

ELISSA M. COHEN

Citizenship: United States

EDUCATION

American University, Washington, DC

Ph.D., Economics

Expected May 2022

M.A., Economics

May 2019

Concentrations: Public, Labor, and Complexity Economics

Santa Fe Institute, Santa Fe, NM

Complex Systems Summer School

Summer 2019

Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

A.B., Economics, Sociology

May 2012

Minors: Law and Society, Policy Analysis and Management, Inequality Studies

Magna Cum Laude

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

American University, Info-Metrics Institute

Aug 2019 — Aug 2020

Graduate Research Assistant, for Professor Amos Golan

Washington, DC

- Developed R statistical codes to visualize ternary plots of information theoretic simulation experiments.
- Conducted literature review on the effects of macro-level vaccination policies on individual-level health outcomes; synthesized and analyzed individual-level COVID-19 health outcome data in Python; helped write University of Chicago HCEO Working Paper No. 2020-04 “Effect of Universal TB Vaccination and Other Policy-Relevant Factors on the Probability of Patient Death from COVID-19.”
- Provided administrative support identifying and applying for institute-level grants.
- Coordinated invited speakers to participate in department-wide and institute-specific panels.

NERA Economic Consulting, Intellectual Property and Antitrust

Jan 2017 — May 2019

Analyst

Washington, DC

- Developed and conducted experimental studies for antitrust and intellectual property disputes related to trade mark and trade dress infringements, and mass tort and false advertising class action complaints.
- Analyzed and interpreted primary and secondary market and financial data sources using Stata to be used as evidence in expert witness testimony.
- Developed strategy for rebuttal critiques of expert witnesses of the opposing side.
- Supervised and trained junior analysts to ensure overall team success.
- Provided business development and administrative support by developing marketing materials for potential clients, compiled a dataset of relevant cases and ongoing litigation.

The Urban Institute, Income and Benefits Policy Center

Jan 2015 — Dec 2016

Research Associate II

Washington, DC

- Managed multiple survey instrument designs, data collection, and analyses for the DOL’s \$1.9 billion dollar Trade Adjustment Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program, a federal workforce development program focused on technical and healthcare career pathways; obtained over 90% survey response completion rates on all survey instruments.
- Managed the maintenance and development of the TAACCCT Grantee database, tracking 256 grantee program designs, goals, and outcomes across three grant waves; analyzed and reported on participant-level educational and labor market outcome data for TAACCCT grantees; helped co-author four briefs and a report on grantee characteristics and program outcomes.

- Coordinated with state TANF administrators to perform quality control maintenance of the HHS/ACF funded, publicly available Welfare Rules Database (WRD); managed the development of a new child-only TANF policy categories to augment the robustness of WRD; managed the design and implementation of new data quality control protocols and wrote statistical programs to automate the creation of the Welfare Rules Databook tables.
- Conducted policy microsimulations using HHS/ASPE's Transfer Income Model (TRIM), which uses CPS/ASEC data aligned to administrative targets; developed administrative targets in SAS using restricted access administrative data from HHS; aligned the non-citizen module using imputation techniques; for TANF and Medicaid modules, updated policy codes using primary and secondary sources and aligned modules using probabilistic techniques.
- Trained and supervised multiple teams of research assistants and interns.
- As a member of the junior staff programming board (RAADs), organized and executed junior research staff professional development programming and coordinated research seminar series; coordinated with human resources staff to develop and fund new universal staff training programs.

The Urban Institute, Income and Benefits Policy Center

Jun 2012 — Dec 2014

Research Assistant

Washington, DC

- Assisted maintaining and updating of the WRD by meticulously reviewing and coding primary case-worker manuals and state legislative documents. Analyzed data and assisted writing the annual report.
- Conducted a network analysis of 49 grantee networks as part of the program evaluation for HHS and DOE's Health Professions Opportunity Grants program; performed ongoing direct correspondence with hundreds of individuals across the 49 network organizations.
- Assisted in the ongoing maintenance and development of the TRIM microsimulation model.

Cornell University, Center for the Study of Inequality

Aug 2010 — May 2011

Research Assistant, for Professors Kim Weeden and Stephen Morgan

Ithaca, NY

- Investigated the STEM pipeline using occupational achievement goals of secondary school students based on parental occupational attainment; coded occupation to align with SOC codes for over 10,000 high school students and performed quality control validation of other research assistant's coding; conducted descriptive analyses and literature reviews.

