

O'NEILL EXPO

May 2, 2025



O'NEILL

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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SCHEDULE

All sessions available on Zoom, click panel title to attend

Opening Ceremony 8:30—9:00 A.M.

[Opening Ceremony](#) | Room A201

Featuring Dean R.J. Woodring and Dr. Allison Schnable

Panel Session One 9:00—10:00 A.M.

[Panel 1A: Governance & Law](#) | Room A201

Reese Wiley, Maddie Alexander, Sydney Benson

[Panel 1B: Housing & Organizational Management](#) | Room A225

Dylan Schutte, Sophie Guo, Ashley Porth

Panel Session Two 10:10—11:10 A.M.

[Panel 2A: Environmental Policy & Nonprofit Management](#) | Room A201

Angelina Mark, Lucia Walker, Yangzheng Wu

[Panel 2B: Health & Public Policy](#) | Room A225

Elizabeth Leitzel, Alexa Weber, Eli Kurlander

Panel Session Three 11:20 A.M.—12:20 P.M.

[Panel 3A: Trade & Consumption](#) | Room A201

Shailey Desai and Kira Sullins

[Panel 3B: Higher Education & Public Policy](#) | Room A225

Zsafia Leary and Rachel Applefield



PANEL 1A: **GOVERNANCE & LAW**

Room A201 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair:

Laura Helmke-Long

The Road To Reproductive Care: How Roe v. Wade's Reversal is Reshaping Interstate Travel in the United States

by Reese Wiley

In a post-Dobbs era, restrictions on reproductive care are becoming more severe, especially as states attempt to prohibit abortion beyond their borders. With some lawmakers joining pro-life advocates to pursue restrictions on abortion travel, the question arises as to whether such laws violate constitutional rights. Traveling to access reproductive care implicates the Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution and highlights the intersection of interstate travel and privacy rights. However, with these travel restriction laws not yet challenged, those seeking reproductive care in other states are forced to make a crucial decision: whether the risk of violating state law and traveling for abortion is the price they are willing to pay for healthcare. This thesis seeks to better understand how women who are currently affected by these state abortion restrictions would respond if put in this difficult position. By surveying college women aged 18 to 23, the study attempts to gauge what would influence women from a multitude of backgrounds to decide to terminate their pregnancy, as well as travel to seek an abortion.

Mentor: Beth Cate, Clinical

Associate Professor

Local Votes, National Voices: The Nationalization of the 2023 Indianapolis Mayoral Race

by Maddie Alexander

To what extent is the nationalization of local elections demonstrated in a locality's mayoral race? This study examines how campaigns frame local and national issues by analyzing the 2023 Indianapolis mayoral race. Through an in-depth analysis of campaign messaging, I seek to fill a gap in understanding how national political discourse influences local election dynamics. Using content analysis, I evaluate the extent to which local versus national framing is employed, while also assessing the use of positive and negative frames in campaign rhetoric. The findings provide insight into the broader trend of nationalized local elections and its implications for political communication and voter engagement.

Mentor: Matthew Baggetta, Associate Professor

Do Juvenile Drug Courts in Indiana Interpret and Practice Federal Recommendations?

by Sydney Benson

This paper works to identify whether juvenile drug courts and problem-solving courts in Indiana adhere to federal recommendations. By comparing the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines to handbooks and standard operating procedures provided by each participating juvenile drug court, I find that the participating juvenile drug courts do not consistently reflect the language used in federal recommendations. Based on this analysis, it is recommended that the Judicial Conference of Indiana amend the Indiana Problem-Solving Court Rules to reflect the best practices recommended by federal guidelines.

