

Christopher Oconnor

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EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION **The University of Alabama**
PhD in Economics 2017 – Expected Spring 2022
- *Dissertation: "Three Essays in Resilience, Vulnerability and Inequality"*
- Committee: Dr Peter Brummund (Chair), Dr Cary Deck, Dr Paul Pecorino, Dr Traviss Cassidy, Dr Gary Hoover (Tulane University)

MA in Economics 2017 – 2019

The University of the West Indies, Mona (UWI)
MSc in Economics 2011 – 2013
BSc in Economics 2008 – 2011
BSc in Statistics 2008 – 2011

Certification:

- *"CITI Certificate – Non-Medical Investigators (2019)"*. Tuscaloosa, AL
- *"Impact Evaluation for Productive Sector Projects (2015)"*. Compete Caribbean (Inter-American Development Bank), Barbados
- *"Economic Development Strategy (2015)"*. Korea International Cooperation Agency, Republic of Korea
- *"Making Effective Public Policy (2014)"*. Management Institute for National Development, Jamaica

RESEARCH INTERESTS Development Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Experimental Economics, Public Economics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE **Instructor, The University of Alabama**
Intermediate Microeconomics

2021 Fall - evaluation pending
2021 Summer - (4.68/5 ; Dept. Avg.: 4.57)
2020 Fall (online) - (4.57/5 ; Dept. Avg.: 4.39)
2020 Summer (Online) (4.57/5 ; Dept. Avg.: 4.14)
2019 Summer (4.92/5 ; Dept. Avg.: 4.47)

Instructor, The University of the West Indies
Introductory Statistics Summer 2013

Teaching Assistant, The University of Alabama,	
<i>Macroeconomic Theory (Masters)</i>	Spring 2021
<i>Managerial Economics (Masters)</i>	Spring 2021
<i>International Trade (Undergrad and Masters)</i>	Spring 2019 and 2020
<i>Game Theory</i>	Spring 2020
<i>Econometrics</i>	Fall 2019
<i>Intermediate Macroeconomics</i>	Spring 2019
<i>Principles of Microeconomics</i>	Fall 2017, 2018 and 2019
<i>Principles of Macroeconomics</i>	Spring 2018, 2019
<i>Business Finance</i>	Summer 2018
<i>Financial Analysis and Modelling</i>	Summer 2018

OTHER
PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE

Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), St Andrew, Jamaica
Policy Analyst/Economist in poverty and inequality 2013 – 2017

Caribbean Local Economic Development Program, Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Short-term consultant (Jamaica) 2013

PUBLICATIONS

A Living Wage for Jamaica: Considerations for Calculation and Implementation (with Lauren Marsh and Danny Roberts). *Social and Economic Studies*, 2017, Vol 66(1&2).

WORK IN
PROGRESS

”An Examination of the Effect of Inequality on Lotteries for Funding Public Goods.” (with Cary Deck and Li Zhang), *Revise and Resubmit: Journal of Public Economic Theory* (September 2021)
- **Summary:** We experimentally study the impact of inequality on the effectiveness of contests for funding public goods in a development context. We observe that the typical result of a lottery funding mechanism leading to greater funding for the public good than predicted by theory extends to groups with inequality. However, while theory suggests that increased inequality should lower total contributions to a lottery funded public good, we observe the opposite pattern. This result differs from prior results for the standard voluntary contribution mechanism where increased inequality has been found to reduce public good provision. Moreover, we find that the poor do not contribute a greater share of their endowment to the public good than do the wealthy. Thus, overall our study demonstrates the potential for community development projects, when funded with a lottery mechanism, to be highly successful even in the presence of inequality and may facilitate a progressive redistribution of wealth.

