

MEA 2010 Annual Meeting

CSWEP Session, Friday, March 19, 10:00–11:45 AM: *Topics in Household Economics*

1. “Gender and the Opportunity Cost of Family Caregiving”
Author: Virginia Wilcox-Gok, Northern Illinois University
Discussant: Shelley White-Means, University of Tennessee-Memphis
Summary: Using a newly developed dataset with general measures of physical and psychiatric morbidity, this study attempts to estimate the effects of older individuals of poor psychiatric health on labor market supply and outcomes of their younger family members. The data are from the British Household Panel Survey, 1999-2006. Women appear to benefit from the presence of healthy older family members in the household. However, there is no significant effect on most labor market outcomes for women if older family members with physical or psychological morbidities are present in the household. The study finds some negative effects on male earnings and other employment outcomes of having ill older family members in the home.
2. “What Will the Neighbors Think? Welfare Stigma due to Public Disapproval”
Authors: Colleen Flaherty Manchester, University of Minnesota; Kevin Mumford, Purdue University
Discussant: Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, University of Chicago
Summary: This study utilizes Survey of Income and Program Participation data to estimate the impact of psychological costs on the utility cost of food assistance programs. Using the parameters of the estimated model, the authors are able to simulate the impact of different means of distributing food assistance on participation rates. For instance, they find that implementation of EBT cards can reduce external psychological costs and increase take-up rates by as much as 30 percent.
3. “Male Wage Inequality and Marital Dissolution: Is There a Link?”
Author: Andriana Bellou, Université de Montréal
Discussant: Jane Herr
Summary: For women with children, this study finds that increased male wage inequality reduces the likelihood of divorce after the fifth year of marriage. The author posits that the positive relationship between marriage duration and wage inequality is a plausible result of “search-on-the marriage,” where women search for better remarriage prospects while married. The search is prolonged when male wage inequality increases.

CSWEP Luncheon and Business Meeting, March 19, 11:45 AM - 1:15 PM

CSWEP Session, Friday, March 19, 1:15-3:00 PM: *Institutions and Economic Welfare*

1. “The Decline in Females in Consumer Economics: A Case Study”
Authors: Andrea H. Beller, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Megan Cott, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Discussant: Irma Arteaga, University of Minnesota

Summary: At the University of Illinois-Champaign, female representation in upper-level courses in the Consumer Economics program fell when that program merged with the Agricultural Economics program and changed its name to Consumer Economics and Finance. The authors explore whether the change in female share in the program resulted from a change in preferences of female students. National trends and flows of students between the program and other disciplines are examined.

2. "The Role of the Institution in College Major Segregation"

Author: Sherrilyn M. Billger, Cornell University

Discussant: James Peoples, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Summary: Using the IPEDS dataset, the author examines how institutional characteristics of universities relate to gender and racial segregation in specific fields of study. Interesting findings include: higher female enrollment at a given university does not necessarily mean higher female enrollment in math and the natural sciences; similarly, higher minority enrollment does not bring higher representation of blacks and Latinos in predominantly white fields; and institutions with higher average SAT scores have more women in science and engineering (S&E), but the study does not find a higher share of minorities in S&E at the more selective institutions.

3. "Recourse and Residential Mortgage Default: Theory and Evidence from U.S. States,"

Authors: Andra C. Ghent, Baruch College; Marianna Kudlyak, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

Discussant: Jane Dokko, Federal Reserve Board of Governors

Summary: This study explores effective policy instruments for mitigating housing foreclosures. The main finding is that a recourse loan, where the lender has the right to take assets of the borrower if repayment is not made, decreases the probability of default particularly when the likelihood is high that the borrower has negative equity in their home. Some states allow recourse agreements while others are non-recourse state. For homes valued between \$300,000 and \$500,000, the authors find that borrowers in non-recourse states are 59 percent more likely to default than borrowers in recourse states.