



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ARTS & LETTERS



2024

SENIOR THESIS PROJECTS

Study everything. Do anything.SM



Dear colleagues, students, and friends,

I am delighted to present this College of Arts & Letters book that highlights 193 original works of research and creativity by 190 seniors. These yearlong projects showcase the Class of 2024's academic prowess and innovative skills, as well as its fascinating array of scholarly interests.

The wide-ranging scope of research includes projects that examine presidential populist rhetoric, the relationship between wilderness and accessibility, analytic class number formula, the impact of Taylor Swift's tour on the hotel industry, implementation of a campus carbon food-labeling pilot program, and dark matter.

Seniors also demonstrated their talents and imagination through the development of a comedy television show, design of dinnerware, transformation of language in environmental lawsuits into poetry, and a performance of classical and musical theatre works by Laitman, Mahler, and Bernstein.

Many of these seniors — who started their college careers when COVID-19 restrictions were in place — traveled throughout the nation and around the world to inform their research and enrich their experiences.

I'm heartened when students say their thesis/creative project is a defining part of their undergraduate careers. For some, it even shapes their future in surprising ways — like Anna Bachiochi, a philosophy major and A&L pre-health supplementary major, it also led to an exciting academic opportunity prior to medical school.

"I have grown as a researcher, writer, and philosophical thinker. I loved the project so much that I applied to a few philosophy master's programs for my gap year before medical school," she wrote in her reflection on her thesis. "I got full funding to one and will be doing that next year! I don't know if I would have made that decision if it were not for my thesis."

As is the case each year, I applaud the many faculty members who generously shared their expertise and goodwill to help make the enriching experiences described in this book possible.

To the Class of 2024, I am so proud of all you have accomplished and am grateful for your many contributions to the College and our University. I wish each of you blessings as you continue to learn, grow, create, and make the world a better place.

Sarah A. Mustillo

Sarah A. Mustillo

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

**Lauren Amrol**

Hometown: Columbia, South Carolina

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Collaborative Innovation, Sustainability, and Digital Marketing
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Peter Burns

Carbon Food-Print: Estimating Food-Related Scope 3 Emissions of Notre Dame's Campus Dining Halls to Research the Effectiveness of a Carbon Labeling Program on Carbon-Conscious Consumption

Food and agriculture are responsible for nearly one-third of all global greenhouse gas emissions, and are leading drivers of biodiversity loss. Changing how we eat through awareness and education has the potential to be a powerful method of addressing the ecological crises threatening the planet.

This project implements a carbon food-labeling pilot program at the University of Notre Dame to increase student awareness of their food's environmental impact, and to determine if carbon labels induce changes in students' food choice.

We hope to understand if and how sustainability motivates students' food choices and empowers them to act to reduce their personal carbon footprint. Ultimately, the goal is to determine if carbon labeling is effective for University sustainability goals.

**Kyle Bass**

Hometown: Davidson, North Carolina

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: French
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Marinho Bertanha

Do Cigarette Taxes Influence Infant Health? External Validity of the LATE Parameter and Extrapolation to Hypothetical Tax Levels

I used Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data on all live births in the United States from 1989 to 2002 to explore variation in the impact of maternal smoking on infant birth weight while employing state cigarette tax levels as a multivalued instrument.

While traditional analyses assume that effects are constant across all mothers, I relax these assumptions to analyze local average treatment effect (LATE) heterogeneity across mothers with differing demographic characteristics and unobserved propensities to comply with cigarette tax changes.

Policy-relevant treatment effects and their external validity are ongoing topics of research among econometricians, which have important implications for economic policymaking. This intersection of theory and empirical application with real-world significance is a complex yet rewarding field of inquiry that uses economics to promote the common good.

**Hannah Bergin**

Hometown: Manhattan Beach,
California

- Major: Biochemistry
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics,
and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program

COVID-19 and Ethnonational Conflict

I explore the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on ethnonational conflict through comparative analysis of COVID-19 in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; Israel and the Palestinian Territories; and Armenia and Azerbaijan.

I first encountered ethnonational studies and comparative politics while studying abroad in London and have enjoyed diving deeper into the subject through individual research.

Additionally, the pandemic was a significant event in my life, and it has been personally meaningful to study COVID-19 from a global perspective — to learn more about the experiences and challenges of others during the same time.

**Michael Bsales**

Hometown: Bloomfield, New Jersey

- Majors: Computer Science (BA) and Economics
- Advisor: Matthias Hoelzlein

Parish or Perish: Catholic Adherence and Deaths of Despair

I am investigating a relationship between social support network effects and deaths of despair (suicide, alcohol related deaths, drug poisonings) by using Catholic adherence as a proxy for social networks and by using the public announcement of sexual abuse accusations against clergy as an instrument.

I was inspired to look at deaths of despair because of my Health Economics class, in which Professor Bill Evans talked extensively about the topic.

Further, a conversation with Maddy Johnson of the Church Properties Initiative at the Fitzgerald Institute for Real Estate led me to connect the social network effects of parishes to the deaths of despair hypothesis.

**Sofia Casillas**

Hometown: Lone Tree, Colorado

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minor: Business Economics
- Latino Studies Scholars Program
- Advisor: Luis Fraga

The Legislative Politics of the 1975 Voting Rights Act

I am tracking how the Voting Rights Act was passed, as well as the ensuing impact of Section 5 on Latino communities.

I have been researching it since I was a first-year student with Professor Luis Fraga.

