

# Kristin Vrona

Curriculum Vitae  
October 2024

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## EDUCATION

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Ph.D., Economics	Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL	Expected January 2025
	Dissertation: <i>Dissertation Title: "An Analysis of Labor Supply Variations and Mental Health"</i>	
M.A., Economics	Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL	2018
B.S., Economics	<i>summa cum laude</i> , Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL	2016

Fields: Econometrics, health economics, labor economics

## EMPLOYMENT

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Graduate Research Fellow 2022 - 2024  
Institute for the Study of the Environment, Sustainability, and Energy (IESE), Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL

- Project sponsor: Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); project value: \$1.35 million
- Evaluated grant proposals, awarding \$59 million
- Consulted IDNR on improving the scoring process delegating funding to parks projects

Instructional Teaching Assistant | Teaching Assistant 2017 - 2022  
Department of Economics, Northern Illinois University DeKalb, IL

- Designed and taught undergraduate Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 261) curriculum for 3 semesters
- Led weekly recitation sessions for graduate Microeconomic Analysis I (ECON 660 IOR: Dr. Anna Klis); graded homework and exams
- Graded assignments, providing productive feedback; proctored and graded exams; provided one-on-one tutoring
- Acted as Assistant Undergraduate Academic Advisor under Dr. Tammy Batson); tracked student progress and held additional office hours for at-risk students; updated Department of Economics pamphlets, fliers

Cost Savings & Operations Analyst 2016 - 2017  
M.O.L America, Inc. Chicago, IL

- Improved capital flow and cost forecasting accuracy for by 5-8% within 3 months
- Presented updated capital movement and cost projections to upper-management monthly
- Received MOL Spot Award in June 2017 for automating database queries and resolving vendor billing disputes leading to major cost savings

## AWARDS, HONORS, & FELLOWSHIPS

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2023 Honoree, Illinois congressional session (February 28) & gubernatorial press conference (March 1): *IESE team recognized for spearheading grant review funding allocations*

2022	Dissertation Fellowship, Northern Illinois University: <i>runner-up, receiving tuition waiver for year 2022-2023</i>
2018	Outstanding Graduate Student Award, Northern Illinois University
2017	MOL Spot Award, MOL America, Inc., June
2017	Kellstadt Graduate Scholarship, DePaul University Kellstadt Graduate School of Business: <i>declined</i>
2016	Departmental Honors in Economics, Northern Illinois University
2014-2016	Dean's List, Northern Illinois University
2012-2013	Academic Excellence List, Northern Illinois University

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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2024	Retirement Confidence Survey: Results and Insight Webinar, Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI), June 25
2024	EBRI & American Benefits Council: 2024 Spring Policy Forum. Event description: feature new research and panel discussions about ERISA-enabled employee benefits innovation and plan sponsor views on ERISA preemption, May 16
2024	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative: Human Subjects Research Training, February 22
2023	IDNR & Federal DNR Collaboration Meeting, February 27-28
2023	Primary Grant Reviewer, Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Program, IDNR
2022	The Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) Mentorship Seminar: <i>selected based on submitted dissertation abstract.</i>
2020	CSWEP Successfully Navigating Your Economics PhD, November 20
2019	Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago 12th Annual Risk Conference
2019	Department of Economics ECONference, April
2017	NIU Department of Economics ECONference, April 26

## DEPARTMENTAL & UNIVERSITY SERVICE

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2019	Academic Advisor, NIU Transfer Student Open House Days, October 18 & November 11
2019	Department Representative, NIU Major and Minors Fair, September 18
2018	Academic Advisor, NIU Transfer Student Open House Days, October 8 & November 12
2018	Academic Advisor, NIU Transfer Student Open House Days, March
2018	Co-Organizer & Department Representative, NIU Spring Internship & Job Fair, February 20

## Presentations & Talks

2022	Paper presented: Labor Productivity and Health, ECON 700: Labor Economics I, NIU Department of Economics, November 27
2021	Paper Presented: Moderate to Severe Diagnosed Mental Disorders and Absenteeism, NIU Department of Economics Graduate Colloquium Seminar, March 24
2019	Topic: A Unilateral Model of Externalities, ECON 750: Public Economics I, NIU Department of Economics
2018	Paper Presented: Mental Health & Labor Supply, NIU Department of Economics Graduate Colloquium Seminar, November 23

## SELECTED PAPERS

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### Manuscripts in Preparation

*Labor Supply Dynamics Among Employed Workers with Mental Illness* (job market paper)

This paper investigates the influence of mental illness on health-dependent labor supply using data from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) focusing on employed adults. It examines the effects of diagnosed mental illness and self-reported measures of mental well-being on health-induced absenteeism, considering job characteristics' role in amplifying or mitigating this impact. Results reveal a robust estimate of an additional day of absence per year attributed to mental illness or related symptoms. Furthermore, the study finds that employer-sponsored health benefits, while generally increasing absenteeism by promoting labor substitution for health-related needs, serve to alleviate the impact of mental illness on absenteeism. Notably, individuals reporting high mental distress alongside an official diagnosis exhibit lower absenteeism compared to cohorts with equivalent distress levels but no diagnostic history, eluding to the importance of promoting mental well-being among workers for firms aiming to optimize long run productivity.

### In Progress

*Mental Health Shocks and Productive Barriers*

*Employment Effects on Mental Health and Mental Effects on Employment*

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Proficient** in R & SAS; **Familiar** with STATA

**Proficient** in Microsoft Office — **advanced** use of Excel for data refinement and visualization with customized VBA macros

**L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X**(expert)

**Intermediate** knowledge of Python

**Coursework** in Java, C<sup>++</sup>, Maple, Matlab

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Graduate

Public Sector Economics

F20 | IOR: Anna Klis

Microeconomic Analysis

SP20, F18 | IOR: Anna Klis

**Undergraduate** *Instructor of Record*, Principles of Macroeconomics

SU22, SU21, SP21

Intermediate Macroeconomics

SP22 | IOR: Evan Anderson

Econometric Analysis

F21 | IOR: Maria Ponomareva

Economics of Government & Business

SP19 | IOR: Tammy Batson:

## REFERENCES

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### Dissertation Committee Members

**Virginia Wilcox**

Assistant Chair, Department of Economics

Northern Illinois University

Email: [vlw@niu.edu](mailto:vlw@niu.edu)

**Maria Ponomareva**

Department of Economics

Northern Illinois University

Email:

[mponomareva@niu.edu](mailto:mponomareva@niu.edu)

**Anna Klis**

Department of Economics

Northern Illinois University

Email: [aklis@niu.edu](mailto:aklis@niu.edu)

## **Other References**

### **Thomas Skuzinski**

Director, Institute for the Study of the Environment, Sustainability & Energy

Northern Illinois University

Email: [tskuzinski@niu.edu](mailto:tskuzinski@niu.edu)