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Feb 5th, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Oral Presentations: Social Sciences I

Olivia Maurer

University of Mississippi

Kaden Grace

University of Mississippi

Ryan Wallace

Pearl River Community College

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Recommended Citation

Maurer, Olivia; Grace, Kaden; and Wallace, Ryan, "Oral Presentations: Social Sciences I" (2022). *Mississippi Undergraduate Honors Conference*. 1.

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Olivia Maurer, University of Mississippi

The Case of Santiago de Chile: Pedestrian Deaths, Neo-Liberal Urban Design, and Insufficient Traffic Policy Reform

Chile's rate of road fatalities and pedestrian deaths in particular has remained a global outlier, even as comparable states have reduced occurrences. Santiago, one of the most urbanized cities in Latin America and Chile's capital, serves as a unique product of competing urban design ideologies put forth by democratic and authoritarian governments throughout the 20th century, and the social and economic stratification created has continued to present challenges for solving urban planning issues in modern Santiago. Recent adjustments in traffic laws have begun a reduction in road fatalities, but they still do not account for the discrepancy between Chile and other states. This is due to the failure to address the underlying problem of urban design solely shaped to create profit which has ignored lower-income sectors of the population who rely heavily on walkability in urban areas. A comparative analysis of US pedestrian deaths in suburban arterials furthers this analysis that adjustments in traffic policy will be insufficient in impactfully lessening pedestrian deaths in Santiago, Chile.

Kaden Spellman, University of Mississippi

Complementarity of Lotteries and Prize-Linked Savings Accounts (PLSAs)

In 2019, four out of every ten Americans would be unable to pay for an unexpected \$400 bill out of their savings accounts. To ameliorate this problem, one policy to incentivize saving is a Prize-Linked Savings Account (PLSA). Unlike a traditional savings account that pays out a minimal and consistent rate of return, a PLSA pools the interest collected on all deposits and distributes the interest in the form of randomly drawn prizes (similar to a lottery). When considering implementing a PLSA, a government may want to know if its PLSA sales could cannibalize their revenue from an already established lottery. A PLSA would encourage individual savings for low-income households, but lottery revenues fund important social programs like education and infrastructure. This undergraduate research thesis focuses on the relationship between Premium Bonds, a PLSA run by the United Kingdom, and lottery sales in the UK. I find that Premium Bonds and lottery sales are loose complements, implying that a government can implement a PLSA to fight poverty without cannibalizing revenue from the lottery. This research provides important policy implications for the state of Mississippi, which battles high poverty and has also recently introduced a state lottery.

Ryan Wallace, Pearl River Community College

What Situations Make UVC an Economically Viable Method to Fight Airborne Pathogens?

I intend to assess how effective UVC is as a method of fighting airborne pathogens as reported by peer-reviewed studies. Assuming UVC is effective, I will review cost estimates of UVC HVAC systems and compare the costs of these systems to national cost averages for lost productivity and healthcare costs for small, medium and large businesses. Additionally, the costs for these systems may be compared to more traditional prevention methods to rank methods according to cost and effectiveness.