**Jessica Castillo**

Hometown: Newark, New Jersey

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Business Economics and Education, Schooling, and Society
- Transformational Leaders Program
- Advisor: Calvin Zimmermann

Resource Utilization and Accessibility Among First-Generation College Students

This project seeks to understand how first-generation students access and use resources at the University of Notre Dame and how the use of resources or lack thereof impacts their experience as first-generation college students.

Awareness and utilization of resources can significantly impact students learning to navigate college. First-generation students struggle to access and utilize resources, which can affect their academic success and retention.

I chose this topic because, as a first-generation student, I had my own experience and journey here at Notre Dame, and resources and people have significantly impacted my journey.

This project has allowed me to independently delve into the research field. Although I have participated as a research assistant in other projects, this project allowed me to explore my research interest and further develop my research and writing skills.

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

**Claire Crafts**

Hometown: San Juan Capistrano,
California

- Major: Psychology
- Minors: Business Economics and Philosophy, Religion, and Literature
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Daniel Lapsley

Moderators of Loss in Emerging Adulthood: A Positive Psychology Approach

This project examines the influence of purpose and meaning, spirituality, and prosocial behavior on reducing the negative impacts of loss. Bereavement and similar stressful life events that cause grief are associated with negative outcomes such as poor school performance and concentration, increased substance use, emotional problems, and other health issues in young adults.

We hypothesize that the deleterious influence of bereavement loss on adjustment will be moderated by a sense of purpose and meaning, prosocial behavior, and spirituality/religiosity.

In the long term, my goal is to contribute to the development of a psychological framework — accounting for the uniqueness of individuals and their experiences — that realistically examines the relationship between suffering and flourishing and how they can coexist.

Received funding from the Scott Family Scholarship.

**Nick Daniel**

Hometown: College Park, Maryland

- Major: International Economics (Concentration in Arabic)
- Supplementary Major: A&L Pre-Health
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Santosh Kumar

Factors Associated with Childhood Diarrheal Diseases and Use of Oral Rehydration Therapy in Jordan

I investigate factors associated with childhood diarrheal diseases. Further, I investigate factors associated with knowledge of and administration of proper treatment.

Knowledge of proper health practices was higher for urban households, internet users, and households of Jordanian nationality. Among those with this knowledge, households with improved water sources were more likely to treat their child using oral rehydration therapy.

I wanted to work on a project at the intersection of health and policy with a focus on a Middle Eastern country. I studied abroad in Jordan in high school, and I sought to learn more about the country by focusing my thesis on it.



Kevin Dickson

Hometown: Lafayette, California

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Business Economics
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Dan Lindley

Militarization of Space

I am examining seven major spacefaring states and analyzing their decisions to (or not to) militarize in space. I am looking to see what conditions best explain a state's decision in space and whether conventional military power and economic utilization of space influence these decisions. Additionally, I am considering whether the security dilemma applies in space.

I am interested in space and international security, and I formed and settled on this topic over time while trying to find out how I can write about both national security and international communities' use of space.

**Elise Dohoney**

Hometown: Concord, Massachusetts

- Majors: Political Science and American Studies
- Minor: Business Economics
- International Security Studies Certificate
- Advisor: Eugene Gholz

The Impact of Americans' Cultural Perceptions on Alliance Maintenance

My thesis seeks to uncover the relationship between Americans' cultural perceptions of U.S. allies and the government's ability to maintain alliances.

By analyzing the U.S.-Germany and U.S.-Japan alliances during both the Cold War era and the modern era, I develop a theory of alliance maintenance that explains that leaders can leverage the American public's strong, positive cultural perceptions of an ally to maintain an alliance yet struggle to maintain an alliance when the American public has a negative or indifferent cultural perception of the ally.

After studying abroad in Berlin, Germany, during summer 2022, I became interested in the U.S.-Germany relationship. This interest grew into a further curiosity about alliance dynamics in general. The U.S.-Germany and the U.S.-Japan alliances serve as fantastic subjects to understand U.S. alliance maintenance.

**Ava Downey**

Hometown: Valley Center, California

- Majors: Economics and History
- Minor: Real Estate
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Daniel Graff

Driving Down Memory Lane: The Legacy of Studebaker's Closure in South Bend

Today, remnants of the legacy of Studebaker, a once prominent car manufacturer, can be found scattered throughout South Bend, Indiana, the company's former headquarters. In my thesis, I argue that while Studebaker's closure in 1963 is often cited by South Bend residents as the main catalyst for the city's economic decline, broader factors like deindustrialization and suburbanization collectively played a more significant role in shaping the city's economic downturn than the closure itself.

Having never visited South Bend before moving here for college, I was surprised to see remains of its industrial heyday still scattered across the city. As I asked residents about the causes behind the city's economic downfall, their responses were uniformly one-worded: Studebaker. My thesis aims to understand why.

Received funding from the Department of History and traveled to Detroit, Michigan, to visit United Auto Workers archives at Wayne State University.

**Gigi Eckholdt**

Hometown: New York City, New York

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Digital Marketing
- Advisor: Susan Rosato

The Impact of NGOs on the Creation and Enforcement of International Human Rights Law

Through the use of various international human rights documents, I evaluate nongovernmental organization (NGO) success through a framework comprised of theory from existing literature, as well as the addition of the concept of legal personality.

NGO success is varied due to various contingencies, but it is clear that without a supranational enforcement mechanism, compliance and implementation are extremely difficult.