Cornell University, Dept. of Policy Analysis and Mgmt

Jan 2010 — July 2010

Research Assistant, for Professor Rosemary Avery

Ithaca, NY

- Investigated the effects of a 2003 Federal Trade Commission regulation on the weight loss industry using proprietary advertising data; coded television weight loss advertisements for false and misleading statements; performed robustness checks of analyses using the coded advertisements; assisted in the writing and compiling of the final report.

The Reinvestment Fund, Policy Solution Center

Jun 2011 — Aug 2011

Policy Intern

Philadelphia, PA

- Validated ArcMap geo-coding for TRFs national supermarket access study.
- Assisted in development and conducting of market value analyses and economic surveying.
- Developed instructional guides for how to use TRF's PolicyMap.

SKILLS

Modeling & Analysis Python, Stata, R, Mathematica, NetLogo, L^AT_EX, MS Office
Certificates “Greenberg Seminars in Effective Teaching,” American University, Apr 2020
“Social & Behavioral Research,” CITI Human Subjects Research, Jan 2020

AWARDS, HONORS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Graduate Student Scholarship: International Society of Artificial Life Spring 2020
Graduate Student Research Award: American University Spring 2019
Doctor of Philosophy in Economics Fellowship: American University Fall 2017 — present
Emerging Scholar Award: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services 2016

PUBLISHED PEER-REVIEWED, POLICY, AND WORKING PAPERS

Cika, A., **Cohen, E.**, Kruszewski G., Seet, L., Steinmann, P., and Yin, W. (2020). *Resilient Life: An Exploration of Perturbed Autopoietic Patterns in Conway’s Game of Life*. In L. Soros, J. Bongard, and J. Lovato (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Artificial Life Conference 2020 (ALIFE 2020)* 32, 656-664. Burlington, Vermont: MIT Press. [Link here.](#)

Golan, A., Mumladze, T., Wilson, D., **Cohen, E.**, McGuinness, T., Mooney, W., and Moon, J. (2020). *Effect of Universal TB Vaccination and Other Policy-Relevant Factors on the Probability of Patient Death from COVID-19*. HCEO Working Paper Series Working Paper No. 2020-041: University of Chicago. [Link here.](#)

Eyster, L., Harford, C., Trutko, J., **Cohen, E.**, Mikelson, K.S., Durham, C., O’Brien, C.T., Martin-Caughey, A., Briggs, A., and Nguyen, K. (2019). *The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: Implementation of the Rounds 1 and 2 Grants*. (Research Report). Prepared for the US Department of Labor, Chief Evaluation Office. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. [Link here.](#)

Mikelson, K.S., Eyster, L., Durham, C., and **Cohen, E.** (2017). *The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: TAACCCT Goals, Design, and Evaluation*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. [Link here.](#)

Cohen, E., Mikelson, K.S., Eyster, L., and Durham, C. (2017). *The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: Grantee Characteristics*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. [Link here.](#)

Eyster, L., **Cohen, E.**, Mikelson, K.S., and Durham, C. (2017). *The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: TAACCCT Approaches, Targeted Industries, and Partnerships*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. [Link here.](#)

Durham, C., Eyster, L., Mikelson, K.S., and **Cohen, E.** (2017). *The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program: Early Results of the TAACCCT Grants*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. [Link here.](#)

Cohen, E., Minton, S., Thompson, M., Crowe, E., and Giannarelli, L. (2016). *Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2015* (OPRE Report 2016-67). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Link here.](#)

Huber, E., **Cohen, E.**, Briggs, A., and Kassabian, D. (2015). *Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2014* (OPRE Report 2015-81). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Link here.](#)

Huber, E., Kassabian, D., and **Cohen, E.** (2014). *Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2013* (OPRE Report 2014-52). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Link here.](#)

Kassabian, D., Huber, E., **Cohen, E.**, and Giannarelli, L. (2013). *Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2012* (OPRE Report 2013-27). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Link here.](#)

PRESENTATIONS

Cohen, Elissa. “The Value of Statistical Life: A Gendered Perspective.” Presented November 12, 2020. Poster presented at: 42nd Annual 2020 APPAM Fall Research Conference. Washington, DC.

Cika, A., **Cohen, E.***, Kruszewski G., Seet, L., Steinmann, P., and Yin, W. “Resilient Life: An Exploration of Perturbed Autopoietic Patterns in Conway’s Game of Life.” Presented July 13, 2020. Artificial Life Conference 2020 (ALIFE 2020). Burlington, Vermont.

Cohen, Elissa. “How the Minor in Inequality Studies Can Make a Major Difference.” Presented November 3, 2016. Cornell University - Center for the Study of Inequality; Ithaca, NY.

