

CURRICULUM VITAE

David Titus

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EDUCATION

Cornell University

PhD Candidate in Economics
Master of Arts

(Expected) 2020-2026
December 2023

Binghamton University, State University of New York

Bachelor of Science in Economics
Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics
Summa cum laude

December 2019
December 2019

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Economics of Immigration, Economics of Education

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND REFERENCES

Michèle Belot (Chair)

Frances Perkins Professor of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics, Cornell University
mb2693@cornell.edu

Francine Blau (Co-Chair)

Frances Perkins Professor Emeritus of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics, Cornell University
fdb4@cornell.edu

Lawrence Kahn (Committee Member)

Braunstein Family Professor Emeritus of Industrial and Labor Relations
Professor of Economics, Cornell University
lmk12@cornell.edu

Gary Fields (Teaching Assistant Supervisor)

The John P. Windmuller Professor Emeritus of International and Comparative Labor
Professor of Economics, Cornell University
gsf2@cornell.edu

AWARDS, HONORS, AND GRANTS

Sage Fellowship (Cornell University)	2025-2026
Graduate School Conference Travel Grant (Cornell University)	2025
Sage Fellowship (Cornell University)	2020-2021
Distinguished Achievement in Economics (Binghamton University)	2019

CURRENT RESEARCH

Job Market Paper

Immigration Policies and Human Capital: The Impact on Undocumented College Attendance

I estimate the impact of Universal E-Verify laws on the college attendance of undocumented Hispanics in the United States. To do so, I implement a series of event studies that account for staggered adoption over time, and I use a random forest algorithm as my primary approach for predicting undocumented status. My results indicate that Universal E-Verify laws lower the college attendance of undocumented Hispanics ages 18-24 by about 3.7 percentage points. This is a substantial effect: only 15.7 percent of undocumented Hispanics ages 18-24 in treated states were enrolled in college following the passage of the laws. This effect is robust to using logical imputation on non-citizen Hispanics to proxy for undocumented immigrants, using a logit model instead of random forest, testing for migration spillover effects on bordering states, and considering potentially confounding impacts of other state-level policies. I develop a theoretical model that explains the mechanisms through which Universal E-Verify affects college education, and I test this model's implications. I find suggestive evidence that the effect is driven by a negative labor market shock on undocumented adults ages 25-54, which likely leads to worse schooling for their children and renders college less attainable. These findings indicate that employment restrictions targeting working-age undocumented adults hinder the human capital development of undocumented youth.

Works in Progress

Market Structures, Prejudice, and the Residual Wage Gap between Refugees and Natives

I exploit regional variation in Germany to estimate the impact of prejudice, institutional factors, and labor market conditions on the residual refugee-native wage and employment gaps. I first demonstrate that a persistent residual gap exists even several years after refugee entry, and that there exists significant variation by region. Furthermore, the larger residual wage gap compared to previous cohorts is not primarily attributable to increased income inequality: a Juhn, Murphy and Pierce (1993) decomposition indicates that residual price changes account for only a small share of the increased gap compared to prior immigrant cohorts. Much of this gap can be explained by heterogeneous returns to education: highly educated refugees receive substantially lower wage premiums than highly educated natives. I find little evidence that this disparity is caused by prejudice, although I do find evidence that the residual employment gap is significantly smaller in regions with greater occupational upgrading, suggesting that labor market fluidity facilitates refugee integration into the labor market. I also find suggestive evidence that the residual wage gaps may be lower in regions with larger minimum wage bites and greater collective bargaining coverage. These results indicate that labor markets characterized by both greater occupational fluidity and greater wage compression are conducive to reducing refugee-native disparities.

Do Integration Courses Alleviate Refugee Downgrading? Evidence from Germany

I examine the impact of the German for Professional Purposes course on the labor market outcomes and human capital of recent refugees in Germany. I focus on language acquisition, employment, skill level, and wages as my key outcomes. I further investigate how the returns to the course are impacted by anti-refugee prejudice. I also test for spillover effects within refugee households. Estimates indicate that this course has remained an effective tool in improving refugee language acquisition. This finding is in the wake of a 2015 crisis that led to a sudden, unexpected, and large influx of asylum seekers, increased prejudice against refugees, settlement policy changes, and a cohort for which the course was not specifically designed. I find evidence that increased prejudice may lower the return to the course. I fail to find evidence for within-household spillovers. My results imply that professional training and language courses can remain an effective policy tool, even in the event of large unexpected crises and upheaval.

Gender Gaps: International Evidence on the Role of Family Policy

Ongoing project with Francine Blau, Lawrence Kahn, Leonardo Peñaloza-Pacheco, Freddy Bachmann, and Helen Burkhardt.

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Cornell University

Graduate RA for Professor Francine Blau

Summer 2023 – Summer 2025

Binghamton University, State University of New York
Undergraduate RA for Professor Plamen Nikolov

Spring 2019 – Spring 2020

Cato Institute (Internship)

Summer 2019

Past Research Assistant Projects

Skill Downgrading Among Refugees and Economic Immigrants in Germany: Evidence from the Syrian Refugee Crisis (IZA Discussion Paper No. 15426, July 2022)

With Plamen Nikolov and Leila Salarpour. Worked on project while an undergraduate RA at Binghamton University.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Introductory Microeconomics (ECON 1110, Cornell University) Winter 2024
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Jennifer Wissink

Economics of Wages and Employment (ILRLE 2400, Cornell University) Spring 2023
Teaching Assistant for Professor Gary Fields

Introductory Microeconomics (ECON 1110, Cornell University) Fall 2022
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Stephanie Thomas

Economics of Wages and Employment (ILRLE 2400, Cornell University) Spring 2022
Teaching Assistant for Professor George Jakobson

Public Finance (ECON 4260, Cornell University) Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant for Senior Lecturer Jennifer Wissink

Microeconomic Theory (ECON 360, Binghamton University) Fall 2018
Teaching Assistant for Professor David Slichter

OTHER TEACHING-RELATED EXPERIENCE

Grading Assistant (ECON 4260, Cornell University) Fall 2022, Fall 2023

Tutor in Economics and Mathematics (Varsity Tutors) Spring 2020

Tutor (Educational Opportunity Program, Binghamton University) Spring 2018 – Fall 2019

PRESENTATIONS

Cornell Labor Work-in-Progress Seminar, Ithaca, NY Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring 2026

Midwest Economics Association, Chicago, IL March 20, 2026

Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, AT February 17, 2026

APPAM Fall Research Conference, Seattle, WA November 14, 2025

Cornell Labor Economics Workshop, Ithaca, NY October 27, 2025

Midwest Economics Association, Kansas City, MO March 22, 2025

Academy of Economics and Finance, Pensacola, FL February 13, 2025

PROGRAMMING: Stata, R, MATLAB, LaTeX

Last Updated: March 19, 2026