The summer after my sophomore year, I traveled to Poland for an International Law and the Holocaust course. It forever changed my outlook on international politics, and humankind. My thesis represents the culmination of how my broadened perspective has informed my coursework.

**Nikita Elkin**

Hometown: Lake Bluff, Illinois

- Majors: Economics, Philosophy, and Finance
- Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Yong Suk Lee

Human Capital Composition in Venture Studios: An Empirical Examination of Its Influence on Venture Performance

My thesis delves into how the size of venture studios' human capital influences their startups' success.

The studio industry is an emerging asset class that creates and launches multiple startups simultaneously to develop unique scalable economics for business-building. Over spring break, I shadowed the team of Hexa, a prominent venture studio based in Paris, France.

I also examined data from 300 studios and more than 1,500 companies they've developed, and uncovered that larger human capital pools are linked to more venture exits, which demonstrates how human capital intensity drives outcomes.

Despite the remarkable success of venture studios and their potential to scale impactful innovation, they remain largely unexplored in academic literature, especially quantitatively. As someone about to join a venture studio post-graduation, I found this knowledge gap to be particularly poignant and also well-suited for a year-long senior thesis.

Received funding from the Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholarship and traveled to Paris, France.

**Audrey Feldman**

Hometown: Berlin, Connecticut

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: William Evans

Friends with Benefits: The Role of Social Networks in Safety Net Benefit Take-Up Among Refugees in the US

Refugees in the United States are eligible for a variety of safety net benefits, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.

However, due to cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, and an underlying mistrust of government, refugees, on average, underutilize these benefits, thereby delaying their integration into American society and opportunities to flourish.

I predicted that refugees with larger social networks will have higher safety net take-up. That prediction stems from using American Community Survey data linked with U.S. Department of State data to identify a cohort of likely refugees. I calculated their network upon arrival, with variations on the level of shared public use microdata areas and national origin.

**Joyce Fu**

Hometown: Hong Kong, China

- Majors: Film, Television, and Theatre and Economics
- Supplementary Major: Global Affairs
- Minor: Data Science
- Advisors: Terrance Brown and Cecilia Kim

The Human-to-Noodle Transformation: A Short Film

My thesis is a short film about my alter ego, Fred, turning into a noodle. It's an absurdist, body-horror X food-porn crossover borne of my noodle-based diet and passion for methods of cultural consumption that can uplift diverse voices.

I hope this story can inspire reflection about how our communities are capable of pushing beyond tokenism to enjoy the benefits of plurality.

This project is a natural extension of my research interests in coloniality and the Asia-Pacific region. Through the language of filmmaking, I challenged myself to find agency in the space between academic literature and our lived-in experiences.

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

**Clara Grillo**

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

- Majors: Economics and Chinese
- Minor: European Studies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program, Kennedy Scholars, Sorin Scholars, and MSPS Scholars
- Advisor: Michel Hockx

Reimagining 'the Other': Nature's Agency in Wu Ming-yi's *The Man With the Compound Eyes*

This thesis explores the dynamic between nature and "the Other" in Wu Ming-yi's *The Man With the Compound Eyes*, the story of a trash vortex colliding with Taiwan. The novel challenges the portrayal of nature as "Other" by giving it a voice, thus revealing the "Otherness" of humans.

This thesis explores how the characters' connections with nature impact their "Otherness" while proposing a new approach to evaluating "the Other" that rejects anthropocentric views of nature.

I chose this topic because there has not been much research on the topic of "the Other" related to nature's agency. I want to uncover more nuanced perspectives within the binary "human versus nature" approach to "Othering" that already exists in traditional ecocritical literature.

**Ella Haley**

Hometown: Cook, Minnesota

- Major: International Economics
(Concentration in Spanish)
- Minor: Italian
- Advisor: Kasey Buckles

Eras Economics: Impact of the Taylor Swift Eras Tour on Hotel KPIs

I examined the impact of the 2023 Taylor Swift Eras Tour on three key performance indicators within the hotel industry: average daily rate, occupancy rate, and revenue per available room.

My results suggested that hotel room prices increased by 29% during concert dates, occupancy rates increased by 17%, and revenue per available room increased by 46%. Furthermore, I conducted a comparative analysis of the impact of the 2023 Beyoncé Renaissance Tour on these same metrics.

I selected this topic because it combines my love for Taylor Swift's music and my interest in the tourism and hospitality industry. The impact of her tour was widely discussed in the media and my aim was to substantiate the assumed impact with concrete evidence and data.

**Layton Hall**

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

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

Racial Bias in the Eviction Process

Evictions can have lasting effects on employment, credit, housing stability, and health. A disproportionate number of evictions are filed and judged against women and Black tenants.

Using a dataset of case-level eviction filings from 2015 to 2019 in Maricopa County, Arizona, I study the impact of judicial bias on judgment amounts. Using a spatial discontinuity in judicial assignment, I compare outcomes between the marginal minority tenant and the marginal white tenant.

I have spent most of my time at Notre Dame participating in local housing and eviction advocacy. I've worked with the South Bend Tenant Association, the St. Joseph County Library, and several other local organizations to build tenant rights literacy and advocacy across South Bend.

Received funding from the Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement.

**Grace Hatfield**

Hometown: Benicia, California

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Gender Studies
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: A. Niles Fernando

National Crisis, Local Reactions: Assessing US Gun Control Support Post-Mass Shootings

The United States has a significantly high rate of gun violence. While there is agreement on this issue, there is much disagreement on specific policy adjustments.