Cohen, Elissa. “Then and Now: Cash Welfare from the AFDC Program to Today’s TANF Program.” The Urban Institute. Presented June 1, 2016. Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency; Washington, DC.

Giannarelli, L., **Cohen, E.**, Briggs, A., and Huber, E. “Transitional Cash Benefits for Families who left TANF: New data from the Welfare Rules Database.” The Urban Institute. Presented August 25, 2015. National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics Conference; Atlanta, GA.

Huber, E., Kassabian, D., **Cohen, E.**, and Giannarelli, L. “Variation in States’ Child-Only and Non-Parent Caretaker TANF Rules: Evidence from the Welfare Rules Database.” The Urban Institute. Presented May 29, 2014. Welfare Research and Evaluation Conference; Washington, DC.

Kassabian, D., Huber, E., **Cohen, E.**, and Giannarelli, L. “States’ Child-Only and Non-Parent Caretaker TANF Rules: Evidence from the Welfare Rules Database.” The Urban Institute. Presented August 20, 2013. National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics Conference; Chicago, IL.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

American University, Department of Economics

Teaching Assistant

Aug 2017 — present

Washington, DC

- Taught weekly discussion sessions and review sessions, held weekly office hours, and graded homework, exams, and papers.
- Assisted preparation of answer keys to homework assignments and exams, provided in-class support and led activities during lectures, maintained course content on class websites, for the following courses:
 - ECON-823: Econometric Methods (Doctoral) Fall 2018
 - ECON-824: Advanced Econometric Methods (Doctoral) Spring 2019
 - ECON-623: Applied Econometrics I (Master’s) Spring 2019, Fall 2020
 - ECON-322: Introduction to Econometrics (Undergraduate) Fall 2020
 - ECON-803: Microeconomic Theory I (Doctoral) Fall 2020
 - ECON-300: Intermediate Microeconomics (Undergraduate) Spring 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020
 - ECON-200: Introduction to Microeconomics (Undergraduate) Spring 2018
 - ECON-100: Introduction to Macroeconomics (Undergraduate) Fall 2017, Fall 2018

Curriculum Development Assistant

- Developed in-class activities for instructors teach macroeconomic and microeconomic principles.
- Developed and curated test question banks for instructors to efficiently construct online exams.
- Copy-edited the open access online textbook.

- ECON-200: Introduction to Microeconomics (Undergraduate) Summer 2020
- ECON-100: Introduction to Macroeconomics (Undergraduate) Summer 2020

Cornell University, Department of Education

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant

- Taught weekly discussion sessions and graded homework and papers for 35 students.
 - EDUC 2410: The Art of Teaching (Undergraduate) Spring 2011

Washington Hebrew Congregation

Aug 2014 — Jun 2015

Judaic Studies Teacher

Washington, DC

- Lead the instruction of 20 second grade children in Judaic studies.
- Developed and executed weekly lesson plans.
- Communicated weekly progress of students to parents via written correspondence.
- Managed and developed teaching acumen in two teaching assistants.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Columbus Property Management and Development, Inc.

Jun 2009 — Jan 2010

Assistant to Corporate Counsel

Philadelphia, PA

- Gathered due diligence for affordable housing tax credit real estate ventures.
- Filed court evictions for landlord-tenant court.
- Coordinated with social workers to ensure tenants understood why they were at landlord-tenant court.

VOLUNTEER AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Complexity and Policy Studies Conference

Spring 2019 — present

Organizing Committee Member

Washington, DC

- Review and assess the originality and significance of conference paper submissions for admissions.
- Help develop and long-term financial feasibility of the conference budget.
- Coordinate with vendors to ensure conference events run efficiently.

SEIU Local 500 American University Graduate Worker Union

Jan 2018 — present

Lead Collective Bargaining Negotiator

Washington, DC

- Develop bargaining platform for a 750 person bargaining unit through survey, focus-group, and member-wide meeting campaigns.
- Negotiate graduate worker bargaining positions to augment working conditions and benefits; successfully negotiated \$2000 stipend increases for doctoral students and raised hourly wages for master's students by over 20%.

IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

Jan 2013 — Apr 2017

Advanced Tax Preparer

Washington, DC

- Obtained annual tax preparer certification.
- Prepared tax returns for low-to-moderate income families, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and those with limited English speaking backgrounds.

- Communicated effectively and patiently with clients each step of the tax return preparation process.
- Maintained strong attention to detail in order to efficiently and effectively complete client tax returns.

Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassador Network

CAAAN Volunteer

2012 — present

Washington, DC

- Serve as an alumni ambassador to prospective Cornell students by conducting 1-on-1 and group applicant interviews; provide advice and support to interviewed incoming students.