



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2023

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM



Hello, friends!

I am thrilled to present the 2023 College of Arts & Letters Senior Thesis book, highlighting the 226 students who devoted a significant portion of their final year at Notre Dame to producing an original work of research or creativity.

While reading these synopses, I've been delighted to see that a number of students were again able to travel — throughout the state and around the world — to inform original research and enrich their experience. I hope that you enjoy perusing these yearlong projects. They showcase the academic and innovative skills, as well as the wide-ranging talents and interests, of the Class of 2023.

For instance, students visited the Peace Walls in Ireland, translated a portion of the *Odyssey* into the Hawaiian language, staged a late-night comedy show, analyzed the function of the coxsackie-adenovirus receptor, tested the accuracy of predicting commodity spot prices, designed sustainable dental floss, examined political rhetoric, performed a recital that included *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps: III. Abîme des oiseaux*, and studied minimal surfaces within differential geometry.

As is the case every year, I'm grateful for the faculty members who have so generously shared their expertise and provided support to students undertaking this invaluable undergraduate academic experience.

While I will miss these seniors, individually and collectively, I am heartened that they'll continue to follow their dreams, contribute to scholarship, and serve their communities. Just as they've made the University of Notre Dame a better place, I'm confident they'll make the world a better place.

Sarah A. Mustillo

Sarah A. Mustillo

I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean
College of Arts & Letters

**Conrado Alcantara**

Hometown: Metro Manila, Philippines

- Majors: Economics and Film, Television, and Theatre
- Minor: Asian Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Manuel Alejandro Estefan Davila

Human Capital Losses from Enhanced Community Quarantine in the Philippines

My aim is to address the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) policy that was instituted by the Philippine government through human capital loss. My line of thinking stems from a policy proposal from the World Bank, which stressed the importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD). Ultimately, I examine how the pandemic has affected ECDs and I quantify the loss of human capital, if any, through each extension of the ECQ. In Sarangani, Philippines, I conducted research and met with school administrations in Indigenous and urban regions.

I chose this topic due to my previous work with Indigenous people in the Philippines filming a documentary in the region. I hope my proposals shed light for the Department of Education to integrate new measures to improve learning outcomes and welfare gain in these communities, and I hope to foster relationships I've built.

Traveled to Sarangani, Philippines, and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.



John Babbo

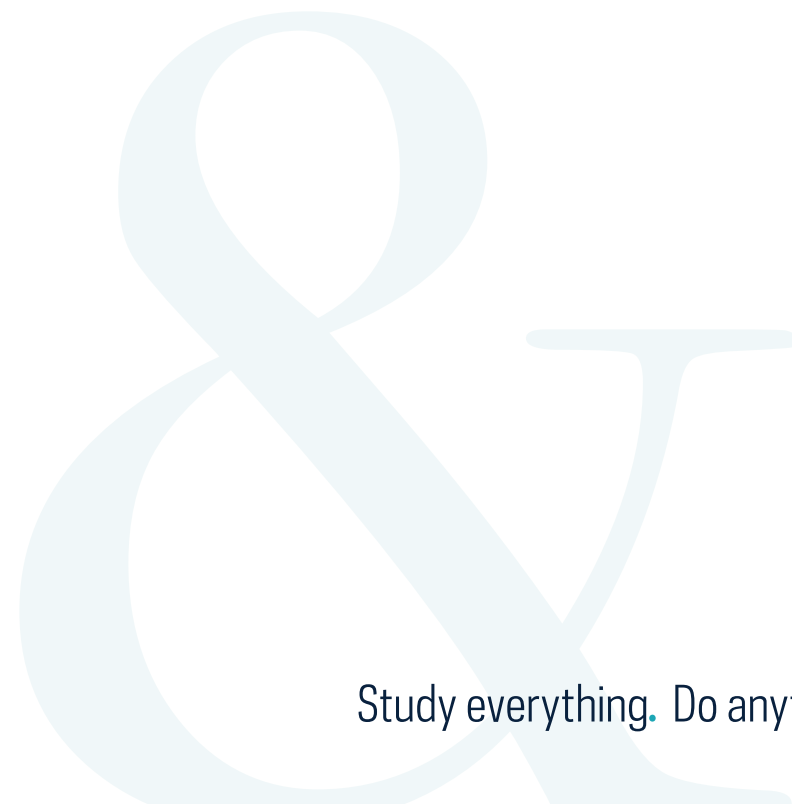
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: James Otteson

Economics and Eudaimonia in the City of Man

I examine the role of economics in the classical conception of the city as described by Aristotle, Aquinas, and Augustine. I conclude that a system of cooperative exchange accords with this conception and best effectuates man's dual citizenship in the earthly and heavenly city.

This topic comes at the intersection of my passion for political philosophy and economics.



**Margaret (Maggie) Barrett**

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Art History
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and the Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Eva Dziadula

Climate Change, Agriculture, and Migration in Mexico

My thesis aims to isolate the impact of changing agricultural yields due to climate change on international migration from Mexico. My results suggest that a 10% decrease in crop yields results in a 0.66% increase in household migration. However, in the period from 2000 to 2020, Mexico showed increasing average corn yields and fewer international migrants. This suggests that Mexico is in an initial period of beneficial temperature rise, although continued changes in climate are likely to result in long-term losses.

I chose this topic because climate change and migration are fundamental global issues with strong implications for the world's poorest and most vulnerable. It is important for policymakers to understand the connections between climate and migration in order to effectively create policies that recognize the human dignity of all involved.

**Joonhee Bock**

Hometown: Torrance, California

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Korean
- Advisor: Cora Bennett

Teacher Incentives and Retention: Evidence from the Best and Brightest Program

I focused on the effectiveness of the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program, a statewide teacher incentive program employed in Florida. I aim to measure teacher retention in response to receiving the financial incentive. The distinct qualifications for the award provide a unique opportunity to gauge what incentivizes teachers to continue teaching.

The ongoing shortage of teachers nationwide calls for better approaches to increasing teacher retention. However, the differences across programs like Best and Brightest necessitate specific analysis to guide future incentive programs.

**Nicholas (Nick) Carter**

Hometown: Sudbury, Massachusetts

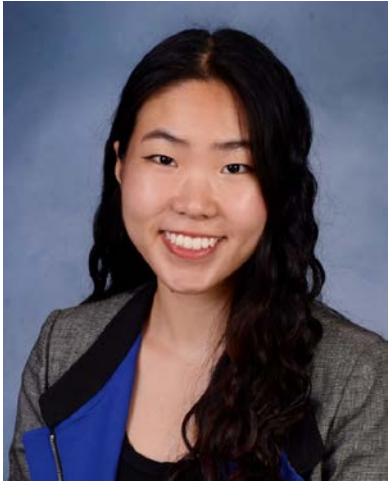
- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Certificate in International Security Studies and Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Daniel Lindley

Measuring Mercenaries: Private Military Companies, Contract Theory, and a Novel Regulatory Regime

My thesis probes the operation and function of private military companies (PMCs). In particular, I develop a causal theory that explains operational outcomes for mercenary PMCs in counterinsurgency contexts. I suggest the nature of PMC contracts is an important determinant of battlefield outcomes. Leveraging a congruence procedure and process tracing case study design, I evaluate my contract theory and further compare it to competing theoretical frameworks of battlefield victory and defeat.