I evaluate the effect of mass shootings on corresponding local gun control support. My results find that there is more support for gun control in congressional districts with a recent shooting; however, this becomes more complex when taking variables such as news media source, gender, race, and income level into account.

I chose this topic because I believe that gun violence is an important issue in our country, and I want to further understand American society's complex response to it. In my work, I aim to shed light on how these contentions operate to potentially inform future policy considerations.

**David Henry**

Hometown: Woodbury, Minnesota

- Major: Program of Liberal Studies
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Kennedy Scholars
- Advisor: Eric Bugyis

The Philosophy of Shame: Failure in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

My thesis explores how the Zarathustra of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is a literary enactment of the "genuine philosopher" of *Beyond Good and Evil*, and how Zarathustra's failure to achieve that ideal offers a new vision of the philosophic life grounded in the embrace of shame and the particularity of one's truths.

I chose this topic to better understand the unique literary form and complex poetic language of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and how they comment on the role of philosophy and philosophic communication in a secular age.

**Grady Hornbeek**

Hometown: Portola Valley, California

- Majors: Economics and Political Science
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

The Impact of Argentina's Repressive Violence on Long-Term Political Outcomes and Behavior

My thesis examines the impact of repressive violence under Argentina's 1976 to 1983 dictatorship on electoral outcomes over time.

Using spatial variation in violence across Argentina's districts during the dictatorship, I contribute to the literature studying the costs associated with repression. Furthermore, by using multiple elections, I study the long-term impact of repressive violence.

Growing up, my family moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where I learned about the history of the repressive dictatorship, while seeing the vibrant return of Peronism in politics. I therefore wanted to study this relationship and contribute to the literature on the impact of repressive violence.

**Nicholas Huls**

Hometown: Chanhassen, Minnesota

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

Raising the Bar: Professional Responsibility Exams and Labor Market Outcomes for Lawyers

Aspiring lawyers in 50 jurisdictions must take the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) to test their understanding of expected professional conduct.

Between 2007 and 2019, 10 states raised their MPRE minimum passing score. Using a two-way fixed effects model, I estimate how higher passing thresholds impact the frequency of disciplinary complaints. Although results are statistically insignificant, the estimated decline in complaints appears to coincide with a broader, unobserved effort to reduce complaints while also increasing passing thresholds.

I am interested in attending law school. Last year, I took Labor Economics with Professor Forrest Spence and Advanced Labor Economics with Professor Jim Sullivan. After these courses, I was interested in testing economic theory assumptions about how certain policy changes impact labor markets through empirical analysis.

**Cecilia Luisa Ignacio**

Hometown: Manila, Philippines

- Majors: Economics and English
- Minor: Computing and Digital Technologies
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Francisco Robles

Between Words and Worlds: Constructing Migrant Female Identities in Coming-of-Age Literature

My thesis explores the representation of immigrant families in *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez. I focus on daughters' narratives to examine the intersection of assimilation, language mastery, and feminist self-identification.

These protagonists negotiate cultural and patriarchal pressures, highlighting the broader dilemma of balancing cultural heritage with assimilation — a key theme in modern immigrant literature reflecting societal shifts in the U.S.

Raised in the Philippines, I initially understood migration through stories of individuals seeking work abroad — narratives of grit that often masked hardships and familial strain.

Relocating to the United States for university deepened my fascination with how migrant literature from a country of destination layers space, language, and identity within immigrant narratives.

**Bryan Keck**

Hometown: Dubuque, Iowa

- Majors: Economics and Philosophy
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Richard Cross

On Existential Problems for Divine Simplicity

I examine two problems for the Doctrine of Divine Simplicity. I first consider a novel objection that suggests that truthmaking accounts of divine simplicity cannot serve as a global mechanism for identifying God with all His attributes, particularly His existence.

I argue that this problem can be neutralized by identifying God with a relation or accepting nonstandard accounts of existence. I then consider and reject objections undermining the chief motivation for divine simplicity.

The Doctrine of Divine Simplicity has fascinated me since I first encountered it in high school and in subsequent philosophy and theology classes at Notre Dame. It's an incredibly perplexing topic in metaphysics. Nevertheless, adopting it is also paramount for any comprehensive and coherent theistic explanation of the world.

I am incredibly indebted to my advisor, Richard Cross, who clarified the doctrine to me, answered hours' worth of my questions, and reviewed my writing. I'm also grateful to Jeff Speaks and Daniel Nolan for their assistance in explaining contemporary metaphysical topics to me. I could not have accomplished this without them.



David LaMaster

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

- Majors: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Fighting Irish Scholars
- Advisor: Michael Pries

Farmers in Flux: Navigating Disruption in the Era of Evolving Plant-Based Meat

My thesis highlights the unforeseen impact of plant-based meat within agricultural economics.

I chose this topic because plant-based protein is an evolving product with limited economic literature and with unique macroeconomic implications.

**Colleen Lipa**

Hometown: Naperville, Illinois

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Minor: Art History
- Advisor: Mary Kate Batistich

Crime AND Punishment? The Effects of Mental Health Court Diversion Programs on Crime and Homelessness

Mental health courts are diversion programs that provide treatment for people with severe mental illnesses, rather than placing them in jails. I test the effects of mental health courts on crime and homelessness at the county level. I find that mental health courts decrease the total crime per 10,000 people in a county by 5.20% and have negligible effects of homelessness.

