James Okun

jokun@mit.edu • website • (561) 558-6448

Education

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA • 2022-Present

Candidate for Ph.D. in Economics

Ph.D. Coursework: IO I, IO II, Advanced Topics in IO, Public Finance, Market Design

Brown University, Magna cum laude

Providence, RI • 2016-2020

Bachelor of Science with Honors in Applied Mathematics-Economics

Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science

Ph.D. Coursework: Micro Theory I, Micro Theory II, Bayesian and Structural Econometrics, Applied Econometrics

Publications

Pandemic Schooling Mode and Student Test Scores: Evidence from U.S. School Districts

The American Economic Review: Insights, forthcoming (with Emily Oster, Rebecca Jack, and Clare Halloran)

Press Coverage: The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post

NBER working paper 29497

The NBER Digest No. 1. January 2022

Working Papers and Data

Bargaining in the Presence of Unsophisticated Agents: The Case of Medicare Part B

Developing a bargaining model between PBMs and manufacturers for physician-administered drugs in which a share of insurers are unsophisticated to understand the effects of unsophisticated agents on equilibrium outcomes.

Selection in Mobility Data

Investigating the econometric implications of using mobility data which is selected on movement (with Emily Oster)

Newspaper Membership in the U.S. Congressional Press Galleries 1875-1939

Digitized data from historical copies of the Congressional Directory.

Research Experience

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA • 2020-2022

Pre-doctoral Research Fellow to Professor Amy Finkelstein in the Economics Department

- Provided research assistance on a project studying the productivity and quality of skilled nursing facilities and **estimated structural models** of nursing home value added
- Worked on a project studying the quality of Medicare Part D plans offered to low-income beneficiaries

Brown University Providence, RI • 2017-2020

The Effect of Transparency on Political Behavior: Evidence from the U.S. Congressional Press Galleries

June 2019 - June 2020

- Economics Honors Thesis Advised by Professor Jesse Shapiro
- Digitized historical copies of the *Congressional Directory* using state of the art **deep learning based OCR** to analyze novel data on press gallery membership in the U.S. Congress from 1875-1939
- Using text from historical newspapers, I find entry into the press gallery **meaningfully changes coverage of Congress**, but said coverage does not impact the way in which politicians speak (as judged from language in the *Congressional Record*)

Research Assistant to Professor Emily Oster in the Economics Department

June 2018-January 2020

- Scripted in R and Stata to clean data and visualize the results of regression analysis
- · Made use of natural language processing techniques to automate the summarization of ACOG practice bulletins

Research Assistant to Professor Arthur Salomon in the Biochemistry Department

June 2017-August 2019

- Created a novel machine learning technique to predict accuracy of LC-MS relative quantitative data
- **Supervised the projects** of 3 other undergraduate researchers

Teaching Experience

Brown University Providence, RI • 2018-2020

Teaching Assistant

- Undergraduate Real Analysis (MATH 1010 Spring 2019 and Spring 2020)
- Undergraduate Mathematical Econometrics (ECON 1630 Spring 2020)
- Undergraduate and **Graduate** Deep Learning (CSCI 1470/2470 Fall 2019)
- **Graduate** Statistics for Program Evaluation (MPA 2040 Summer 2019)
- Undergraduate Multivariable Calculus (MATH 0180 Fall 2018)

Professional Service

• Referee for the American Economic Review: Insights

Leadership

Tink Knit 501(c)3

Providence, RI • 2017- 2019

President

- Led a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a staff of 40 plus individuals teaching low-income women in Providence to make knitwear that earned them income
- Created an e-commerce platform to increase sales and spread awareness about our organization

Meiklejohn Peer Adviser

Providence, RI • September 2017-June 2019

Peer Adviser

· Advised first-year Brown students as they started college

Honors and Awards

- · Outstanding Thesis Award in Economics
- Inducted into the Rhode Island Chapter of Omicron Delta Epsilon
- Pathfinder Scholarship in Mathematics

Languages and Technical Skills

Technical: Stata, R, Python, Matlab

Languages: English (native) and French (basic conversational proficiency)