

JACOB LIGHT

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EDUCATION

Stanford University

Ph.D. in Economics

2018 - 2024 (*Expected*)

- Fields: Labor and Public Economics
- Dissertation: Essays in the Economics of Education

University of Michigan

Bachelor of Science, Mathematics and Economics (Highest Honors)

2011 - 2015

- Summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa (inducted as a junior)

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Prof. Caroline Hoxby (Primary)
Economics Department, Stanford University
(650) 723-9678
choxby@stanford.edu

Prof. Nick Bloom
Economics Department, Stanford University
(650) 725-7836
nbloom@stanford.edu

Prof. Eric Hanushek
Hoover Institution, Stanford University
(650) 736-0942
hanushek@stanford.edu

Prof. Petra Persson
Economics Department, Stanford University
(650) 723-4116
perssonp@stanford.edu

PUBLISHED WORK

Long-run Trends in the U.S. SES-Achievement Gap, (with Eric Hanushek, Paul Peterson, Laura Talpey, and Ludger Woessmann), Fall 2022, *Education Finance and Policy*

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Student demand and the supply of college courses [[Job Market Paper](#)]

In an era of rapid technological and social change, do universities adapt enough to play their important role in creating knowledge? To examine university adaptation, I extracted the information contained in the course catalogs of over 450 US universities spanning two decades (2000-2023). When there are changes in student demand, universities respond inelastically, both in terms of course quantity and content. Supply inelasticity is especially pronounced in fields experiencing declining demand and is more pronounced at public universities. Using Natural Language Processing, I further show that while the content of existing courses remains largely unchanged, newly-created courses incorporate topics related to current events and job skills. Notably, at selective institutions, new content focuses on societal issues, while at less selective institutions, new content emphasizes job-relevant skills. This study contributes uniquely to our understanding of the supply-side factors that affect how universities adapt to the rapidly evolving landscape.

Anatomy of labor market distress (with Eric Hanushek, Simon Janssen, and Lisa Simon) [\[Slides\]](#)

Earnings losses after mass layoffs are highly skewed: a small number of workers experience catastrophic losses, while most workers recover quickly. This paper documents the heterogeneity in earnings losses after mass layoffs and the adjustments driving these differences. We study workers from firms in West Germany that closed between 2000-2005. For each laid-off worker, we create a synthetic control from similar workers with matching earnings trajectories who weren't laid off during that period. Which workers experience the greatest losses is not a priori predictable based on fixed characteristics, but is associated with post-layoff adaptability, like switching professions or relocating. Consequently, pre-layoff targeted policies to assist these workers might not be as effective as post-layoff interventions.

The importance of non-major courses in predicting college students' post-graduation outcomes (with Merrill Warnick)

Instructor value-added in higher education (with Merrill Warnick)

The labor and education effects of employer-sponsored higher education benefits (with Nick Gebbia)

PRESENTATIONS

2023: All-California Labor Economics Conference, CSQIEP Virtual Seminar, Stanford Applied Economics Workshop

2022: AERA Annual Meeting, Stanford Applied Economics Workshop

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Leonard W. Ely and Shirley R. Ely Graduate Student Fellowship	2023
Stanford IRiSS Dissertation Fellowship \$11,000	2023
NAEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship Semifinalist and Alternate	2023
Stanford H&S Graduate Research Opportunities Grant (with Merrill Warnick) \$5,000	2023
George Shultz Graduate Research Fellowship (with Merrill Warnick) \$3,000	2022
Patricia Liu McKenna and Kenneth McKenna Graduate Fellowship	2021-22
Stanford Outstanding Teaching Award	Spring 2021
George Shultz Graduate Research Fellowship \$12,500	2021
Stanford Outstanding Teaching Award	Winter 2021
Stanford IRiSS Research Data Grant \$2,000	2020
Stanford IRiSS Center for Computational Social Science Grant \$1,500	2020
Stanford Economics First-Year Ph.D. Fellowship	2018
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, Honorable Mention	2018
Ferrando Honors Prize, University of Michigan Economics Department	2015
Sims Honors Scholarship, University of Michigan Economics Department	2015
Gerald Ford Public Service Prize, University of Michigan	2015
Outstanding Achievement in Math, University of Michigan Math Department	2015

TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

ECON 43: Introduction to Financial Decision-Making	Spring 2021
Outstanding TA Award	
ECON 144: Family and Society	Winter 2021
Outstanding TA Award	
ECON 1: Principles of Economics	Fall 2020
Research Assistant for Professor Caroline Hoxby	2019 - 2020

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Engineering Intern - Core Data Science, Meta Menlo Park, CA	<i>2021</i>
Senior Research Analyst, The Brattle Group Washington, DC	<i>2015 - 2018</i>

SERVICE

Advanced Tax Preparer , IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	<i>2015 - 2021</i>
President , Stanford Graduate LGBTQ+ Affinity Group (GradQ)	<i>2019 - 2022</i>
Applied Economics Workshop Coordinator , Stanford Economics Department	<i>2020 - 2022</i>
Social Chair, Admitted Student Day Liaison , Stanford Economics Department	<i>2019 - 2020</i>

CITIZENSHIP

United States