

HARNEET KAUR

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Education

Ph.D. in Social Science (Primary areas: Economics and Policy), Maxwell School, Syracuse University	2025
Dissertation: <i>Exploring the Interplay of Restorative Justice, Mental Health, and Support Structures in Shaping Student Outcomes</i>	
Committee: Prof. Sarah Hamersma (Advisor), Prof. Ying Shi, Prof. Maria Zhu	
Certificate in University Teaching , Syracuse University	2024
Ph.D. Coursework in Economics , SUNY Stony Brook University	2018–19
M.A. in Economics , Panjab University	2016
B.A. in Economics , Panjab University Honors in Economics	2014

Academic Employment

Postdoctoral Fellow , College of Public Health, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	2025–Present
• Lead quantitative policy research using linked statewide education and health-insurance claims data to study education, child health, school nutrition, mental health, discipline, and student outcomes. • Use quasi-experimental research designs and panel-data methods, including difference-in-differences with staggered policy adoption, stacked difference-in-differences, triple-difference designs, fixed-effects models, and event-study analyses, to evaluate education, health, and social policies. • Completed school-based primary data collection through May 2026, including student accelerometry and systematic recess observations. • Coordinate interdisciplinary research, mentor doctoral researchers, contribute to grant development, and communicate findings through peer-reviewed scholarship, conference presentations, and policy-facing work.	

Research Interests

Primary Public Policy; Applied Microeconomics; Program Evaluation and Causal Inference; Education Policy; Economics of Education; Health and Social Policy

Secondary Labor Economics and Human Capital; Machine Learning for Causal Inference

Research

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- **Universal Free School Meals and Medicaid Spending: Evidence from Linked Education and Claims Data in Arkansas.** Joe Sundell, [Harneet Kaur](#), Gwendolyn M. Lawson, Xueying Ma, Bradley C. Martin, J. Mick Tilford, Joseph W. Thompson, and Michael R. Thomsen. *Health Affairs Scholar*, 4(8), qxag196, 2026. [10.1093/haschl/qxag196](https://doi.org/10.1093/haschl/qxag196).
- **Central Adiposity Versus Body Mass Index in Assessment of Adiposity-Related Differences in Physical Activity Among Schoolchildren Aged 5–12 Years in High-Risk Neighborhoods.** Matthew J. Barenie, Michael R. Thomsen, [Harneet Kaur](#), Erin K. Howie, Christopher M. Murphy, and Kari A. Weber. *Sports*, 14(9), 394, 2026. [10.3390/sports14090394](https://doi.org/10.3390/sports14090394).

Revise and Resubmit

- **A Pre-Post Evaluation of Clinic-Based Produce Prescriptions for Patients with Cancer.** Peter DelNero, [Harneet Kaur](#), Amber Kaufman, Alyssa Frisby, Jeanette Shack, Tess Bentley, Ciara Jenkins, Harriet Farley, Anne Marie Morse, Gina Droben, and Michael R. Thomsen. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (JAND)*.

Under Review

- **Behavioral and Mental Health Diagnoses and School Discipline: Evidence from Linked Administrative and Claims Data.** [Harneet Kaur](#), Joe Sundell, Gwendolyn Lawson, Bradley Martin, Mick Tilford, Joseph W. Thompson, and Michael R. Thomsen.
- **Asymmetric Effects: SNAP Caseloads When Work Requirements Are Dropped and Reinstated.** Sarah Hamersma and [Harneet Kaur](#).
- **Exploring the Move Away from Zero-Tolerance Policies: Evidence from Restorative Justice Practices in Texas and Michigan Schools.** [Harneet Kaur](#).

