

ALI NIAZI

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Energy and Environmental Economics, Empirical Industrial Organization, Applied Microeconomics

DOCTORAL STUDIES

Ph.D. in Economics — University of Calgary

Expected completion 2026

Dissertation: Essays in Energy and Environmental Economics

Dissertation Committee and References:

Blake Shaffer (Supervisor)

Department of Economics, University of Calgary
blake.shaffer@ucalgary.ca

David Brown

Department of Economics, University of Alberta
dpbrown@ualberta.ca

Erica Myers

Department of Economics, University of Calgary
erica.myers@ucalgary.ca

Lucija Muehlenbachs

Department of Economics, University of Calgary
lmuehlen@ucalgary.ca

PRIOR EDUCATION

M.Sc. in Economics — Sharif University of Technology

2020

B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering — Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

2016

WORKING PAPERS

Renewable Expansion and Strategic Behavior in Restructured Electricity Markets (Job Market Paper)

Do Gasoline Prices Influence Electric Vehicle Usage? Evidence from the U.S.

with Blake Shaffer

Electric Vehicle Charging and Driving Behavior

with David Brown, Blake Shaffer, and Mallika Sharma

The Reproducibility and Robustness of Economics and Political Science (R&R, Nature)

with Abel Brodeur, Derek Mikola, Nikolai Cook, Lenka Fiala, et al.

PUBLICATIONS

Ali Ebrahim Nejad, Saeid Hoseinzade, and Ali Niazi (2024). “Credit Rating Agencies During the Credit Crunch.” *Review of Financial Economics* 42: 124–147. [doi:10.1002/rfe.1192](https://doi.org/10.1002/rfe.1192)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant — University of Calgary 2021–2025
with Blake Shaffer (2023–2025); Scott Taylor (2021–2023); Trevor Tombe (2022); Aidan Hollis (2022)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record — University of Calgary 2024, 2025
Computer Applications in Economics (ECON 311)

Teaching Assistant — University of Calgary 2021–2024
Principles of Microeconomics (3 terms); Macroeconomics II (2 terms); Engineering Economics (1 term);
Computer Applications in Economics (6 terms)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Market Fundamentals Analyst — Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) 2025–present
Research Analyst (Part-time) — Energy Futures Lab 2024–2025
Research Analyst (Part-time) — Smart Prosperity Institute 2024–2025

HONORS & AWARDS

Eyes High International Doctoral Scholarship (CAD \$15,000), University of Calgary 2025
Doctoral Research Scholarship, University of Calgary 2023–2025
International Tuition Award, University of Calgary 2020–2025
Macroeconomics Prize, University of Calgary 2021
Economics Scholarship, Agricultural Bank of Iran 2017–2018
Excellence Scholarship, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad 2015

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

2025: Canadian Economics Association Annual Conference (Montreal); Electricity Lunch Research Seminar (Calgary)
2024: Canadian Economics Association (Toronto); Environmental Econ Workshop (London, ON); Electricity Lunch Research Seminar (Calgary)
2023: Canadian Economics Association (Winnipeg); Canadian Resource and Environmental Economics Association (Winnipeg)

SERVICE

Referee, *Canadian Journal of Economics* 2024
Researcher, Net Zero Electricity Research Initiative 2022–present
Co-organizer, Grid Forward Conference 2024
Co-organizer, Electricity Camp in the Rockies 2023–2025
Co-founder, Graduate Economics Buddy Program 2022–2024
VP Finance, Economics Graduate Association 2023–2024

SKILLS

Programming & Tools: R, Stata, Python, MATLAB, L^AT_EX
Languages: English (Fluent), Persian (Native)

ABSTRACTS

Renewable Expansion and Strategic Behavior in Restructured Electricity Markets

Job Market Paper

This paper quantifies how wind and solar expansion shape wholesale prices, market power, and generator profitability. Using data from Alberta's energy-only market, I construct an hourly cost-based competitive benchmark and decompose observed price movements into cost and markup components. Theoretically, zero-marginal-cost renewables owned by fringe, price-taking firms lower competitive prices, while under imperfect competition, the response of markup above the competitive price is ambiguous. Empirically, I show that wind lowers prices in every hour, with roughly 40% of the decline from markup compression. Solar reduces midday prices and markups but raises prices in the morning and evening as capacity tightens, with roughly one-third of those ramp-hour increases reflecting higher markups. Accounting for intraday spillovers, wind remains pro-competitive across the day, whereas solar's predictable ramps shift the scope for market power into morning and evening hours. Counterfactual capacity additions indicate a shift in value from energy to flexibility. Inframarginal rents for renewables and baseload combined-cycle units fall, while scarcity rents concentrate into fewer hours that favor fast-ramping units and storage. Wind increases consumer welfare via lower markups, while solar's ramp-hour markup increases partially offset midday gains. Importantly, adding zero-marginal-cost supply is not, by itself, a cure for market power. Robust market design and flexible resources are essential to keep decarbonizing grids competitive and reliable.

Do Gasoline Prices Influence Electric Vehicle Usage? Evidence from the U.S.

with Blake Shaffer

This paper examines how households with electric vehicles (EVs) adjust their charging and driving behaviors in response to short-term fluctuations in gasoline prices. Using a novel dataset of over 5,000 battery EVs across the U.S. from 2021-2022, we find that a 1% increase in gasoline prices is associated with a 0.35% rise in average daily EV miles traveled. This response is significantly stronger in areas with greater access to charging infrastructure, particularly DC fast chargers. We argue that this behavior primarily results from intra-household substitution within multi-vehicle households owning both EVs and internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEVs), where higher fuel costs shift miles between vehicles. Higher gasoline prices also increase the share of away-from-home charging, suggesting EV owners found new charging opportunities in response to higher gasoline prices. These results suggest that carbon taxes could increase EV usage, but their effectiveness depends on complementary investments in charging infrastructure. Our findings inform policies that leverage price incentives to reduce transportation emissions.

Electric Vehicle Charging and Driving Behavior

with David Brown, Blake Shaffer, and Mallika Sharma

In this paper, we examine the charging and driving behavior from over 6000 electric vehicles from 14 metropolitan areas across the U.S., for over 2.3 million charging sessions and 3.3 million driving trips. The study investigates when and where people charge, including the use of different charger types (level 1, level 2 or DC Fast) and the frequency of charging. We also explore the extent of EV usage and driving patterns, including annual vehicle mileage, trip length, and daily driving behavior. We observe peak midnight charging, with 66% of charging occurring at home and a mean start state-of-charge at 49%. EV users also charge four times in a typical week. They drive, on average, 16,392 km annually. They also tend to take longer trips during weekends, with an average of 46.7km per day compared to 43.5km on weekdays. These behavioral insights are critical for policy design shaping the transportation sector, charging infrastructural planning and energy management programs to support EV adoption and meet decarbonization goals.

The Reproducibility and Robustness of Economics and Political Science (R&R, Nature)
with Abel Brodeur, Derek Mikola, Nikolai Cook, Lenka Fiala, et al.

This systematic and large-scale reproduction effort provides the first evidence of the reproducibility and robustness of economics and political science fields. We reproduced and conducted robustness analysis of 110 articles recently published in leading economics and political science journals. We first find that 84% of published claims can be computationally reproduced. Second, our re-analyses lead to 79% of statistically significant estimates to remain statistically significant in the same direction. Third, the median reproduction's effect size is 100% the originally published effect size. Fourth, six independent research teams examined 12 pre-specified hypotheses about determinants of reproducibility and robustness. They found a negative relationship between reproducers' experience and reproducibility, but no relationship between reproducibility and author characteristics or data availability.