



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2021

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM

**Colleen Bartlett**

- Major: Psychology
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Gabriel Radvansky

Causal Connections in Memory of the United States 2016 Presidential Election

Findings from many studies have demonstrated that in simple narrative stories, the more causal connections a narrative event has, the better remembered that event will be. My project extends the causal connection theory of narrative comprehension to less structured information — news headlines from the United States presidential election in 2016. I hypothesized that the longer, more complex, and less cohesive “narrative” created by these headlines will essentially conform to the existing theory of narrative comprehension.

I chose this topic because I thought it would be interesting to study people’s memory of the 2016 presidential election, especially while the 2020 presidential election campaign was ongoing. Specifically, I was interested in studying one of the potential mechanisms that could influence people’s memory of an election because what people remember best from an election is likely to influence the way they choose to vote.

**David Bender**

- Major: Economics
- Minor: History
- Advisor: Ethan Lieber

The Affordable Care Act's Effect on Flu Shot Consumption in the United States

For this project, I examined the impact of the Affordable Care Act on flu shot consumption by comparing yearly trends for those impacted by the ACA to those on Medicare who were not impacted.

I wanted to combine my interests in public policy and data analysis to examine the tangible impact of a particularly notable piece of legislation. COVID-19 gave me inspiration to conduct this research in the field of health economics.

**Levi Bognar**

- Major: Economics
- Advisor: James Sullivan

The Impact of Performance-Based Funding on Institutional Finances

My thesis investigates the impact of state-level performance-based funding (PBF) policies on the institutional finances of public, two-year colleges. Literature has shown that PBF policies do not have an impact on student success measures such as degree completion, graduation rate, and retention rate. I used difference-in-difference estimates to measure how PBF affects institutional finances, and identified crowd-out as a reason why PBF has failed to positively influence student outcomes.

I chose this topic because I am passionate about college completion in the United States. The proportion of graduated high school students who have enrolled in college has sharply increased in the last decade. However, college graduation rates have remained flat. This is a problem as the completion of a college degree continues to become more important in the labor force.

**Patrick Brady**

- Majors: Russian, Economics, and Political Science
- Minor: Middle Eastern Studies
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Advisor: Michael Desch

Future of U.S. Naval Grand Strategy in the Persian Gulf

My thesis proposes a new maritime strategy for the U.S. in the Persian Gulf by evaluating developments in naval technology, Middle Eastern geopolitics, and American energy production. It looks to the future of these three rapidly evolving domains, laying out a framework for the U.S. Navy to efficiently and effectively maintain sea power in the gulf.

I saw this thesis as an opportunity to synthesize what I had learned through the Notre Dame International Security Center and my Middle Eastern Studies minor — a chance to channel my passion for geopolitics, grand strategy, and the Arabic and Persian languages into a single project. This topic also allowed me to better understand and appreciate the weapon systems, ideas, and people with whom I will be working as a naval officer after graduation.



Patrick Brady

- Majors: Russian, Economics, and Political Science
- Minor: Middle Eastern Studies
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Advisor: Zachary Stangebye

Macroeconomics of Russian Hybrid Warfare

In this project, I studied the impact of Russian hybrid warfare efforts against former Soviet-bloc states by analyzing various macroeconomic indicators during incidents of hybrid warfare. Specifically, I examine cases in which cyber, political, cultural, and financial tactics were used to augment conventional military action by Russia, evaluating the effectiveness of these hybrid tactics in damaging the target nation's economy.

While I have always wanted to study international relations through an economic lens, I developed a special interest in Ukrainian and Russian geopolitics while studying at a Russian language school in Kiev two summers ago. Additionally, hybrid and asymmetric tactics have become especially prevalent today, both in regards to contemporary Russia and the overall future of warfare.

**Gretchen Bruening**

- Major: International Economics
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Advisor: Susan Blum

Cultural Perceptions of Food Allergies in Africa

This study seeks to understand the cultural perceptions of food allergies in Africa by drawing connections between food practices and attitudes towards food allergies. An online survey was used to collect data from individuals from seven African countries. Findings show that there is a generally respectful perception of food allergies among the population surveyed.

I chose this topic because I have suffered from food allergies for several years. Ever since I was diagnosed, I have been much more aware of how food allergies are perceived in the United States, and I have been curious as to how people perceive food allergies in different cultural contexts.

**Gretchen Bruening**

- Major: International Economics
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Transportation in France: Impacts of the Grenelle II Law on Carbon Emissions

This project studies the impact of the 2010 Grenelle II Law on carbon dioxide emissions in France. Using a difference-in-difference model, I studied the impact of transportation-related public policy from this law on carbon emissions during the five years before and after the Grenelle II Law was passed.

I chose this topic because I was interested in French transportation infrastructure after studying abroad in Angers, France, in the spring of 2020. I am also interested in environmental public policy and how it impacts people's actions, and this topic was a great way to combine my interests.

**Sam Cannova**

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Ernest Morrell

Global Counterculture in Local Protests, First Then and Again Now: Reviving Cape Town Hip-Hop to Renegotiate the New Apartheid

Written in the style of new journalism, my thesis parses out through-lines of the roles of hip-hop culture in Cape Town social discourse. Episodically synthesizing insights from songs, videos, interviews, articles, historical context, and casual ethnographic observations from my exploratory research in Cape Town, I present a scene in which today's artists find themselves at a threshold fairly familiar to their cultural pioneers, leveraging hip-hop to confront the lurking conditions of apartheid. I'm a longtime fan of American rap, and began to engage in hip-hop studies after encountering a paper correlating the rise of the culture in Cape Town with the climax of apartheid protests. I pursued these research interests through the Kellogg International Scholars program, eventually traveling to Cape Town on a research grant. From there, my fascination built as I synthesized my experiences into this thesis.

Traveled to Cape Town, South Africa, with funding from the Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

**Jonnathan Cuji**

- Majors: Economics and Management Consulting
- Advisor: Christopher Cronin

COVID-19 and Mental Health: A Look At The Effects of Physical and Social Isolation

Using Google Trends mental health, SafeGraph mobility, COVID-19 confirmed cases and deaths, and policy data at the county level, we took a look at the effects of the pandemic on the volume of mental health-related Google searches. This analysis was conducted at the metro level, controlling for geographical variance with an OLS regression.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every part of life and, having tackled mental health issues personally, I wanted to ensure that there was economic evidence for the diminishing mental health that is to be expected. In addition, this project allowed me to contribute to both isolation and natural disaster mental health research.