”Robust Estimates of Vulnerability to Poverty using Quantile Estimators.”
- **Summary:** I propose an alternative empirical strategy—based on estimated medians with quantile regression—to standard strategies that identify individuals/households that are vulnerable to future episodes of poverty. This methodology is robust to measurement error and outliers; more accurate and rely on fewer assumptions than current mean-based methodologies and so facilitate more efficient use of scarce resources; and easy to implement which allows easy adoption by policymakers. Moreover, this methodology is shown to provide more dynamic information about household welfare than the static poverty rate. Applying this strategy to data from Uganda to illustrate its usefulness, I find that it more accurately identifies the future poor among the general population. The accuracy is highlighted in the fact that 1 in 2 households identified as vulnerable using the median strategy were poor within 1-3 years after being identified as vulnerable compared with 1 in 5 households using mean-based empirical strategies.

”Do Conditional Cash Transfers create resilience against poverty? Long-run evidence from Jamaica” (Job Market Paper)
- **Summary:** Conditional Cash Transfer Programs (CCT) are the leading source of social assistance in many developing countries, particularly in Latin-America and the Caribbean. The Jamaican CCT program, for example, provide benefits to a third of all children, highlighting the potential

reach of CCTs. The program goals include the ex-ante prevention of poverty which can be achieved if beneficiaries are made more resilient against poverty. There is no study that has examined the potential for CCTs to build resilience among target populations in the long run. To fill this gap, I exploit the age-based eligibility thresholds and regional variation of the Jamaican CCT program to identify its long-run impact on resilience against poverty. Results show that child beneficiaries on the program have a higher level of resilience against poverty when they become adults than they would have had in the absence of the program. Moreover, these benefits do not kick in until the child becomes at least 21 years old, after they have become more integrated into the labor market.

REPORTS,
CONFERENCE
ATTENDANCE AND
PRESENTATIONS

Conference Presentation:

- Public Choice Society Meeting. Nashville, Tennessee (upcoming 2022)
- ACM conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization. Online (upcoming 2021)
- EFLS brown bag, University of Alabama. Tuscaloosa, Alabama. (upcoming 2021)
- Southern Economic Association 91st Annual Meeting. Houston, Texas (upcoming 2021).
- Association for Mentoring and Inclusion in Economics (AMIE). Online (2021)
- Southern Economic Association 90th Annual Meeting. Online (2020).
- 8th Annual Caribbean Child Research Conference. Kingston, Jamaica (2015).

Conference Attendance:

- 4th High Level Meeting of the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network, Acapulco, Mexico (2016).
- 9th Annual Caribbean Child Research Conference, Kingston, Jamaica (2016)
- 4th Annual National Health Research Conference, Kingston, Jamaica (2014)

Reports:

- *“Household Consumption”* in the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC) 2012, 2013 and 2014.
- *“Westmoreland Modified Local Area Economic Profile (LEAP)”* (2013): for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ (FCM) Caribbean Local Economic Development Programme.

PROFESSIONAL
MEMBERSHIPS

- Southern Economic Association (current)
- Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions committee, PIOJ (Jamaica, 2013-2017).
- Research Ethics Committee, Ministry of National Security (Jamaica, 2013-2017).
- Technical Working Group for the revision of the poverty measurement methodology, PIOJ (Jamaica, 2013-2017).
- Jamaica Poverty Mapping Committee, PIOJ (Jamaica, 2013-2017).

AWARDS AND
ACHIEVEMENTS

- Summer Research Grant: Dept. of Economics, Finance and Legal Studies, UA
- Development Bank of Jamaica Scholarship for excellence in Academics, UWI Mona 2009-2011
- WIGUT Bursary for excellence in Academics, UWI Mona 2009-2011
- NWC Cooperative Credit Union Scholarship for excellence in Academics, UWI Mona 2008-2011

TECHNICAL SKILLS • Proficient in Stata, z-Tree, SPSS and L^AT_EX.
• Working Knowledge of R, MATLAB, SAS, EVIEWS, HTML and CSS.

REFERENCES

Peter Brummund

Associate Professor of Economics
Dept. of Economics, Finance and Legal Studies
University of Alabama
361 Stadium Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL, 35487

Cary A. Deck

Professor, Bidgood Chair in Economics and Finance
Director of The Interactive Decision Experiment (TIDE)
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Paul Pecorino

James Patrick and Elizabeth B. Hayes Professor of Economics
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