

## 2016-2017 Undergraduate Honors Thesis Students

### Managerial Economics (Agricultural and Resource Economics):

	<p><b>Niveditha Achanta</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> I am researching the effects of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on learning outcomes in California public high schools, such as standardized test scores and academic performance indices. I will be conducting an econometric analysis using panel data over a period of approximately 10 years to see if changes in these learning outcomes can be explained by the implementation of CCSS.</p>
	<p><b>Julie Beppler</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> The face of every restaurant is their menu and this drives the decisions we make as consumers when it comes to food choices away from home. I want to dig in deeper and research what strategies different types of restaurants (e.g. corporate chains, franchises, and locally owned restaurants) in Davis follow in their menu design. Particularly, I want to see if they promote the low cost or high profit margin items more prominently on their menu. Combined with a trend towards eating away from home, this menu design potentially contributes to consumers making less healthy food choices. Observed differences across restaurants with diverse ownership structures can provide an additional justification for menu labeling regulations currently only targeting chain restaurants.</p>
	<p><b>Carey Chan</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> My research is about Hong Kong's housing problem. Particularly, I would like to research the relation between subdivided units and public rental housing. The question I want to answer is whether or not subdivided units are a stop-gap measure of the insufficiency of public rental housing in Hong Kong.</p>
	<p><b>Serena Chew</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> Despite efforts to decrease inequality, such as financial aid programs, that enable lower class individuals to obtain a college degree, I propose that a horizontal stratification still exists in college education. Having a college degree has become a new norm, therefore, a student's "college experience" now holds great importance. To gain insight on this topic I will be analyzing data on study abroad programs, which are representative of the kinds of activities that enrich a student's "college experience." I hypothesize that there is an advantage for the upper class because socioeconomic background heavily influences the opportunities a student has the means to participate in and deems valuable.</p>



**Albert Huang**

**Thesis topic:**

My Undergraduate Honors Thesis in Managerial Economics will be research on corporate sustainability strategies in regards to the aspects of environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG). Specifically, I am interested in the aspects of information being publically transmitted on a corporation's environmental impact. My study will analyze the quantitative relationship between a corporation's stock performance during the event of information being released on environmental impact, through media, and the impact it has on a corporation's market share. Through my study, I will develop corporate strategies on environmental risk mitigation and a method for best practices.



**Ryan Koch**

**Thesis topic:**

The growth of web-based, decentralized peer-to-peer lending represents an exciting and innovate opportunity for alternative small-business and entrepreneurial financing. My research aims to capture the marginal effects of incremental changes of a borrower's credit factors on the probability of reaching full funding, and includes an analysis of the relevant implications of the findings for existing lending markets.



**Sophia Law**

**Thesis topic:**

My research focuses on how payment methods can affect purchases and consumption of food products. In my analysis, I am looking at purchase behavior of students at UC Davis. A better understanding of the effect of payment methods on product choice can foster healthier eating behaviors for students in the future.



**Lucy Yu Lu**

**Thesis topic:**

The price of parking is a large concern for many faculty and student members at the University of California, Davis, from wasted time to increased traffic. In order to analyze whether current UC Davis' parking prices are a large factor in creating this issue, my research will analyze the determinants of demand for parking and attempt to measure the elasticity of demand for parking. The study will also evaluate the factors responsible for the price elasticity of demand and possible substitutes for parking on campus.



**Linda Vo**

**Thesis topic:**

My research topic focuses on the usage of policy and technology as different means for conserving water. My emphasis is on Riverside, California and how the city can best achieve local water conservation. By examining the outcomes of its water conservation program and analyzing household consumption data from water meters, I will review the different impacts of each method to determine its effectiveness in inducing water conservation.



**Weizhou Wang**

**Thesis topic:**

Technology companies, especially in recent decades, have been not only changing the way we live but also are becoming a more important part of the U.S. economy. However, since the 2000 tech bubble burst, a large amount of tech companies became financially distressed, and even dropped out. When a company entered financial distress, one way to get out is to raise money. But clearly, lots of tech companies failed. One possible explanation is that low tangibility makes it difficult for companies to raise money during financial distress. In my research, I'll test this hypothesis and explore if low tangibility is the reason for tech companies' financial failure.