I learned about incarceration in the United States in classes and during research my sophomore year. This knowledge, combined with understanding that people with severe mental illnesses are more likely than others to go to prison, led to me learning about mental health courts and examining their effects.

**Sean Lonergan**

Hometown: Bowie, Maryland

- Major: Sociology
- Minors: Business Economics and Constitutional Studies
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Erika Summers-Effler

Dynamic Interaction Rituals: An Ethnography of Gospel Choirs

I observed and participated in two gospel choirs to understand the social processes which create solidarity within them and enable them to generate emotionally effective performances.

I found that existing sociological theory fails to account for the dynamic process by which performers must communicate to the audience that they are in “the group” which is included in the social ritual that takes place through the performance.

Gospel choirs are at the intersection of culture, race, religion, music, and social movements. By studying gospel choirs, I knew that I would encounter intense, emotionally charged social processes.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program.

**Theodore (Teddy) Maginn**

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Advisor: Robert Collinson

Regeneration or Reversion? The Impact of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program on Changes in Neighborhood Characteristics

Following the 2008 foreclosure crisis, Congress implemented the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) to finance demolitions and rehabilitations of vacant properties. While some studies have analyzed short-term effects of the NSP, its long-term impacts have yet to be researched.

My thesis examines the effects of the NSP on changes in neighborhood racial composition and various housing market outcomes a decade after the policy's implementation.

Neighborhood revitalization programs are often portrayed in a contentious light. While such policies can drastically improve the quality of a neighborhood, they can also negatively impact marginalized groups.

I chose this topic because I am interested in finding ways to aid distressed neighborhoods while mitigating harm to disadvantaged populations.

**John (Jack) Manning**

Mequon, Wisconsin

- Major: History
- Minors: Business Economics and Theology
- Sorin Fellow
- Advisor: Ian Johnson

'A meeting of two slavs:' John Paul II, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the End of the Cold War

My thesis details the Dec. 1, 1989, summit meeting between St. John Paul II and Mikhail Gorbachev in the Vatican. Although this meeting has received minimal attention from historians, it was really "a truly extraordinary event," to use Gorbachev's own words.

The meeting is a remarkable story of diplomacy in its own right. It speaks to the extent of the changes taking place in Europe in 1989. But accounting for the many strange facets of the planning process and the two leaders' conversation allows a deeper analysis, revealing the distinct roles that the Pope and the Soviet leader played in the collapse of communism.

I came upon this topic by happenstance, while talking to a Cardinal outside the Vatican during a semester abroad. It caught my interest immediately; I did not know that John Paul had met with Gorbachev. As I researched it further, the lack of thorough historical research surrounding the topic piqued my interest. Discovering a full-length transcript of the leaders' conversation cemented it.

Received funding from the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture.

**Anand Mehta**

Hometown: Oakland, California

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

Exploiting Regional Heterogeneity to Identify the Phillips Curve: A Focus on Global Supply Chain Constraints

I examined whether supply chain constraints produce a causal effect on the inflation-unemployment relationship.

I constructed a panel dataset of U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) to produce a modified Phillips curve estimation that controls for nationwide economic shocks.

First, I identified the “baseline” Phillips curve using a fixed-effects panel regression. Then, I integrated the Global Supply Chain Pressure Index (GSCPI) into my model to assess whether the slope of the Phillips curve changes given high levels of global supply chain pressure.

I became interested in macroeconomic concepts after taking elective courses my junior year. Considering the salience of inflation and the extensive research focused on the Phillips curve, I thought it would be interesting to focus on a distinct subsection of this topic while contributing to the overall literature.

**Matthew O'Donnell**

Hometown: North Caldwell, New Jersey

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Accountancy and Real Estate
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisors: Davin Raiha and Chris Hedlin

Divine Discounts: Trinity Church New York and Property Tax Exemption

This thesis examines whether Trinity Church New York provides its congregants and nearby New York significant economic, social, and spiritual capital to justify not paying property taxes.

I selected this particular subject due to my internship experience on Wall Street during the summer following my sophomore year. I found myself captivated by the multitude of ways in which people engaged with Trinity Church. I later traveled to New York City to meet with various Trinity Church leaders and congregants.

Received funding from the Sheedy Family Program and traveled to New York City.

**John (Johnny) O'Meara**

Hometown: San Rafael, California

- Majors: Economics (Concentration in Financial Economics and Econometrics) and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Marinho Bertanha

Equality of Parameters using Permutation Tests Applied to the Tennessee STAR Experiment

Recently in economics, there has been a revival in randomization tests. In particular, it has been shown that you can use a permutation test to test for equality of variance using an asymptotically normal test statistic.

Through a simulation exercise as well as an empirical example, this thesis studies the permutation test's performance compared to other tests of equality of variance and applies the permutation test to the problem of clustering in economics. This issue is prevalent in the Tennessee STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) experiment, where the permutation test determines that the clustering is necessary at the classroom level.

We typically think about the effects of the mean when looking at a dataset, but studying risk and variance has provoked new research in recent years. Alongside this resurgence, the need to cluster at the right level has found its way into a variety of empirical examples, including the Tennessee STAR experiment. I was interested in combining equality of variance tests with the problem of clustering and utilizing the permutation test to do so.

