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Department of Economics
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Education

University of California, Davis

- Ph.D. in Economics Expected 2026
Advisors: Anujit Chakraborty, Scott Carrell, Andres Carvajal
- M.A. in Economics 2020

Binghamton University, State University of New York (SUNY)

- B.S. in Economic Analysis and B.A. in Mathematical Sciences 2018

Research

Fields of Interest

- Labor Economics, Behavioral Economics, Economics of Education

Working Papers

- *Seeing is Believing? How Learning Modes Shape Belief Bias and Discrimination (Job Market Paper)*

Abstract: Why do biased beliefs persist even when accurate information is available? This paper shows that the endogenous nature of information acquisition systematically distorts beliefs. Through a combination of theory and experiment, I show that even when accurate information is available, individuals who can decide how much to learn and when to stop end up with systematically biased evidence that reinforces their existing belief bias. In contrast, when people acquire similar amounts of information but without the ability to control when to stop, their initial belief bias is significantly reduced after learning. The results identify a novel channel of persistent belief bias - the endogeneity of information acquisition - and point to exogenously structured learning as a powerful tool for reducing belief-based discrimination and designing effective information interventions.

- *Do Schools Matter? Measuring the Impact of California High Schools on Test Scores and Postsecondary Enrollment*, with Scott Carrell, Michal Kurlaendar, Paco Martorell, and Matthew Naven (Under Review)

We estimate high school impacts on test score performance, post-secondary enrollment, and the relationship between the two using administrative data on California high school students. We find that models using only standard controls for prior test scores and student demographics are biased (especially for college enrollment), but adding rich controls for peer, neighborhood, and family quality eliminates most of this bias. Our results suggest substantial variation in quality across schools in both test scores and college enrollment. In our preferred (fully saturated) specifications, a one-standard deviation increase in our base school quality measure is associated with a 0.10 standard deviation increase in standardized test scores and a 4.8 percentage point increase in four-year college enrollment. Higher test score value-added schools increase college enrollment across multiple margins—lower-ability students move from no college to two-year colleges while higher-ability students move from two-year to four-year colleges. Notably, most variation in college enrollment value-added is not explained by test score value-added, suggesting policies that focus solely on test scores miss important components of school effectiveness. Finally, using school-level survey results, we show that value-added models of school quality are highly correlated with measures of school climate, teacher and staff quality, and counseling support within the school.

- *Challenges and Disparities Faced by LGBTQ+ Students in the Transition to College: Survey Evidence from California*, with Michal Kurlaender, Alexandria Hurtt, and Baiyu Zhou

Work in Progress

- *Behavioral Incentive Compatibility of BDM Belief Elicitation*

Recent evidence has shown that revealing incentives during belief elicitation might negatively impact truth telling, even if the elicitation mechanism is theoretically incentive compatible. In this project, I study the effect of quantitative incentive information on truth telling in the Becker–DeGroot–Marschak (BDM) belief elicitation mechanism. Subjects guess the probability of selecting a red urn out of 10 urns of colors red and blue, where the number of urns of each color is known. Results show that when subjects are shown full quantitative incentives, the rate of false reports is around 10 percentage points higher than in the treatment where no quantitative incentives are shown. This higher rate of false reports is driven by subjects who misunderstood the incentives. Given that BDM belief elicitation is particularly difficult to explain and implement, this result shows a potentially simpler and more practical way of eliciting beliefs while maintaining quality of data.

- *Diversity in Schools: Immigrants and the Long-Run Outcomes of US-Born Students*, with Briana Ballis and Derek Rury

We construct a novel longitudinal dataset of Texas public school students and use family fixed effects to address selection bias. We first document sorting: students initially exposed to more immigrant peers are more likely to move to schools with fewer immigrants, underscoring the importance of addressing endogenous mobility. We find small long-run effects: immigrant exposure has no impact on college completion or employment, and small negative effects on academic achievement and college enrollment. Once we adjust for correlated peer characteristics—such as poverty and English-learner status—these negative effects attenuate or reverse. Heterogeneity analyses show that exposure to higher-income and Asian immigrant peers consistently generates positive spillovers. Overall, compositional disadvantage—and not immigrant status per se—drives observed negative effects.

Policy Reports

- *Transition to College: Voices from the Class of 2023*, with Michal Kurlaender, Alexandria Hurtt, and Baiyu Zhou.
- *California Cradle-to-Career Data System 2024 Student Experience Report*, with Jacob Jackson, Michal Kurlaender, Stephanie Luna-Lopez, Judy Chan, and Elizabeth Pierotti.
- *Applying for Financial Aid: Lessons from California's 2024 High School Seniors*, with Jacob Jackson, Michal Kurlaender, Stephanie Luna-Lopez, Jessica Moldoff, and Ryan Fuller.

Teaching Experience

Instructor of Record

ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics	Summer 2023
ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics	Summer 2022

Teaching Assistant

ECN 190A: Behavioral Economics	Spring 2023
ECN 151A: Economics of Labor Markets	Summer 2020
ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics	Spring 2020
ECN 135: Money and Banking	Winter 2020
ECN 117: Economics of International Immigration	Fall 2019

Undergraduate Research Mentoring

Mentor for Undergraduate Research Fellows, UC Davis	Fall 2024-Present
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Professional Experience

Graduate Student Researcher

California Education Lab	Summer 2020-Present
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Presentations

Economic Science Association North American Conference	October 2025
UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar	October 2025
Western Economic Association International 100th Annual Conference	June 2025
Bay Area Behavioral and Experimental Economics Workshop	May 2025
Association for Education Finance and Policy 50th Annual Conference	March 2025
American Economic Association CSQIEP Seminar	February 2025
Economic Science Association North American Conference	October 2024
American Economic Association CSQIEP Seminar	March 2024
Economic Science Association North American Conference	October 2023
American Economic Association CSQIEP Mentoring Conference	June 2023
Bay Area Behavioral and Experimental Economics Workshop	May 2023
Economic Science Association North American Conference	November 2022

UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar
 UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar
 UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar
 UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar

March
 November 2022
 February
 November 2021

Referee

Journal of Human Resources

Seminars and Workshops

Seminar on College Teaching, University of California, Davis 2023
 Discrimination & Diversity Workshop, University of East Anglia 2022

Service

Graduate Program Student Mentor, Economics Department, UC Davis 2019 – 2023
 Organizer of Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar Series, UC Davis 2020
 Executive Vice President of Economics Graduate Student Association, UC Davis 2020 – 2021

Awards and Fellowships

Russell Sage Foundation Research Grant: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Program, Co-PIs: Briana Ballis, Derek Rury	2023
UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award	2024
UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award	2023
UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award	2022
UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award	2021
UC Davis Economics Departmental Fellowship	2018-2019
State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence	2018
Binghamton University President's Award for Student Excellence	2018
Binghamton University Economics Faculty Award for Excellence in Economics	2018
Binghamton University Award for Excellence in Mathematics	2018
Binghamton University Senior Class of 1986 Award for Student Excellence	2018

Technical Skills

Stata, Python, SQL, JavaScript, R, HTML, CSS, QualtricsXM, LaTeX, Markdown, Tableau

References

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