In EC 495, "Economics of Poverty and Income Distribution", we study the changes in income inequality over the last 100 years in the United States. We look into the economic and political forces that led to a huge decrease in inequality in the first half of the 20th century, especially in the 1940s, and a huge increase in inequality since 1980. We also make comparisons with other countries, and we study the changes in poverty and income distribution for the entire world. We devote a lot of attention to changes in the gender earnings gap and the black/white earnings gap. We also study several policies that have an effect on poverty and income distribution, including Social Security, Medicare, Disability Insurance, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. We study the changes over time in the official poverty rate in the U.S., and we look at alternative poverty measures. We compare the poverty rates by age, race, sex, and immigration status.

In EC 495, I will share my current research, which is in collaboration with my colleague, Professor John Goddeeris. We look at the changes in the earnings gap between black workers and non-Hispanic white workers in different regions of the United States, from 1976 to 2017. At the beginning of that period, the racial earnings gap was much larger in the South than in the rest of the country. However, those regional differences have diminished greatly over time. The racial earnings gap has shrunk some in the South, but it has grown in the rest of the country. The relative and absolute losses for black workers have been larger in Michigan than anywhere else. Forty years ago, black workers earned more in Michigan than anywhere else in the world, but that is no longer true. We find that these changes have to do with racial differences in educational attainment, occupational segregation by race, and the decline of manufacturing and labor unions."

In COVID world, I have learned about all sorts of special settings in Zoom, MediaSpace, and D2L that I never even imagined!!!
FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: STEVEN MATUSZ

EC 441: International finance could just as easily be called “open economy macroeconomics,” since the semester covers both of these important features of a globalized world. Unfortunately, the word “finance” could be misleading to some. We don’t talk about capital asset pricing models, P/E ratios, or leveraged buyouts! Instead, the focus is on the big forces that determine the value of one country’s currency relative to all others; the determinants of international borrowing and lending (and corresponding indebtedness); and the fundamental reasons for trade imbalances (hint: it has nothing to do with “unfair” trade policies adopted by trade partners). Open economy macroeconomics examines the effectiveness of monetary and fiscal policy when constrained by the desire to minimize trade deficits or hold constant the international value of a country’s currency.

These last several months have been challenging for all of us. Learning and teaching are certainly different, and not all of it is bad! Chances are that you get to sit in a more comfortable chair than you do in class. You can see the names of your classmates and participate by chat. Though not an issue in September and October, it will be nice to move between classes in January and February without having to walk 20 minutes through a blizzard! All lectures get recorded, so you can return to parts that might be confusing. I’ve been using OBS Studio combined with Zoom to provide a more dynamic presentation than can be done with Zoom alone. I am still working on perfecting my technique, but I think I’ve gotten pretty good at this!

INTERNSHIP SEARCH TIPS:
HTTPS://CAREERNETWORK.MSU.EDU/CHANNELS/FIND-JOBS-OR-INTERNSHIPS

S/NS GRADING OPTION FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021

- Students will earn numerical grades and will have the option to maintain their grades or to record a S/NS for their coursework. For undergraduate students, the threshold between S and NS will be 1.0. Grades of 0.0 will automatically be converted to NS and undergraduates will have until January 5, 2021 to view their grades and decide on a class-by-class basis if they would prefer to have a grade in any particular course recorded on their transcripts with the numerical 1.0-4.0 grade or with S. All original grades will be retained by the Registrar’s Office in case students need them reported sometime in the future.
- The window for requesting that a fall 2020 class grade be recorded as S/NS will be open from Wednesday, December 23, 2020 (the day that grades are posted) until 11:59 EST on Tuesday, January 5, 2021.
- The implementation of the S/NS grade reporting option with the automatic replacement of 0.0 with NS replaces the No Record-COVID19 grade reporting option.
- More information about the S/NS grade reporting option, including a series of FAQs, is available on the MSU Guide to Remote Access website.

THANKSGIVING UNITY DINNER
Registration: https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_erOlrmJ9f13S9LL
Deadline is 11/13/2020 at 11:59PM
Wednesday November 25th 12:00 PM -2:00 PM

OCAT “PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING: WHAT IS IT REALLY?”
Friday, November 20th
(1:00PM-2:00PM)
ZOOM LINK: 945 5530
3294PASS: OCAT

MSU SCIENCE FESTIVAL
APRIL 1ST-30TH 2021
Submissions open: October 21 – December 1, 2020
Submit proposals here:
https://sciencefestival.msu.edu/

CAREER SERVICES NETWORK EVENTS:
HTTPS://CAREERNETWORK.MSU.EDU/
EVENTS/
- CSN Beyond the Resume: What IS Career Services?
  Wednesday, November 11, 2020, 12pm - 1pm
- CSN The Value of Mentorship
  Tuesday, November 17, 2020, 9:30am - 10am
- CSN You Majored in What?
  Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 7pm - 8pm
- Virtual Field Experience 2020: Quicken Loans
  Monday, November 23, 2020, 1pm - 2pm

WHAT INFO WOULD YOU LIKE IN THE EC NEWSLETTER?
Provide feedback here:
https://tinyurl.com/y5crvoqr