**Carolyn Davin**

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Chloe Gibbs

External Shocks to Schooling: Catholic Schools' Response to Hurricane Katrina and COVID-19

In this paper, I sought to discover how external shocks, like hurricanes and COVID-19, affect Catholic schools, particularly in terms of enrollment, closings, consolidations, re-openings, and the composition of the student body served in terms of race, socioeconomic status, and religion.

I have attended Catholic schools since kindergarten, and I have always been interested in education. When the pandemic hit, I was extremely interested in the impact it is having on schools. A lot of the literature and data out there are focused on public schools, so I wanted to dig deeper into what happens to Catholic schools.

**Grace Dean**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Impact of the 2016 Brexit Referendum on Spain's Financial Markets

I examined how Britain's 2016 vote to leave the European Union impacted Spain's stock returns and government bond yields immediately after the referendum passed. By treating Brexit as a shock to the market, I looked for the extent to which the UK's unilateral policy decision was incorporated into stock indices overseas.

I was interning at the UK Parliament when Brexit actually occurred on January 31, 2020, which sparked my interest in British public policy. Since the language focus of my international economics major is Spanish, I also quickly became fascinated with how Spain's membership in the EU connected the many facets of my interdisciplinary curriculum. As a participant in the concentration in financial economics and econometrics, I seized the opportunity to view Brexit's vast economic implications from a more financial lens and see how the theoretical foundations from my coursework appear in an empirical analysis.

**Erin Doyle**

- Major: History
- Minors: Education, Schooling, and Society (ESS) and Business Economics
- Advisors: Brian Collier and Maria McKenna

Montessori Education and its Role in the Educational Landscape of the United States

My project traces the history of Montessori education from its origins in Rome and introduction to the United States through its revitalization in the 1950s and its presence in current movements. I argue for its viability in the American context due to its pedagogical alignment with concerns and challenges in the country. Additionally, I show the various societal and institutional factors that have historically prevented it from holding a more prominent position in American education.

I attended a Montessori school from preschool to eighth grade, and I have always felt passionately about the education model. Additionally, I wanted a project that would combine my academic interests in history and education.

**Isabel Edgar**

- Majors: International Economics (French) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies (CDT)
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

Do Protests Matter? The Political Implications of the Gilets Jaunes Movement

I studied the Gilets Jaunes movement in France, which rose to prominence through grassroots protests in November 2018, to understand whether protests can have a tangible impact on the local political landscape. I examined how the variation in intensity of Gilets Jaunes participation across the country impacted voting behavior and electoral outcomes in the 2020 municipal elections.

I became interested in protest movements while studying abroad at Sciences Po in Paris in spring 2020. While walking down the streets during my semester orientation, I was quite literally swept up in a miles-long protest of the government's recent changes to the federal pension program. I find that the innate notion of civic responsibility is implemented through the loud voices and stomping feet of the French populace, which is incredibly fascinating to me as an American, though it is standard there. I wanted to learn more about one of the most intense protests of the last 50 years.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Elena Esteve**

- Major: International Economics (Romance Languages)
- Minor: Social Work (at St. Mary's College)
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Niles Fernando

Hogares Temporales: Inefficiencies in the Chilean Child Welfare System and Why They Matter

In this paper, I discuss the importance of a functioning child welfare system for the well-being of a country's economy and its citizens, by focusing on Chile's National Service for Minors (SENAME). I highlight the inefficiencies in the SENAME system, including inequalities in access across regions, and the effects they have on economic outcomes.

I wanted to combine my international economics major with my interest in social work and residential care as a viable form of treatment for children who have experienced trauma. Upon learning about the injustices occurring in SENAME residential centers and the lack of attention they receive, I hoped to highlight the importance of a functioning child welfare system, not only for the well-being of children, but also for society as a whole.

**Rhetta Eubanks**

- Majors: International Economics (Spanish) and History
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

The USMCA and the Auto Industry

In this project, I analyze the impact of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, instituted in July 2020, on the wages of automotive industry workers in Mexico. The USMCA intended to increase the wages of these workers, so I evaluated its efficacy in achieving this goal.

Policies that increase wages for workers in low-paying employment are incredibly important, and I wanted to examine whether trade agreements can have a positive effect on wages. The COVID-19 pandemic affected my project because I had to control for the impact of the pandemic on my results.

**Rhetta Eubanks**

- Majors: History and International Economics (Spanish)
- Advisor: Joshua Specht

The History of the Mexican Community in Arizona Through the Lens of Their Newspapers

My thesis examines the history of the Mexican community in Arizona through their own words, by exploring Spanish-language newspapers. I used three major events in Arizona history to explore the tensions and changes within Mexican identity: the debates surrounding Arizona statehood from about 1870 until statehood in 1912; the Bracero Program that employed Mexican nationals starting during World War II, from 1942 to 1964; and the arguments surrounding the English-only amendment to the Arizona constitution that was passed in 1988.

I grew up just outside of Phoenix, Arizona, and have always been interested in its unique history. Furthermore, because of my Latina identity and my strong interest in the Spanish language, I wanted to explore the history of Mexican people and their language in my home state. Finally, I believe that we should allow historical people and groups to tell us their story in their own words. I want to help publicize the history of my home state and my Mexican predecessors by allowing them to speak for themselves.

The senior thesis has been an incredibly rewarding experience that has allowed me to explore a topic I love and develop my research skills. I regularly am asked about my thesis in law school interviews, and I have enjoyed the experience of researching the words of people from the past.

**Emileigh Evans**

- Majors: Theology and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Francesca Murphy

She-Said, We-Said: Marian Apparitions and Their Societal Implications

My thesis analyzes Marian apparitions throughout history. In particular, I look at how the accounts of these apparitions are influenced by the recipients' cultures and how, in turn, the apparitions influence the culture. I also discuss the historical figure of Mary in an attempt to explain why she appears to certain demographics and brings specific types of messages.

At first, I had a broader topic that looked at visions and apparitions in general, but I noticed that the Virgin Mary was a very common figure in these types of events. This evolved into a desire to specifically examine Marian apparitions, which revealed connections between the images and ideas that the recipients were exposed to and the accounts that they gave about their experiences.

**Kevin Fox**

- Major: Sociology
- Supplementary Major: Theology
- Minors: Poverty Studies and Business Economics
- Advisor: David Gibson

Social Elusiveness Among Advantaged Groups

For this project, I created a survey to measure people's desires to discuss certain subjects. I analyzed how advantaged groups wanted to discuss the topic of oppression at slower rates than the disadvantaged groups.

I was inspired to do this research after reading *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo and hearing her speak on campus as well.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.

**Kevin Gallagher**

- Majors: Business Analytics and International Economics
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Central Research Question: What is the Relationship Between the Murder Rate and Mexican Students' Decisions to Pursue a Higher Education?

