

Austin V. Smith

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Education

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| 2025 (expected) | PhD in Economics, University of Arizona |
| 2021 | MA in Economics, University of Arizona |
| 2020 | BA in Economics and Mathematics, Lewis & Clark College |

Fields of Interest

Labor Economics, Economics of Crime, Public Economics

Awards and Honors

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| 2024 | Southern Economic Association Graduate Student Award |
| 2023 | Best 3rd Year Paper |
| 2022 | Steve Manos Prize (Best 2nd Year Paper) |
| 2020 | <i>summa cum laude</i> with Honors in Economics, Lewis & Clark College |
| 2020 | <i>Phi Beta Kappa</i> (Senior Year), Lewis & Clark College |

Conference and Seminar Presentations

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| 2024 | Texas Economics of Crime Workshop, Workshop on the Economics of Crime for Junior Scholars, Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting (<i>scheduled</i>) |
| 2023 | APPAM Fall Conference (discussant) |

Workshops

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| 2023 | Price Theory Summer Camp, <i>Becker Friedman Institute at University of Chicago</i> |
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Teaching Experience

Sole Instructor of Record

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| 2024 | Economic Strategy for Business Decisions (online, asynchronous; 7-week Spring Course) |
| 2022-2023 | Economics of Sports (5-week Summer Course) |

Teaching Assistant

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| 2023 | Economics of Strategy |
| 2022 | Econometrics |
| 2022 | Economics of Sports |
| 2021 | Basic Economic Issues |
| 2021 | Public Sector Economics |
| 2021 | Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions |
| 2020 | Macroeconomic and Global Institutions and Policy |
| 2020 | Global and Financial Economics and Strategy |

Working Papers

“Who You Gonna Call?’ 911 Call Takers and Police Discretion”

Police make high-stakes decisions under multiple sources of uncertainty, often resulting in adverse outcomes that are disproportionately experienced by minority citizens. What source of information do police use to make their enforcement decisions and does it generate accurate decisions? I examine a common information source for police officers throughout the United States: risk assessments conducted by 911 call takers. Exploiting random variation in the automated call distribution system used by a large metropolitan 911 center, I show that police are 37.7% more likely to make arrests at calls that the call taker deems risky. I demonstrate that officer perceptions are a primary channel through which the effects operate. This results in lower quality police decisions: misdemeanor arrests made at calls that are on the margin of being classified as risky are 14.9 percentage points less likely to result in a conviction. In cases where the race of the involved civilians is the same as the responding officer or the responding officer has more job experience, call taker information has a negligible effect on arrests. The results suggest that the strength of an officer’s priors determines the extent to which officers rely on information transmitted by call takers.

Works in Progress

“Lead by Example: The Effects of Police Supervisors on Officer Behavior” (Job Market Paper)

“Teams in the Public Sector: Evidence from Police Officers”

Programming Languages

R (Advanced), \LaTeX (Proficient), Stata (Proficient)