

JOHN W. BARRY

August 2024

Rice University
Jones Graduate School of Business
6100 Main Street MS 531
Houston, TX 77005

Email: john.w.barry@rice.edu
Office: (+1) 713-348-6242
Mobile: (+1) 346-228-2292
Web: <https://johnwbarry.info/>

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Rice University, Jones Graduate School of Business

Houston, TX

Assistant Professor of Finance

2024-

EDUCATION

Duke University, Fuqua School of Business

Durham, NC

PhD, Finance

2018-2024

Barcelona School of Economics

Barcelona, Spain

MS, International Trade, Finance and Development (ITFD)

2015-2016

Trinity College Dublin

Dublin, Ireland

BA, Philosophy, Politics, Economics & Sociology (PPES)

2009-2013

WORKING PAPERS

Shareholder Voice and Executive Compensation

Job market paper (December 2023) [Latest version, SSRN](#)

Managerial influence on the Board of Directors induces an agency problem in the design of executive compensation. I evaluate the role of shareholder voice in disciplining compensation practices by estimating a model of CEO compensation with non-binding shareholder approval votes (Say-on-Pay). The Board sets CEO pay and is biased towards a high wage; shareholders can fail the Say-on-Pay (SOP) and punish the Board for overpayment. Failed votes are perceived as costly by both the Board and shareholders: a cost of 2.06% (0.76%) of value for the Board (shareholders) is sufficient to match the data. SOP thus resembles a costly punishment mechanism and the disciplining effect on compensation increases firm value by 4.6% on average. Empirical evidence suggests the Board cost is a career and reputation concern for directors, and shareholders internalize a cost to dissenting from the Board on a prominent policy. I construct a counterfactual SOP mechanism which emulates giving a focal shareholder an advisory seat on the Board; this lowers the SOP failure rate, decreases wages and further increases firm value.

Human Capital and Mobility in the Executive Labor Market

with Noah Lyman and Lin Zhao (August 2024)

We estimate a search model of executive careers, allowing for general and firm-specific human capital accumulation, firm and executive heterogeneity, and both internal and external CEO promotions. We decompose managerial wage growth into contributions from general and firm-specific human capital accumulation, and job search. Beyond a level impact on wages, firm-specific human capital also impacts executive mobility (within and across jobs): as firm-specific skill increases, managers are less likely to switch firms, but are more likely to see upward revisions in the contract via search-driven renegotiation with their incumbent firm. This effect arises as firm-specific human capital increases the match-specific quality between the manager and firm over tenure.

Project Development with Delegated Bargaining: The Role of Elevated Hurdle Rates

with Bruce Carlin, Alan Crane and John Graham (March 2024) [SSRN](#)

During project development, costs are endogenously determined through delegated bargaining with counterparties. In surveys, nearly 80% of CFOs report using an elevated hurdle rate, the implications of which we explore in a delegated bargaining model. We show that elevated hurdle rates can convey a bargaining advantage that exceeds the opportunity cost of forgone projects, whether hurdle rate buffers arise for strategic or non-strategic reasons. Using CFO survey data, we find buffer use is negatively related to the cost of capital and ex ante bargaining power, consistent with the model, and that realized returns exhibit “beat the hurdle rate benchmark” behavior.

PUBLICATIONS

Corporate Flexibility in a Time of Crisis

with Murillo Campello, John Graham and Yueran Ma (June 2022)

[Journal of Financial Economics](#)

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

2024: Toulouse School of Economics, CEMFI, Cornell University, Notre Dame University, Rice University, Ohio State University, UMass Amherst, MIT Sloan, Boston College, University of Maryland, Vanderbilt University, UVA Darden, MFA, Eastern Finance, Aarhus Strategic Interactions Workshop, Lone Star Finance Symposium[†], UTD Finance Conference[†]

2023: AFA, LBS TADC, Inter-Finance PhD Seminar, Duke IO lunch, Fuqua, Olin Finance Conference PhD Poster Session, Boca Finance Conference

2020-2022: AFA, ITAM Finance Conference, Fuqua (×3) [†] = scheduled

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor	Rice University
Advanced Corporate Finance (Undergraduate)	2025-
Advanced Corporate Finance (Evening MBA)	2025-
Head Teaching Assistant	Duke University
Corporate Finance (MBA)	2019-2023
Empirical Methods in Corporate Finance (PhD)	2019-2023
Pre-PhD	International House Dublin & Huelva
English Teacher	2013-2015

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Python, Julia, R, SQL, Stata, SAS, Git

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Referee: American Economic Review: Insights, Journal of Human Capital