Using state-by-state homicide and tertiary education enrollment data collected across the last two decades from Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics (INEGI), I sought to discover whether violence impacts human capital decisions in a statistically significant way. I used Stata to draw quantitative insights.

Last spring in Puebla, Mexico, two of my schoolmates were killed coming home from a local municipality where I also travelled once weekly for an internship. In response to the poor security situation, my classmates shut down the campus by creating a human chain around it for several days. Their response inspired me to investigate whether some students would rather lose the potential benefits of a higher education than put a target on their backs.

**Christopher Gamboa**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Minor: Theology
- Advisor: Forest Spence

Hispanic Multigeneration Households

Why has there been a recent influx in Hispanic people choosing to live in multigenerational households? Is this a cultural phenomenon or a financial decision? My paper explores the motivations behind this recent trend and the economic outcomes for families who make this choice. I chose to study this topic because it combines my interest in macroeconomics with my background in Hispanic culture. This paper allows me to analyze the influence that culture can have on economic decisions.

Renyang Gao

- Majors: Sociology and Economics
- Minor: Data Science
- Advisor: Rory McVeigh

Perception of Threats in the Context of a Colonial Legacy: Reactions of White British Citizens Towards British Indian Civil Initiatives

This study investigates how white British citizens react to collective actions that appear to be undertaken by ethnic minorities. The study uses an online survey, in which respondents were asked about their opinions on the webpages of fictitious civil organizations that show the same contents signifying a commitment to all citizens, but different titles that mention specific ethnic groups. I then examined whether exposure to different titles induced significant differences in the respondents' opinions.

Existing literature suggests that people with lower socioeconomic statuses are more prone to racial/ethnic biases, as tolerance tends to increase with one's educational and income level. However, I wanted to investigate whether this observation still holds true when minorities are advancing socioeconomically and presenting more competition to those from higher social classes.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Eisch Endowment for Excellence.

**Ellen Geyer**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Minor: Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy
- Advisors: Forrest Spence and Denise Della Rosa

The Spillover Effects of Promotion & Relegation in Spain: The Case of La Liga & Segunda División

My paper analyzes how the relegation or promotion of a team between La Liga and Segunda División, the top two Spanish professional soccer leagues, impacts local economic health as measured by annual per-capita gross domestic product. In this manner, I provide both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the spillover effects between sporting success and overall economic conditions.

This topic married my love of economics and sport. The critical role that soccer plays in nation and culture in Spain created a particularly fascinating case study, allowing me to more fully understand the relationship between sport and identity — and how this relationship impacts economic decision-making.

**Laura Henares**

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: German
- Minor: International Development Studies
- Advisor: Patrizio Piraino

Differences Between Urban and Rural Educational Outcomes in Brazil

In this research, I used econometric regressions to quantify how demographic and socioeconomic factors influence a student's ability to attend college in Brazil. Since the country is extremely unequal and mosaic, calculating this provided insight into the debate on whether federal or state-based policies are more efficient for Brazil.

As a Brazilian citizen, I was extremely privileged to be able to attend a top-quality school through my 14 years of education. I want other Brazilians to be able to not only have access to education, but quality of education as well. This will only be achieved by effective policymaking.

Traveled to Brazil.

**Amorette Hernandez**

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Sustainability and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Melissa Paulsen

A Sustainable Financing Plan for El Campito's Urban Garden

I studied the economic feasibility and sustainability of an urban garden for El Campito, a South Bend child development and education center, to address food insecurity and implement environmental education. My financial sustainability plan includes grant writing, community mapping, and impact identification and evaluation.

I am passionate about empowering students and families at El Campito because of the large minority and immigrant population served. With this project, I am able to help provide an underserved community greater financial ownership of their food production, which can improve the community's sustainability for future generations.

**Margaret Horan**

- Majors: International Economics and Political Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: John Firth

Child Labor and Schooling in Rural Peru

My project uses data from the 2014 Peruvian Rural Household Survey to identify the determinants of child labor in rural Peru. I use children's birth order and sibling gender to analyze the household cost-benefit analysis regarding the labor-schooling decision. This analysis offers additional insight into the factors that affect child labor in rural Peru, which has implications for implementing policies to reduce its prevalence.

I chose to research the interaction between child labor and schooling because understanding a poor household's decision to engage in child labor is crucial to designing effective policies to reduce it.

**Declan Hotter**

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Russian and Accountancy
- Advisor: Eric Sims

Negative Interest Rates

For this project, I ran a macroeconomic analysis on 11 countries to determine if a one-point policy rate change in the negative range has the same effect as a one-point change in the positive range.

I chose this topic because unconventional monetary policy was very interesting to me after I took Eric Sims' Monetary Policy and Theory class. Because this policy is relatively new, I figured it would be a very interesting research topic.

**Rachel Ingal**

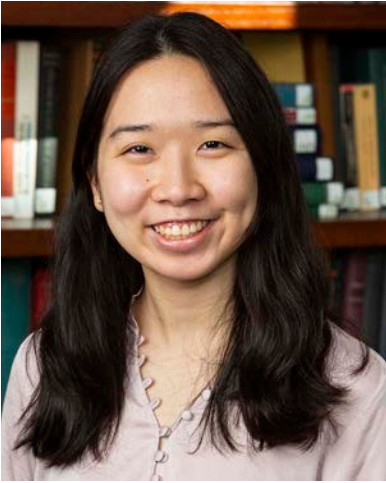
- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Christina Wolbrecht

Run Like a Girl: How Gender and Race Work Through the Role Model Effect to Increase the Political Ambition of Adolescent Girls

In the United States today, we are still far from gender parity in our elected governing bodies. But this is not due to the fact that women aren't winning — it's because they aren't running. My research explores how the visibility of women candidates affects girls' political ambition throughout their lives. I am interested in investigating the effects of both gender and race in visibility and representation.

As someone who believes policy is essential to enacting justice, I believe that having a diversity of policymakers is vital to representing and creating equity for the variety of perspectives and voices in our country. Women, especially women of color, are heavily underrepresented in our government. As a woman of color myself, I am interested in exploring why that is and how to work toward meaningful representation.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Mika Inoue**

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Michèle Müller-Itten

Digging Deep: Modeling Cap and Trade Policies for Groundwater Management

Excessive pumping of groundwater has become a greater issue over the years. Previous economic literature on the topic has resulted in the underestimation of the cost of groundwater pumping due to a lack of integration with an accurate hydrological model. My paper aims to comprehensively research the various policies being proposed and to analyze the different asymmetrical considerations in creating a groundwater market using a two-player model.

