

Social Interactions, Drug Abuse and Criminal Behavior

Closed to further applications

Faculty Member: [Kaivan Munshi](#)

Proposal Description:

I am looking for research assistance for two studies. The first study will examine the role played by social interactions, and community ties more generally, in the recent opioid epidemic in the United States. A distinguishing feature of the opioid epidemic is that prescription medications are misused. Moreover, the epidemic has been concentrated in rural white populations, not all of which are poor. We hypothesize that these unusual patterns are observed because the novel opioid drugs, whose negative consequences were less known initially, spread relatively rapidly in tight-knit rural communities. We will test this hypothesis by (i) constructing a measure of social connectedness that is based on crop suitability, (ii) validating this measure with multiple data sets, and (iii) estimating the relationship between opioid mortality and social connectedness. The second study will use administrative data from the Connecticut Department of Corrections (DOC) over many decades to examine the short-term and long-term consequences of within-prison social composition on various outcomes. The social units that determine a prison's social composition are defined by race and city of origin. We will examine how the social composition within a prison at a particular point in time determines: (i) immediate in-prison conflict and incidents, (ii) future criminal behavior (recidivism) of inmates, and (iii) future crime in their origin neighborhoods.

Requisite Skills and Qualifications:

We are looking for 3 research assistants who will conduct literature reviews and assist with data analysis. Knowledge of Stata and ability to work with data are required skills. This project is eligible for remote work.

Award: Alice Geng

Tobin Application Link: [Tobin Application](#)

Project Type: Tobin RA

Project Year: 2021

Term: Spring 2021

Source URL: <https://economics.yale.edu/undergraduate/tobin-ra/spring-2021/social-interactions-drug-abuse-and-criminal-behavior>