**Paola Ortiz**

Hometown: Hidalgo, Texas

- Major: Political Science
- Supplementary Major: Latino Studies
- Minors: Business Economics and Health, Humanities, and Society
- Latino Studies Scholars Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and Questbridge Scholar
- Advisor: Ricardo Ramírez

A Healthy Democracy: Exploring the Impact of Health on Latino Voter Turnout in the United States

The Latino vote is continually becoming a key determinant in United States elections, and yet, at the same time, the state of Latino health in the U.S. is declining. Previous scholarship has sought to explain the declining Latino voter turnout but has not considered the impact that health has on voter turnout.

I look to determine whether health has a meaningful impact by considering other agents influencing Latino voting, including state contexts, nativity, immigrant generation, education, and income. By employing a quantitative statistical method, I have been able to identify a link.

As a Latina, I wanted to explore Latino politics in the United States in a meaningful manner. I am also interested in public health policy, specifically relating to the Latino community. While reading, I encountered a body of literature that analyzed the impact of health on voter turnout in the United States. However, these studies did not consider Latinos' unique challenges, which pushed me to take on this project and contribute a new lens to this field.

I would like to thank my advisor, Ricardo Ramirez, for his constant support and guidance with my thesis.

**Maeve O'Shaughnessy**

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: Business Economics and Irish Studies
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society
- Advisor: Angela McCarthy

Not Just Chit-Chat: Examining the Impact of Social Networks and Ideological Diversity on Political Conversation

My thesis considered how undergraduate students from multiple political clubs at Notre Dame think about and engage in political conversation.

I conducted focus groups with students from the Notre Dame College Democrats, Notre Dame College Republicans, and BridgeND to understand how politically engaged college students' level of closeness with their political conversation partners affects the conversation.

Additionally, I explored how these students adapt their communication styles when interacting with those who share their political beliefs, those who do not, or in mixed-group settings.

In an age of increasing political polarization, the ability to have productive and respectful political dialogue among dissenting views is growing increasingly vital. I chose this topic out of curiosity about how college students are navigating diverse political conversations and to explore potential strategies for enhancing the benefits of informal political discourse.

**Daniel O'Shea**

Hometown: Munster, Indiana

- Majors: Economics and Biological Sciences
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Trenton Agrelius

Quantifying Reactive Oxygen Species in Daphnia Magna Mutants Over Age Classes

From the differential gene expression data from the 2023 course-based undergraduate research experience that I helped to curate and teach, we found many differentially expressed genes that had ontology terms related to or involving oxidative stress and oxidative damage.

I then began investigating these genes via fluorescent microscopy and found an accumulation of reactive oxygen species within the mutant organisms as they aged.

I chose this topic as it was related to other findings that we had within our lab and I was fascinated by fluorescent microscopy and its applications within our model organism.

Received funding from the College of Science's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships.

**Lauren Ostdiek**

Hometown: Columbus, Nebraska

- Major: Economics
- Supplementary Major: Education, Schooling, and Society
- Minor: Data Science
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Jeffrey Denning

Beyond the Mountains of Maternal Education: Understanding the Relationship between Maternal Schooling and Child Health in Haiti

I explore the relationship between maternal schooling and child height-for-age percentile in Haiti and find that as a mother's education increases by one year, her child's height-for-age percentile increases by more than 1.2.

I then account for two sets of variables: a behavioral set, which includes mechanisms through which maternal schooling may impact children's health, and environmental variables, which control for confounding factors like wealth. These variables provide a deeper understanding of the initial relationship.

After noticing that global health was a continued subcurrent in my coursework in economics and education, schooling, and society, I became curious about the interplay of these variables. Specifically inspired by Paul Farmer's work in Haiti and my passion for equity in access to quality education, I wanted to explore this in a resource-constrained setting.

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



Rose Quinlan

Hometown: Buffalo, New York

- Majors: Program of Liberal Studies and Economics
- Advisor: Thomas Stapleford

The Bhutan Dilemma

Bhutan, a small Buddhist monarchy in the Himalayas, seeks to maximize Gross National Happiness (GNH) rather than gross domestic product (GDP). This objective has guided the monarchy toward a series of controversial policy initiatives that impose an objective understanding of happiness on its citizens.

My thesis focuses on the ethical questions arising from Bhutan's agenda of economic and cultural isolationism and, conversely, the ethical problems arising from a more growth-centric approach to development.

I wanted to do a project that combined my interests in philosophy and economics by examining the ethical debates surrounding standard-of-living metrics. I traveled to Bhutan for independent qualitative research on Bhutanese culture, politics and history, which included interviewing government officials and researchers at the Center for GNH Research in Thimphu.

Shortly into my research, I became fascinated with Bhutanese public policy, and I decided to examine the country as a case study in alternative approaches to development.

Received funding from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts' Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Roberts Endowment for Undergraduate Research in East Asia. Traveled to Bhutan.



Maya Ramp

Hometown: Stewartville, Minnesota

- Major: Economics
- Notre Dame Scholars Program
- Advisor: Nooshin Hakim Javadi

Flightless Birds: The Social and Environmental Costs of Travel

Amid worldwide climate catastrophe, tourism is the fastest growing carbon-emitting industry.

Research finds that there is no technology-driven sustainable solution to current travel patterns, making decreased consumption the only path to decreased emissions. Additionally, creating economies reliant on unsustainable tourism practices creates societies vulnerable to economic catastrophe.

By creating an art installation utilizing data visualization, my work explored the parallels between human and bird migration asking the question: Are humans meant to travel the world?