I decided on this topic because groundwater pumping rates are reaching an unsustainable level, resulting in land subsidence, reduced water supply, increased pumping costs, and water contamination. Though more countries are starting to realize this problem, there is still no clear consensus as to the best course of action to halt groundwater depletion. I wanted to then understand how markets can address the tension between the socially optimal case and the current situation.

**Grace Johannesen**

- Majors: Political Science and International Economics (Italian)
- Advisor: Andrew Gould

Strict Lockdowns vs. Trust in Citizens: Policy Responses to COVID-19 in Italy and Sweden

Sweden and Italy took drastically different approaches in their responses to the coronavirus. My thesis explores their policies and the impacts of those policies, looking into their health care systems, institutional setups, and governments as possible determinants of their specific responses to COVID-19. Six months into the pandemic, Italy and Sweden saw very similar results in terms of death rates and other metrics, but after a year, the results of their policies have diverged.

During the spring 2020 semester, I looked into how various European countries handled COVID-19 as part of a European Politics course. This was of particular interest to me as I had been studying in Rome until the pandemic hit. Countries across Europe took different approaches and encountered the virus with varying levels of severity. Two countries that stood out were Italy and Sweden, whose policies covered both extremes.

I was not planning on writing a thesis until my professor, and now advisor, encouraged me to follow up on the research I did last spring. Since the subject matter of my thesis is current and ongoing, new information is constantly available as both countries work to curb the spread of the virus. Changes to policy or, in Italy's case, changes to the current government after the resignation of the prime minister, have led me to continuously make updates to my project and have shown me just how quickly everything can change.

**Grace Johannesen**

- Majors: Political Science and International Economics (Italian)
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Populism and Economic Growth in Italy

For my international economics senior research project, I analyzed how the recent rise and election of populist parties Lega and the Five Star Movement in Italy have affected economic growth.

I chose this topic due to my interest in the Italian government, particularly at a point in time when it has been so susceptible to crisis and collapse. The recent rise in populism is a worldwide phenomenon, and Italy — the first Western European country to have a populist majority — can provide insights into the relationship between populism and the economy.

Disagreements over the Italian response to COVID-19 and the use of EU relief funding led to the collapse of the Italian government in January 2021. This has only added to the political and economic instability now typical of Italy and has made this study ever more important.

**Kate Kleiser**

- Majors: Economics and Psychology
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

Analyzing the Neighborhood Effects of HOPE VI Revitalization Grants

I am using census data from 1990 and from 2014-2018 to analyze the effects of revitalization grants from Hope VI. I am looking at things such as poverty and unemployment levels, as well as overall income of the neighborhoods before and after the grants.

I became interested in housing projects after I took the Economics of Housing course, and I wanted to explore the topic further.



**John Kling**

- Majors: English and Classics
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisors: Greg Kucich and Ian Newman

'There Was Nowhere to Go But Everywhere': Wordsworth, Kerouac, and the Self-Epic as Shelter from Revolutionary Storms

I am comparing the British Romantics' and the American Beats' responses to periods of political and social crisis. My two primary texts, William Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* confront the dilemmas of the French Revolution and World War II, respectively. By adapting older quest narratives through the lens of the individual poet-prophet, both authors use their journeys as personal refuges from issues that their institutions have failed to effectively solve.

I was inspired by my University Seminar on the history of quest literature with Greg Kucich, in which we studied both of my primary texts. The Romantic period and the Beat generation both sought lofty revelation inspired by disillusionment with their political eras. Although these two movements have not been widely compared, this topic allowed me to work with two well-established periods and draw interesting new connections between the seemingly disparate eras.

**Mitchell Larson**

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Peace Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Victoria Woodard

One Wave, Two Wave, Red Wave, Blue Wave: Modeling Midterms Before Candidates

My paper relies on the differences between House and presidential coalitions in presidential elections to generate a logistic regression model predicting which U.S. House of Representatives seats are most likely to flip in the following midterm. Relying on data from the past three cycles, I also identify which pre-redistricted seats would be targets for Democrats in 2022.

I have always been interested in the U.S. House of Representatives because it is the body most representative of average Americans. With 435 individual races run repeatedly, these elections provide deeper insights into the electorate than one-off presidential elections or the wonkiness of Senate elections. Modeling these elections seemed a good use of the skills I developed in my ACMS major.

Mitch MacDonald

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Katie Bugyis

More than Contemporaries: John Wyclif, Geoffrey Chaucer, and the case for a Wycliffite Spirituality in *The Canterbury Tales*

My thesis seeks to establish an intellectual and historical link between Geoffrey Chaucer and John Wyclif that allows for the subsequent exploration of a Wycliffite spirituality within *The Canterbury Tales*. "The Wife of Bath" is relied on heavily as a site through which this influence becomes apparent. *The Canterbury Tales* was, for me, the most influential text encountered across the PLS Great Books Seminars. This work showed me that there are fundamental aspects of the human experience that remain constant regardless of time or place. After reading the *Tales*, I knew I wanted to come back to them for my senior thesis, and the added prospect of working with Professor Katie Bugyis was too much to pass up.

Cade MacQuarrie

- Major: Economics
- Minor: Sustainability
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Economics of Carbon Neutral Plans of Businesses

I researched the connection between economics and sustainability specifically as it pertains to businesses instituting carbon-neutral plans. The focus of my project was to determine which actions taken by governments crowd out the efforts of private businesses to reach their sustainability goals, particularly with regard to carbon mitigation.

This topic blends together my major and minor and represents my interest in both business and a carbon-free future in regards to the fight against climate change. This topic also presented me with a chance to contribute to a field of economic study that does not receive enough attention.

**Noah Mattapallil**

- Majors: Philosophy and Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jeffrey Harden

Factors Predicting State Levels of COVID-19

In this project I attempt to delineate factors that predict a U.S. state's level of COVID-19 case positivity. These include political factors like support for Donald Trump during the 2020 election and social factors like community mobility.

I chose this topic because COVID-19 was an emerging issue at the time, and the United States was weathering the storm far worse than most other nations, despite its massive health care apparatus. That phenomenon fascinated me, so I decided to focus on states as the perfect case studies for how public health responses succeed and fail.

**Sean McConville**

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

Does Collaboration Amongst Service Providers Reduce Homelessness? Evidence from Coordinated Entry

Coordinated Entry is a policy that encourages homeless service providers to operate collectively and work together in fighting homelessness at a local level. In my project, I studied whether Coordinated Entry has been effective in reducing levels of homelessness from its introduction in 2012 to 2019.

I have had the opportunity to work as a research assistant at the Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO) for two years at Notre Dame. While working on a study related to homelessness, I came across Coordinated Entry and found it fascinating. In talking to my advisor, Robert Collinson, I thought that it would be an interesting topic and one that would benefit from more research.

