

Matías Axelrod

Curriculum Vitae, October 2024

Contact Information

Department of Economics
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1038

Cell: (714)914-6605
Email: axelrod6@msu.edu

Education

Ph.D.	Economics, Michigan State University	2019 – 2025 (Expected)
M.S.	Computational & Behavioral Economics, Chapman University	2015 – 2017
B.S.	Mathematics, Chapman University	2012 – 2016
B.A.	Economics, Chapman University	2012 – 2016

Fields of Interest

Public Economics, Labor Economics, Economics of Crime, Causal Inference in High-Dimensional Settings

Working Papers

“In the ‘Right’ Place at the Right Time: Prison Labor Compensation and Recidivism in Arizona”
[Job Market Paper]

Despite their ubiquity in prisons across the United States, relatively little is known about forced prison labor programs and their impacts on post-release outcomes. Program evaluation in this context is empirically challenging due to lack of accessible data, lack of clear variation over time, and the familiar self-selection issues that plague most research designs. I address these challenges using a novel administrative dataset from the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry (ADCRR) by exploiting cross-prison variation over time in the availability of higher-paying *correctional industry* (CI) work assignments to see how varying levels of mandatory savings from CI impact recidivism rates. I find that higher levels of mandatory savings significantly reduce the probability of recidivism and that these effects are largest in the first six months after release. On average, a \$1,000 increase in mandatory savings decreases the probability of reincarceration within six months by 0.8 (↓4.3%) and 0.9 (↓6.4%) percentage points, for men and women respectively. Investigating potential mechanisms behind this result suggests substantial heterogeneity (differences in treatment response between subgroups) and nonlinearity (diminishing marginal returns in recidivism reduction for increases in mandatory savings) in the relationship between mandatory savings from prison labor and recidivism.

Works in Progress

“Human Capital Complementarities in Post-Release Outcomes”

Leveraging recent advances in machine learning methods for causal inference, I examine trends in prison program participation and how they relate to labor market outcomes and other measures of wellbeing for recently released inmates. I plan to link microdata from the U.S. Census Bureau’s LEHD series to a merge of data from the Arizona Department of Corrections and the Criminal Justice Administrative Records System. This high-dimensional setting makes for an excellent use-case of dimension reduction methods in the machine learning literature with the double-robustness property in evaluating impacts of several programs along several dimensions of wellbeing.

“Tradeoffs between Supervision and Recidivism: Evidence from Arizona”

I investigate how additional months of incarceration impact rates of reincarceration in a regression-discontinuity design using variation in sentence lengths induced by Arizona’s “Truth-in-Sentencing” law.

“On the Cost-Effectiveness of Illicit Drug Enforcement” (with Alex Kucera)

Using novel datasets from wastewater treatment facilities in metropolitan areas, we investigate the “down-stream” effects of DEA and local law enforcement illicit drug seizures have on end-user consumption.

Teaching Experience

Instructor, EC 301 Intermediate Microeconomic Theory, MSU	Spring ‘22
Instructor, EC 201 Introduction to Microeconomics, MSU	Fall ‘21
Instructor, MGSC 209 Introduction to Business Statistics, Chapman University	Spring ‘19
Instructor, MATH 109 Business Calculus, Chapman University	Fall ‘18 – Spring ‘19
Teaching Assistant, EC 330, Money and Banking, MSU	Spring ‘23
Teaching Assistant, EC 201, MSU	Fall ‘22

Work Experience

Consultant, Resolution Economics LLC	Summer 2017-Spring 2018
--------------------------------------	-------------------------

Fellowships and Awards

Criminal Justice Administrative Records System (CJARS) Fellow – U. of Michigan	2022
University Enrichment Fellowship - MSU	2019,2023
Early Start Research Fellowships – College of Social Science, MSU	Summer 2021,2020,2019

Professional Memberships and Conference Presentations

Memberships: Southern Economic Association

Presentations: Southern Economic Association Conference 2023, AEA Committee on the Status of LGBTQ+ Individuals in the Economics Profession 2023

Attendance: High Dimensional Inference Workshop MSU 2024, Southern Economic Association (Discussant) 2024, Transatlantic Workshop on the Economics of Crime (TWECC) 2023, CJARS Training Workshop 2023,

Service

Professional Service

Session Organizer, Southern Economic Association Conference Fall 2023

University Service

College of Social Science, DEI Stakeholder Group	Fall 2022 – Spring 2023
Graduate Student Advisory Council (Chair)	Fall 2021 – Spring 2022
Graduate Student Advisory Council (Member)	Fall 2020 – Spring 2021

References

Stacy Dickert-Conlin

Professor

Department of Economics
Michigan State University

dickertc@msu.edu

(517) 353-7275

Todd Elder

MSU Foundation Professor

Department of Economics
Michigan State University

telder@msu.edu

(517) 355-0353

Ajin Lee

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics
University of California,
Riverside

ajin.lee@ucr.edu

(517) 353-6939