



## THIS ISSUE

*Important Dates**Faculty Spotlight**EC Alumni Spotlight**Summer Study Abroad Opportunity**Campus & CSN Events**Congratulations Fall 2021 Graduates*

## IMPORTANT DATES

- STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT ENROLLED IN CLASSES FOR SPRING 2022 BEFORE DECEMBER 9TH ARE SUBJECT TO A LATE ENROLLMENT FEE
- FINALS WEEK IS DECEMBER 13TH-17TH
- THE FALL 2021 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY IS DECEMBER 18TH AT 9:00 AM IN THE BRESLIN CENTER
- MOST MSU OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FROM DECEMBER 24TH-JANUARY 3RD

## ADVISING

## APPOINTMENTS

If you have questions about enrollment, please schedule an Advising Appointment [student.msu.edu](http://student.msu.edu)

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: LESLIE PAPKE

I am Professor Leslie Papke. I joined the MSU Economics faculty in 1991 and have taught a variety of undergraduate courses – primarily in public economics. I also teach public economics and quantitative methods courses in our Masters of Public Policy Program that is joint with Political Science. Our department offers a way to combine undergraduate and Masters degrees in five years - ask about it if you're interested!

My favorite class to teach is EC 436 Public Revenues. This is a course in the economics of public revenue sources like the federal income tax, the tax that funds Social Security, and the state sales tax you pay on purchases, for example. Many economic behaviors like hours of labor supplied, how much and where to save for retirement, human capital investment (education!), and business investment may be influenced by taxes in some form. Some of the questions we discuss include: How could we use the tax system to combat climate change? Who really pays the sales tax on marijuana? Should the government tax junk food? Do taxes reduce work effort? Do taxes reduce economic growth? Can we use the tax code to increase retirement saving? How much does tax evasion in the U.S. increase the deficit? Who is evading taxes?

While we study details of U.S. tax system, the tax concepts we study are applicable to any country's tax structure, so the course is useful for international students too. One of my favorite concepts to explain is tax incidence – it turns out that prices and wages adjust in response to taxes so that the individual or firm who is in-charge of sending the revenue to the government is not necessarily the entity that actually pays the tax! It's a real eye-opener for most students.

In my own research, some of the topics I have studied include state competition for business, retirement plan participation, and enterprise zone program evaluation. Currently I am working on issues related to public pensions plans – the plans that cover K-12 teachers, first responders, and other state and local government workers. I am studying whether public sector workers' retirement decisions are affected by pension plan underfunding. Additionally, since about 25% of public employees don't participate in Social Security, their behavior may be affected differently since the public pension is their primary (only?) source of retirement income. I am also examining how likely it is that states can eventually fund their public sector plans without federal assistance.

What did I learn during COVID? I learned that there is no substitute for physical presence for communicating, paying attention, and staying engaged. For me, anyway. I'm glad to be back in the classroom!

# EC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MATTHEW SUANDI

I am studying at UC Berkeley. I am pursuing a PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics and my focus is Development Economics and Economic History.

How does your Economics Education help you succeed in your PhD program?

- Michigan State's econometrics sequence is excellent. It's very easy to miss the forest for the trees with this subject: MSU's curriculum really communicates the intuition behind causal inference.

What is the most rewarding or enjoyable part of your PhD program?

- Collaborating with others on mutual areas of research interest!

What is a challenging part of your PhD and how do you handle it?

- Time management – imposing checkpoints is how I address this. Set up binding deliverables for yourself.

What recommendations do you have for current EC students on the internship search, job, or graduate school search?

- Use Twitter! Lots of news about job postings, pre-docs, and graduate school opportunities are posted there.

What would you encourage all EC students to do before finishing their program?

- Take 499 – the senior seminar is a great way to assess whether writing papers is something you want to do in the long run.

Grad school advice:

Conditional on you wanting to enter direct from undergrad (there are other paths if you don't want to do a pre-doc):

1. Math double major. Advanced track ideally (the caliber of the mathematics is very rigorous in a PhD program) but regular is fine. You MUST take through Analysis II.
2. Metrics grad sequence through 820b. Micro is great if you think you can get at least a 3.5 in it but not strictly necessary (I didn't take it).
3. At least one research "deliverable." This can be either a senior seminar paper or a more formal working paper done through a research assistantship. CSS' Dean's Assistantship is a great program that I recommend if you want a more guided 1-on-1 research experience.
4. Research assistantships in general are great. They also are a great chance for you and faculty to get to know each other, and faculty rec letters are key in the process.
5. Have fun!! If you've decided to go into a PhD straight through, you have a tall hill to climb. Don't feel bad about needing take a break or set your mind on things other than econ. I enjoyed study abroad, piano, and MSUMUN as a student.

## ECONOMICS OF LAW AND PUBLIC POLICY LONDON STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITY

- Summer 2022 (May 9th-June 9th)
- Courses:
  - EC 335 (Taxes, Government Spending and Public Policy), 3 credits
  - EC 498 (Economics of Health Care), 3 credits
- Academics Information:
  - Students must enroll in six credits.
  - Accepted students may request a waiver of the EC 301 prerequisite for EC 498
- Application Deadline:
  - February 25, 2022 11:59 pm EST

## CAREER SERVICES NETWORK

### OPPORTUNITIES

- [Career Advising](#)
- Resume/Cover Letters can be emailed to [sscareer@msu.edu](mailto:sscareer@msu.edu) for electronic review.
- [MSU Connect](#)
- [Career Events](#)

## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING CENTER

- [Workshop Schedule](#)

## COUNSELING & PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

(CAPS) [HTTPS://CAPS.MSU.EDU/](https://caps.msu.edu/)

- [CAPS Connect \(brief consultation\)](#)
- [Crisis Services](#)

## OFFICE OF CULTURAL & ACADEMIC TRANSITIONS (OCAT)

- [Fall 2021 Events](#)

## TRIO IS HIRING TUTORS

- Please visit handshake to apply for the job # 5671837 (Pay \$12.75)

*Congratulations!*  
**FALL 2021 GRADUATES!**

We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors!