

Matthew Estes

Caltech, Department of Social Sciences
1200 E California Blvd, MC 228-77
Pasadena, CA 91125

Website: matt-estes.com
Email: mestes@caltech.edu

Education

California Institute of Technology, Ph.D. Candidate in Economics (2021–present)
Ph.D. expected May 2026

Dissertation Committee: Mike Alvarez, Jim Greiner, Jonathan Katz, Bob Sherman

The University of Chicago Law School, J.D., *with Honors* (2021)

Honors: Kirkland & Ellis Scholar

Activities: Poverty & Housing Law Clinic, Kirkland & Ellis Corporate Lab Clinic,
Teaching Assistant (Prof. Lisa Bernstein)

Harvard University, A.B. in Mathematics, *cum laude* (2018)

Honors: Phi Beta Kappa, John Harvard Scholar, National Merit Scholar,
Language Citation (Chinese)

Research & Teaching Areas

Primary: Property, Housing Law, Land Use, Law & Economics, Empirical Legal Studies

Secondary: Contracts, Business Law, Administrative Law

Working Papers

Housing & Eviction

1. “[Eviction Reduction Policies](#)” (Job Market Paper)

- (a) Abstract: Eviction is a leading cause of housing instability in California cities. Yet comprehensive strategies to prevent and reduce evictions are lacking. Empirical work quantifying how and how much these policies causally effect eviction outcomes is therefore needed. Using data on LA County eviction filings, this paper empirically examines how court-based procedural policies impact eviction via the tenant cost channel. By exploiting time variation in court policy, this paper quantifies the extent to which courts effect default outcomes. I show that although distance-to-court is an important tenant cost influencing eviction in LA County, reforms to the number of courts may only have limited effects on eviction outcomes. The findings highlight the need for both short-term and long-term strategies to address the eviction and affordable housing crises.

2. “Justice Divided, Justice Denied? The Effects of Court Rules on Eviction Outcomes in Los Angeles County” (with Kyle Nelson)
3. “Regression Discontinuity Designs: Applications to Eviction and Property”

Legal Academy & Courts

1. “Courting the Academy: The Judicial Role in Popularizing Legal Scholarship” (with Ransi Clark)
2. “Parallel Lifecycles: Applications to Approval Ratings, Citations, and Judicial Ideology” (with Ransi Clark)
3. “Law and Education: The Law School Curriculum and Elite Judges, 1870-1930”

Works in Progress

1. Zoning Los Angeles: The Effect of Upzoning LA City on Eviction
2. Property Crime and Housing in Chicago, 1870-1930
3. Legal Realism in *Amicus* Briefs: A Challenge to Natural Law Theory from Legal Practice
4. Measuring Ideological Responses to SCOTUS Decisions (with Melina Much, Danny Ebanks, and Mike Alvarez)

Conferences and Presentations

Caltech Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy, “The Dismantling of the Regulatory State” (Dec 2025) (Conference Co-Organizer)

Canadian Law & Economics Association Annual Conference (Oct 2025)

UChicago Law Teaching Conference (June 2025)

Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, “Causal Inference” session (Apr 2025)

Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, “Observational Causal Inference” session (Apr 2025)

Other Funding and Awards

Adam Smith Fellowship, Mercatus Center at GMU (2025-2026)

Haynes Lindley Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, Haynes Foundation (2023-2024)

- Award of \$26,000

Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University (2016)

Teaching Experience

Teaching at Caltech

Teaching Assistant: PS 12 “Introduction to Political Science” (Winter 2025)
Teaching Assistant: EC 122 “Econometrics” (Fall 2024)
Teaching Assistant: PS 141B “A History of Budgetary Politics in the U.S.” (Spring 2024)
Teaching Assistant: PS 123 “The Politics of Regulation” (Winter 2023, Spring 2024)
Teaching Assistant: PS 141A “A History of Budgetary Politics in the U.S.” (Winter 2023)
Teaching Assistant: Math 6A/106A “Introduction to Discrete Mathematics” (Fall 2022)

Teaching at University of Chicago

Grader: Math 27300 “Basic Theory of Ordinary Differential Equations” (Winter 2020)
Grader: Math 19620 “Linear Algebra” (Fall 2019)

Teaching at Harvard University

Teaching Assistant: Math 110 “Vector Space Methods for Differential Equations” (Spring 2017, Spring 2018)
Teaching Assistant: Math 23a “Linear Algebra and Real Analysis I” (Fall 2016, Fall 2017)
Teaching Fellow: Math S-1A “Calculus I” (Summer 2016, Summer 2017)
Teaching Assistant: Math 21b “Linear Algebra and Differential Equations” (Spring 2016)

Other Experience

Legal Aid Chicago, *Housing Practice Group*, Chicago, IL (Jan 2020–Oct 2020)

Skills

R, Julia, Python, Mathematica, Stan, LaTeX

References

R. Michael Alvarez

Flintridge Foundation Professor of Political and Computational Social Science
California Institute of Technology
626-395-4228
rma@caltech.edu

Lisa Bernstein

Wilson-Dickinson Professor of Law
The University of Chicago Law School
773-834-2881
lbernste@uchicago.edu

D. James Greiner

The Honorable S. William Green Professor of Public Law
Harvard Law School
617-496-4643
jgreiner@law.harvard.edu

William H.J. Hubbard

Deputy Dean & Harry N. Wyatt Professor of Law
The University of Chicago Law School
773-702-9494
whubbard@uchicago.edu

Jonathan N. Katz

Kay Sugahara Professor of Social Sciences and Statistics
California Institute of Technology
626-395-4191
jkatz@caltech.edu

Brian Leiter

Karl N. Llewellyn Professor of Jurisprudence
The University of Chicago Law School
773-702-0953
bleiter@uchicago.edu

Robert Sherman

Professor of Economics and Statistics
California Institute of Technology
626-395-4337
sherman@caltech.edu

Last updated: August 2025