In spring 2023, I studied abroad in Athens, Greece, and became interested in the relationship between travel and catastrophe. I hadn't taken an art class since fifth grade but decided to take the leap and explore this concept creatively to take advantage of all the opportunities at Notre Dame before I graduate.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts. Traveled to Greece.

**Isabela Rascon**

Hometown: Chihuahua, Mexico

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Sustainability and Anthropology
- Advisor: Sisi Meng

The Sea is Rising, Are We Moving?

The long-term viability of coastal communities is threatened by sea-level rise caused by climate change. However, how these communities will respond and what will prompt them to take adaptive measures is not well understood.

My thesis analyzed the factors that impact the likelihood of relocating as an adaptation strategy in response to sea-level rise. Ultimately, I found that concern for sea level rise, previous experience with natural hazards, place attachment, and certain sociodemographic factors shaped these decisions.

I am interested in topics related to immigration and the environment. My thesis allowed me to quench my curiosity about the intersection of the two and think about the global implications of climate displacement.

**Benjamin Riner**

Hometown: Geneva, Illinois

- Majors: Economics and Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Drew Creal

FORE-casting Success: Predicting Outcomes on the PGA Tour

My thesis consists of building a model to predict the outcomes of PGA Tour events from player-level historical data.

I fit a linear model to predict the skill of each player, add a random shock to simulate the round-to-round variance of golf, and conduct Monte Carlo simulation to calculate the probability that each player finishes in a given position in a specific tournament.

I chose this topic because I am a huge fan of golf and statistics, and I love sports analytics. Additionally, golf tournament prediction is a space with relatively little academic literature but lots of potential.

Received support from Professor Drew Creal's research fund.



Catherine Schafer

Hometown: Cincinnati, Ohio

- Major: German
- Minors: Business Economics and Data Science
- Sheedy Family Program in Economy, Enterprise, and Society and iTREDS (Interdisciplinary Traineeship for Responsibly Engaged Data Scientists) Scholar
- Advisor: Mark Roche

Poetry in the Visual World: An Analysis of Selected German-Language Poems from Eichendorff to Steinherr

This thesis seeks to investigate the nature of the imagery evoked through poetry, particularly through the lens of German poems.

Analyzing works from five different poets — Joseph von Eichendorff, Theodor Storm, Jakob van Hoddis, Paul Celan, and Ludwig Steinherr — hailing from literary periods spanning the Romantic to the Contemporary, the figurative effects and graphic impact of the poets' diction and rhetorical devices are considered.

**Bridget Schippers**

Hometown: Olathe, Kansas

- Major: Economics
- Minors: Data Science, Hesburgh Program in Public Service, and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program, Notre Dame Scholars Program, and Suzanne and Walter Scott Scholars Program
- Advisor: Lakshmi Iyer

Teacher Stay-tistics: The Effects of Principal and Teacher Gender on Teacher Support and Turnover

Limited literature quantifies male resistance to female leadership. I explore this phenomenon in public education between principals and teachers.

Using a nationally representative dataset of U.S. public school principals and teachers from 2003 to 2021, I analyze how teacher turnover is mediated by teacher and principal gender.

I expect to find increased male teacher turnover rates under female principals, with female teacher turnover rates remaining relatively constant. Resistance to female leadership is predicted to decrease over time and in areas with higher female workforce participation.

This topic is inspired by my own experiences in leadership positions, my time working for female leaders, my prior research on female leadership with Professor Tom Mustillo in the Keough School of Global Affairs, and the research of academics, including Claudia Goldin who recently received the Nobel Prize "for having advanced our understanding of women's labor market outcomes."

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

**Madison (Mimi) Schneider**

Hometown: Granger, Indiana

- Major: German
- Minors: Business Economics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Globally Engaged Citizens Program
- Advisor: Mark Roche

Poetic Enchantment and Poetic Ambiguity: Understanding the Nature of German Romanticism by Interpreting Four Eichendorff Poems

In my thesis, I analyze four poems by the German Romantic poet Joseph von Eichendorff.

My primary focus is the form, structure, and meaning of the poetry, including how Eichendorff portrays Romantic themes, such as isolation of the self, time's fleeting nature, human interaction with the sublime, and the magnificence of nature. In my afterword, I draw comparisons between Eichendorff's works and those of Caspar David Friedrich and Mary Oliver.

During my sophomore year, I took the course German Literary and Cultural Tradition. While covering German Romanticism, I found myself particularly captivated by Eichendorff's poetry. I am writing my thesis on Eichendorff to further explore how his poetry fits into, and shapes, the meta-themes of German Romanticism.



Jacob Sherer

Hometown: Platteville, Wisconsin

- Major: Political Science
- Minors: European Studies and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program and Kennedy Scholars
- Advisors: Geoffrey Layman and James Kirk

Blame It All On My Roots? Rural-Urban Migration, Rural Consciousness, and Political Attitudes

My thesis explores the political behavior of “rural movers” — the portion of the electorate who have recently relocated from rural to urban areas.

On a range of issues, I find that rural movers are politically distinct from their rural and urban peers. Additionally, I find that they maintain heightened levels of rural identity — specifically rural consciousness — after moving. This suggests that where an individual previously lived may have lasting effects on how they make sense of the political world. My thesis ultimately contributes to a better understanding of the political implications of rural-urban migration in the United States.