**Meredith McElroy**

- Majors: English and Psychology
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Amy Mulligan

Teaching Medieval Literature in a High School Setting

I explore how the characteristics of stereotyping, agency, community, individuality, and leadership influence *The Voyage of Saint Brendan* and *The History and Topography of Ireland*. I then show how those analyses can be used in a classroom setting for the benefit of both students and teachers.

I hope to teach after graduation, and I wanted to familiarize myself with pedagogical knowledge and ways to connect with students. Additionally, there has not been a lot of crossover between the fields of Irish studies and education, and I enjoyed making those connections.

**Patrick McGuire**

- Majors: Economics and Sociology
- Advisor: William Carbonaro

Lost Value: Home Ownership and the Racial Wealth Gap in South Bend, Indiana

I analyze the relationship between neighborhood racial composition and home sale price, as well as “lost value”: the difference between a home’s assessed value and its sale price, in South Bend, Indiana from 2009-2019. I found that historical redlining has persistent negative effects on both dependent variables. In addition, I discovered that while controls explain the observed relationship between racial composition and sale price, there remains a significant effect of racial composition on lost value.

I’ve had the privilege of working with the City of South Bend and local organizations for the past several years, implementing home ownership initiatives to address the racial wealth gap in our town — a local symptom of one of the nation’s most urgent crises of inequity. In my thesis, I hoped to offer insights for this work in the local context of South Bend and beyond, particularly highlighting the limits of “color blind” policy strategies.

**Alex Moran**

- Majors: Economics and Program of Liberal Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Drew Creal

Predicting U.S. Monthly Inflation With a Random Forest

I created a random forest machine-learning model that is capable of outperforming classical univariate time series models. Unlike a standard random forest model, my model is intended to be used in time series contexts.

I was interested in unconventional forecasting methods, and I chose the random forest in particular because I wanted the opportunity to learn about machine learning.

**Nicholas Mungan**

- Major: Classics
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Brian Krostenko

The Sermon on the Mound: Political Realism Applied to the *Commentarii* of Caesar

My thesis project is a novel approach to the literary analysis of Julius Caesar's history of his own conquest of Gaul. By applying the modern political science of realism to ancient text, one can see the timeless nature of international relations in Caesar's narrative of his diplomacy with the Germanic chieftain of the Suebi, Ariovistus, in Book 1 of the *Commentarii de bello Gallico*.

Unlike other Roman authors, Caesar writes not only from firsthand experience but also as the driving force behind the events in Gaul he describes. Therefore, the *Commentarii* becomes a source for both a literary and political approach, and the two intertwine frequently in discussing the meaning and thought behind Caesar's words and actions.



Joanna Murphy

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Taryn Dinkelman

Can Truth Restore Confidence: A Quantitative Assessment of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

Many countries emerging from oppressive pasts have instituted restorative justice bodies to improve political, social, and economic divisions. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) are one form of restorative justice body that have been adopted by several transitional societies to facilitate the healing process. My thesis studies whether the South African TRC has had a quantifiable impact on confidence in the country's institutions and government post-apartheid.

The motivation behind my thesis is to better understand how nations can effectively address historical human rights violations in order to create a more inclusive future. Over 40 nations have established restorative justice bodies similar to Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, and understanding the strengths and shortcomings of such commissions can inspire other nations, such as the United States, to create similar bodies to address and heal from oppressive pasts.

**Shanon Murphy**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Supplementary Major: Arts and Letters Pre-Health
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Health Care System Responses to COVID-19: Spain vs. the United States

My project compares how the health care systems of Spain and the United States have responded to the pandemic by analyzing data trends of COVID-19 cases and deaths, vaccination distribution rates, and hospitalization rates and capacity limits.

As a pre-health and international economics student, I wanted to pursue a topic that combined my different areas of my study. I plan to go to medical school and learned a lot by completing this project. It is important to compare different health care systems around the world in order to discover areas of improvement for health care and institutional policies. My research aims to find particular features of both systems that have performed better than the other during the pandemic, which I hope will be useful when creating future health care policies.

**Thomas Murphy**

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)
- Advisor: Emma Planinc

The Moral Philosophies of *The Federalist Papers* and Cicero's *De Officiis*

My thesis is an examination of republicanism in *The Federalist Papers*. This examination is placed alongside the work of Cicero's *De Officiis*, a treatise on the Roman duty, and the two works are critiqued for an overreliance on institutional mechanisms as a means of promoting the common good.

I chose this topic because of my long-term interest in Cicero and my deep admiration for the minds of America's founders. The Lockean influence on the American Constitution is ever-emphasized in popular media — taking an alternative look at the Constitution's underpinnings has been a great joy for me.

Evan Núñez

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Advisor: Geoffrey Layman

Pro-life Democrats: The Solution to Democrats' Structural Disadvantages in Congress

I examined the electoral performances of pro-life Democrats, showing that, on average, they outperform the partisan baseline of their district by 11 percentage points. Then, I outline how Democratic strategists might deploy pro-life Democrats in swing districts and red-leaning districts in order to overcome the structural disadvantages that the Democratic Party faces in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate.

I chose this topic because I think that the Democratic Party is giving up on around 20 to 30 House seats and a handful of Senate seats every election cycle. While those seats are presently out of reach, they might be competitive if the party ran candidates who reflect the ideological composition of the districts in which they run.

**Augustine Pasin**

- Major: Chinese
- Minor: Business Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholar
- Advisor: Michel Hockx

Self-censorship and Hollywood: How Chinese Cultural Policy Influences American Media

My thesis project explores theories of self-censorship, Chinese domestic and foreign policy, and how these two things can be applied to gain a better understanding of how financial incentives drive American self-censorship in media productions.

I chose this topic because it suited my interests of media and cultural policy research. I found it especially engaging because I was able to apply my background in economics to a more traditionally cultural field.

**Maria Paul**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Guillermo Trejo

The Rise of the Venezuelan Human Rights Movement and What Actors/Changes Are Necessary for Justice to Ensure

The systemic human rights violations perpetrated by the Venezuelan government are widely recorded. In fact, hundreds of organizations have been created to record victims and bring justice. However, the human rights movement is more like a collection of islands than a united front. In countries like El Salvador and Guatemala, a wide and united movement led to important transitional justice reforms. I explore what conditions and actors must change to achieve this in Venezuela.

I first became interested in transitional justice and human rights movements in Latin America after taking Guillermo Trejo's class Dictatorship, Democracy, and War. As I learned about other countries' efforts, failures, and achievements, I began to wonder how these lessons could be applied to Venezuela's case, especially since the United Nations and several other international organizations have published reports about Venezuela's gross human rights violations.

