplement School Revenues. 2023  
Association of Education Finance and Policy
- [12] Do Nonprofits Substitute Educational Resources in Response to Tax and Expenditure Limits on School Districts? 2022  
Association for Budgeting and Financial Management
- [11] Property Tax Levies Relative to Predetermined Options: Exploiting Fiscal Illusion? 2022  
Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management
- [10] The effects of removing voter recall from school district property taxes. 2021  
Association for Budgeting and Financial Management
- [9] The impact of state oversight on property assessments and school district revenues. 2019  
Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management

[8] The effects of homestead exemptions for the disabled and the elderly on school districts. Association of Education Finance and Policy	2019
[7] High-tuition, high-aid policy and college expenditures. Association of Education Finance and Policy	2018
[6] Are state subsidies in higher education driving a divergence in institutional expenditures? Association for Budgeting and Financial Management	2018
[5] The effect of NCLB waivers on college outcomes. Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management	2017
[4] Local response to school finance equalization: The important of place. Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management	2017
[3] Local response to school finance equalization. Association for Budgeting and Financial Management	2017
[2] The effect of distance on degree completion. Association of Education Finance and Policy	2016
[1] Trends and determinants of state government privatization activity. Association for Budgeting and Financial Management	2015

### **Research Assistance**

Visiting Research Assistant, Kentucky Center for Statistics and University of Kentucky	2018-2019
Assistant to Drs. Eugenia Toma & Ron Zimmer, University of Kentucky	2017-2019
Research Fellow, Council of State Governments	2013-2014

### **Awards**

Graduate School Academic Year Fellowship, University of Kentucky. \$16,000	2016
Graduate School Academic Year Fellowship, University of Kentucky. \$16,000	2015
Daniel Reedy Award for Outstanding MPA Paper, University of Kentucky. \$1,000	2014

### **Teaching**

#### **University of Georgia**

Education Finance and Policy	Fall 2022
Data Applications in Public Administration	Fall 2019-Present
Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector	Fall 2020
Introduction to Public Policy Analysis	Spring 2020, 2022, 2023
Public Financial Management	Fall 2019, 2021, 2023

## University of Kentucky

Public Program Evaluation	Spring 2019
Strategic Planning & Organizational Change	Fall 2018
Economic and Business Statistics	Spring 2017
Education: Economics and Policy (TA)	Fall 2015

## Service

### Conferences

Panel Discussant, Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management.	2022
--	------

### University

College Curriculum Committee, School of Public and International Affairs	2020-2021
MPA Capstone Reviewer, School of Public and International Affairs	2020-Present

### Students

Youkyoung Jeong, Public Administration (Ph.D.), University of Georgia, Committee Member

### Media Commentary

Kiernan, J.S. 2023's Property Taxes by State. *WalletHub*. <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-with-the-highest-and-lowest-property-taxes/11585>

Kiernan, J.S., 2023's Most & Least Federally Dependent States. *WalletHub*. <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-most-least-dependent-on-the-federal-government/2700>

### Journal Reviews

State and Local Government Review, AERA Open, Educational Researcher

## Non-Academic Employment

Associate Director of Leadership Development, Sigma Nu Fraternity Inc.	2010-2013
Leadership Consultant, Sigma Nu Fraternity Inc.	2009-2010