



THIS ISSUE

*Important Dates**Faculty Spotlight**EC Alumni Spotlight**Congratulations Fall Graduates**CSN & Campus Events*

IMPORTANT DATES

- If you have not enrolled in classes please do so ASAP since enrollment has been open a month
- Enrollment for Summer 2023 is open
- Final exams occur December 12th-16th.
- Commencement December 17th more information [posted here.](#)
- MSU Holiday The University is closed December 23rd-January 2nd.

QUESTIONS

ABOUT

ENROLLMENT?

Schedule an Advising Appointment student.msu.edu

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: SOREN ANDERSON

I am super excited to be teaching EC 422: Advanced Data Analysis in Economics. This is a brand-new "experiential learning" course that I taught for the first time in Spring 2022. Our goal is for students to plan and execute their own empirical research projects from scratch, using econometrics. This course is all learning-by-doing. No exams. No required readings. No term papers. Just come up with a topic that's important to you. Find the best data you can. Use econometrics to analyze the data. Then showcase your results in a compelling presentation using sharp-looking tables and figures.

Our research theme this spring is "Covid and the economy." What was Covid's impact on employment, health, education, sports, the environment, etc? Students can pick any topic they want! Last spring's class looked at similar issues. But now we have an extra year of data to analyze. So I'm curious to see how the economy has recovered—and whether we can detect any long-term impacts.

Pulling off an original research project requires a bunch of data and coding skills that professors usually don't have time to cover in EC 420 (Intro Econometrics). So our in-class activities and take-home "training exercises" will walk students through the research process step-by-step to develop these skills. These skills are super valuable on the job market! Several students last spring got quantitative jobs based in part on the data and coding skills they developed in EC 422.

My other class is EC 491: Energy Economics and Policy. (You will see it listed as "Topics in Economics" in the course catalog.) I have been teaching this class for over a decade and I absolutely love it! We focus on markets for all types of energy: oil and gasoline, natural gas, electricity, and renewables like wind and solar. How do these energy markets work? How are they regulated? Will we run out of energy? Why are energy prices so volatile? What are the benefits of energy efficiency? What can we do to minimize environmental impacts like climate change? What are the prospects for wind, solar, batteries, and electric cars? The course is built around developing economic models to answer these and other important questions. A big highlight of the course is the "Electricity Strategy Game"—a multi-day activity in which teams of students work together to simulate a deregulated wholesale electricity market. The team with the highest profit wins!

What is your teaching style or philosophy?

I try to emphasize hands-on, practical, learning-by-doing activities in my courses. Concrete stuff a student can put on her resume and say: "I did this." I wrote code to load and analyze a dataset with 3 million observations. I created a beautiful data visualization. I gave a 5-minute research presentation. I forecasted profits for seven different electricity-generating firms. I wrote a mini research report on large-scale battery storage. At the same time, I think it's really important for students to bring a deep understanding of economics to these activities—to think in terms of theoretical models. Models help us interpret what we are seeing in the historical data and to predict what's likely to happen in the future, under different policies. So I spend a lot of time, especially in my energy course, working with students to think about energy efficiency, or battery storage, or volatile oil prices in terms of theoretical models.

Most of my work historically has focused on markets for cars and the fuels they use, like oil, gasoline, biofuels, and electricity. Continued next page...

But I have recently gotten really interested in the politics of environmental policy—in particular, carbon taxes. Environmental economists love the idea of taxing pollution. By taxing something "bad" you raise its price and people do less of it, which is good! In this case, we want people to stop using so much oil, coal, and natural gas, since burning these fossil fuels contributes to climate change. So let's tax the carbon content of these fuels! At least, that's what the economists say. But what about everyone else? My recently published work based on two referendums from Washington State in 2016 and 2018 shows that the general public is highly divided on the idea of carbon taxes. Political liberals tend to like the idea, while political conservatives tend to hate it. This pattern tracks pretty closely with the ideological divide on belief in climate change and support for taxes in general. My follow-up work based on a nationwide survey confirms this result—but reveals something new and interesting. Strong liberals and strong conservatives are mostly set in their thinking on carbon taxes. But political moderates are more open to persuasion. In particular, they are much more likely to support a carbon tax if the government promises to rebate the money through an annual "carbon dividend" payment to every household. So maybe there's a way to make both economists and the general public—or at least a majority of them—happy about a carbon tax.

EC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MARCOS MARTINEZ

What is your job title and what do you do?

- My name is Marcos Martinez. I work for the Lansing Lugnuts, the High-A affiliate of the Oakland Athletics, and I am in ticket sales. Specifically, I work with non-corporate groups to have outings at the ballpark during games. I work with different churches, schools, universities, little league teams, and more.

How does your Economics Education help you succeed in your job?

- I believe that my work is enhanced with my background in Economics because of the classes taken in the program and many lessons I learned throughout. Specifically, Behavioral Economics has helped me understand my clients better and be able to sell my product better because of this. I feel that my background has also helped me identify improvements and needs for the organization in a way that I wouldn't recognize without Economics. It can be a different method of thinking and problem solving.

What is the most rewarding or enjoyable part of your job?

- I find that the most rewarding part of my job is seeing my clients have overwhelmingly positive experiences with events I helped set up. I know this sounds cheesy and cliché, however, the impact we can have is much larger than it may seem on the surface. Time after time, in 2022, I was able to help groups come out of their homes and enjoy the world (some for the first time in 2 years). Being able to help provide such positive things in life for people reminds me why I do what I do. My next goal with this is to include more Lansing Schools in the process and execution of these events. People, young and old, come out to games and I feel that it is important to highlight our community. This would be truly rewarding for all.

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

- My biggest challenge with my job has been communication with clients on their timelines and not my own. It was a difficult adjustment to make for myself. I was able to start finding success through different ideas I learned through Professor Bushong on how people behave. Adapting to their styles, being straightforward, and trying to find their best options without personal gain has helped me get better at this.

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

- If I could offer a current Economics student any advice, it would be, meet with your advisor regularly, GO TO THE CAREER FAIRS, join the Fed Challenge (IT IS COOL), and take a chance on yourself. Don't be afraid to do the annoying/hard stuff that comes with the end of undergrad. Lean into it all and see where it takes you. Once the opportunities come, take a chance, and bet on yourself for your first job. You never know where things will take you.

Is there anything you would do differently if you had the chance?

- In terms of my school and job career, I wouldn't do a single thing differently. If you listen to your advisors and prioritize your best interests, you start off in the right direction. From there, chase whatever your heart desires. You have the knowledge and resources to do whatever you want, go get it!

Go Green! -Marcos Martinez

**AN EARLY
CONGRATULATIONS TO
FALL 2022 GRADUATES!
WE WISH YOU THE BEST
IN YOUR FUTURE
ENDEAVORS!**



**ACADEMIC SUCCESS
WORKSHOPS**

**CAREER SERVICES
NETWORK
OPPORTUNITIES**

- LinkedIn Photo Booth Tuesday Dec. 6th 9:00-11:30 AM
- Finals Study Lounge at Career Services Thursday Dec. 8th, 9th, 12th, and 13th 9:00 AM-5:00 PM
- CSN: Job Search Workshop Wednesday Dec. 14th Noon-12:30 PM

**COUNSELING &
PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES
(CAPS)**

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

**OFFICE OF CULTURAL &
ACADEMIC TRANSITIONS
(OCAT)**

**WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN
WAMIE**