The topic blends international security and economic market analysis to address an emergent threat to enduring international norms. The ubiquity of PMC activity allowed me to cast a broad geographical net in my case selection process — which improved the explanatory power of my theory, made my conclusions more compelling, and kept the research process engaging.

Traveled to present the project as a working paper at a conference in Portugal and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Michelle Cho**

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

- Majors: Psychology and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jason Colquitt

Greater Good, Lesser Evil: Promotion and Prevention Focus in Diversity Advocacy

This study proposes a novel framework to conceptualize diversity advocacy such that some people are more promotion-focused (oriented toward pursuing positive outcomes such as inclusion and representation), while others are more prevention-focused (oriented toward avoiding negative outcomes such as discrimination and bias). This study empirically shows that this motivational difference is systematically based on identification with a privileged majority group or a disadvantaged minority group, which provides implications for organizations implementing diversity-fostering policies and practices.

Given the recent surge of interest in diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations and the consistent disagreement over which diversity-related issues to prioritize, I sought to investigate why this conflict persists and create a more comprehensive foundation for organizations to create better diversity policies. I presented findings at the 2023 annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology in Atlanta.

Traveled to Atlanta and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program, Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, and DaVinci Multidisciplinary Grant.

**John Clancy**

Hometown:

Chelmsford, Massachusetts

- Major: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Advisor: Michael Pries

Creating Equitable Incentives for SPAC Sponsors and Investors

Despite rising in popularity in recent years, special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs) have received scrutiny for the outsized returns they give to sponsors over common shareholders. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has proposed regulations to level the playing field, but its proposed methods of regulation have prevented sponsors from forming SPACs altogether. My thesis investigates what drives SPAC returns for founders versus common investors in order to reveal regulatory possibilities that encourage fairness but do not discourage formation.

Researching differing incentives for SPAC sponsors and investors afforded me the opportunity to work at the intersection of my interests in finance, economics, and law. It also enabled me to contribute to the literature supporting the fairness of the public markets before I begin my career in finance.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

**Abigail (Abie) Craff**

Hometown:

Albuquerque, New Mexico

- Majors: German and Economics
- Cathy and Jack Brennan Family Scholars Program, Glynn Family Honors Program, and Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Mark Roche

Early German Cinema as a Model for Hitchcock's Pure Cinema

My thesis explores the impact of Weimar-era German cinema on Alfred Hitchcock, who spent many of his early years working in Germany and learning from great German film directors like Fritz Lang and F.W. Murnau. The German expressionist techniques had a deep impact on Hitchcock's style and films. I traveled to Berlin to conduct research in the Deutsche Kinemathek (German Film Museum). I viewed documents in the archives pertaining to the films I am writing about, and used the microfilm machine to look through film magazines from the 1920s and 1930s.

I chose this topic because I took a class my sophomore year titled The Cinematic World of Alfred Hitchcock. I fell in love with Hitchcock films and later took several German classes with the same professor, Mark Roche. In these classes, I learned about German cinema and how Hitchcock got his start in Germany. Professor Roche suggested this topic for my thesis, as it connected with my interests in German, Hitchcock, and cinema.

Traveled to Berlin and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Caroline Crawford**

Hometown: Flower Mound, Texas

- Majors: English and Economics
- Minor: Italian
- Advisor: Colleen Taylor

The Impact of Colonialism on the Production of New Women

My thesis argues that the colonial setting of Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm* and Emily Lawless' *Grania* impacts, and in some ways allows for, the development of the female protagonists into New Women figures. The identities of the protagonists are shaped by their positions within colonialism as well as by their removal from the imperial metropole, resulting in New Woman characters who both merge and challenge British imperialism and national traditions.

When I first learned about the New Woman in an English class, I was fascinated by it. Since a great deal has been written on New Women characters, I wanted to take a new approach, so my thesis advisor suggested I incorporate colonialism into my study of the New Woman.

**Aidan Creeron**

Hometown: Garden City, New York

- Majors: Economics and History
- Advisor: Daniel Graff

The New Testament and the New Deal: Catholics and the Labor Question During the Great Depression

My thesis documents the Catholic Union of Unemployed, a group established by the Catholic Worker movement in the late 1930s to organize and minister to the jobless of New York City. Historians tend to view the political alliance between Catholics and New Deal politicians as especially strong, yet studying this group allows me to highlight how the Great Depression exposed the tensions that existed between New Deal liberalism and Catholicism. I traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to consult the Dorothy Day Papers and the Catholic Worker Collection archives housed at Marquette University.

This topic has allowed me to apply my interests in labor history and public policy to questions of politics and religion. Additionally, labor historians have largely overlooked the role of religion in shaping the American labor movement, and this topic enabled me to contribute to this growing literature.

Traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).

**Benjamin (Ben) Cuga**

Hometown: North Aurora, Illinois

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

Real Estate Prices and Fertility Rates: Evidence from the U.S. in the 21st Century

My research looks at U.S. counties during the 2010s to measure the relationship between housing prices and fertility rates. I find that rising real estate values were associated with a decrease in fertility rates during this period. Even counties with high home-ownership rates experience a decline in fertility following a housing price boom.

I am entering the real estate industry after graduation, so I knew I wanted to research housing from some angle. I feel the social and political aspects of housing are under-discussed, and I thought that fertility was an interesting dimension to look into.

**Noelle Dana**

Hometown: Hampden, Maine

- Major: Classics
- Minors: Business Economics and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Ted Warfield

On Causality and Moral Responsibility

This project seeks to draw conclusions about the assignment of moral responsibility depending on the causal ancestry of an action. After establishing a causal dichotomy, namely that all things are either caused or not caused, the project walks through each possible relationship between moral and causal responsibility, as well as conclusions drawn from each possibility.

This endeavor started with the question, "Why do people do bad things?" When an individual makes a decision, it must either be caused by something or not. Either way, conclusions can be drawn on the assignment of moral responsibility for the action.

**Charles (Charlie) Dapp**

Hometown: Carmel, Indiana

- Majors: Finance and Economics
- Minor: Theology
- Advisor: Michèle Müller-Ippen

Eliciting Access Costs to Stock Market Data

I apply an experimental method to elicit a subject's willingness to pay to avoid learning information on stock prices and mortgage rates with varying degrees of information access hurdles. Based on subject responses, I can calculate the costs of accessing information and compare these costs across the different stock price and mortgage rate conditions to determine whether subjects are responsive to the varying degrees of access hurdles.

I chose to conduct my thesis on information costs in a financial setting because I am particularly interested in how costs associated with accessing financial information might affect an individual's ability to generate long-term gains in wealth through making sound investment decisions.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).