Manuscripts in Preparation

- **Universal Free School Meals and Disciplinary Disparities: Evidence from Linked Education and Health Data.**
Harneet Kaur, Joe Sundell, Bradley C. Martin, J. Mick Tilford, and Michael R. Thomsen
- **The Landscape of Universal Free School Meals in the United States: Adoption, Incidence, and Measurement, 2012–2024.**
Shuoli Zhao, Qingxiao Li, Michael R. Thomsen, and Harneet Kaur
- **Mental Health Care Access and Student Disability Identification.**
Harneet Kaur
- **Exploring the Relationship Between Mental Health Issues in Youth and Later-Life Economic Outcomes.**
Harneet Kaur

Works in Progress

- Mental Health Access and School Discipline: Evidence from North Carolina. *Harneet Kaur*.
- Peer Aggression Exposure and District Exit: Evidence from Student Victimization Reports and Administrative Records. *Joint with Ying Shi*.
- When Weather Keeps Children Inside: Outdoor Recess Disruptions and School Discipline. *Joint with Michael R. Thomsen*.
- Weather, Recess, and School-Day Physical Activity: Evidence from Accelerometer-Based Measures. *Joint with Michael R. Thomsen and Kari A. Weber*.

Grant Activity

Spencer Foundation, Principal Investigator, proposal under review 2026

Conference Presentations

Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Fall Research Conference (APPAM)	2026 (scheduled), 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022
Annual Meeting of the Southern Economic Association (SEA)	2026 (scheduled), 2025, 2024, 2023
Annual Conference of the American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon)	2025, 2024 (Poster), 2023
Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP)	2026, 2024 (Poster)
Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness Annual Conference (SREE)	2026, 2025, 2024, 2023 (Poster)
Atlanta Workshop on Public Policy and Child Well-Being (PPCW)	2025

Academic Service

Ad hoc Reviewer, <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>	
Conference Proposal Reviewer, Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP)	2026
Discussant, Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Fall Research Conference (APPAM)	2025
Conference Proposal Reviewer, Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE)	2025
Discussant, Annual Conference of the American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon)	2024

Professional Experience

Graduate Research Associate , Center for Policy Research, Syracuse University	2021–2025
• Research Assistant to Prof. Sarah Hamersma and Prof. Ying Shi. • Conducted literature reviews, developed policy briefs, and assisted in the acquisition and pre-processing of large datasets. • Employed quasi-experimental methods for analysis and created data visualizations to communicate findings. • Developed proposals to acquire restricted student administrative data and helped prepare Institutional Review Board applications.	
Senior Business Analyst , Tata Consultancy Services Ltd., Bengaluru, India	2016–2018
• Developed and validated statistical models using SAS for the Anti-Money Laundering domain of a global bank as part of the Global Risk Analytics team.	

Awards and Honors

Doctoral Prize, Syracuse University	2025
Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Syracuse University	2025
Dean's Office Summer Project Assistantship	2024
APPAM Excellence, Equity, and Inclusion (EEI) Fellowship	2023
Graduate Student Organization Travel Grant, Syracuse University	2022-24
Syracuse University Fellowship, Ph.D. Social Science Program	2020-24
Full-tuition Scholarship, Ph.D. Economics Program at Stony Brook University	2018
Seth Beni Parshad Memorial Scholarship for outstanding performance in the Graduate Program, Panjab University	2016
Certificate of Merit for securing 5th position at the University level and 2nd position at the College level for the Undergraduate Program	2015

Teaching Experience

Syracuse University

Econ, Stats & Math Refresher, Defense Comptrollership Program Bootcamp (Graduate Level, Instructor)	Sum 2025, 2024
Fundamentals of Policy Analysis (Graduate Level, Tutor)	Sum 2024, 2023, 2022
Quantitative Methods for the Social Sciences (Undergraduate Level, TA)	Spr 2024, Fall 2023
Introduction to Statistics (Graduate Level, TA)	Fall 2022

University of Michigan

ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods	Sum 2023
Introduction to Computing for Data Analysis (TA)	
Introduction to the LaTeX Text Processing System (TA)	

Stony Brook University

Introduction to Economics (Undergraduate Level, TA)	Spr 2019, Fall 2018
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Tools & Software

Statistical Software	R, Stata, SAS, SPSS
Programming Languages	Python
Software & Skills	ArcGIS Pro, LaTeX