



ISSUES IN POLITICAL ECONOMY

Undergraduate Student Research in Economics

Volume 31
Issue 1 & 2
July 2022

Co-Editors

Cole Haecker, Elon University
Maria Mendoza, Elon University

Associate Editors

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Elon University

University of Mary Washington

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>

Faculty Sponsors:

Steven A. Greenlaw
Professor of Economics
University of Mary Washington
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
Email : sgreenlaw@umw.edu

Stephen B. DeLoach
Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Elon University
Elon, NC 27244
Email: deloach@elon.edu

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. Amrita Dhar 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 28th annual IPE Conference was held in New York City, NY 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 our 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.

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FOREWORD

Aise O'Neil, from American University, seeks to independently analyze the Phillips Curve and its applicable consistency in the United States, Canada, and Australia. This analysis finds evidence of a Phillips Curve mechanism which allows inflation to be explained in terms of behavioral unemployment. However, questions arise when applying short-term expectation augmentations to the Phillips Curve.

Patrick Tavares Ruivo Muscari, from Skidmore College, unpack the Brazilian labor force by analyzing the *PEC das Domésticas* policy. This paper interacts with how the robust domestic workers market is impacted by specific economic policies. It finds that the implementation of the *PEC das Domésticas* policy has long-run benefits for the working conditions of domestic workers.

Ethan Cohen, from the University of Edinburgh offers valuable insight to the relationship between technological adoption and international trade standings. This analysis estimates multiple macro-economic economic instruments. It finds that trade is statistically significant and has a causal effect on a country's technology adoption rate.

Krunal Desai, from the University of California – Berkeley conducts a district-level analysis on India's civil conflict to understand if government assistance leads to a decrease in civil conflict within rural and impoverished areas of India. It finds that the Backward Regions Grant Fund had an adverse effect on impoverished communities during the Naxalite-Maoist insurgency.

Laura Peterjohn, from the College of Wooster interacts with the relationship between South Africa's middle class and human capital investment. This study analyzes how a post-Apartheid South Africa can bolster its struggling middle class through education investment. It finds that current policies of human capital investment fail to achieve the economic equity expected from South Africa.

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