Mentor: Tara Ali, Lecturer

PANEL 1B: **HOUSING & ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Room A225 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair: Xiaochun Zhu

Student Drivers of Urban Change: Identifying the Effects of Studentification on Local Housing Markets

by Dylan Schutte

The American "college town" presents unique forces of urban change resulting from a dominant student population. Despite such unique attributes, the process of studentification, or the transformation of localities due to increases in the concentration of higher education students, remains understudied, particularly in the American context. Existing studies identify broad implications or focus on contexts outside of the United States. This study seeks to fill in existing gaps in research by empirically identifying the effects of studentification on local housing markets in small- and mid-sized cities in the United States. Using population data from the 2023 American Community Survey and the Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System (N = 1,758), an ordinary least squares regression analysis was completed to test the effects of studentification on numerous housing market indicators. The results show that as the concentration of students in a locality increases, there is no statistically significant effect on the vacancy rate and housing prices, there is a statically significant positive effect on rent prices and the cost-burdened rate, and a statistically significant negative effect on owner-occupancy. Further, the results form a delineation between the effects of full-time and part-time as well as between the effects of undergraduate and graduate students. These findings not only fill in gaps in previous research, but also present important considerations for housing market researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

Mentor: David Audretsch, Distinguished Professor

Granting Local Power: Differential Municipality CDBG Implementation Effectiveness

by Sophie Guo

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a longstanding federal grant designed to support local governments in providing affordable housing and expanding economic opportunities for low to moderate income people. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) distributes funds to localities, who then determine how best to allocate resources for community development. While HUD assesses the program's overall effectiveness, there is limited comparative research on how different cities' stewardship strategies impact the targeted populations. This study conducts a cross-sectional analysis to examine variations in CDBG implementation across localities by comparing funding amounts and allocation strategies. The outcomes observed are based on the federal goals of the CDBG program. This research aims to identify the most successful ways local governments can leverage their CDBG funding to address housing affordability and economic hardship.

Mentor: Tom Rabovsky, Associate Professor

Hospital Ownership Matters: Understanding the Gap in Patient Experience Scores Between For-Profit and Not-For-Profit Hospitals

by Ashley Porth

Patient experience is a critical measure of healthcare quality, yet the impact of hospital ownership, for-profit vs. not-for-profit, remains underexplored. For-profit hospitals prioritize financial performance and shareholder value, while not-for-profit hospitals focus on reinvesting in patient-centered care and community well-being. This study analyzes data from the 2024 Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Survey data merged with the 2023 Compendium of U.S. Health Systems (CSHP) Hospital Linkage File to

examine how these two hospital ownership models influence patient satisfaction. Multivariable regression models assess differences in patient experience scores between for-profit and not-for-profit hospitals, controlling for size, teaching status, and socioeconomic factors. Three model specifications were tested: one with all hospitals and no controls, one with full controls, and one with the same sample, including additional controls. Not-for-profit hospitals consistently score higher than for-profit hospitals across all models. These findings suggest that the financial incentives of for-profit hospitals may limit the reinvestment in patient-centered initiatives and deprioritize patient-centered care. Not-for-profit hospitals' goals are better aligned to achieve high-quality healthcare.

Mentor: Kosali Simon, Distinguished Professor

PANEL 2A: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT

Room A201 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair: Ashlea Raemer

Midwest Foodbanks & Pantries Survey Evaluating Climate Change, COVID-19 and Inflation Impacts on Food Aid Organizations

by Angelina Mark

The effects of climate change will not be felt equally. Those already living with food insecurity will be joined by a new wave of people pushed into this precarious situation. There will be more stress on the organizations providing food to those in need. Over the past few years, climate change, COVID-19, and inflation have all contributed to food scarcity. This project has been surveying and interviewing food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and other food services across IN, IL, KY, and OH, to evaluate the

impacts of these three stressors on the food supply chain and client servicing.

Mentor: Diane Henshel, Associate Professor

It's Not Just About The Money: Examining The Diversity Conditions Under Which Nonprofit Boards Require Minimum Annual Gifts

by Lucia Walker

Nonprofit governing boards are called upon to steward their agencies into a future that is changing rapidly due to public demand for organizational accountability, uncertain administrative support and funding, and evolving humanitarian needs. In response, boards are increasingly turning to their own operations with a critical eye, particularly in the areas of fundraising, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Amid political controversy surrounding DEI in the workplace, scholarly literature in organizational leadership and management has repeatedly found that the presence of diverse, representative perspectives leads to greater knowledge sharing, innovation, and public approval. In an attempt to relate current nonprofit diversity and fundraising priorities, I examined here whether governing boards with greater representation of diverse minorities were more or less likely to use minimum annual gift requirements for their board members as a fundraising tool. By using minority concentration as a measure of diversity, I focused on the role that minimum gift policies play in presenting a financial barrier to board members of varying backgrounds. I accomplished this using a cross-sectional analysis of data from BoardSource's 2019 Leading With Intent Survey. Using a logistic regression to compare the presence of minoritized racial, gender, and age demographics with the presence and scale of minimum gift requirements, I found that these demographic variables played no significant role in predicting a minimum annual gift. These findings suggest that despite concerns about potential financial barriers posed by minimum annual gifts as fundraising policies, diverse boards utilize them as frequently as homogenous boards. Therefore, organizations hoping

