How should we communicate research to policy makers?

Faculty Member: Zachary Bleemer

Proposal Description:

I recently published a study showing that a popular form of university policy – restricting access to certain high-demand college major – has substantial negative equity ramifications, tending to decrease lower-income and Black and Hispanic enrollment in restricted majors without providing any measurable educational benefits. I now intend to run an experiment in which a random selection of universities’ deans and department chairs are informed of the findings of our research in different ways – e.g. by being sent the study, or being sent a policy brief summarizing the study, or being sent a news article summarizing the study, et cetera – and see which treatment arm is most likely to change university policy in the coming years.

The Tobin RA will help to conceptualize the study; collect information online about the presence of major restriction policies and contact information for deans and department chairs; help to draft the policy brief, the emails, an IRB approval, and other documents; conduct randomization and some initial descriptive statistics and statistical analysis; and implement the experiment.

Requisite Skills and Qualifications:

Self-motivation, creativity, and a broad interest in empirical economic research, as well as interest in labor economics and/or the economics of education. Successful RAs will be detail-oriented and able to work independently.

Award: Amelia Davidson
Tobin Application Link: Tobin Application
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