economics
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UC SANTA BARBARA

Research Fellows Application

DUE Wednesday, December 2

The Economics department is accepting applications for the **Research Fellows Program.** The Research Fellows program pairs undergraduate students interested in research with faculty members who have a need for a research assistant on a specific project. This is a competitive application process. Individuals chosen as Research Fellows will work on the specified project approximately 5 hours per week from January 2021 through June 2021 and earn a $1500 stipend (awarded over 2 quarters), but will not be eligible to receive units.

To apply, you must submit the following to the **Career Connection office by** email to **econ-careerconnection@ucsb.edu with the subject line "Research Fellows":**

- **This application**
- **Resume**
- **Research Statement -** A brief research statement explaining their research interests and skills
- **Diversity Statement** - (suggestions for diversity statements are attached) (500-word max).
- **Unofficial transcript**

YOU WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED IF YOU ARE MISSING ANY OF THE MATERIALS LISTED ABOVE.

Timeline for Research Fellows Program

- Application due: Wednesday, Dec 2, by 5:00 PM
- Fellow notifications: Friday, December 11

A complete application (this application on top, resume, personal statement and unofficial transcript) is due no later than 5:00 PM on Wednesday, December 2nd.

Name_____ Perm #_____ Year: **2 3 4** (circle one)

U-Mail _____ Major(s)_____

When do you plan to graduate? _____

A faculty panel will review all applications, and will pair students with faculty members.

A list of faculty projects is listed on the following page(s). Please review all projects and rank each one.

Please rank your interest in all of the following faculty research projects from 1-5;
1 being most interested and 5 being least interested.

_____ Professor Kieran James Walsh

Household Finance Heterogeneity in Disasters - The purpose of this project is to use the US Census Bureau's new Household Pulse Survey (HPS)1 to further our understanding of heterogeneity in household consumption and borrowing behavior during crises, such as the 2020 pandemic and concurrent natural disasters. My main interest is in using the HPS to uncover how the household consumption, debt, or saving response to fiscal stimulus (e.g., the CARES Act) varies with demographics (e.g., income, region, race). Which households use stimulus checks for consumption expenditures, which households use stimulus to pay off debt or save, and how do the answers to these questions vary with regional characteristics such as natural disasters? My proposed analysis of the HPS will (hopefully): i) improve future modeling of household finance, ii) illuminate the transmission mechanisms of largescale stimulus programs, and iii) identify the economic challenges of different groups and thus guide the design of future relief packages. But a thorough cleaning and analysis of the HPS, which to my knowledge has not yet been exploited in published academic studies, should also reveal important questions I have not yet considered.

_____ Professor Clement De Chaisemartin

To study the effect of a policy or treatment on an outcome, researchers often leverage "natural experiments": they compare over time units experiencing different evolutions of their exposure to treatment. In practice, this idea is implemented by running regressions of a state's employment level on its minimum wage, controlling for state and time indicators. We refer to those regressions as two-way fixed effects (FE) regressions. We showed that two-way FE regressions only recover the treatment effect if that effect is constant across states and over time, we proposed a new method that can recover the effect even it is heterogeneous across states and over time, and we developed a Stata package that implements our proposed method. Shuo Zhang, a graduate student in the department, has developed a translation of our package into R. A shortcoming of the method we proposed in "Two-way fixed effects estimators with heterogeneous treatment effects" is that it assumes the treatment does not have dynamic effects. For instance, today's minimum wage can affect today but not tomorrow's employment. This is a strong assumption, and in a new paper, "Difference-in-Differences Estimators of Intertemporal Treatment Effects", also with Xavier D'Haultfoeuille, we propose estimators that do not rely on that assumption. We are currently extending our Stata package, so that it computes both the estimators proposed in our former and in our new paper.

I am asking for two quarters of RA support, to perform the following tasks:

- Extend our R package, so that it also computes the estimators proposed in our new paper.
- Write a paper to be submitted to the R journal presenting the R package.
- Update our survey of two-way fixed effects papers to more recent years of the AER.
- Revisit some of those papers using our new estimators.

_____ Professor Aliza Tazhitdinova

Political contributions and venture capital - Venture capitalists contribute extensively to political campaigns and the goal of this project is to understand the economic consequences of these contributions. Contributions by venture capitalists differ from contributions by regular firm owners in that venture capitalists often do not own the majority of the startup firms they fund and they divest

from start up once these firms are listed on the stock exchange. Finally, start-up firms can be located outside of venture capitalists' own geographic locations, which matters since the previous literature established a link between firms and federal representatives of the local district (e.g. Brogard et al (2020)). The project will investigate how and if the political contributions of venture capitalists change depending on the startup projects they support, and whether these political contributions yield economic benefits. This project will utilize campaign contribution data from FollowtheMoney.org, redistricting data from UCLAs' United States Congressional District Shapefiles, and information on venture capitalist and corresponding start up projects from Crunchbase.

_____ Professor Gonzalo Vazquez-Bare

Power Calculations for Partial Population Experiments-The goal of this project is to develop a statistical framework to analyze partial population experiments and provide rigorous, theoretically-based guidance on how to implement this design in practice. In particular, the project will consider the performance of regression-based estimators in terms of identification and estimation in partial population experiments building on the framework in Vazquez-Bare (2017), and to analyze large-sample inference under general conditions. These results will be applied to conduct power, sample size and minimum detectable effects (MDE) calculations, all key factors for appropriately designing an experiment. The theoretical findings from this project will be complemented with a simulation study and statistical software for implementation.

_____ Professor Youssef Benzarti

Workers' compensation programs are ubiquitous around the world and virtually all US states mandate some form of insurance against workplace injury for workers. In the proposed research we plan on estimating the combined effect of firms and workers' contribution to moral hazard. To do so, we will use the last two decades of state-level reforms of workers' compensation programs. Most of these changes resulted in lowered workers' compensation benefit amounts or more stringent application and qualification requirements (lowering the chance of claiming benefits), though some did the opposite and increased the program's expected generosity in one of these. As such, we will mostly be estimating the effect of less generous workers' compensation on reported incidents, but also test for different effects from increases versus decreases in workers compensation program generosity.