to become more diverse and representative of their constituent communities should look beyond presumed financial barriers and instead examine how they can actively build more inclusive and welcoming board cultures.

Mentor: Karen Gahl-Mills, Professor of Practice

Sociocultural Drivers of Young Adult Wildfire Risk Perception and Mitigation: Comparison Between the US and China

by Yangzheng Wu

Wildfires are increasingly threatening China and the United States, with mounting frequency and intensity inspiring greater risk perception and adaptation measures. While many of the prior research studies have looked into residents in high-risk areas, young adults are an under-studied group. The present investigation explores how sociocultural influences impact young adults' perceptions of wildfire threats and their adoption of measures to mitigate threats, with a comparative study between two different cultural and governance regimes. The research examines how individualism and collectivism affect perceptions of wildfire risk and preparedness behaviors. In America, disaster preparedness tends to revolve around personal responsibility. On the other hand, China's collectivist strategy relies on government coordination and collective action. It is critical to know how these cultural frames impact young adults' preparedness behaviors and perceptions of risk. Based on both countries' survey data, the research explores cross-country differences in risk awareness, institutional trust, and wildfire preparedness behaviors. Findings provide insights for policy makers.

Mentor: Susan Siena, Teaching Professor

PANEL 2B: HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY

Room A225 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair: Ju Won Chung

When Profit is Greater Than Care: Analyzing the Effects of Frequent Ownership Changes on Nursing Homes

by Elizabeth Leitzel

This paper examines the relationship between recurring ownership changes and the quality of care provided in nursing homes. As nursing homes have experienced an increase in ownership changes, concern for impact on resident care has also increased. This study uses data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to test how ownership turnover affects quality outcomes. Findings reveal a negative relationship between ownership changes and care quality, and the study presents the explanation that frequent transitions disrupt stability and shorten the focus of the organization. Controlling for the number of residents and mean income, the research narrows down the possible factors contributing to quality.

Mentor: Kosali Simon, Distinguished Professor

The Primary Care Physician Shortage: Are Hospitals Losing Quality Alongside Quantity?

by Alexa Weber

The aging population in United States will require more care than physicians can provide, and the disparity between the patient population and the number of physicians in the country will worsen as birth rates continue to decline. This physician shortage is especially prominent among primary care physicians, who specialize in providing general and preventative care. Past research regarding the impact of the primary care physician shortage was limited to examining

the effects on patient populations. This study uses a multivariable, logarithmic regression analysis to compare the relationships between primary care physicians, the preventative care they offer, and incidents of hospital acquired infections. The results of the regression analysis found that nurses and vaccination rates were significant variables that negatively correlated with incidents of hospital acquired infections. The hypothesis that PCP-ratios affected hospital quality was disproven as the results were insignificant. The established relationship between PCPs and vaccination rates implies that preventative care could improve hospital care outcomes, even if nurses are more involved in the direct delivery of care to patients.

Mentor: Kosali Simon, Distinguished Professor

An Evaluation of the Impact of SB 946 on Autism Treatment Coverage and Insurance Appeals Through California's Independent Medical Review Program

by Eli Kurlander

The number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in California reached a record high in 2023. Access to treatment, including Applied Behavior Analysis, is critical to supporting the long-term development of children with ASD. However, insurer denials have threatened access to such care, leading California to enact Senate Bill 946 (SB 946) in 2011. This research evaluates the impact of SB 946 by analyzing data from California's Independent Medical Review (IMR) program, which allows policyholders to request an independent review of treatment denials. The results found that SB 946 was associated with a statistically significant reduction in the number of ASD appeals to the IMR program but not the outcome of the appeal, suggesting that the policy contributed to a decline in treatment denials. Taken together, these findings support the effectiveness of SB 946 in reducing insurer denials and expanding access to ASD treatment.

