Vincent Armentano

Doctoral Candidate — Economics Department — University of California San Diego

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Education

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics Expected completion; June 2025
University of California San Diego
Committee: Craig McIntosh (Co-Chair), Tom Vogl (Co-Chair), Paul Niehaus, Sara Lowes
B.A. in Economics 2016
Northeastern University

Fields of Interest

Development Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Agricultural Economics

Publications

- "Movin' on up? The impacts of a large-scale housing lottery in Uruguay" *Journal of Public Economics*, Vol. 235, July 2024.

  We report on a large-scale urban resettlement program in Uruguay. Under the program, thousands of low- to middle-income households were randomly assigned over the course of seven years to ownership of apartments in new buildings in more central areas and received a subsidy averaging $44,000 per household. We match applicants to comprehensive administrative data on employment, schooling, fertility, and voting over the decade after the move. We find that the program led to a small decline in fertility for women and a two-percentage-point increase in formal employment but did not affect school attendance. The relocation program did not result in transformative improvements in the lives of its beneficiaries, likely because of its minimum income requirements and the lack of strong spatial inequality in Uruguay.

Working Papers

- "How Poverty Fell", with Paul Niehaus and Tom Vogl. Presented at NBER Development Economics, Fall 2024 conference.

  The share of the global population living in extreme poverty fell dramatically from an estimated 44% in 1981 to 9% in 2019. We describe *how* this happened: the extent to which changes within as opposed to between cohorts contributed to poverty declines, and the key changes in the lives of households as they transitioned out of (and into) poverty. We do so using cross-sectional and panel sources that are representative or near-representative of countries that collectively accounted for 70% of global poverty decline since 1990. The repeated cross-sections show that all birth cohorts experienced the decline of poverty over time in parallel, such that poverty decline can be viewed as a primarily within-cohort phenomenon. The panels show substantial within-cohort churn: gross transitions out of poverty were much larger than net changes, as many households also lapsed back into poverty. The overall picture is of a "slippery slope" rather than a long-term trap. The role of sectoral transitions varied across countries, though progress within sectors generally played a larger role than transitions between sectors.

- "Regulatory Risk and Firm Decision-making: Evidence from the Waters of the United States and US Farms", with Philip G. Hoxie

  Federal regulatory changes often impose substantial costs on directly affected firms. This paper asks a more nuanced question: Does the regulatory process itself, including the threat of regulatory changes, also impose substantial costs? We leverage a proposed jurisdictional change to the Clean Water Act, which led to regulatory changes in some states and only regulatory risk in others, in tandem with variation in the share of cropland potentially affected by the jurisdictional change in each county. We estimate an exposure difference-in-differences design to measure the effects of regulatory exposure on the reservation price for farming, as measured by rents from the Conservation Reserve Program. Using a willingness-to-pay-style analysis, farms subject to regulatory risk experience costs that are about 60% as large as the costs associated with the regulatory change itself. Moreover, due to a provision in the Clean Water Act which exempts certain types of pollution that accompany "regular" farming, we see that the threat of future regulation acted as an incentive to expand cropland in advance of any changes. This eroded other policy goals, in this case establishing new farming practices at the expense of the preservation of certain types of conservation lands. A simple back of the envelope calculation suggests that after accounting for both regulatory risk and the direct cost of regulation, the Clean Water Rule had a total cost to farms of about $2.9 Billion (2022 USD) annually.

Works in progress

- Risk Aversion and Crop Portfolio Diversification.

Professional Service

Referee Journal of Development Economics, Economic Development and Cultural Change
Conference Organizer S. California Graduate Conferences in Applied Econ., Graduate Student Research Seminar
Founder ECONnected
Extracurricular support Federal Reserve Challenge, Mentor

Honors and Awards

UC Office of the President, Global Food Initiative Fellow 2021-22
Summer Research Fellowship 2021
Summer Research Fellowship 2020

Relevant Professional Employment

Graduate Student Researcher 2020 - 2021, 2024
Agricultural Technology Adoption Intitiative

- Worked with CEGA and ATAI staff to harmonize data across 29 RCTs with an agricultural focus
- Helped design and implement a system to merge ATAI survey data with Google Earth Engine data about weather and environment
- Designed a digital portal where the data could be downloaded by the public, portal.atai-data.org

Senior Research Analyst 2017 - 2020
Global Poverty Research Lab, Northwestern University

- Performed regression analysis on multi-armed agricultural RCT, exploring heterogeneity across rainfall distribution, gender and soil dimensions with marginal effect analysis
- Made use of both Causal Forest and Double Machine Learning algorithms to search for Heterogeneity
- Wrote automated Stata programs to perform at one-touch; a Post Double Selection LASSO, Marginal effects at desired points of an out-of-sample Rainfall Profits Surface, Randomization inference on those marginal effects and finally Bonferroni Q value adjustment on the final Rand.-Inf. P-Values
- Assisted with more senior administrative research tasks, managing stakeholders, hiring and overseeing the training process for new Research Analysts, managed multiple Undergraduate Research Analysts

Research Analyst 2016 - 2017
Innovations for Poverty Action

- Oversaw data collection of a 3,120 Household Sample RCT, performing data quality assurance checks
- Performed data cleaning on collected data in Stata software, examining outliers and summary stats
- Assisted in writing academic papers, project reports and policy memos on a variety of topics
- Partook in design of survey questionnaire items and survey construction with SurveyCTO software

Teaching Experience, Teaching Assistant

ECON100C: Microeconomics C Winter 2025
ECON100A: Microeconomics A Fall 2024
ECON164: The Indian Economy Spring 2024
ECON1: Principles of Microeconomics Winter 2024
ECON100A: Microeconomics A Fall 2023
ECON3: Principles of Macroeconomics Winter 2022
ECON1: Principles of Microeconomics Fall 2021

Other Information

Citizenship: United States
Birthday: December 13th, 1993