



## THIS ISSUE

*Important Dates**Faculty Spotlight**Economics Help Rooms**EC Scholarships Due Mar. 8th**Campus & CSN Events**Matters of Fact: Research Opportunity*

## IMPORTANT DATES

- FEBRUARY 12TH  
LAST DAY TO DROP  
WITH A REFUND  
FOR MOST FULL  
SEMESTER  
COURSES
- MARCH 2ND-3RD  
STUDY BREAK DAYS
- EC SCHOLARSHIPS  
DUE MARCH 8TH
- MARCH 10TH LAST  
DAY TO DROP  
COURSES WITHOUT  
A GRADE  
REPORTED FOR  
MOST FULL  
SEMESTER  
COURSES

## ADVISING

## APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

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

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: CHRISTIAN AHLIN

I teach EC 310 and 410, both classes on international economic development. This subfield focuses on economies all over the world, particularly less-developed and emerging economies, which account for about 5/6th of the world population. One of the more surprising set of facts we discuss in these classes is that world poverty and inequality have been declining over the past few decades. Especially, with the rapid economic growth of East and South Asia, income gaps between citizens of rich countries like the US and citizens of poorer countries have been shrinking. They remain large, though, which leads us to some of the other key topics in the class: what leads to a country growing rapidly vs growing slowly? A lot rides on the answer to this question.

Part of the answer on a micro-level likely has to do with improving people's access to financial markets. Financial markets seem to be critical in richer countries for facilitating entrepreneurship and investment, but they face significant challenges in poorer countries. We spend time in these classes looking at financial market innovations that have increased financial access dramatically, associated with the microfinance movement. One noticeable pattern, though, is that microfinance institutions tend not to mix agricultural with small-business clientele. There are typically agricultural finance banks servicing farmers and standard microcredit institutions that focus on microentrepreneurs, but less common are microfinance institutions that service both.

In current research with Godwin Debrah, who is has his PhD from MSU and currently teaches at the University of Ghana, we try to explain this phenomenon in a theoretical model. What the model shows is that it can be significantly more effective to separately service populations with very different degrees of covariate risk - that is, different likelihoods that when one client has a bad year, other nearby clients do too. Since agriculture is the textbook case for covariate risk, this helps explain why agricultural clients are often serviced separately, or by entirely separate institutions.

The past year has been entirely different. My wife and I have four kids, all at home this year, so I have been working from my bedroom. One area where I have improved is creating a quiet, focused work environment. The key tools for me are a folding table and my lawnmowing earmuffs (blocking out trumpet, clarinet, and voice practice and lessons, Zoom calls, etc). It has also been helpful has been to create a rhythm within the seemingly endless, monotonous days: trying to get to work at a similar time each day, taking two walks or runs each day for breaks, etc. Finally, prioritizing keeping in touch with friends and colleagues, many of whom I would normally just run into at the office or church, has become more important to me. Of course, I look forward to the day when we can freely go places and see people.

# ECONOMICS HELP ROOMS

As a student, you are not alone in your education. During a time of physical distancing, it can certainly feel that way. However, Social Science students are part of a community of learners and our college is here to support you and ensure your success in Economics courses.

We offer tutoring for students who are enrolled in Economics 201, 202, 301, and 302. These are not only for students who may be struggling, but these free resources are for all types of students who want extra support. Perhaps you have a question or need help on a dataset, our Help Room staff is ready to assist you!

### Here are some reasons why you might want to attend an Economics Help Room:

- Help Room staff can enrich your understanding of the course material.
- Attending a Help Room can help you apply better study methods.
- Attending a Help Room can help you manage your time more effectively.
- Attending Help Room can assist you in focusing in on what is important.
- Attending a Help Room can help you earn better grades!

All Help Rooms are running virtually and are available Monday through Thursday from 3:00-9:00 p.m. Please check our [website](#) for schedules for your specific course and links to the Virtual Help Room! We look forward to serving you soon!



## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MAR. 8TH

New Ann Feldman Scholarship, created to honor a former advisor in economics. This scholarship is intended to support economics undergraduate students who have faced significant challenges and demonstrate a passion to succeed.

Please visit the [scholarships page](#) of our website for detailed information on qualifications and how to apply, and email [advising@econ.msu.edu](mailto:advising@econ.msu.edu) with any questions.

## MATTERS OF FACT: DISCUSSING RESEARCH-BASED POLICY

Matters of Fact is a highly original organization that spans multiple university campuses, founded by students from MSU and Wayne State. Their mission is to promote research-based and well-reasoned policy discussions primarily through the publication of short persuasive articles. Members begin the writing process by exploring their current political interests, conduct literature reviews to gather background info on the topic, and put together a short, grounded, and logical argument about a very specific aspect of a broader subject, all in the span of a 6-week timeline. Each member also enters a pool of peer reviewers who will be called upon to anonymously fact-check and critique the submissions of their peers, lending a unique credibility to the publication. As they grow, they intend to establish permanent roots at Michigan State, Wayne State, University of Michigan, and elsewhere, with the help of a growing body of faculty advisors.

If you are interested in joining the writing and peer review process. Please reach out to Matters of Fact via email at [mattersoffactmi@gmail.com](mailto:mattersoffactmi@gmail.com) if you are interested and have the time to commit!

## CAREER SERVICES NETWORK EVENTS:

[HTTPS://CAREERNETWORK.MSU.EDU/EVENTS/](https://careernetwork.msu.edu/EVENTS/)

- Grad School Preparing, Exploring, and Applying Feb. 10th 11:00-11:30 AM
- MSU Packaging Career Fair Feb. 10th 1:00-3:30 PM
- MSU Career Fairs: Feb. 12th 10:00 AM-4:00 PM, Feb. 16th 3:00-6:00 PM, Feb. 22nd 4:00-7:30 PM,
- Navigating Virtual Career Fairs Feb 15th 6:00-7:00 PM, Feb. 23rd 4:00-5:00 PM
- Connecting Online: Informational Interviewing Feb. 16th 4:00-5:00 PM
- Refresh Your Job/Internship Search Feb. 18th 3:00-3:30 PM
- CSN Virtual Drop-In Advising Feb. 18th 5:00-7:00 PM
- Community Engagement & DEI: CMO Viewpoint Feb. 23rd 1:00-2:00 PM

## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING CENTER

[Workshop Schedule & Registration](#)

## COMMUNITY ENGAGED - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAM: CRITICAL SOCIAL

### JUSTICE EDITION:

[tinyurl.com/22ks3nwj](https://tinyurl.com/22ks3nwj)

## MARATHON OF MAJORS

Feb. 18th 4:00-6:00 PM Join us to explore opportunities:

<https://spartans.easyvirtualfair.com/>

## MINDFULNESS MEDITATION CLASSES

Group 2 registers at <https://bit.ly/34y5Xwq> and meets: March 10, 17, 24 and 31.

## OCAT: SUCCESS SERIES

Mondays 7:00-8:00 PM  
ZOOM Log-on: ocatmsu  
Pass: ocat

## SCHOLARSHIPS AFFILIATED WITH STUDENT AFFAIRS & SERVICES

Most scholarships Due Mar. 8th  
<https://studentaffairs.msu.edu/scholarships/>