FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: RENE CRESPIN

- Could you please give students insight into what they will learn in EC 485?

In EC 485 (Economics of Education), we explore the complex role of education in the wider economy. The course delves into economic theory and models, including human capital development, the returns to educational investment, and labor markets. We also focus on the latest empirical research to explore the effectiveness and efficiency of various pressing topics in education policy, including school finance, school choice, and college tuition.

The goal of the course is to provide students with a broad understanding of the issues that arise at the intersection of education and economic policy, to be able to make judgments about the effectiveness of various education policies based on current research, and to be able to make cogent and effective arguments for appropriate policy recommendations.

- Highlight an interesting fact from your research.

My research focus is at the intersection between schools, neighborhoods, and housing. These topics are strongly intertwined in the United States, as families’ decisions of where to live and send their children to school can have direct impacts on house prices and neighborhood segregation. In some of my research projects, I study the intended and unintended consequences of educational policies on families’ residential sorting decisions and on real estate markets.

- Please share an interesting fact, favorite hobby, or something else fun about yourself.

I really enjoy rock climbing, biking, and watching horror movies.

REQUEST FOR EC TUTORS FALL 2023 DUE SEPTEMBER 12TH BY 5:00 PM

We are hiring Economics Tutors for the Fall 2023 semester. To be considered for the list, you must have earned a minimum of 3.5 for any MSU EC course you identify (transfer or Advanced Placement credits may not be included) and have a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA. You should be prepared to provide evidence of this to the person requesting the tutoring.

- Name
- EC Course(s) for which you would consider being a tutor (We always need more EC 3-4xx level Tutors)
- Instructor you had for the course(s) identified above
- Grade received
- MSU e-mail
- Hourly rate-of-pay you are requesting or indicate your willingness to negotiate the rate.

Please email this information to Nicole Gekeler and Jodie Romzek (nicoleac@msu.edu and romzekjo@msu.edu) by 5:00 PM September 12th.
EC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MAX GREGG

I am a first-year in the Masters of Science in Data Science (MSDS) here at MSU! I am also a graduate assistant within the Department of Statistics and Probability, and currently work as a teaching assistant, helping with an honors statistics course. In short, I spend a lot of time learning or using statistics, math and data in an academic environment.

- How does your Economics Education help you succeed in your job/graduate school? I should preface my answer with a qualifier: not everyone will spend their time in Economics in the same way. My education consisted greatly of econometrics, math, and microeconomics, and I also spent a great deal of time in the Fed Challenge club (I encourage anyone interested to check it out!); I think this path produced a great sense of analytical thought in me, and a ‘toughness’ that allows me to keep learning new analytical ideas as I need. It has taken me to wonderful places. I have worked with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, the State of Michigan’s Labor and Economic Opportunity Office, and I have found my way to the MSDS.

- What is the most rewarding or enjoyable part of your job/graduate school? Ah… The good parking.

No, not really—I am interested in pedagogy and teaching design, and I find I am able to truly explore this now in graduate school. I am a new graduate student, so at this moment everything remains quite wonderous. As it relates to my time as an economics student, economics provides a great sense of ‘structure’ to real-world observations; when adding some analytical tools to the mix, the study of economics begins approach the goals and methods of a data scientist. That makes the transition to a program like MSDS feel like a continuation of these analytical topics, rather than a random move into a new discipline.

- What is a challenging part of your job/graduate school and how do you handle it? I had a chance to take Econometrics 820A in my last year of undergraduate econometrics, and the class was significantly more challenging than my undergraduate experience with econometrics. In this, I have found a great sense of commitment that comes with graduate studies, and this experience is best met with great preparation.

That said, being challenged by studying economics can be a way to develop and grow ones understanding of the topic; it is okay to not know, and desire to know more.

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

My advice to you is to be aware of where your heart is—if you find a passion for a certain subject, class, consider exploring that more. There is an excellent world out there that needs your insights and brilliant ideas. If you have this particular thing identified, connect with this by reaching out to the faculty, joining a club, or by taking courses related to it—and be encouraged, for I was in your place at one point and was not sure of my journey. I am happy with where I went.

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

Please consider joining the Fed Challenge, a fall and spring course that provides an excellent overview of the Federal Reserve System. It was an integral part of my experience. For interest, please contact Professor Antonio Doblas-Madrid. Additionally, I encourage all students to learn a basic amount of R and Python, as there is strong labor-market value in the use of these languages.

Everybody’s path is different, so recognizing your interests early and following them to see where they lead is beneficial for your growth. I am very content with my path and experience at MSU. I am happy to share this information. I hope you find it helpful!