William (Will) Dieterich

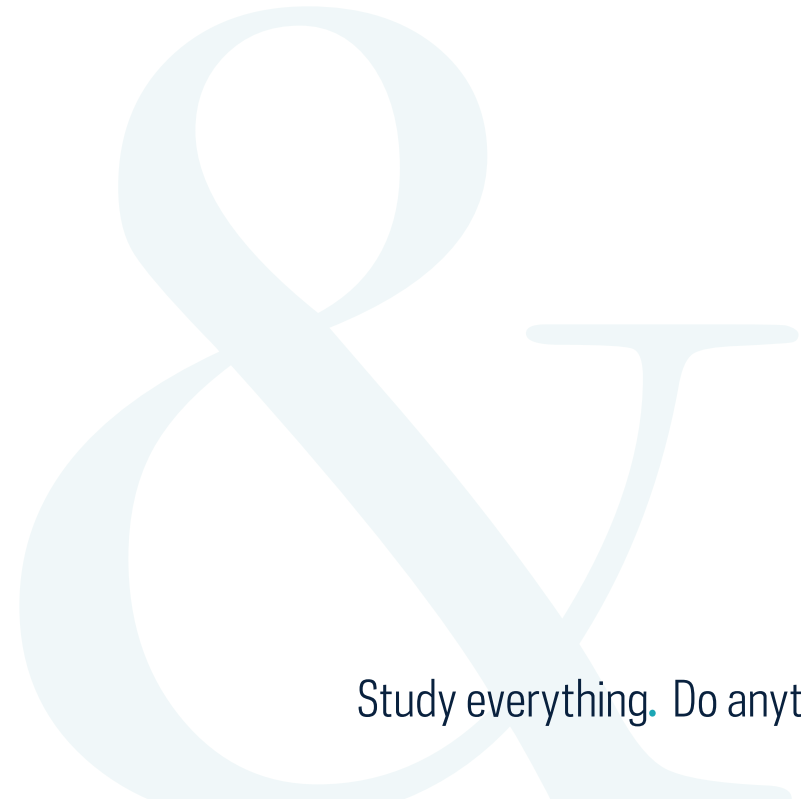
Hometown: South Paris, Maine

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program and the Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Erin Rossiter

Conservatives' Response Rates to Polling

I am looking at what motivates different types of conservatives to respond to polls and the effect that their lack of response rates had on recent national and state elections.

This topic combines my two majors, and I am interested in the results that could be socially beneficial.



**Mary Do**

Hometown: Columbus, Georgia

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

When Soft Law Finds Success: Analyzing the Conditions by which UNHRC Member States Comply with Ratified International Human Rights Law

My thesis delves into the conditions by which the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) member states comply with international human rights laws. I present my theories on the independent variables that might affect compliance: political regime type, economic development level, and religious freedom score. Then, I conduct four case studies on current or former member states of the UNHRC — Qatar, China, Eritrea, and Finland. (Case study countries may be subject to change.) I elaborate on each country's respective history with human rights and the Council. I also analyze each independent variable within the countries to see if it affects their relationship with compliance under the UNHRC. The goal is to determine the factors that encourage ratified member states of the Council to comply with international human rights law given its "soft law" status.

The atrocities in the world, especially in Ukraine, piqued my curiosity with regard to the role of international institutions in preventing human rights abuses. As world leaders from the United States, United Kingdom, France, and others expressed their condemnation of Russia's invasion, the country has yet to retreat amid backlash. I wanted to study the efficacy of international institutions in preventing human rights abuses and enacting consequences for those who commit violations to these rights.

**Clarkston (Clark) Doman**

Hometown: Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

- Majors: American Studies and Economics
- Minor: Chinese
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisors: Korey Garibaldi and Forrest Spence

'Look for Me, Ma, I Won't Be There': Climate, Migration, and the End of the California Dream

My thesis explores the complex relationship between climate and migration in California. Although California's climate has historically been idealized to promote immigration, various factors like social inequality, racist native backlash, unsustainable housing development, and natural disasters have consistently harmed many Californian migrants. Additionally, I propose that as California's climate worsens, the Golden State will further lose its golden standing as America's premier migrant paradise and instead become a producer of American climate refugees. I visited historical sites in Bakersfield — a city where many Dust Bowl migrants settled in the 1930s — and I conducted archival research at The Huntington Library in San Marino.

I was interested in American climate migration, and California seemed like the perfect case study given its frequency of natural disasters and slowing population growth. I enjoyed comparing California's idealized climate that attracted many migrants in the 1930s and the modern reality of climate catastrophe.

Traveled to California and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.



Timothy Dorn

Hometown:

Horse Shoe, North Carolina

- Majors: Music (Concentration in Music Theory and History) and Economics
- Cathy and Jack Brennan Family Scholars Program, Glynn Family Honors Program, and Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: John Liberatore

Analysis of Historical Classical Guitar Technique and the Use of Picking-Hand Fingernails

The classical guitar, unlike other instruments, is affected by the physiology of the player. Namely, the use of fingernails on the plucking hand has been contested in technique manuals over the past 400 years. Early guitarists openly condemned the use of nails on the basis of diminished tone, but modern (20th-century) players established the use of fingernails as the standard due to increased projection and timbral color. I am studying the hypotheses for these divergent practices and their impacts on repertoire.

I am a classical guitarist and am interested in the history of the instrument and the techniques associated with it. From an anecdotal point of view, I can see that modern repertoire heavily utilizes extended techniques that could only be achieved with fingernails, and modern instruments are different from historic ones.

**Luis Elizondo Gracia**

Hometown: Monterrey, Mexico

- Major: Economics
- Minor: Italian
- Advisor: Alejandro Estefan

Why Should I Pay? Nudging for Utility Payments in Mexico

My honors thesis — which I presented at this year's Human Development Conference at Notre Dame — analyzes some drivers of payment for water utility bills in Mexico. Finding out what the government can do to reduce delinquent customers is of critical value to public finance. Using data provided by the government of Mexico, I find using a difference-in-difference regression that not all government policies are effective at inducing citizens to pay.

I am from Monterrey, Mexico, a city that experienced months of water rationing last summer. Many citizens were desperate for water and there was nothing the government could do; there was none left. Being able to prepare for such situations is of extreme importance, and underfunded utility companies will never be able to get it right.

**Peter Emanuelli**

Hometown: Montclair, New Jersey

- Major: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Advisor: Drew Creal

Banking on Capital: The Effect of Capital Ratios on Bank Performance

Strict capital holding requirements for banks were implemented after the Great Recession and, since then, CEOs of the largest banks have complained about capital requirements hurting their performance. I look at whether a bank's capital ratio can help predict its stock performance and how portfolios of banks with different capital ratios perform. I learned about this topic during an internship and I thought it would be interesting to learn more.

**Cristina Escajadillo**

Hometown: Darien, Connecticut

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Collaborative Innovation
- Advisor: Jennifer Martin

The Art of Friendship

This thesis explores the transition from classical friendship, as defined by Aristotle and Cicero, to spiritual friendship, as defined by Aelred of Rievaulx and Thomas Aquinas, and compares it to the transition from Renaissance to Baroque art. The thesis suggests that friendship is an act of creation, emerging wholly from the radical uniqueness of each individual. And it examines how the implications of the created essence between self and other serves as a representation of the Trinity. I traveled to Rome to augment my research on Renaissance and Baroque art.

I grew up moving around internationally, so making new friends has been an omnipresent experience in my life. This thesis gave me the opportunity to delve into the philosophy of friendship and intertwine it with my deep love of art history.

Traveled to Rome and received funding via the Diana M. Sciola Grant.

**Dominic Gaziano**

Hometown: Newton, Massachusetts

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Davin Raiha

The Effect of Physical Education on Student Health Outcomes

I examine whether the different levels of physical education required by each state have a causal effect on the students' health outcomes in their respective states. I begin with mental health outcomes and move on to explore other outcomes and factors in later models.

