# **James Okun**

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**Education** 

Brown University, Magna cum laude, Honors in Economics

Providence, RI • 2016-2020

Bachelor of Science with Honors in Applied Mathematics-Economics

Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science

# **Working Papers and Data**

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

NBER Working Paper 29497, November 2021 (with Emily Oster, Rebecca Jack, and Clare Halloran)

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 • June 2020-June 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 • June 2017-June 2020

The Effect of Transparency on Political Speech: 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 • September 2018-June 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 • September 2017-June 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, 2020
- Inducted into the Rhode Island Chapter of Omicron Delta Epsilon, 2020
- · Pathfinder Scholarship in Mathematics, 2016

### **Languages and Technical Skills**

Technical: Stata, R, Python, Matlab

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