CURRICULUM VITAE
David Titus

Cornell University   dwt45@cornell.edu
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EDUCATION
Cornell University
PhD Candidate in Economics   (expected) 2020-2026

Binghamton University, State University of New York
Bachelor of Science in Economic Analysis   December 2019
Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics   December 2019

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Labor Economics, Economics of Immigration, Economics of Education

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE
Michele Belot (Chair)
Frances Perkins Professor of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics, Cornell
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Francine Blau (Co-Chair)
Frances Perkins Professor Emeritus of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics Cornell
fdb4@cornell.edu

Lawrence Kahn
Braunstein Family Professor Emeritus of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics, Cornell
lmk12@cornell.edu

PRESENTATIONS

APPAM Fall Research Conference, Seattle, WA   (scheduled) November 14, 2025
Cornell Labor Economics Workshop, Ithaca, NY   (scheduled) October 27, 2025
Midwest Economics Association, Kansas City, MO   March 22, 2025
Academy of Economics and Finance, Pensacola, FL   February 13, 2025
Cornell Labor Work-in-Progress Seminar, Ithaca, NY   Fall 2024, Spring 2025

RESEARCH PAPERS

Immigration Policies and Human Capital: The Impact on Undocumented College Attendance

(Job Market Paper)

I estimate impact of Universal E-Verify laws on the college attendance of undocumented Hispanics in the United States. I do so by implementing a series of event studies that account for staggered adoption over time, and I use a random forest algorithm as my primary approach for predicting undocumented status. My results indicate that Universal E-Verify laws lower the college attendance of undocumented Hispanics ages 18-25 by approximately 3 percentage points. This is a large effect, given that only 20.9 percent of undocumented immigrants ages 18-25 either were attending or had completed at least some college education. This effect is also robust to using non-citizen Hispanics as a proxy group without random forest, testing for potential spillovers to bordering states, and considering any potentially confounding impact of other state-level policies. I explore potential mechanisms by developing a model explaining avenues through which Universal E-Verify can affect college education, and I test this model's implications. I find suggestive evidence that the negative effect on college education is driven by worse labor market outcomes for undocumented parents, which render future prospects for college less attainable for undocumented children. These results indicate that employment restrictions on undocumented immigrants produce detrimental effects on their human capital accumulation.

Policies, Prejudice, and the Residual Wage Gap between Refugees and Natives

I explore possible explanations for the residual wage gap between refugees and natives in Germany. I first demonstrate that most of the increased wage gap compared to previous cohorts is not primarily attributable to increased income inequality: a Juhn, Murphy and Pierce (1993) decomposition reveals that residual price changes explain only a small portion of the increased residual gap. I then estimate the impact of prejudice and the minimum wage. While I find limited evidence that prejudice increases the residual wage gap, my results indicate that average prejudice and prejudice at the upper tail of the distribution negatively impacts refugees. This finding diverges from Becker's model on the "marginal" prejudiced employer, but it is consistent with alternative theories, such as prejudice by customers, or lower reservation wages due to increased job search costs in a prejudiced environment. I also find evidence that increases in the minimum wage bite across regions within Germany lower the residual wage gap but raise the residual employment gap. Finally, I find that refugees in more prejudiced regions invest more in integration courses and language acquisition. However, refugees in these regions do not earn higher wages, suggesting that prejudice may mitigate potential returns to assimilation.

Do Integration Courses Alleviate Refugee Downgrading? Evidence from Germany

I examine the impact of the German for Professional Purposes course on the labor market outcomes and human capital of recent refugees in Germany. I focus on language acquisition, employment,

skill level, and wages as my key outcomes. I further investigate how the returns to the course are impacted by anti-refugee prejudice. I also test for spillover effects within refugee households. Estimates indicate that this course has remained an effective tool in improving refugee language acquisition. This finding is in the wake of a 2015 crisis that led to a sudden, unexpected, and large influx of asylum seekers, increased prejudice against refugees, settlement policy changes, and a cohort for which the course was not specifically designed. I find evidence that increased prejudice may lower the return to the course. I fail to find evidence for within-household spillovers. My results imply that professional training and language courses can remain an effective policy tool, even in the event of large unexpected crises and upheaval.

The Gender Pay Gap Across Countries

(Ongoing project with Francine Blau, Lawrence Kahn, Leonardo Penaloza Pacheco, Freddy Bachmann, and Helen Burkhardt)

Skill Downgrading Among Refugees and Economic Immigrants in Germany: Evidence from the Syrian Refugee Crisis (IZA Discussion Paper No. 15426)

(Past project as an undergraduate research assistant with Plamen Nikolov and Leila Salarpour)

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Cornell University	Summer 2023 – Summer 2025
Graduate RA for Professor Francine Blau	
Binghamton University, State University of New York	Spring 2019 – Spring 2020
Undergraduate RA for Professor Plamen Nikolov	
Cato Institute (Internship)	Summer 2019

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Introductory Microeconomics (ECON 1110 at Cornell)	Winter 2024
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Jennifer Wissink	
Economics of Wages and Employment (ILRLE 2400 at Cornell)	Spring 2023
Teaching Assistant for Professor Gary Fields	
Introductory Microeconomics (ECON 1110 at Cornell)	Fall 2022
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Stephanie Thomas	
Economics of Wages and Employment (ILRLE 2400 at Cornell)	Spring 2022
Teaching Assistant for Professor George Jakubson	
Public Finance (ECON 4260 at Cornell)	Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Jennifer Wissink	
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON 360 at Binghamton University)	Fall 2018
Teaching Assistant for Professor David Slichter	

OTHER TEACHING-RELATED EXPERIENCE

Grading Assistant, Public Finance (ECON 4260 at Cornell)	Fall 2022, Fall 2023
Tutor in Economics and Mathematics (Varsity Tutors)	Spring 2020
Tutor (Educational Opportunity Program, Binghamton University)	Spring 2018 – Fall 2019

AWARDS, HONORS, AND GRANTS

Sage Fellowship (Cornell)	2025-2026
Graduate School Conference Travel Grant (Cornell)	2025
Sage Fellowship (Cornell)	2020-2021
Distinguished Achievement in Economics (Binghamton University)	2019

PROGRAMMING: Stata, R, MATLAB