

Austin Knies

Economics Ph.D. Student

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, Economics Indiana University, <i>Bloomington, IN, USA</i>	2018 - 2024
Master of Arts, Economics Indiana University, <i>Bloomington, IN, USA</i>	2018 - 2020
Bachelor of Science, Mathematics and Business Economics, Honors Scholar Louisiana Tech University, <i>Ruston, LA, USA</i>	2013 - 2017

HONORS AND AWARDS

Dissertation Research Fellowship recipient, <i>IU College of Arts and Sciences</i>	2022 - 2023
Adam Smith Fellowship recipient, <i>Mercatus Center</i>	2021 - 2022
Complex Networks and Systems National Science Foundation Research Traineeship Program Summer Affiliate, <i>IU Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering</i>	2021
Nominated Student Representative, <i>IU College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Alumni Awards</i>	2021
Best Graduate Paper Award recipient, <i>Hoosier Economics Conference (Indiana University)</i>	2021
Best Third Year Presentation Award recipient, <i>Hoosier Economics Conference (Indiana University)</i>	2021
W. Phillip Saunders Award for Outstanding Introductory Economics Associate Instructor recipient, <i>Department of Economics, Indiana University</i>	2021
Hayek Fund for Scholars Research Stipend recipient, <i>Institute for Humane Studies</i>	2021
Don Lavoie Fellowship recipient, <i>Mercatus Center</i>	2020 - 2021
College Graduate Fellowship recipient, <i>Indiana University</i>	2018 - 2019

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Associate Instructor , ECON-B 251 (Fundamentals of Economics for Business I) <i>Indiana University</i>	Spring 2022
Associate Instructor , ECON-E 251 (Fundamentals of Economics I) <i>Indiana University</i>	Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021
Associate Instructor , ECON-E 201 (Intro to Microeconomics) <i>Indiana University</i>	Fall 2019, Spring 2020
Tutor , ECON 510 (Managerial Economics) <i>Louisiana Tech University</i>	Spring 2017

RESEARCH

Research Interests: Applied Microeconomics, Health Economics, Information Frictions, Transportation

Coding Languages: R, Python, MATLAB, Stata, Fortran, Excel

Publications:

“A Recursive Logit Model with Choice Aversion and Its Application to Transportation Networks.” 2022
Transportation Research Part B: Methodological, Volume 155, January 2022, Pages 47-71
Co-authors: Jorge Lorca, Emerson Melo

Ongoing Research:

“Physician Information Costs and the Rise of Telehealth during the COVID-19 Pandemic” Latest Draft: March 2023
Working Paper

Abstract: The use of synchronous telemedicine services rose dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic, but to what extent should telehealth be used going forward? Using 2018-2022q1 claims data from Optum’s de-identified Clinformatics® Data Mart Database, I characterize the evolution of telehealth and face-to-face modalities for office and outpatient evaluation and management (E/M) service claims, where telehealth coding has been the most frequent. I find telehealth usage is associated with higher likelihood of patient mortality and ER visit within 6 months of E/M service claim, with strongest impact for Medicare Advantage plan members, for established patients, and for patients with no referring provider. To explain these findings, I model the physician-patient interaction as a costly information acquisition problem, where rationally inattentive physicians learn about the patient’s health status through costly signals. In doing so, I provide a mechanism to explain differences in health outcomes and quantify differences in information costs across visit modalities. Estimated average increases in physician information costs range between 5 to 37 percent with telehealth usage after March 2020. These findings reinforce existing literature that suggest telehealth is best used when expanding access to care for low-risk patients and as a complement rather than a substitute to in-person care.

“Effects of Public Price Transparency Tools on Shopping for Health Care” Latest Draft: February 2023
Working Paper

Funding:

Research Data Funding, IU Social Science Research Commons. “Social and Neighborhood Determinants of Healthcare: Medical Appointments No-Show Rates in Urban and Rural Indiana.” \$4800. PI: Patrick Shih. Co-PI: Volodymyr Lugovskyy, Austin Knies

Hayek Fund, Institute for Humane Studies. “Heterogeneous Information Processing and Health Insurance Choice.” \$2500. PI: Volodymyr Lugovskyy. Co-PI: Michael DeDad, Austin Knies, Emerson Melo, Alexandre Skiba

Hayek Fund, Institute for Humane Studies. “Effects of Public Price Transparency Tools on Shopping for Health Care.” \$750. PI: Austin Knies

Presentations:

Presentation, “Physician Information Costs and the Rise of Telehealth during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Eastern Economic Association, 49th Annual Conference*. Presented on February 25th, 2023.

Presentation, “Effects of Public Price Transparency Tools on Shopping for Health Care,” *Hoosier Economics Conference at Indiana University*. Presented on April 30th, 2021.

Poster Session, “A Recursive Logit Model with Choice Aversion and Its Application to Transportation Networks,” *6th Annual Conference on Network Science and Economics*. Presented on March 26th, 2021.

Additional Projects:

“Fraud Detection with Medicare Provider Data” 2022
Erdős Institute’s Fall 2022 Code Data Science Boot Camp
Collaborators: Jonathan Leslie

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Field Underwriter (Louisiana Farm Bureau Insurance Companies) June 2017 - June 2018

- Analyzed personal, farm, and commercial property and liability exposures of the insured applicant to ensure optimum coverage was provided in the event of a loss
- Oversaw the performance of local Louisiana Farm Bureau agents across northeast Louisiana by acting as a regional liaison between parish offices and the state underwriting department
- Assessed the risk of potential policyholders by inspecting dwellings, farms, and other insurable items and verifying production was within underwriting guidelines