

Research on Education and the Labor Market

We are planning two studies in labor economics and economics of education. The first is “**The Dynamics of Graduate education and Occupation Choice**”. The choice of college major, graduate field, and occupation is a multiple stage decision process. Using a number of surveys, we will study 3 related issues. The first is role of undergraduate major and early labor market experience in the decision to attend graduate school in a particular field. Second, we will examine how the choice of type of graduate education depends on college major and work experience before entering graduate school. Third, for those who already hold an advanced degree, we are interested in the role of preferences and past experience, including college major, occupation prior to graduate school, and graduate degree and field, in shaping occupation choice. As part of our analysis, we will specify and estimate a Markov transition model to describe the path of education and work experience. To estimate the transition matrices of this Markov process, we will use information about undergraduate education, graduation education, and occupation over time. The transition probabilities will depend on personal characteristics. This model will show us how people who earn a bachelor’s degree in engineering, say, end up with a variety of occupations and associated distributions of earnings.

The second project is “**Education, Migration, and the Returns to Schooling**”. This project aims to understand the relationship between human capital accumulation, migration, and the returns to schooling. In particular, we are looking to answer four closely related research questions: First, how strongly are post-secondary educational decisions tied to local labor market returns to education? Second, how do local labor market conditions affect educational migration decisions? Third, how does migration for college affect “brain drain” from rural areas. Fourth, how does migration for college affect the spatial distribution of human capital and the recent rise in human capital agglomeration in many urban settings?

We are looking to hire full-time pre-doctoral fellows to assist with these projects. The position would be for one year with the possibility of extending it for a second year. The fellows will be based at Yale University under the direction of Professors Joe Altonji and John Eric Humphries. The candidate will be provided work space on campus with other research assistants working in similar areas. The researcher will be involved in all parts of the research process. A love of working with data—cleaning it, understanding it, and presenting it in enlightening ways—is essential for this position. Methodological interests in labor economics, the economics of education econometrics, machine learning, and statistics are also a big plus.

Qualifications:

Candidates should have quantitative and coding skills, especially experience in general purpose languages like Python and statistical languages like Matlab, R, or Stata. Candidates experienced working with R, stata, and Latex are preferred. Candidates need not be economics majors, though they should have experience with economics. We welcome applicants from other fields such as, but not limited to, computer science, engineering, mathematics, physics, political science, psychology, and statistics.

How to Apply:

Applications should include a **single pdf document**. Applications can be submitted at <https://economics.yale.edu/tobin-center/predoc-ra-application>. If any problems arise, applications can also be sent to johneric.humphries@yale.edu with subject line “RA Application”:

- Resume with the following information:
 - Your familiarity with R, stata, and other programming languages
 - Your experience as a research assistant and with any independent researcher
 - One or more references with contact information. If possible, one of these references should be someone for whom you have worked as a research assistant or someone who has supervised your research.
- Transcripts
- Writing sample (e.g. thesis or term paper)
- Coding sample (e.g. R, stata, or python code used in an empirical project or written for class)
- Any other relevant information.

Package:

Compensation will be competitive with other top institutions and includes standard benefits such as health insurance.

Questions:

Questions can be directed to johneric.humphries@yale.edu with the subject “Question regarding RA position”.