

Michael Nguyen-Mason

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EDUCATION

Harvard University
Ph.D Student in Health Policy and Economics

August 2020 – Present
Cambridge, MA

University of California, Berkeley
BA in Economics, supplement: Cognitive Science
GPA: 3.6 (overall), 3.8 (major)

August 2011 – December 2017
Berkeley, CA

Awards and Honors

- *NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (2022)*
- *Leadership Awards Scholar (2011)*
- *Honors Economics (2017)*

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Co-Author (Health Economics)
Harvard University

Jan 2024-Present
w/ Prof. Luca Maini

Research Topic: We characterize the distributional health gains to pharmaceutical innovation across race, gender, education, and income. To do this we use data on Quality-Adjusted Life Years (QALY) from the Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA) Registry to estimate the health gains from a set of drugs and data from MEPS to get diagnosis rates and drug utilization. Together we create a QALY index to assess how different sets of population would benefit from each drug versus how much they actually do.

Co-Author (Health and Macro Economics)
Harvard University

May 2020-Present
w/ Prof. Xavier Jaravel and Prof. Jonathan Kolstad

Research Topic: We explore the unequal distribution of inflation in healthcare prices and the potential impact this inflation has on firm spending and wages. Further, we look to extend a methodology in describing price inflation that more precisely controls for quality of care, substitution of services, and entry and exit from the market.

Data: Utah All Payer Claims Data (2013-2015), Utah Pay Stub Data (2013-2015)

Co-Author (Health and Finance)
Harvard University

May 2019-Present
w/ Prof. David Sraer and Prof. Jonathan Kolstad

Research Topic: We find evidence that privately insured firms are exposed to undiversifiable risk. This is largely driven by risk components: (a) covariance of health risk within certain firms is high and (b) there exist a thick tailed distribution of high-cost outlier individuals. We investigate mechanisms such as pricing of new technologies, firm level insurance design changes, and more.

Data: Utah All Payer Claims Data (2013-2019)

Research Assistant (Health Economics)
Harvard & NBER

August 2021 – Dec 2021
w/ Prof. Mark Shepard and Prof. Josh Gottlieb

Research Topic (1): We identify and quantify how administrative hassle costs impact provider behavior and patient access to healthcare.

Data: Massachusetts All Payer Claims Data (2013-2017)

Tasks: I was charged with (1) defining what hassle costs and their counterfactual are realized in the data. For example, imputation of denied claims' counterfactual prices if they had been accepted. (2) Began a claim size and physician practice size analysis intended to investigate provider response to administrative barriers and their relationship to returns to scale in provider organizations.

Research Assistant (Health Economics)

UC Berkeley & NBER

December 2017 – August 2020

w/ Prof. Ben Handel and Prof. Jonathan Kolstad

Research Topic (1): We investigated the role of insurer differentiation (e.g. insurer-hospital integration, supply-side protocols, price bargaining) on the utilization of healthcare and health outcomes of individuals.

Research Topic (2) *w/ Prof. David Thesmar (MIT) and Prof. David Sraer*: We examined the importance of the thickness of the tail in the distribution of the cost of claims in creating undiversifiable risk in large firm risk pools.

Data: Utah All Payer Claims Data (2007-2015), Utah Hospital Facilities Data (1993-2013)

Tasks: I was charged with (1) Implementing an extreme value, rank-size, analysis to determine the shape parameter of the distribution of cost of claims. (2) Determining the rate of decay of firm health-cost volatility under the Pareto conditions through affine curves. (3) Adapting a forced-switcher, AKM experiment onto the 20-year panel of hospital facilities data to obtain the causal relationship between insurer and long-term health outcomes of individuals (e.g. mortality). (4) Constructing COX proportional hazard model to obtain survival estimates of patients post-acute myocardial infarction. (5) Web-scraping physician networks using Python web-scraping capabilities

Research Assistant (Financial Economics)

UC Berkeley: Department of Economics

January 2017 – September 2017

w/ Leslie Shen under Prof. Pierre Olivier Gourinchas

Research Topic: We explored preferential decision making in international lending and its impact on industry organization in emerging economies.