**Katherine Paulsen**

- Majors: Economics and Film, Television, and Theatre
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Richard Donnelly

Using Fabric Modification to Design and Construct Costumes for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

For my creative thesis project, I researched and implemented fabric modification techniques such as fabric dyeing, fabric painting, and flower-making into the design and construction of two costumes for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

In FTT, I have had amazing opportunities to explore costume design and construction over the years. For this project, then, I wanted to learn and do something entirely new to build upon my skill set. Costume crafts and fabric modification are rarely taught at the undergraduate level, but they are a very integral part of costuming that can be learned through independent study.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Madeline Penn**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Supplementary Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

Promoting Peace: Government Advertising and Coverage of the 2016 Peace Accords

This study examines the role soft censorship mechanisms might have played in the campaign for the 2016 Colombian peace referendum and the four-year process that preceded it. Specifically, I analyzed the relationship between public advertising contracts to media agencies and front-page newspaper content to determine any possible government influence on coverage of the peace process.

The project combines my interests in Latin American affairs and political economy in a way that I found incredibly engaging. I was not only interested in the context of the Colombian referendum, but also in the underlying theme of how media is used as a tool to sway public opinion, which remains highly relevant in popular discourse.

**Thomas Pero**

- Major: Finance
- Supplementary Major: Economics
- Minor: Collaborative Innovation
- Advisor: Illenin Kondo

The Duality of Streaming and Globalization

My thesis investigates how changes in distribution methods and cost structure have impacted music globalization. To investigate this, I created a new measure of music globalization and interpreted it using existing trade flow models.

I have strong interests in music and technology and how they can each impact people globally. Choosing this project allowed me to dive deeper into my interests and how they intersect, while studying globalization in a new way.



**Susan Peters**

- Major: International Economics (Chinese)
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Air Quality, Economic Output, and Lockdown Stringency in China During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In this project, I examine how the severity of lockdowns in different Chinese cities during the COVID-19 pandemic influenced air quality as well as economic output.

I chose this topic because I am interested in exploring how a better understanding of air quality during these lockdowns could influence future environmental policymaking.

**Jorge Plaza**

- Majors: Philosophy and Economics
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- CEC Sorin Fellow
- Advisor: David Cory

Ratzinger on Religion and Politics: The Quasi-Religiosity of Modern Democracy

I examine the reflection of Josef Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) on the current state of contemporary politics in relation to religion. In place of genuine religion, modern democracy offers a quasi-religion: an appearance of religion that has a commitment to a certain ethos, but lacks a sense of absolute, divine truth at its core. I point out Ratzinger's concerns that this quasi-religion is incapable of supporting human dignity in the political community.

My family moved from Venezuela in 2005 to escape political persecution from President Hugo Chávez. A remarkable aspect of the Chávez regime was the total lack of respect for religion. Chávez would often mock Christianity as a vestige of an expired era, undermining the shared Christian identity that informed the ethos of Venezuelan law. I believe that a renewed discussion of religion and politics is needed to curb this lack of respect for religion.

**Catherine Prather**

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Hesburgh Program in Public Service and Sociology
- Advisor: Matthias Hoelzlein

Economic Development and Policy in Eastern Kentucky

My capstone project for the Hesburgh Program in Public Service focuses on current economic development plans and policies in Eastern Kentucky, particularly the coalfield region. This region has been heavily reliant on coal and subject to many past “War on Poverty” and other government initiatives. However, the largely stagnant economy has been a point of contention on how to best serve the residents in the region.

I am from Kentucky, and I am highly proud of my home state and its communal traditions. I am interested in learning how to best improve the economic well-being of people in my state while keeping the Kentucky culture. I have learned a lot about my home state from talking with economic organizations, lawmakers, and community leaders.

**Claire Reid**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Advisor: David Campbell

Leveling the Playing Field: An Examination of Pay-to-Play Policies Across America

Extracurricular participation fees, otherwise known as pay-to-play policies, have become increasingly commonplace throughout the United States as school districts grapple with strict budget constraints. At the same time, a growing gap in extracurricular participation has emerged between low- and high-income students. I examined the prevalence of extracurricular fees and their corresponding effects on participation rates to determine the extent to which pay-to-play policies have contributed to this gap.

This topic allowed me to explore my interest in alleviating economic inequality through education-related interventions. Since the benefits of extracurricular activities are far-ranging and numerous, barriers to participation only exacerbate preexisting inequities. After reading about pay-to-play policies in one of my classes, I became interested in how something as seemingly harmless as a participation fee could be having extremely detrimental effects on low-income children.

**Anastasia Reisinger**

- Major: International Economics (Arabic)
- Supplementary Major: Peace Studies
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

The Impact of American Military Aid on the Arab Spring

Throughout the period of the Arab Spring, the United States was actively engaged with political actors in the majority of the affected countries through provisions of foreign aid, diplomatic mediation, and indirect support. Given this context, we must ask: How well did the resources spent on aid in this period achieve the United States' overarching policy goal of democratization?

This topic represents the intersection of the three fields that have defined my undergraduate academics — economics, Middle Eastern studies, and peace studies. It allows me to take an intersectional approach to a topic about which I am personally passionate, and the results could potentially be consequential to national foreign policy.

**Laura Rubino**

- Major: Psychology
- Minors: Theology and Business Economics
- Advisor: Mark Cummings

The Prospective Relations Between Parental Depression and Adolescent Disordered Eating: Investigating Emotional Security as a Mediator

Given the severity of eating disorders, it is important to understand the factors contributing to their etiology and maintenance to help inform interventions. One promising relationship is the connection between emotion dysregulation, parental depression, and disordered eating. We investigated the relationship with two cross-lagged panel models. Parental depression (paternal and maternal separately) were the predictors, emotional insecurity was the mediator, and disordered eating was the outcome. Although the model fit well, the relationship was not significant.

Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses that impact not only the individual, but his/her family, friends, and society as a whole. However, eating disorders are not well understood, and treatment success rates are not satisfactory. I am hoping to investigate eating disorders in future research and was grateful and excited to have the opportunity to begin such work with my thesis.

**Courtney Sauder**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Poverty Studies
- Advisor: Aníbal Pérez-Liñán

Political Ideology's Role in State Variation in the Abortion Rate

In my thesis, I tell the story of political ideology's influence over state variation in the abortion rate for the past 40 years. Traditionally, political ideology influences the abortion rate through voting for politicians who enact restrictions. However, it can also play a role in people's personal pregnancy decisions. To test this, I compiled data on 28 variables for all 50 states from 1974 to 2014 and ran linear regressions.