I wanted to choose a topic that combined my two majors as a way to culminate my schooling in both of these fields. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened student health, especially mental health, so this particular topic is relevant.

**MyKayla Geary**

Hometown: Houston, Texas

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minors: Africana Studies and Computing and Digital Technologies
- Advisor: Cora Bennett and Anna Haskins

Communities on ICE: The Impact of Immigration Enforcement on Student Discipline

Estimates suggest that 1 in 4 American children are born to immigrants. This means that approximately 12.8 million American children have been impacted by U.S. immigration policy. In my thesis, I examine the relationship between immigration enforcement and student discipline using discipline data reported by local education agencies (LEAs) to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. I find that increased immigration enforcement at the county level leads to worse disciplinary outcomes for Hispanic students. More research would need to be conducted to determine the mechanisms through which immigration enforcement influences disciplinary action; however, it could be a result of increased negative behaviors by students because of heightened stress related to immigration enforcement and/or teacher stigma.

As an economics and education student, I have long been interested in how policy influences and contributes to disparate disciplinary outcomes for students of color. While there has been extensive study on the white/Black discipline disparity, my literature review on student discipline highlighted a gap in how undocumented students and students from mixed-status families experience school discipline policy, as well as how community factors can influence discipline in schools. With the help of my advisors, we identified the 287(g) program — in which state and local law enforcement agencies collaborate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to enforce federal immigration laws — and thought that exploring this program's impact could provide critical insight in this area.

**Jonathan Goodloe**

Hometown: Buffalo, New York

- Major: Spanish
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Pedro Aguilera-Mellado

Fascismo Reinventado: la Supervivencia Duradera del Franquismo en la España Contemporánea a Través de Principios Neoliberales en la Política y la Economía Española

I am examining dictator Francisco Franco's legacy as it currently stands in Spain with a focus on its lasting power in the economy and in politics due to its incorporation into the neoliberal Spanish democracy post-dictatorship. In addition, there is a dive into the political party Vox, how it attempts to emulate Francoist policies, and recommendations to officially disrupt Franco's legacy in Spanish society.

I took Professor Aguilera-Mellado's Fascism in Spain class my first year. When I studied for a semester in Madrid, I saw how intact Franco's legacy is firsthand through my host parents and how they perceived Franco as someone who "stumbled" into power and not as a dictator.

**Emily Hannon**

Hometown: Cary, North Carolina

- Major: History
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Rebecca McKenna

Changing Textbooks, Changing Stories: The Development of *The American Pageant* from its Inception to the Present

I studied the development of the popular high school history textbook, *The American Pageant* by going through each edition at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. I focused on the change in the textbook's discussion of women in the latter half of the 20th century, and paired that study with research on the development of women's history as an academic discipline. I found that *The American Pageant* changed substantially in the 1970s due to the rise of women's liberation, but that these changes did not fully integrate women into history in the way that women's historians wanted.

I believe that the way that schools teach history profoundly shapes the way that Americans understand their national identity. A quick glance at the news today puts debates over education and what it truly means to be American to the forefront. I wanted to go to the root of where students learn American history and research how and why the content that they learn has changed over time. In doing so, I am able to better articulate how powerful history is.

Traveled to Washington, D.C., and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Maura Hogaboom**

Hometown: Arlington Heights, Illinois

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Advisor: William Evans

Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Maternal Death and Cesarean Delivery: Evaluating the Role of Hospitals and Physician Effects

Using hospital census data, multiple linear probability models exploit variation in race and ethnicity to estimate the rates of maternal death between racial and ethnic groups. The results show that differences between hospitals treating patients of different races explain a significant portion of the differential rate of cesarean delivery for Black patients. How patients are matched to physicians for treatment does, in fact, contribute to the racial disparities in maternal mortality and cesarean delivery.

The U.S. performs poorly on measures of maternal mortality and cesarean delivery in comparison to all peer countries. The rates for Black patients are differentially greater. With the identification of the level at which these disparities emerge, opportunities arise for eliminating the preventable deaths of Black mothers.

**Aaron Jalca**

Hometown: Orlando, Florida

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Minors: French and Philosophy
- AnBryce Scholars Initiative and Questbridge Scholar
- Advisor: Jim Sullivan

In Search of Brighter Futures: How the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Affects High School and College Graduation Rates Among First- and Second-Generation Americans

Education costs in the United States have increased dramatically within the last 40 years, coinciding with many states' shift from need-based to merit-based financial aid. Current literature has shown that effects of merit aid on different population heterogeneities or outcomes vary. Since immigrants and their children have unique experiences, I seek to answer the question: What effect does the Florida Bright Futures program have on high school and college completion for first- and second-generation Americans?

I chose this topic because of personal experience. I am a third-generation American and my grandparents are immigrants from Puerto Rico and Ecuador. My sister is receiving Florida Bright Futures funds to pay for college, but I wondered what effect the program has for people like my parents and grandparents.

Received funding from a Research and Materials Grant from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

**Emma King**

Hometown:

Basking Ridge, New Jersey

- Major: Economics
- Advisor: Kirsten Cornelson

Does 'Fitspiration' Lead to Exasperation? The Impact of Social Media on Women's Time Use and Mental Health

This paper analyzes an online survey that asks women to follow specific Instagram accounts and traces those accounts' impact on their body esteem, depression, anxiety, and time use.

Fitness is a large part of my personal life, and I am passionate and curious about its impact on other women, especially in the field of behavioral economics.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).

**John Klym**

Hometown: Rocky River, Ohio

- Majors: Political Science and Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Jeffrey Harden

Bipartisan versus Partisan: Extralegislative Outcomes Stemming from Partisanship in the Legislative Process

I examine whether bipartisan or partisan bill development increases the success or failure of public policy. Using a dataset covering crime rates and state bills permitting the DNA collection of felony arrestees, this study estimates the impact of a bipartisan- or partisan-developed DNA collection bill on crime rates. I find strong indications that partisan bills are more successful at lowering the crime rate than bipartisan bills.

Many Americans and politicians claim that a bipartisan bill is a better bill. Public opinion polling confirms the salience of this belief among voters of both parties, but is the belief true or is it a myth? My findings can help voters and policymakers consider how partisanship in the legislative process can affect policy outcomes.

Received funding from an Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts Research and Materials Grant.

**Lucie Kneip**

Hometown: North Bend, Ohio

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Kellogg International Scholars Program, and Diplomacy Scholars Program
- Advisor: Steve Reifenberg

Co-Creation with Private Partners in Development Work: The Case of The Vines of Mendoza

I conducted field research for two months in Mendoza, Argentina, on the role of private partners in international development. I worked with a private vineyard to establish a charitable foundation to combat food insecurity, expand opportunities for local youth, and work with the community to create pathways for realizing their aspirations. My thesis provides key insights into promoting community participation and feedback mechanisms in development work conducted by private partners by constructing a theory of co-creation which, cognizant of their operating model, can enhance their ability to carry out development work.

The development sphere is saturated with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with expertise and whose work is geared toward carrying out development projects. However, it is much rarer to engage with non-development focused partners, such as a private vineyard. I was impressed by The Vines, which not only wanted to create a charitable foundation, but also has invested in taking ownership of the projects by working directly with the community.