Data: Bank-to-firm loan data (from Mexico, Turkey, and Brazil), OSIRIS and CG financial data

Tasks: (1) Cleaned, merged and transformed financial datasets. (2) Identified firms and their parent organizations collecting operational information including mergers, buyouts, and subsidiaries. (3) Flagged global versus local capital flows to identify preferences in lending.

Research Assistant (Neuroeconomics)

UC Berkeley: Brain Imaging Center

September 2016 – August 2017

w/ Prof. Ming Hsu and Prof. Andy Kayser

Research Topic: We sought to observe what parts of the brain activate when faced with decision making under conditions of self interest (dictator game). We also investigated the behavioral change that Dopamine enhancing pharmaceutical Tolcapone instigated in the decision making process during said game.

Data: Through double-blind, randomized control trial we collected decisions made, decision times, and fMRI brain scans of 40+ subjects under placebo or Tolcapone.

Tasks: (1) Managed subjects under close medical and procedural scrutiny, walking them through the experimental process. (2) Maintained detailed and managed detailed records of subjects for analysis.

Research Assistant (Health Economics)

UC Berkeley: Department of Economics

September 2016 – December 2016

w/ Jennifer Kwok under Prof. Ben Handel

Research Topic: We investigated the impact that discontinuity of care, as defined by a patient lacking a primary care physician due to lack of insurance or exit of primary care physician, has on patient utilization of healthcare and subsequent health outcomes.

Data: Medicare claims data, Dartmouth Atlas Ambulatory Data, IRS statement data

Tasks: (1) Aggregated state-by-state regulations on provider exiting behavior (e.g. non-compete clause). (2) Cleaned and prepped IRS data and created preliminary figures.

PHD COURSEWORK

Fall 2020

Econometrics 1 - Bruich
Microeconomic Theory 1 - Deb
Decision Theory - Hammitt
Course in Health Policy - Newhouse

Spring 2021

Econometrics 2 - Dobbie
Microeconomic Theory 2 - Avery
Course in Health Policy - Newhouse

Fall 2021

Industrial Economics 1 - Pakes
Public Economics 1 - Chetty
Research in Health Economics- Shepard

Spring 2022

Industrial Economics 2 - Kalouptsi
Health Economics - Cutler
Economics Reading Course - McGuire

Spring 2023

Innovation and Entrepreneurship - Lerner and Bernstein

THESIS AND PROJECTS

Honors Thesis: *‘Pharmaceutical Payments and Physician Induced Demand in the Market for Opioids’*. Investigated the impact of pharmaceutical payments on physician prescription rates of opioids. Constructed a three-year panel, three million observation dataset of pharmaceutical payments to physicians. Used a differences-in-differences specification to identify a payment effect. Found that the number of payment interactions, rather than value of payment, was most important in predicting an increase in opioid prescription and beneficiaries.

Econometrics for Public Policy Final Project: Investigated the factors contributing to the length of stay required for patients to successfully complete treatment at a drug rehabilitation center. Used a Kaplan-Meier survival analysis on SAMSHA Episodic Treatment data (2016).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Educational Content Creator

Harvard Business School: Healthcare Strategy

October 2020 – September 2021

w/ Prof. Leemore Dafny

Created a comprehensive, pedagogically centered lesson on “the boundaries of the firm” which included lessons on vertical and horizontal integration.

Conducted interviews with healthcare leaders to design case studies on the integrated organizations of Civica Rx and Beth-Israel Lahey Health system.

Lead Econometrics Tutor/Student Coordinator

UC Berkeley: Student Learning Center

January 2017 – December 2017

Led three other students in peer-tutoring for the undergraduate econometrics course hosting daily drop-in tutoring, pre-exam review sessions, and weekly group study groups. Served more than 40+ students any given week. Took the role of student co-coordinator for the economics program at the Student Learning Center. Organized weekly meetings with other lead tutors and led seminars on peer pedagogy.

Residential Assistant

September 2012 – May 2013

UC Berkeley: Residence Halls

Provided resources, mediation, and check-ins for more than 100 students. Received highest mark (exceptional) for student engagement. Planned, promoted, and executed 8 academic and social programs for more than 400 students.

Hall Association President

January 2012 – May 2012

UC Berkeley: Clark Kerr

Led the hall association committee and allocated dorm funds for student activities and initiatives.

COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

Python, Stata, L^AT_EX, Git.