Abortion is one of the most controversial and partisan issues in American politics. I wanted to know what actually influences the abortion rate. Instead of listening to polarized political anecdotes, I let the data be my guide.

**Frederick Schemel**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: David Campbell

Nationalization of Politics as NIMBY Antidote

My project explores the potential for nationalized partisan politics to overcome local not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) attitudes, especially with regard to housing issues. I seek to explore if, for example, Democrats in major cities and suburbs would change their minds on opposing housing development if national partisanship were injected into the scenario.

I was influenced by events near my home in Connecticut. I saw a large amount of activism against housing development while, at the same time, the area was moving rapidly toward the Democratic Party. I wanted to understand if the shift toward the Democratic Party, which is generally in favor of development, could change anti-housing development opinions.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Timothy Silva**

- Majors: International Economics (French) and Political Science
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Relationship between French Nationalism and Opinions on Frexit

My project explores how the recent rise in right-wing nationalism in France and the increased popularity of right-wing leader Marine Le Pen may have affected the opinions of French citizens on a French exit from the European Union.

France's role in the European Union is even more essential after Brexit. Now, with the rise of nationalism and Le Pen's popularity, it becomes even more important to study how these recent changes influence opinions of the country's role in the international sphere.

**Maeve Simon**

- Major: Sociology
- Supplementary Major: Spanish
- Minor: Business Economics
- Advisor: Rory McVeigh

Alliance Formation, Intersectionality, or Group Solidarity? How Organizations Can Leverage Identity Frames to Grow Public Support

In order to achieve their stated goals, organizations must mobilize support from the public and sustain this support over time. Using an experimental approach, my study seeks to understand how the language a women's organization employs to define itself and communicate its goals and values may influence the support it receives from women.

Amidst the contemporary climate of intersectional activism, I am particularly interested in the ways organizations can build on the momentum of mass mobilizations to form coalitions that bring about inclusive, meaningful social change. I chose this topic to investigate the important relationship between organizational identity language and popular support.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Eisch Endowment for Excellence in Sociology.

**Joseph Simone**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Digital Marketing
- Certificate in International Security Studies
- Advisor: Dan Lindley

An Overview of the South China Sea Dispute

Six countries all claim part of the South China Sea. I assessed the validity of those claims and then assessed the countries' military strength and relationships with China and the United States to predict the likelihood of a violent conflict in the region. I used different international relations theories to aid my prediction.

I interned in China during the summer of 2019, and I became very interested in the country. I thought it was fascinating how so many countries claim territory in the region, yet it never seems to be in the mainstay of the news.

**Daniela Simons Arango**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Digital Marketing and Business Economics
- Advisor: Elizabeth McClintock

Confinement, Dry Law, and Domestic Violence in Panama During the COVID-19 Pandemic

I explored the effects of enforced confinement and of the imposition and removal of the dry law on reported cases of domestic violence in Panama during the months of the COVID-19 pandemic. In doing so, I examine actions taken by the government and suggest ways in which the situation could have been handled in a more efficient manner, considering other objectives besides the control of infection.

Living in an extremely chauvinistic country, with one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates, I knew this was a matter I wanted to look into. In Panama, sexism is ingrained in the mentality of its people and the workings of its systems. With COVID-19, I knew the issue of domestic violence had become even more serious, and I needed to explore this topic.

**Jack Sitarski**

- Major: International Economics (German)
- Advisor: Daniel Hungerman

How Does Native Religiosity Affect Immigrant Outcomes in the German Labor Market?

The recent influx of immigrants from Muslim-majority countries has spurred Islamophobia in Germany and raised questions about the role of religion in the challenge of integration. My paper looks at the domestic side of the equation, studying whether Germans' own religious beliefs affect the labor market outcomes of immigrants. In particular, I used survey data to analyze the effect that regional differences in degree of religiosity have on immigrants' wages and employment prospects. I chose this topic due to my interests in migration and the religious identity of Germany. I think it is important to understand what types of features make one location more hospitable to immigrants than another. Given Germany's sharp regional divide in degree of religiosity, this seemed like a good lens through which to study migration and integration.

**Anne Slevin**

- Major: Anthropology
- Minors: Business Economics and Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Advisors: Sam Miller and Eric Haanstad

Wearable BAC Monitor

For my innovation and entrepreneurship minor capstone project, I worked with a group on creating a new venture. We experimented with developing a wearable blood alcohol content (BAC) monitor with a corresponding app. As an anthropology major, I am interested in analyzing the potential users and market by conducting interviews and research in order to develop the most useful product possible.

My passion lies at the intersection of anthropology and entrepreneurship, so I chose a project that combines theorizing the genesis of a company and conducting ethnographic research. I am also a strong advocate of responsible drug and alcohol use, and a device that measures BAC would be beneficial to many people of different backgrounds.



Alina Jiajing Song

- Majors: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Jing Cynthia Wu

Monetary Policy Announcements and the Heterogeneity of Stock Returns Before and During the ZLB

My thesis studies the link between monetary policy announcements and stock returns before and during the zero lower bound. I use futures data to extract monetary policy surprises as the target surprise, forward guidance surprise, and asset purchase surprise. I find significant evidence that stocks react negatively to a monetary policy tightening surprise before and during the ZLB. I find limited evidence of the relationship between banks' balance sheet characteristics and sensitivity to such announcements.

I am interested in topics related to the intersection between the macroeconomy and finance. After taking the elective courses in the concentration in financial economics and econometrics, I figured out that I am specifically interested in the transmission channels of monetary policy through the financial system to the real economy.

**Mariella Stephens**

- Major: Film, Television, and Theatre
- Minors: Musical Theatre and Business Economics
- Advisor: Anne Garcia-Romero

How to Catch a Mad Dog: A Contemporary Play

How to Catch a Mad Dog is a contemporary play set in American suburbia about a young, biracial girl trying to understand her role in the world while on a mission to catch her beloved (and mischievous) mutt, who has escaped from her house.

As a biracial, American woman myself, I have experience with what it feels like to be alone and confused about the intersection of my ethnic, national, and personal identities. That's not to say this is some magnum opus because it's so personal, but rather that I've been eager to find a way to shed light on experiences that many Americans may never have — and this play is just that.

**Mariella Stephens**

- Major: Film, Television, and Theatre
- Minors: Musical Theatre and Business Economics
- Advisor: Matt Hawkins

COVID: The Musical (A Documentary)

The Department of Film, Television, and Theatre has spent this year workshopping, staging, and filming a student-written musical, *An Old Family Recipe*, during a time when theatre is essentially non-existent, thanks to the pandemic. This short documentary follows the musical's director, Matt Hawkins, and creator/writer/composer Ronnie Mansour as they navigate the process through insane circumstances.