Traveled to Mendoza, Argentina, and received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), and Emily and Art Monaghan.

**Henry Langbo**

Hometown: Columbus, Georgia

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Advisor: Patrick Turner

The Indiana Choice Scholarship Program and Public School Graduation Rates

I used a synthetic difference-in-difference regression to examine the impact of the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program on public school graduation rates. I found graduation rates rose at public schools after the introduction of school choice policy, compared to a synthetic comparison group of the weighted averages of states that did not implement school choice policies.

I chose education and school choice policy for my senior thesis because of the impact that education and high school graduation have on a person's life. School choice is also rapidly expanding across the United States and it is important to understand how policies impact all involved parties, not just the students who switch schools.

**Margaret (Maggie) Lenhart**

Hometown: Defiance, Ohio

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Data Science and Sociology
- Advisor: Kirk Doran

DNA Methylation Mediates the Association Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Chronic Disease Risk in Retired Americans

There is a significant body of research on the relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the onset of chronic disease in adulthood. Much less is known, however, about the mechanisms by which this association occurs. This project uses medical, genetic, and survey data from the University of Michigan Health and Retirement Study to estimate the proportion of the association between ACEs and chronic disease that can be attributed to differential DNA methylation patterns.

I believe integration of social and biological sciences is essential for reducing health disparities. I think this research can contribute to a conversation challenging biological determinism and Social Darwinism — theories that argue one's health and financial challenges are caused by one's intrinsic shortcomings, rather than their environment.

**Xinqi (Kayle) Liao**

Hometown: Chengdu, China

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Greater China Scholars Program
- Advisor: Eric Sims

Does Political Pressure Undermine the Efficacy of Monetary Policy in the US?

Central bank independence has been proven to correlate positively with achieving macroeconomic objectives. I derived a political pressure index on the Federal Reserve from conducting text mining on approximately nine decades of presidential speeches. Then I examined the effect of political pressure on macroeconomic output. I found the more the president talks about the Fed, the more the Fed deviates from targeting inflation to the unemployment rate.

With persistent inflation and sluggish gross domestic product growth post-COVID pandemic, the current market conditions have given the Fed a difficult task and made the role of monetary policy more imminent. I'm interested in providing insight into how we can better implement monetary policy to achieve its macroeconomic objectives. I'm greatly indebted to Eric Lease Morgan in the Center for Digital Scholarship at the Hesburgh Library for the construction of my political pressure index. Without his generous help on text mining, my regression wouldn't have been possible.

**Jack Loesch**

Hometown: Westlake, Ohio

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Advisor: Ethan Lieber

The Cost-Effectiveness of Rebalancing

Using state expenditure data from 1981–2014, I will determine if increased spending on Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services is cost-effective — whether states see a reduction in nursing facility spending.

I chose this project because as a pre-medical student, I want to apply my economics background to a topic relevant to health care.

**Adler Maher**

Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in Spanish)
- Kennedy Scholars Program
- Advisor: Patrizio Piraino

The Inequality of Opportunity Index in South Africa Before and After the Pandemic

I analyze the degree to which the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the inequality of opportunity index (IOp) in South Africa. The IOp measures the degree to which inherited circumstances (such as race, gender, parental education and occupation) influence outcomes (income and employment). The effects of the pandemic were likely inconsistent across socioeconomic groups, and this paper seeks to quantify the potential degree to which the pandemic affected the transmission of inequality in South Africa.

After a summer in South Africa with the Center for Social Concerns' International Summer Service Learning Program, as well as Entrepreneurship and Empowerment in South Africa, I wanted to research what I observed there through the scope of my economics degree.

Traveled to South Africa.

**James Mancini**

Hometown: Woodstock, Georgia

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in French)
- Advisor: A. Niles Fernando

Building Confidence: A Case-Study Analysis of the Impact of African Hydroelectric Development on Household Trust in Government

With the development of Chinese and state-funded hydroelectric power in Sub-Saharan Africa, many worry that negative consequences to freedom will result. In response, I evaluate the unintended, socio-political effects of this development on the household. Using the 2017 Soubré Dam in Côte d'Ivoire as my case, I employ a difference-in-differences strategy on survey response data to determine the effects of dam infrastructure and electrification on households' perceived economic conditions, faith in democracy, and trust in government.

My studies in international economics and Francophone studies have revealed to me the complexities of development, particularly in culturally and politically fractured areas. With my tangential interests in renewable energy and transportation, a topic on infrastructure development seemed perfect, and African investment in hydropower stood out as most relevant.

**Anabel Martinez**

Hometown: Larchmont, New York

- Majors: Economics and Spanish
- Minor: Studio Art
- Advisor: Juan Vitull

Agencia de la Mujer en Teatro Barroco

My thesis focuses on the role that women played in Iberian Baroque theatre. This includes female characters and female playwrights. I analyze the agency that female playwrights give their characters and how it differs from the agency that male playwrights give their female characters.

I chose this topic because of a class I took on Iberian Baroque literature in Toledo, Spain. I found the plays to be the most interesting because of the way they mix social sentiment with a desire to be entertaining.

**Santiago Martinez**

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

- Majors: Physics and Economics
- Advisor: Drew Creal

An International Evaluation of Random Forest Inflation Forecasting

Using monthly macro data for 12 countries from January 1980 to January 2018, I forecast inflation for these countries using a random forest machine learning model and two classic benchmark models (auto-regressive and random walk). I compare the results from these models, then compare results from the random forest model across countries to see where it performs the best. I then analyze why the model works better in some economies over others.

I chose this topic because I am interested in machine learning and wanted to gain experience with forecasting. I chose inflation as the forecasting variable since we have recently felt the effect of large inflation in our economy. I am conducting an international evaluation since single-country analysis is well documented.

**Jane McAvoy**

Hometown: Potomac, Maryland

- Major: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Advisor: Jasmine Xiao

To What Extent do Futures Prices of Crude Oil and Gasoline Forecast Their Future Spot Prices in the New York Mercantile Exchange?

To test the accuracy of predicting commodity spot prices, I leveraged Bloomberg data to calculate regressions from a basis equation (the commodity's futures price equals its future spot price with a constant equaling zero). I study crude oil and gasoline futures from 1983 to 2022 for month-end prices at the 1-, 3-, 6-, 12-month horizons. In conclusion, the basis regression model generates better forecasting properties of future spot prices than a random-walk model for all horizons.

Recent events (the Russia-Ukraine War, the energy crisis, and COVID-19) have challenged economists' predictability to forecast energy commodities precisely. Policymakers closely analyze aggregate energy market pricing because of its significant impact on the macroeconomy. This model can facilitate decisions for fiscal policymakers and investors as well.

**Gregory (Greg) McKenna Jr.**

Hometown: Brookfield, Connecticut

- Majors: History and Economics
- Minor: Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy
- Advisor: Joshua Specht

Armies and Advocates: F.C. Barcelona, Athletic Club and Regional Nationalisms During 'La Transición'

My thesis explores how F.C. Barcelona and Athletic Bilbao influenced Catalan and Basque nationalist movements during Spain's turbulent transition to democracy from 1975–82. Using press clips, club documents, court records and other materials, I show how players engaged in bold activism, how politicians used their region's biggest club to stir support for their policy agendas, and how both clubs supported the recovery of their respective regional cultures while helping immigrants assimilate. I conducted research at the Spanish National Library in Madrid as well as at the official archives of Athletic Club and F.C. Barcelona.