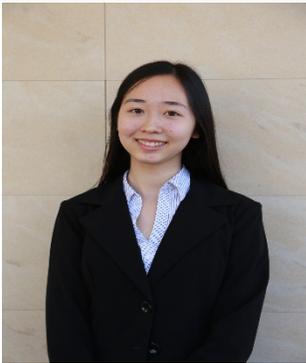


**Karen Wu**

**Thesis topic:**

The sharing economy has the potential to revolutionize the way in which consumers interact with the world around them. My research focuses on the extent to which Uber, a ride-sharing program, reduces the amount of DUI convictions. I will model the relationship between the number of Uber deployments and the number of DUI convictions in several college towns.

**Economics:**

	<p><b>Yuwei Chen</b> <b>Thesis Topic:</b> The Affordable Care Act aims at enforcing universal health care coverage and expanding access to medical services. Under this nationwide health care reform, low-income families, those below 400% of the federal poverty level, are eligible to receive benefits. Using a regression discontinuity design, my thesis studies the quantitative impact of the Affordable Care Act on health care coverage rate of low income families. I will also analyze other relevant changes such as their medical expenditure and access to medical service.</p>
	<p><b>Konrad Franco</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> The enormous social cost of crime makes it a major concern for policy makers. Understanding the role that economic conditions play in the general deterrence of crime is essential for formulating better public policy. My research will estimate the causal effect of changes in earnings for the poorest of Americans on property and violent crime rates. I plan to implement an instrumental variable approach using legislative changes in each state's minimum wage and top marginal income tax rate to address the issue of endogeneity of earnings and analyze the causal effect of a change at the top and at the bottom of the income distribution on incidence of crime.</p>
	<p><b>Emily Kaar</b> <b>Thesis Topic:</b> My thesis examines the effectiveness of the Common Core State Standards in California high schools by evaluating its effect on standardized test scores, which I use as a proxy for learning. I use several years of standardized testing scores and school surveys, and the different timing in the implementation of Common Core standards in school districts across California in order to isolate the new curriculum's effects on student learning.</p>
	<p><b>Phuc T Luong</b> <b>Thesis topic:</b> Research on sleep patterns of adolescents shows that they are more likely to experience sleep deprivation and sleepiness early in the morning. Moreover, sleep deprivation is associated with lower cognitive performance. Inspired by these findings, my research examines whether there is a relationship between attending early morning classes and academic performance of teenagers. Specifically, I will be applying econometric methods to analyze the academic outcomes of a group of Vietnamese first year college students who is randomly assigned to a time slot for their Math, Physics and Chemistry classes and can attend as early as 6:30 am. or as late as noon.</p>



**Brian Lee**

**Thesis topic:**

Corruption has been identified as a major obstacle to economic development in poor countries. The OECD's Anti-Bribery Convention and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption are examples of high profile attempts at stemming this problem. As result of this effort a significant amount of data has been collected that makes it feasible to explore the relationship between corruption and economic performance. Using data provided by the World Bank my thesis will answer the question of whether improved economic performance in a firm reduces corruption. I will consider the case of Egypt and the growth of its export sector as exogenous economic driver of changes in corruption.



**Thomas Smith**

**Thesis topic:**

During recessions, as job opportunities become scarcer for high school graduates, the opportunity cost to pursue both college degrees and vocational certificates decreases. Does this fact, push individuals towards either of these degrees? And are students' choices of major directly affected by the state of the economy? My research focuses on how recession affects students' decisions to pursue post-secondary education. I will analyze data from The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System on enrollment rates over the time spanning 1991-2014 to see if changes in enrollment rates based on gender, ethnicity, major, and institution can be explained by recessions.



**Yuren Zhang**

**Thesis topic:**

NBA team Cleveland Cavaliers' franchise value dropped 100 Million Dollar after LeBron James decided to leave and play for the Miami Heat and its value spikes again in recent years after James' return. Using data on NBA players and teams in the last ten years, my thesis analyzes the impact of "superstar" players on revenues of a team. I will also use performance statistics and indices of popularity in the media and social media, to define superstars and I will identify the wage premium that such status generates.