I love musical theatre and shooting and editing films — not to mention the fact that these circumstances are pretty once-in-a-lifetime — so the idea to make a documentary about it all just made sense.

**Cameron Sumner**

- Majors: Economics and Art History
- Advisor: Elyse Speaks

The African American Assemblage Movement and Art Education

In my thesis, I discuss the work of artists Noah Purifoy, John Outterbridge, and David Hammons, who were all part of an artistic movement that occurred in Los Angeles during the '60s and '70s, now referred to as the African American Assemblage Movement. I look at their shared sensibility of art as a service to the community — an act that could occur outside of the museum towards non-aesthetic ends.

I am in my third year of being a gallery teacher at the Snite Museum, so art education is near and dear to me. I have seen the efficacy of using art objects to discuss topics of race and inequity with sections of Moreau students over the years, and my thesis addresses similar themes.

**Patrick Taylor**

- Majors: International Economics (Spanish) and Accounting
- Advisors: Forrest Spence and Thomas Gresik

Effects of the 2007 Uruguay Corporate Tax Reform on Worker's Wages

My project analyzes the 2007 Uruguay tax reforms, with a particular interest in the reduction of the corporate tax rates. I use industry-level data to assess the effects of the reform on workers' wages and employment.

I chose this project because it combines my studies of tax policy and strategy in the Mendoza College of Business with my studies of global taxation in my international economics major with Thomas Gresik. I hope this project can contribute to the growing literature showing the positive effects of reduced corporate tax rates on workers' wages.

**Mary Treacy**

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- CUSE Sorin Scholar
- Advisor: Joseph Kaboski

The Agricultural Productivity Gap: Hedging Against Risk in an Uncertain Environment

The agricultural productivity gap is the twin pattern of disproportionately low productivity and a disproportionately high share of workers in the agricultural sector, compared to the non-agricultural sector. My thesis examines a potential explanation for this gap, specifically that workers choose agriculture in order to ensure that they always have food, a necessary good. Working in agriculture would therefore function as a hedge against risk in uncertain environments.

The agricultural productivity gap is a topic in development economics, my primary field of interest. There have been a number of theories tested, but none of them have incorporated risk or been able to fully explain the gaps. There are particularly significant implications for developing economies — understanding the existence of the gap can allow for better policy encouraging workers to move out of agriculture, earn higher incomes, and advance the structural transformation process.

**Antonio Villegas**

- Major: International Economics (French)
- Minor: Portuguese and Brazilian Studies
- Advisor: Taryn Dinkelman

Effects of COVID-19 on the French Agriculture Labor Market

My study uses data collected from French government agencies to analyze the economic impact of the labor shortage on the agricultural sector in France during the second quarter of 2020. The pandemic created restrictions in labor, as migrant seasonal workers were either unable or unavailable to travel and work during the most afflicted months.

I chose this topic because I was very interested in assessing the impact that the nationwide lockdown and travel restrictions had on a country like France with seasonal fluctuations in foreign labor.



Stephen Vukovits

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Constitutional Studies; Hesburgh Program in Public Service; and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Chloe Gibbs

The Effect of Civic Education Curriculum Requirements on Youth Voter Participation

Using data from the Current Population Survey's November supplement, I sought to determine whether a state instituting a new requirement that high school students must take a civics class in order to graduate had any causal effect on youth voter participation. I employed a difference-in-differences design that relied on quasi-experimental variation in civic education requirements across states between 2004-2016.

I sought to write a thesis at the intersection of my academic interests in economics, political science, and law. Given that civic education is important in developing an engaged citizenry, I wanted to investigate the efficacy of curriculum requirements versus other related policies, such as standardized civics tests and civics-related accountability standards.

Received Enrichment Funding from the Suzanne and Walter Scott Merit Scholarship.

**Emily Yeager**

- Major: International Economics (Spanish)
- Minors: Theology and Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Forrest Spence

Spanish Income and the Euro

My project uses global data to analyze how the currency transition from the peseta to the euro in Spain in January 2002 impacted Spanish regional income.

When I was studying abroad in Spain in 2020, I heard from my professors and my host family that the euro noticeably changed prices and the value of goods and services. I wanted to see if there really was a correlation between the adoption of a common currency and regional incomes.

**Natalie Ying**

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Supplementary Major: Japanese
- Kellogg International Scholar
- Advisor: Jazmin Sierra

Shifting Green Visions: Rising Economic Powers and Climate Change Discourse

My project investigates what conditions cause emerging economic powers to shift their climate change discourses. Major carbon emitters have shown varying commitments to mitigating climate change. While some countries have remained consistently devoted or opposed to the international efforts of climate change mitigation, other countries have shifted their climate change discourses over time.

With more visible extreme climate conditions occurring around the globe, increasing international attention is now devoted to the issue of climate change. However, climate change is mostly still understood through the scientific realm. I hope to connect the scientific and human narratives to contribute to solving arguably the most depressing issue in our world today.

**Zhefan Zhang**

- Majors: Mathematics and Economics
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE)
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

The Impacts of Female Leadership on Gender Equality: A Study on China's Gender Quota

In 2001, the Chinese Communist Party announced the launch of a gender quota on party leadership positions. While the quota is designated as a fundamental tool to improve women's social status, it is unclear how effective it has been in promoting gender equality in China. My paper analyzes its impacts by examining the implementation timeline in different regions and a variety of gender equality outcome measurements, including illiteracy rate and educational level by gender.

The topic intrigues me because while gender quotas in India and Western Europe are widely discussed in academic articles, China's gender quota system is underexplored. I am interested in understanding whether a gender quota in a socialist country can have different impacts than those in democratic countries. In addition, because there is an urgent need for gender equality in China, I wanted to evaluate the policy to see if it has a positive influence on women's lives.

**Emma Ziegler**

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Hesburgh Program in Public Service
- Advisor: Matthew Hall

Connecting Low-Income Litigants With Lawyers: Measuring the Impact of Civil Legal Aid

As legal aid organizations have become more strapped for resources over the years, they have turned to innovative methods in order to assist their clients. Often these methods consist of brief service interventions — a statement of advice or instructions for filing paperwork — instead of full representation. My project examines these interventions and the effects they have on case outcomes.

Over the past two years, I have volunteered with a legal aid organization in South Bend. There, I have witnessed firsthand the difficulties that lawyers face when trying to serve such a large client base with limited resources. Thus, I wanted to examine which services and forms of aid allowed the organization to reach as many clients as possible, while still remaining effective.

Received funding from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.