Mentor: Coady Wing, Associate Professor

PANEL 3A: TRADE & CONSUMPTION

Room A201 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair: Megdalynn Fisher

Secondhand or Second-Class? Trade Policy & Fast Fashion Dumping in Ghana and Tanzania

by Shailey Desai

This thesis explores the differing responses of Tanzania and Ghana to second-hand clothing imports, focusing on why Tanzania has taken steps to limit these imports while Ghana has not. By analyzing policy decisions, economic factors, and the role of international influence, the study aims to understand the motivations and barriers behind each country's stance. It draws on existing research, trade data, and government statements to highlight how second-hand clothing affects local industries and long-term development. The findings reveal key differences in political will, economic dependence, and global pressure that shape each country's approach to fast fashion dumping.

Mentor: Sergio Fernandez, Professor

The New Normal: How Social Media Advertising and Use Changes Consumption Patterns in Generation Z

by Kira Sullins

As income, influencers, and social media screen time all have been increasing markedly across the western hemisphere, a question of general interest is whether these increases have economic consequences, and if so, to what extent. To shed some light on this question, we examine whether and how these rising factors impact the purchasing volume of Generation Z customers, focusing on goods rather than services. To conduct this analysis, we designed and distributed an online survey to Indiana University students. We then econometrically analyzed the survey results using

ordered logistic regressions and non-linear regressions. We find that social media screen time increases spending, showing marginal significance with our small sample size (n=197). There was also an increase in restaurant food consumption from higher screen time. Further research, with larger samples, will need to be conducted to determine if influencers and income have a statistically significant impact.

Mentor: David Konisky, Associate Dean for Research

PANEL 3B: HIGHER EDUCATION & PUBLIC POLICY

Room A225 ([Zoom link](#))

Panel Chair: Shaun Khurana

You Better Work!: Exploring How and Why LGBTQIA+ Students Connect to Queer Representation at School

by Zsafia Leary

This study aims to explore the relationship that queer youth in Indiana public high schools have with their sources of community, specifically, how and why queer youth find meaningful representation. Previous literature has found that culturally minoritized people that have sources of symbolic and active representation, and participate in sources of community, are more likely to have positive health and academic outcomes. Twelve LGBTQIA+ students at Indiana University who formerly attended Indiana high schools were interviewed about their experiences with coming out, family & friend support systems, and their GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance). Some students were active in their GSAs and reported having positive supportive networks. However, most interviewees either did not have proper community representation or perceived it with stigma, and thus did not join, which exacerbated their feelings of "otherness." Therefore, it seems queer students in Indiana are facing barriers towards representation because of

the extreme stigmatization of GSAs by both cisgender/heterosexual (cis het) and queer youth.

Mentor: Jennifer Silva, Associate Professor

Campus Antisemitism: Is There a Link to Progressive Politics?

by Rachel Applefield

This thesis investigates the rise of antisemitism on American college campuses, particularly in relation to progressive student movements. Following the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel, antisemitic incidents on campuses surged, raising questions about the ideological alignment between progressive activism and hostility toward Israel and Jewish students. Drawing on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, this study explores whether anti-Israel sentiment among progressive students reflects broader antisemitic attitudes or is rooted in political critique. To examine this, a survey was conducted among 147 college students from various universities, measuring political identity, historical knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, support for social justice movements, and reactions to protest slogans. The findings revealed that lower levels of historical and contextual knowledge strongly correlated with higher antisemitic attitudes. Additionally, a positive correlation emerged between support for multiple social justice causes and antisemitic scores. Interestingly, while progressives were more likely to support anti-Israel positions, a separate regression indicated that conservative students also exhibited antisemitic attitudes, suggesting antisemitism exists across the political spectrum. Overall, the study underscores the complex relationship between ideology, knowledge, and antisemitic beliefs. It calls for more robust historical education and critical engagement on college campuses to foster nuanced discourse and ensure the safety and inclusion of Jewish students.

Mentor: Paul Helmke, Professor of Practice