When I visited Athletic Club's award-winning museum while studying abroad in Spain, I was wowed by the archival material on display. Pleas to "keep politics out of sports" have become commonplace, but this topic shows how the intersection of the two realms is constant, important and makes for riveting history.

Traveled to Spain and received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Samuel (Sam) Miller**

Hometown: Perrysburg, Ohio

- Majors: Finance and Economics
- Advisor: Matthias Hoelzlein

The Premium Grocery Store Premium? The Impact of Whole Foods Market and Trader Joe's on Gentrification in their Surrounding Communities

I investigate the effect of a Whole Foods Market or Trader Joe's entering a community on gentrification in the surrounding area. Throughout my time here at Notre Dame and my studies in economics, I have become passionate about the economics of housing and the issue of gentrification. I'm particularly enamored with the problem of how we can make communities better for low-income residents without pricing them out of their homes. I was inspired by the arrival of Trader Joe's and Whole Foods in South Bend to take a look to see if they have any impact on this.

This has been an amazing culmination to my time at Notre Dame and truly the first opportunity I've had in my academic career to have an idea, research it, and see it through the entire academic process to try to add to the conversation.

**John (Jack) O'Leary**

Hometown: Palm City, Florida

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in Spanish)
- Minor: Data Science
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Matthias Hoelzlein

Changing Commuting Costs to Determine the Value of Public Transportation as Capitalized by Home Values

My project aims to understand the value of access to public transportation as capitalized in home values. Exogenous shocks to the relative value of car travel and public transportation (medium-term fuel price fluctuations) and spatial variation in the relative access to both modes are used to estimate how these shocks are capitalized differently depending on relative transit access. The differential response can then be translated into a causally identified monetary valuation of public transit access.

Consumer behavior regarding geographic sorting (where people live) and commuting decisions (how they get to work) interest me. This study has the potential to explain the value of investment in public transportation, which has social and environmental implications for policymaking. This study combines my interests with prominent issues (climate, fuel consumption, and traffic).

**Michael O'Loughlin**

Hometown: Norfolk, Massachusetts

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Supplementary Major: German
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: A. James McAdams

Surprise, Surprise: Explaining the Unexpected Persistence of the Alternative for Germany

In my senior thesis, I offer an explanation of the unexpected persistence of the Alternative for Germany (AfD), Germany's largest populist, radical-right party, and the first far-right party to enter German parliament since World War II. I examine several points during the party's 10-year history, at which many could have predicted the party's extinction. I evaluate key hypotheses which may explain the continued success of the party despite the challenges it has faced.

During my semester abroad in Germany, I witnessed the 2021 federal election firsthand and visited Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin to interview journalists, political scientists, government officials, and politicians. Through conversations with friends and peers, I became fascinated by the rise and persistence of the AfD. After returning to Notre Dame, I felt motivated to write my senior thesis about the often-surprising story of the AfD.

Traveled to Germany and received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Christina Onorato**

Hometown: New Milford, Connecticut

- Major: Design (Concentration in Visual Communication Design)
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Clinton Carlson

Ecopass

Ecopass is a design intervention whose purpose is to activate an interactive and educational experience for visitors to zoos and aquariums. It prompts interesting activities and adventures throughout the exhibits, helping visitors learn about the wildlife — their habitats, life cycles, diets, sounds, tracks, and special features. Ecopass forges a connection between visitors and animals in zoos and aquariums, fostering greater conservation efforts worldwide.

After visiting many zoos and aquariums last summer, I realized that making meaningful progress in protecting natural habitats requires shifting people's perspectives by developing visual cues in zoos and aquariums that communicate a broader understanding of animals as complex organisms that form integral parts of our ecosystem.

Received funding via the William and Connie Greif Art Award.

**Macy Owens**

Hometown: Mandeville, Louisiana

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Advisor: Kasey Buckles

Effects of Texas Fiscal Policy on Access to Prenatal Health Care

In 2011, Texas reduced state and federal funding for family planning services by 67%. This policy resulted in the closure of 25% of the state's family planning clinics, and reduced hours and staffing at some remaining clinics. These publicly funded clinics provide family planning services to many women, many of whom are underinsured or uninsured. My thesis examines the effect of these clinic closures on access to prenatal health care and infant and maternal outcomes.

I chose this topic because I am hoping to attend medical school and am interested in working in the field of women's health care. Many women in the United States face economic, social, and geographic barriers in accessing care. Understanding and removing these barriers is necessary for improving women's health outcomes.

**Gabriela Rivera**

Hometown: Clinton, New Jersey

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Advisor: Alejandro Estefan

An Antithesis: The Lack of Intergenerational Links of Female Labor Force Participation in Post-NAFTA Mexico

In Europe and North America, daughters of working mothers are more likely to work. In this paper, I focus on the shock of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in Mexico and see if the same theory of intergenerational links applies. Using data from the Mexican Family Life Survey, the empirical analysis shows that, contrary to Eurocentric and North American economic theory, intergenerational female labor force participation (LFP) does not seem to be present in post-NAFTA Mexico.

I was inspired by my advisor's research on female LFP in Mexico. There is a gap in economic literature about the next generation of women following NAFTA. Filling that gap is important for policymakers to understand how to increase female labor force participation in future generations in Latin America.

**Grace Rozembajgier**

Hometown: Carmel, Indiana

- Major: American Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Korey Garibaldi

Deliberating Civil Rights in the 21st Century

My thesis analyzes changes in the rulings and political landscapes of landmark Supreme Court cases. I investigate the cultural movements coinciding with the *Roe v. Wade* and *South Carolina v. Katzenbach* decisions, focusing on how feminist and civil rights advocates championed Fourteenth Amendment rights. Following the recent cases of *Merrill v. Milligan* and *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, I determine how reinterpretations of voting and reproductive rights affected the 2022 midterm elections.

Inspired by the recent acquisition of my grandfather's accounts of the 1965 Natchez boycotts, I wanted to study the role legal advocates played in the civil rights and feminist movements. As an American studies major, I value focusing on individual Americans to understand how popular political movements create legislative change. I conducted archival research at Harvard University's Schlesinger Library, studying the Pauli Murray Papers and the collection of the National Organization for Women (NOW) records. I also attended Harvard Radcliffe Institute's Age of Roe exhibit, which provided me with valuable information and images for my thesis.

Traveled to Massachusetts and received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).

**Edward (Eddie) Samowitz**

Hometown:

Port Washington, New York

- Majors: Science-Business and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Davin Raiha

The Effect of the 421-a Real Estate Tax Exemption on Rent Levels in New York City

Critics say the highly controversial real estate tax exemption policy 421-a gave unfair handouts to developers, but developers claim it was necessary to fund multi-family construction sustainably and profitably in New York. I look to isolate the policy's causal effects and its inclusionary housing provisions on rent levels across the five boroughs to provide insight on whether it was a necessary tax expenditure during its tenure as binding legislation.

