

Neil Duzett

PhD Candidate

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Education

PhD in Economics, Texas A&M University 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*)

“The Composition of Power: Gender Penalties in Close Elections”
(Under review)

Job market paper

“Does Diversity Improve Group Performance? 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 enhances information exchange, but also heightens communication frictions – increasing negativity in council meetings by 66%. These competing communication effects are strongly associated with diversity’s effects on two different measures of council effectiveness: council diversity increases local house prices by 3% within one election term, and improves incumbent vote shares by 6.7 points. These effects are driven by councils with low communication frictions, suggesting that 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 Andrew Barr and 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

2018-2020

Brigham Young University

Presentations

Southern Economics Association Conference

Fall 2025

Texas Applied Microeconomics Student Workshop

Spring 2025

Texas Applied Microeconomics Student Workshop

Spring 2024

Mountain West Economic History Conference

Spring 2023