Research Topics

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Research Topic 1 - Local Data

Research Topic 2 - The Economy

We think it'd be interesting to investigate some kind of economic data, especially given recent news and current events. There are many different directions we could take this topic, but possible ideas we discussed that are relevant today could be impacts of trade policies and tariffs, fluctuations in inflation and interest rates, or other governmental policies. This topic could be focused on macro level data, or we also thought it could be interesting to focus on different cities like Durham. Potential audiences include economic policy makers, people in government, and regular people to inform them. Here are some potential research questions:

- The effects of interest rates and inflation on consumer spending

- Something about how effective tariffs and other policies are reducing prices

- What factors predict housing prices in Durham?

In terms of potential datasets, the National Beareau of Economic Research, the IMF, and other respected economic organizations have many useful datasets related to this topic.

Research Topic 3 - Environmental

We want to investigate some type of environmental/climate data. Specifically, we think that investigating natural disasters like wildfires, floods, sea level rise, etc. could be interesting project topics. We are interested in these topics because they are extremely relevant (recent California wildfires, hurricane Helene, etc.), and they are only poised to get worse as time goes on with climate change effects. Additionally, we think that we could find good data around these events. Here are three potential research questions:

- Can factors like wind speed and rainfall totals predict economic damage caused by hurricanes?

- How do factors like humidity level, wind speed, and temperature, and urban environment influence the area burned in a wildfire?

- What is the relationship between wildfire incidence and respiratory illness?

To find data to answer these questions, we think that government and environmental organizations will be good places to start our search.