



ISSUES IN POLITICAL ECONOMY
Undergraduate Student Research in Economics

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Mission Statement

Issues in Political Economy is committed to supporting and encouraging quality undergraduate research in all areas of economics. The Journal was founded on the belief that the best way to learn economics is to do economics. Through the process of research, writing, and peer review, students actively engage the discipline in a way not possible by simply listening to lectures and reading textbooks. In short, undergraduate research is a vital component in an economics education. The literature suggests that students take projects more seriously and learn more when the project is directed towards an external rather than an internal audience such as a class assignment. *IPE* is designed to provide an external audience for such research.

Issues in Political Economy is edited and refereed entirely by students, with oversight from faculty at Elon University and University of Mary Washington. In order to maintain quality and objectivity, we follow a double-blind review process. The only requirements for submission are that the article pertains to some aspect of economics, that it was written during undergraduate study, and that it be submitted through a faculty sponsor. Though submissions on all topics in economics will receive consideration, papers should be analytical and seek to add new understanding to the topic

For additional information please visit our website <http://www.elon.edu/ipe>

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Issues in Political Economy began over a decade ago with the goal of developing a forum to further the understanding of economics among undergraduate students. The original journal was conceived and cultivated by dedicated students and faculty at Bellarmine College in Louisville, Kentucky.

In 1999, Elon University and the University of Mary Washington inherited the sponsorship and editorial responsibilities of *Issues in Political Economy*. Since then, IPE has gained international recognition as one of only two undergraduate research journals, and has received submissions from all over the world.

The IPE not only focuses on promoting undergraduate research, but also is a student lead incentive. While faculty oversees the project, an editorial team of senior economic majors primarily leads the journal. Students review all submissions and the final decision-making rests in the hands of the editorial team.

We would like to thank Dr. Steve DeLoach from Elon University and Dr. Steven Greenlaw from the University of Mary Washington for their guidance and support. These faculty members steered much of the process, and the final result would not be possible without them.

The Journal also sponsors an undergraduate session every year, typically in conjunction with the Annual Eastern Economics Association Conference. This year's 25th annual IPE Conference was held in Boston, MA and was a great success, hosting many student papers and allowing students to serve as session chairs and discussants. We would also encourage any future submitters to consider presenting at the conference as well as submitting to the Journal, as the experience of a live presentation is not something to ignore.

It is out of hope that each year's *Issues in Political Economy* will build upon the success of the past and continue to be a creative and beneficial journal for all involved.

Parker Coon
2018 Editor

FOREWORD

Natalia Kreciglowa from Smith College attempts to estimate the effect of various states' infrastructure policies and migration to and from said states. Utilizing theories of regional economics and a gravity model, they find that policies such as infrastructure spending that would increase the labor demand and quality of life in a state is likely to boost that state's influx of migrants.

Stonehill College's Ann Furbush tests the effects of paternity leave on labor markets. By attempting to apply and testing the logic and literature associated with maternity leave, the author estimates an OLS fixed effects model using data from a variety of countries with different paternity leave policies. The results indicate that societies with more paternity leave generally have a smaller gender wage gap.

The theory of the resource curse is investigated by Nathaniel Edenfield of American University. Questions over the sustainability of the Appalachian economy and its dependence on mining minerals and fossil fuels are re-evaluated through a simultaneous equations model incorporating federal, state, and local policy decisions and cultural factors.

Sydney Treiman of West Chester University seeks to answer questions pertaining to retention rates at their university. By attempting to quantify factors pertaining to professors, academic programs, and campus life and how they affect various students who come from different backgrounds, an ordinary least squares estimate was generated in an attempt to help the school figure out what policies work, and what would need changing in order to increase retention rates by the school.

Furman University's Benjamin Hartman and Sophia Amoo-Gottfreid also investigate the relationship between gender and the labor market. Utilizing previous work in labor economics and an ordinary least squares model using data from a nationally representative sample of labor force participants from 1997 to 2011, they find evidence of increased job mobility, and by proxy wage growth, in male employees when compared to females.

Finally, Paul Jaworski of West Chester University attempt to answer questions surround the Affordable Care Act and the profits of large health insurance companies. Digging at the heart of one of the central questions surrounding the politically dividing legislation, Jaworski uses multiple ordinary least squares regressions to argue that these companies largely benefit from a policy that requires consumers to purchase health insurance.

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