

**RILEY K. ACTON**  
Curriculum Vitae

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**EMPLOYMENT**

Assistant Professor, Miami University, Department of Economics, 2020 – present

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Research Affiliate, Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), 2021 – present  
Research Affiliate, College Crisiss Initiative, 2020 – 2023

**EDUCATION**

Ph.D., Economics, Michigan State University, 2020  
M.A., Economics, Michigan State University, 2016  
B.S., Economics & Mathematics, Ursinus College, 2015 (*summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa)

**FIELDS OF INTEREST**

Economics of Education, Labor Economics, Public Economics, Health Economics

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS**

Current & former Miami student coauthors underlined

“The Effect of Vaccine Mandates on Disease Spread: Evidence from College COVID-19 Mandates”  
(with Emily Cook, Wenjia Cao, Scott Imberman, and Michael Lovenheim). Conditionally  
accepted, *Journal of Human Resources*.

“Is a Name Change a Game Change? The Impact of College-to-University Conversions.” *Economics  
of Education Review*, 88, 2022.

“The Influence of Peer Institutions on Colleges’ Decisions: Evidence from Fall 2020 Reopening Plans”  
(with Emily Cook & Allison Luedtke). *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 195, 2022.

“Do Health Insurance Mandates Spillover to Education? Evidence from Michigan's Autism Insurance  
Mandate” (with Scott Imberman & Michael Lovenheim). *Journal of Health Economics*, 80, 2021.

“Community College Program Choices in the Wake of Local Job Losses.” *Journal of Labor  
Economics*, 39(4), 2021.

“Effects of Reduced Community College Tuition on College Choices and Degree Completion.”  
*Education Finance and Policy*, 16(3), 2021.

## WORKING PAPERS

“Returns to School Spending in Rural America: Evidence from Wisconsin’s Sparsity Aid Program” (with Cody Orr & Salem Rogers). Annenberg Institute EdWorkingPaper No. 23-724 & IZA Discussion Paper No. 15915. *Under Review*.

“Suspended from Work and School: Impacts of Layoff Events and Unemployment Insurance on Disciplinary Incidence” (with [Jo Alkhafaji-King](#) & Austin Smith). Annenberg Institute EdWorkingPaper No. 23-839 & IZA Discussion Paper No. 16423. *Under Review*.

## SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

“Political Views & College Choices in a Polarized America” (with Emily Cook)

“Distance to Opportunity: Higher Education Deserts and College Enrollment” (with Kalena Cortes & Camila Morales). Book chapter in preparation for NBER *Economics and Finances of Higher Education* project.

“Long-Run Effects of Public Investments in Higher Education Access: Evidence from the Community College Expansion Period” (with [Emma LaGuardia](#) & Gregory Niemesh)

“Inclusive Introductory Course Material to Broaden Participation in College Majors: A Randomized Curriculum Intervention” (with Peter Nencka, Carla Nietfeld, Aiday Sikhova, and Bruce Weinberg)

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITED SEMINARS

2024 (scheduled): Bates College, NBER Financing Higher Education Meeting

2023: ASSA Annual Meeting, University of Connecticut, AEFPP Annual Conference, Conference on Skills and Postsecondary Response (University of Michigan)

2022: APPAM Fall Research Conference (delayed from 2021), University of Central Oklahoma, Ohio State University, NYU Wagner, Elon University, RAND Corporation, APPAM Fall Research Conference, NBER Education Program Fall Meeting

2021: University of Memphis, University of North Texas, AEFPP Annual Conference, SOLE Annual Meetings, University of Exeter, Liberal Arts College Labor & Public Conference, WEAI Annual Conference, Kansas State University, Davidson College

2020: University of Notre Dame, Miami University, Wake Forest University, Dickinson College, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, The Brookings Institution

2019: AEFPP Annual Conference, University of Michigan H2D2 Day (poster session), University of Toledo, SOLE Annual Meetings, UM-MSU-UWO Labor Day, APPAM International Conference, APPAM Fall Research Conference, American University, University of Michigan CIERS Seminar, University of Texas at Dallas

2018: AEFPP Annual Conference, University of Michigan CIERS Seminar, APPAM Fall Research Conference

## SPONSORED RESEARCH

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, \$78,983, August 2021 – August 2022. “Impact of Sparsity Funding in State Formulas” (PI).

## AWARDS & HONORS

Creativity & Innovation Award, Miami University	2022
Honorable Mention, Jean Flannigan Outstanding Dissertation Award, AEFP	2021
University Distinguished Fellowship, MSU	2015-2020
Department of Economics Excellence-in-Teaching Award, MSU	2018
Red Cedar Award (best third-year paper), MSU	2018
Compton-Rose Prize (top graduating economics major), Ursinus College	2015

## TEACHING & ADVISING

### Courses taught at Miami University:

ECO 415/515/630, Topics in Microeconomics (S21, S22, S23, S24)  
ECO 462, Economics of Compensation (S24)  
ECO 315, Intermediate Microeconomic Theory (F20, S21, F21, S23, F23)

### Courses taught at Michigan State University:

EC 480, Analysis of Labor Markets (S19)  
EC 202, Introduction to Macroeconomics (SU17)

### M.A. thesis advising at Miami University – with initial placement:

Kailey Kraft, 2024 – in progress  
Teresa Maloney, 2023 – Deloitte (co-advisor with Peter Nencka)  
Emma LaGuardia, 2022 – Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (co-advisor with Gregory Niemesh)

### Undergraduate honors thesis advising at Miami University – with initial placement:

Maya Serrano, 2024 – in progress

## PROFESSIONAL & UNIVERSITY SERVICE

### Professional Service:

Mentor, Association for Mentoring & Inclusion in Economics (2022-2023)  
Program Committee, AEFP Annual Conference (2022, 2023)  
Program Committee, APPAM Fall Research Conference (2023)  
Session Organizer, APPAM Fall Research Conference (2018, 2019, 2022)  
External Reviewer (ad hoc) for William T. Grant Foundation

### University Service:

#### *Miami University*

Member, FSB Dean’s Faculty Advisory Committee (2022 – present)  
Member, Economics Assistant Professor Search Committee (2022-2023)  
Member, Economics of Disadvantage Project (2021 – present)  
Member, Economics Graduate Studies Committee (2021 – present)  
Member, Economics Visiting Assistant Professor Search Committee (2021)  
Member, Economics Seminar Committee (2020 – present)  
Member, Economics Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (2020 – 2021)  
Advisor, Women in Economics Club (2020 – present)

## **REFeree**

*Economics of Education Review* (5), *Education Finance and Policy* (4), *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management* (3), *Journal of Public Economics* (3), *Journal of Health Economics* (2), *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (2), *AERA Open*, *American Education Research Journal*, *Contemporary Economic Policy*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Education Economics*, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *Higher Education*, *Higher Education Policy*, *Journal of Labor Economics*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *Labour Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*