

# Neil Duzett

*PhD Candidate*

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## Education

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|--|---------------------------|
| PhD in Economics, Texas A&M University<br>Committee: Andrew Barr (Chair), Jonathan Meer, Steven Puller, Joanna Lahey | Expected Spring 2026      |
| Pre-Doc at BYU Record Linking Lab  | Spring 2020 – Spring 2021 |
| BA in Economics and Mathematics, Brigham Young University  | Spring 2020               |

## Fields of research

Applied microeconomics – Public, Labor, Political economy

## Papers under review

“Intergenerational Transmission of Lifespan in the U.S.” with Sandra Black, Adriana Lleras-Muney, Nolan Pope, and Joseph Price  
(Revise and resubmit at *American Economic Review*)

“Detecting Fake People in Historical Records” with Tammy Hepps and Joseph Price  
(Conditionally accepted at *Social Science History*)

“The Composition of Power: Gender Penalties in Close Elections”  
(Under review at *Journal of Public Economics*)

## Job market paper

“Diversity’s Impact on Group Communication and Effectiveness: Evidence from U.S. City Councils”

*Abstract:* The debate surrounding diversity in organizations has intensified in recent years, spurred by claims that it enhances group decision-making and performance. Yet despite significant attention and investment, evidence on diversity’s effects, its channels, and how these depend on group characteristics remains limited. This paper provides new

evidence on diversity in the U.S. city council setting. Leveraging quasi-random victories in close elections between different-race candidates, I use a regression discontinuity design to estimate the impact of racial diversity on city council communication and effectiveness. Applying natural language topic modeling and sentiment analysis techniques to 17,000 city council meeting transcripts, I show that diversity shifts council discussion topics, and also heightens communication frictions – increasing negativity in council meetings by 66%. Consistent with predictions from existing theories and experiments on diversity in groups of varying sizes, diversity's effect on communication frictions is particularly strong in smaller councils. These competing communication effects and heterogeneity by council size are reflected in diversity's effects on incumbent vote shares, a measure of council effectiveness. Diversity improves future vote shares by 6.7 points in large councils, with little to no effect for smaller councils. Together, these results suggest that diversity's impact on communication plays a key role in determining the effectiveness of diverse groups.

## **Works in progress**

“The Effects of Risky Financial Behavior as an Undergraduate: Sports Betting and Academic Performance” with Maxwell Bullard

“The Impact of Individual Debt Forgiveness: Evidence from the Texas Driver Responsibility Program”

## **Teaching experience**

### Instructor of record

*Texas A&M University*

Contemporary Economic Issues (ECON 465)

Spring 2025

Hullabaloo U (ECON 285)

Fall 2023

### Teaching assistant

*Texas A&M University*

Public Economics I (ECON 603)

Fall 2025

Data Science for Economic and Social Issues (ECON 470)

Fall 2025

Economics of Education (ECON 328)

Fall 2024

Intro to Econometrics (ECMT 463)

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

Principles of Economics (ECON 202)

Summer 2023

Economic Data Analysis (ECMT 461)

Fall 2022 – Spring 2023

Economics of Crime (ECON 421)

Spring 2022

*Brigham Young University*

Intermediate Price Theory II (ECON 382)

Spring 2018 – Fall 2018

Economic Principles and Problems (ECON 110)

Spring 2017 – Spring 2018

**Research assistance**

Research Assistant, Prof. Joseph Price  
*Brigham Young University*

2018-2020

**Presentations**

Southern Economics Association Conference  
Texas Applied Microeconomics Student Workshop  
Texas Applied Microeconomics Student Workshop  
Mountain West Economic History Conference

Fall 2025  
Spring 2025  
Spring 2024  
Spring 2023