

# KEGAN O'CONNOR

Department of Economics ◊ Snow Hall 3rd Floor Rm 318 ◊ University of Kansas

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## EDUCATION

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PhD Candidate, Economics, University of Kansas, Expected May 2021  
M.S. Economics , University of Kansas , May 2018  
B.S. Economics (Honors), Brigham Young University-Idaho, April 2015

## RESEARCH INTEREST

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Applied Microeconomics, Labor, Family Economics, Poverty and Social Safety Net Programs

## JOB MARKET PAPER

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“Household Food Insecurity: Effects of State Grocery Tax Variation”

**Abstract:** Food insecurity is being recognized as major health crisis in the United States. Households that experience food insecurity are either unable or uncertain that they can acquire enough food to meet their nutritional needs. On average an estimated 10.5 percent (13.7 million) of U.S. households were food-insecure at least some time during the year 2019. The prevalence of food insecurity is also larger for more vulnerable groups, such as low-income households, and minorities. This paper examines the relationship between food insecurity among US households and state sales taxes on food. Few studies have explored how grocery food sales taxes affect food insecurity prevalence in the US. This study contributes to the literature by using the change in food sales taxes across states and time and difference-in-differences and fixed-effects ordered logit models to estimate impact of food tax changes on self-reported food insecurity. I find that decreases in the food sales tax decreases the likelihood of being a food insecure household and eliminating the food sales tax contributes to a marginal improvement in a households food security level. Conversely, food sales tax increases result in a decrease in self-reported food security.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

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“Third-Party Policing: Nuisance Laws and their Impact on Legal and Extralegal Evictions”

“EPA Priority Program: A Review Using Evidence from the Chemical Manufacturing Industry”

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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Department of Economics Summer Research Scholarship, University of Kansas, 2017

John Ise Memorial Award, University of Kansas , 2020

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

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### Graduate Research Consultant

- Supervisor: Dr. Dietrich Earnhart  
Center for Undergraduate Research, The University of Kansas (Fall 2018, Spring 2019)  
Responsibilities: Assisted the Department of Economics undergraduate program faculty advisor, in exploring and expanding undergraduate research opportunities within the undergraduate program.

### Research Assistant

- Supervisor: Dr. Dietrich Earnhart (Spring 2019)  
Responsibilities: Collected relevant papers and prepared report on literature around pollution abatement costs and productivity and asymmetric information around pollution abatement Costs.

### Research Assistant

- Supervisor: Dr. Donna Ginther (Summer 2020)  
Responsibilities: Worked on projects relating to Food Insecurity and SNAP. Prepared literature review, created and cleaned data sets for analysis and conducted preliminary analysis using these data.

## CONFERENCES

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- Presenter, Southern Economics Association [3.K.18] Topics in Family Economics, November 2020 (*Planned*)
- Presenter, Southern Economics Association [1.A.26] Poverty and Policy, November 2019
- Session Chair, Discussant, Presenter, Missouri Valley Economic Association, October 2019

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

#### **Introductory Economics**, (Summer 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2020)

*Course Description:* A 4 credit hour introduction to modern economics designed primarily for students who do not plan to major in economics. Topics include the operation of economic institutions, and the formation and execution of economics policies to meet the current problems of the domestic and international economy.

Responsibilities: Designed and taught an introductory course covering micro and macroeconomics with 100+ students. Class met 2 times a week. Selected Course topics, textbooks, presented the material, held regular and extended office hours and evaluated student performance. Managed two other grad students as teaching assistants and evaluated them on teaching and preparation for their discussion sections. Additionally, transitioned to online only course in spring 2020 in response to COVID-19.

#### **Intermediate Microeconomics**, (Summer 2019, Fall 2019)

*Course Description:* A 3 credit class covering the theory of consumption, production, pricing, and resource allocation

Responsibilities: Taught an intermediate level course covering the intro of calculus based consumer and producer theory economics for 20 undergraduate students. Class met 3 times a week, presented the material, held regular and extended office hours and evaluated student performance.

#### Graduate Teaching Assistant

Principles of Macroeconomics, (Fall 2016, Spring 2017)

Principles of Macroeconomics, (Fall 2017, Spring 2018) (*Head GTA*)

Principles of Microeconomics, (Spring 2018) (*Head GTA*)

Intermediate Microeconomics, (Spring 2019) (*Head GTA*)

Introductory Economics, (Fall 2020, Spring 2020) (*Head GTA*)

**Responsibilities:** Led discussions for 25 students which met once a week. I was responsible for explaining course material with emphasis on teaching additional material, holding regular office hours, proctoring and grading examination. As head GTA, I created exam keys, organized and scheduled make-up exams and co-ordinated other GTAs in fulfilling instructions from lead professor. In spring 2018 I managed other GTAs in their implementation of the Econ Lab help room.

## **COMPUTER SKILLS**

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Stata, Latex , Microsoft Suite

## **REFERENCES**

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Donna K. Ginther, Roy A. Roberts Distinguished Professor of Economics  
1460 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Room 333, Snow Hall  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
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