Working in commercial real estate in New York City, 421-a is a key discussion point due to its recent expiration and because of its history of spurring badly needed residential construction. It seemed interesting to analyze the policy's economic impacts while we await its anticipated renewal or replacement. This project combines financial and economic empirical methods to disentangle it from confounding trends in the New York City housing market, and isolate 421-a's impact on rent levels due to its provisions from the period of 2008–2015.

**Lauren Sanderson**

Hometown:

Kensington, New Hampshire

- Major: Neuroscience and Behavior
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Lee Anna Clark

Maladaptive Personality Traits and Poly-Substance Use Disorder

There is evidence to suggest that certain personality traits may be risk factors for developing a substance use disorder (SUD). I'm looking at ways in which different classes of SUDs (e.g. alcohol use disorder, drug use disorder, poly-substance use disorder) vary in their scores on maladaptive personality trait scales.

I chose this topic because I'm interested in the relationship between personality traits and poly-substance use disorder, and whether knowing about the traits that characterize individuals with poly-substance use disorder can inform personality-targeted intervention programs for at-risk youth.

**Steven (Steve) Sayles**

Hometown: Oneida, New York

- Majors: Economics and History
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jake Lundberg

Compensated Emancipation in Delaware

At the start of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln drafted a bill for compensated emancipation of enslaved people in Delaware. Delaware was seen as more likely to adopt the bill than other southern states, and when the bill failed it reminded Lincoln of the Confederacy's deep connections with, and unwillingness to let go of, the institution of slavery.

I was intrigued by the topic when reading about the border states as a whole, and found that there were not many historical accounts that discuss it. This thesis enabled me to dig deeper into a topic within the Civil War that has been seldom discussed.

**Anupriya Seksaria**

Hometown:

Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

- Majors: Psychology and Economics
- Sorin Scholar Honors Program
- Advisor: Ying (Alison) Cheng

Self-Report and Process Data: Personality Predicts Student Engagement During the Transition from In-Person to Online Instruction Amidst COVID-19

The study investigated the change in student engagement as predicted by personality in the transition to remote online instruction during the 2019–2020 academic year. Students (N=228) completed self-reported course engagement in February to early March and again in late April to early May, and their personality data was collected in December 2019. In addition to the self-report data, process data for engagement was collected using the computerized AP-CAT system.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a sudden shift to remote learning, making it important to understand how students' engagement was affected. Combining self-report and process data with personality traits can provide valuable insight into how students responded to the transition, ultimately contributing to the field of education.

Received funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.

**Natalie Selover**

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in French)
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society and Poverty Studies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Zachary Stangebye

Frexit and the Future: What Leaving Would Mean for Europe

In both the 2017 and 2022 elections in France, political candidates called attention to a rising wave of populism within the country. Marine Le Pen, in particular, presented various proposals to leave the European Union, the eurozone, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). My thesis seeks to understand the potential consequences of a French departure from the EU or the eurozone on European economic stability via bond markets.

I took a class last year about the 2022 French election, which is when I first learned in depth about the ideas behind Frexit. I became interested in what Frexit might look like and how it could affect both France and Europe economically.

**William Shea**

Hometown: Pittsford, New York

- Major: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Advisor: Kali Rath

They Started It: How Universities Push Up Each Others' Tuition

My thesis examines how colleges, whether intentionally or not, cause each other to raise prices. In the competition for students, universities have to somehow convey the value of their product: Generous financial aid has allowed them to use a higher sticker price to do this, while not losing out on students. Applying literature on price-matching, I show how this competition can actually raise prices.

I chose this topic because education is becoming more and more important as a means of raising one's human capital. At the same time, the price of this education continues to rise. Understanding how and why these prices change is essential to predicting future changes.

**Gavin Shust**

Hometown: Walden, New York

- Majors: Romance Languages and Literatures and Political Science
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Charles Leavitt

Whispered Resistance: Queer Activism in Tondelli's *Camere Separate*

In the midst of the Italian AIDS crisis, Pier Vittorio Tondelli published his final novel, *Camere Separate*, a heart-breaking portrait of a gay man grieving his former lover. Contrary to the existing scholarly literature on Tondelli, I argue that queerness is intrinsically tied to the suffering of the main character, a largely autobiographical representation of Tondelli himself, highlighting how he crafted this uniquely Italian gay identity in the face of societal homophobia.

I chose this topic to honor those who have died of AIDS. Increasing queer visibility is a continual work of activism, and this thesis works to contribute to this arduous task. Tondelli is understudied in academics, therefore this project gives recognition to the underappreciated artist.

**Elizabeth (Lizzy) Steffensmeier**

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Mary Kate Batistich

Can I See Some Identification? The Impact of Receiving an ID Upon Release from Prison

My thesis investigates the impact that state assistance with obtaining identification upon release from prison has on the recidivism rates of previously incarcerated individuals. Many people lack valid identification when they exit prison, which restricts access to employment, housing, benefits, and more. Some states provide identification upon release, some assist with obtaining identification, and others do not provide help. I leverage across-time variation in such policies to measure their impact on recidivism.

This research generates evidence about policies promoting successful re-entry after exiting incarceration. Each year, more than 600,000 people are released from prisons within the United States, and far too many return in subsequent years. Formerly incarcerated individuals and society benefit from the enactment of successful reentry programs and policies.

**Shand Stephens**

Hometown: Tiburon, California

- Majors: Economics and Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Brian Cutter

A Glimpse of Us: Exploring the Philosophy of Consciousness

My thesis explores various positions in the philosophy of mind concerning consciousness. In particular, I attempt to resolve a substantial counterargument against one of those positions (a position which is generally less popular). If my response is correct, the position becomes much more favorable.

I chose this topic because I very much enjoyed my Philosophy of Mind class with Professor Brian Cutter. I thought it would be interesting to continue exploring this sub-discipline.

**Benjamin Sullivan**

Hometown: Fairfield, Connecticut

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Advisor: Erin Rossiter

Words Matter: An Analysis of the Impact of Rhetoric from Political Leaders on Partisan Social Identity of American Voters

My two-part project seeks to identify the link between partisan social identity (PID) and rhetoric from political elites. Firstly, I conducted a rhetorical analysis to detail the discursive strategies of modern political leaders in partisan rhetoric. Secondly, I conducted a survey experiment to identify the effects of unifying and incendiary partisan rhetoric on respondents' PID strength.

There is no doubt that it is becoming increasingly difficult to engage in political discourse with members of the opposite party. This issue isn't reflective of ideological polarization, but is rather due to the partisan social polarization which has continued to drive American political parties apart. I chose this topic to shed insight on what might be catalyzing this social polarization and how the words of political leaders matter in mending this partisan divide.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP).

**Anoop Sunkara**

Hometown: Rochester, New York

- Major: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics)
- Supplementary Major: Arts & Letters Pre-Health
- Minor: Poverty Studies
- Notre Dame Scholars Program and Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Christopher Cronin

The Impact of Education on Obesity, Examined through the United Kingdom's 1972 British Raising of School Leaving Age

What is the impact of education on obesity? This question is examined through the 1972 British Raising of School Leaving Age act, which raised the school leaving age in Britain from 15 to 16. Using this act, I seek to determine the broader impacts of education on obesity. Specifically, I attempt to understand the link between government education requirements and obesity levels, helping policymakers better target and reduce obesity.