Reflecting on my experiences growing up in small-town Wisconsin, I’m interested in understanding how geography and one’s sense of place shapes political attitudes. The surprise election of Donald Trump in 2016 — largely at the hands of disaffected rural voters — brought the rural-urban political divide to the forefront of discussions about American politics. I chose this topic because it’s an exciting (and important) time to be exploring questions related to political geography.

I presented my research at the annual Midwest Political Science Association conference in Chicago in April. Earlier, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to better understand how the current way the government functions might contribute to the dissatisfaction of rural citizens. I moved away from this specific topic for my thesis, but it was a valuable experience nonetheless. Additionally, I was a Kennedy Scholar at Notre Dame London, which gave me the opportunity to speak with scholars about my research at Cambridge University and present my research topic to scholars at Durham University.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and Kennedy Scholars Fellowship. Traveled to Chicago, London, and Washington, D.C.

**Joel Skelley**

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

- Major: Political Science
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Mary Keys

The Purpose of Politics in Plato's *Gorgias*

The *Gorgias* has been neglected and misunderstood in considerations of Plato's political thought. In my thesis, I investigate how Plato's Socrates understands the ends to which political activity is ordered through close analysis of the text in translation and reference to the original Greek.

I argue that Plato envisions politics as fundamentally ordered toward friendship with the people, namely a kind of friendship based not on flattery and mutual satisfaction but rather providing for the relative material good of the polis, encouraging citizens toward moral improvement, and safeguarding the state of their eternal souls.

Upon first reading Plato's *Gorgias*, I was enthralled with the dialogue's discussion of politics, one which was radically different from the ways in which we conceive of politics today. I find that the *Gorgias'* account of political friendship is one which speaks to the modern ear in a challenging but rewarding way.

**Isabela Tasende**

Hometown: Panama City, Panama

- Majors: Political Science and Economics
- Minor: Theology
- Hesburgh-Yusko Scholars Program and Kellogg International Scholars Program
- Advisor: Scott Mainwaring

Guardians of Power: Unraveling the Military's Role in Venezuela's Authoritarian Consolidation and Survival

This thesis presents a new, actor-based theory for what allows personalistic dictatorships to survive in high-tension contexts. It analyzes how Venezuela's Chavista regime has maintained control since 1999, focusing on the role of the military in the regime's authoritarian consolidation and survival.

I argue that by leveraging a cycle of militarization and co-optation, personalistic dictators can shift the military's preferences for and capacity to sustain their regime in times of crisis. The military's nature as a hierarchical institution with vast coercive power allows it to act as the most decisive determinant of authoritarian longevity.

More than 5 million Venezuelans have fled the country since the regime's consolidation, creating one of the largest migration crises in world history. My family makes up just four of those millions. Thus, my personal and academic interest in Venezuela's democratic revival pushed me to understand which factors stand in the way of democratization, and how the armed forces have served as a bulwark for the regime in times of crisis.

**Lauren TerMaat**

Hometown: Grand Rapids, Michigan

- Majors: Economics and Spanish
- Minor: Constitutional Studies
- Advisor: Juan Vitulli

El Desarrollo del Utopismo Latinoamericano

I explore the unique role that Latin America has played, as a geographic space and as an intellectual realm, for debating and imagining how the ideal society ought to be established.

I determine a concise definition of the Latin American branch of utopianism and trace its development through the centuries, highlighting utopian thought in works by prominent historical figures and emphasizing the influence that utopianism has on current Latin American political discourse.

As a constitutional studies student, I'm fascinated by what people throughout history have considered to be the ideal political community. And my love for Spanish literature and Latin American history inspired me to study how Latin America has been perceived as the place where the ideal community could be established.

**Nicole Weiss**

Hometown: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- Major: Economics
- Minors: European Studies and French
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Davin Raiha

Game Changers: Exploring the Link Between Mid-Season Standings and Winter Transfer Investments in European Football Clubs

My project aims to study the relationship between mid-season standings for European football clubs and their propensity to spend on new players in the winter transfer window.

Even though I'm still analyzing my results, there seems to be a strong correlation between an increase in transfer expenses and the 16th position.

I've always been passionate about football and wanted to explore that interest in the context of economics. Also, I wanted to better understand some of the economic incentives behind clubs' purchasing patterns.

**Felicity Wong**

Hometown: Princeton, New Jersey

- Major: English (Concentration in Creative Writing)
- Supplementary Major: Art History
- Minor: Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Glynn Family Honors Program
- Advisor: Xavier Navarro Aquino

Vain Trifles

My short story collection, *Vain Trifles*, explores the relationship that women have with their clothes, particularly in the way that fashion shapes self-consciousness and encodes personal and collective histories.

My work is heavily influenced by my time in Jaipur, India, where I immersed myself in the fashion landscape of a country with a rich and storied visual culture. I visited galleries, cultural landmarks, and spoke with textile technologists, designers, stylists, and business owners about sustainability, consumerism, and the way in which histories of colonization can be traced in clothing.

My work also is influenced by the writing of Virginia Woolf, Jenny Zhang, Carmen Maria Machado, Daniyal Mueenuddin, Sigrid Nunez, May-Lan Tan, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

By drawing out the narratives embedded in clothing, I attempt to challenge the notion of fashion as a capitalist product. This collection is a marriage between my research interests in fashion and textiles studies, diasporic narratives, and postcolonial theory.

Received funding from the Glynn Family Honors Program and traveled to Delhi and Jaipur, India.