

Matthew Spitzer Brooks

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EDUCATION *Ph.D.*, Agricultural and Resource Economics
University of California, Davis, *in progress*

M.S., Agricultural and Resource Economics
University of California, Davis, 2024

B.A., Economics and Religion, *summa cum laude*
Middlebury College, 2017

PUBLICATIONS *Peer reviewed:*

- “A Taste for Taxes: Minimizing Distortions Using Political Preferences.” 2019. *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 180, p. 104055. With Andrea Robbett and Emiliano Huet-Vaughn. [Link](#).

Working papers:

- “Evaluating the Impact of Physical and Human Capital Augmentation to Drive Small Business Growth in Kenya.” 2021. Nairobi, Kenya: Busara Center for Behavioral Economics. Working Paper. With Jeremy Shapiro and Chaning Jang.
- “Public Attitudes on Setting Limits in End of Life Care: On the Costs of Not Talking about the Costs.” 2020. Nairobi, Kenya: Busara Center for Behavioral Economics. Working Paper. With Jeremy Shapiro, Geoffrey Rees, and Daniel Brauner.

Reports at Mathematica Policy Research:

- “Maternal Health Care Quality Improvement in Rajasthan, India: Insights from a Development Impact Bond Verification Agent.” 2021. Washington, DC: Mathematica. With So O’Neil, Divya Vohra, Shveta Kalyanwala, and Dana Rotz. [Link](#).
- “Jordan Refugee Livelihoods Development Impact Bond Evaluation Framework.” 2021. Washington, DC: Mathematica. With Evan Borkum, Paolo Abarcar, and Laura Meyer. [Link](#).
- “Maternal Health Care Quality and Outcomes Under the Utkrisht Impact Bond: Midline Findings and Insights.” 2020. Washington, DC: Mathematica. With So O’Neil, Divya Vohra, Dana Rotz, and Shveta Kalyanwala. [Link](#).
- “Evaluation of the Liberia Power Compact’s Mt. Coffee Hydropower Plant Rehabilitation and Capacity Building and Sector Reform: Baseline and Interim Findings.” 2020. Washington, DC: Mathematica. With Candace Miller, et al. [Link](#).

EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Researcher for Dr. Travis Lybbert 2024–present
University of California, Davis

- Analyze data from pilot study of collective marketing app for small-scale goat producers and cooperatives in Nepal.
- Support revision of grant proposal informed by findings from pilot.
- Lay groundwork for baseline data collection with goat farmers, agricultural workers, and cooperative managers in Nepal.
- Coordinate with Heifer Nepal to ensure implementation of goat marketing facilitation adheres to RCT design.

Graduate Student Researcher for Dr. Ashish Shenoy 2023–2024
University of California, Davis

- Leveraged Global Agro-ecological Zones Data to investigate the spatial impacts of agricultural research and development.
- Developed Python scripts to clean and analyze large spatial datasets (hundreds of millions of observations).

Research Analyst 2018–2022
Mathematica Policy Research, Cambridge, MA

- Evaluated social programs using experimental, quasi-experimental, and mixed-methods designs to uncover insights for federal government and private foundation clients in the energy infrastructure, health, nutrition, education, and agricultural sectors in India, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Jordan, Indonesia, and Nepal.
- Analyzed large survey and administrative datasets (8 mil.+ observations) using advanced techniques in Stata and R.
- Managed budgets and tracked expenses of multi-year program evaluations that range from \$1 mil. to \$5 mil.
- Won new work for the company by contributing to business proposal development for contracts over \$700k.

Policy and Communications Associate 2017–2018
Innovations for Poverty Action, New Haven, CT

- Summarized the results of IPA’s research for policymakers in two-page digests of technical academic papers.

Research Assistant for Dr. Jeremy P. Shapiro 2016–2017
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

- Managed research for grant investigating health care at end of life. Invited to be co-author on paper.
- Conducted literature review of 80+ articles, designed survey, managed IRB relationship. Drafted pre-analysis plan. Collected, cleaned, and analyzed data from 2,000 respondents. Created tables for publication.

Research Assistant for Dr. Jeremy P. Shapiro 2016, 2017
Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Nairobi, Kenya

- Supported the design and implementation of a 1,500 sample size RCT in Nairobi; invited to be co-author on paper. Oversaw entire research process: developed survey instrument, ensured high-quality data collection, supervising field team of 12. Cleaned and analyzed data, created tables for publication.
- Implemented protocol for 2 NIH-funded, 480 subject lab studies investigating impact of stress on self-efficacy, executive function, and temporal discounting.

AWARDS

SurveyCTO Primary Data Collection Research Grant Honorable Mention, 2024
Henry A. Jastro Graduate Research Award, \$3,000, UC Davis, 2024
ARE Graduate Summer Research Fellowship, \$4,000, UC Davis, 2024
Provost's Fellowship in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, UC Davis, 2022
Phi Beta Kappa, Middlebury College, 2017
Highest Honors in Economics, Middlebury College, 2017
Highest Honors in Religion, Middlebury College, 2017
Religion Departmental Prize, Middlebury College, 2017
Kellogg Fellow, \$5,000 grant for senior thesis, Middlebury College, 2016

**PRESENT-
ATIONS**

University of Colorado Boulder Environmental & Resource Economics Workshop,
September 2024

ADDITIONAL

Technical skills: Python, R, Stata, MATLAB, Julia, Google Earth Engine; L^AT_EX
In-person fieldwork: Kenya, Nepal, Liberia.

Last updated: December 20, 2024