Obesity is a broadly understudied area in economics, and very little research has focused on the relationship between government-mandated education and obesity levels. Because obesity has impacts on mortality, health expenditures, and quality of life, reducing obesity should be a primary focus of government policy. I chose this thesis topic to fill a gap in economic literature and encourage government policies that target obesity reduction.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

**Anthony Tatarka**

Hometown: Belgrade, Montana

- Majors: Mathematics (Science) and Economics
- Advisor: Evan Mast

The Effect of New Jersey's Mount Laurel Doctrine on Housing Supply

This project studies the Mount Laurel Doctrine, which is a policy that banned exclusionary zoning in New Jersey. By studying this topic, I hope to further knowledge related to zoning policies and their implications on the housing market.

Everyone needs housing; it is where people spend most of their time. I see housing as a fundamental part of people's lives, so I thought it would be an interesting topic to study.

**Joseph Tatarka**

Hometown: Belgrade, Montana

- Majors: Mathematics and Economics
- Advisor: Yong Suk Lee

Do ESOPs Affect Firm Performance and ESG?

I study how Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) affect firm performance and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) scores. I match firms with ESOPs to similar firms without ESOPs. I find evidence of a general positive effect on firm performance, particularly for market-based measures. I find a positive effect on ESG for large firms and for firms in transportation and construction.

I was interested in studying how employees owning stock in their company and becoming “employee owners” would influence employee motivation and engagement within the company. Additionally, the concept of ESG in business has become increasingly popular over the past decade.

**Elliott Thomazin**

Hometown: Columbus, Nebraska

- Majors: Economics and Philosophy
- Advisor: Kasey Buckles

The Time-Consuming Road to the Fast Track: An Analysis of Family and Career Attainment Using the American Time Use Survey

Inspired by the work of Claudia Goldin, this paper uses the American Time Use Survey to develop measures of family and career for men and women from 2003–2019. By defining family relative to time spent with children and career as working a full-time job, I find 18% of men and 14% of women meet my criteria for family and career attainment. Among those with children, the inequality widens to 50% of men and 32% of women attaining both family and career. However, women attain family and career to a greater degree and spend more time with their children than men, when analyzing those employed full-time. Despite women's greater time spent with their children while possessing a full-time job, only 48% of women with children are employed full-time relative to 86% of men with children.

I chose the topic because the attainment of both family and career constitute primary pursuits for many individuals today. However, both these pursuits present inequalities. In the words of Goldin: "Men are able to have a family and step up because women step back from their careers to provide more time for the family. Both are deprived: Men forgo time with family; women forgo career." I hope to shed light on this inequality and suggest further avenues to allow men and women to meaningfully engage with their children and their career.

**Connor Tsikitas**

Hometown: Bloomfield, New Jersey

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics, Mediterranean/Middle East Studies, Sustainability, and European Studies
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

INGOs: Weapons of Influence or IR Bombshells? The Impact of International Nongovernmental Organizations on CBRNE Weapons Policy

This project tackles the debate in international relations theory over whether non-state actors have influence over state actors. It also bridges a gap between theories of nongovernmental organization (NGO) influence in IR and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives (CBRNE) weapons policy.

I chose this topic because CBRNE is interesting to me and it seems to be a less-studied or pursued field in military and scholarly terms, besides maybe the nuclear weapons part. Professor Susan Rosato's NGO seminar made me particularly interested in the NGO theory side of things. This project was conducted as both my political science/NDISC thesis and my Middle East Studies capstone.

**Brian Walsh**

Hometown: Arlington Heights, Illinois

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Accountancy and Digital Marketing
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

The Impact of 1998 Tax Legislation on the Number of ESOPs and Company Consolidation

How did the 1998 tax law for S Corp employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) firms consequently impact the C Corp ESOP firms? Did the tax benefits result in an exit of C Corp consolidation for C Corps as they switched to become S Corps, or did the tax change have no impact on this? I presented my progress at Rutgers University at the Kelso Workshop, which is specific to ESOP-related topics. I sought advice and help from many ESOP experts.

I chose this topic because I am interested in the economics behind employee stock ownership plans and wanted to become an expert on them.

Traveled to New Jersey.

**Caroline (Callie) Whelan**

Hometown: Ridgefield, Connecticut

- Major: Economics
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Mary Flannery

(Meta)morphosis: Facebook's Fabled Fast Track to Infamy and its Impact on Competition and Privacy

My thesis considers the rise of Facebook-Meta as a case study for the insufficiency of American antitrust law and privacy regulation. The paper examines the innate industry tension between economic competition and consumer privacy, and devises policy prescriptions to rectify such strain in light of the newly emerging Web3.

I chose this topic because I am passionate about the economic, political, social, and psychological impacts of big tech companies and their unbridled power on human society. I sought to learn more about the current structure of American competition and privacy law to understand how and why this phenomenon is occurring. I also sought to learn how other countries are handling these issues for potential policy inspiration.

**Justin Witt**

Hometown: Midland, Michigan

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Susanne Wengle

Who Supports Free Markets? A Comparative Study of Economic Attitudes in the Baltic States

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet planned economy, scholars proposed a variety of theories to predict how citizens of post-socialist states would view free markets and government intervention in the economy. My thesis conducts a plausibility probe to determine how well these existing theories explain contemporary trends. I conducted fieldwork in Vilnius, Lithuania, and Tallinn, Estonia. Through case studies in the Baltic States, I explore how national economic growth, communist nostalgia, and ethno-religious identity relate to economic ideology.

I selected this topic after interning for a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that promotes market-oriented reforms through its global network of think tank partners, including those in the Baltic States.

Traveled to Lithuania and Estonia and received funding from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

**Bailee Zacovic**

Hometown: Reynoldsburg, Ohio

- Majors: Mathematics and Philosophy
- Minor: Business Economics
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program, Glynn Family Honors Program, and Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Matthew Dyer

The Combinatorics of Coxeter Groups

Coxeter groups were first introduced as generalizations of finite reflection groups by Harold Scott MacDonald "H.S.M." Coxeter in 1934. In my thesis, I describe some of the beautiful explicit formulae for the Poincaré series of Coxeter groups, examine analogies between such series and others arising in combinatorics, and consider techniques for computing the Poincaré series of more general subsets. Remarkably, the Poincaré series of Coxeter groups, and many geometrically or algebraically natural subsets, are rational.

I intend to obtain my Ph.D. in mathematics and pursue a career in mathematical research, particularly in algebraic combinatorics, the field to which the theory of Coxeter groups belongs. I chose this project to acquire familiarity with several potential doctoral research topics which are actively studied today.

**Andrew Zimlich**

Hometown: Charleston, South Carolina

- Majors: History and French
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Patrick Griffin

Making a Myth: Retracing the Story of General Francis Marion

Brig. Gen. Francis Marion, better known to many as the Swamp Fox, is widely celebrated as one of America's greatest Revolutionary War heroes. His legendary reputation, however, is rather astonishing considering he was a backcountry fighter who mainly engaged in small, local skirmishes in the Carolinas. My thesis investigates the creation of this unlikely legend, analyzing several factors that played a key role in elevating Marion to the status of a national hero.

Growing up in Marion's home state of South Carolina, I grew accustomed to seeing his name around me. However, when I learned that Indiana's most populated county, Marion County, was also named after the Swamp Fox, I began to ask myself how his story had spread so far.