

Mathew Knudson
Curriculum Vitae, October 2019

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Vanderbilt University
Department of Economics
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Graduate Education

Vanderbilt University, Department of Economics
Ph.D. Candidate in Economics
Expected completion date: May 2020

Dissertation Title: Three Essays in Political Economy

References:

Prof. Mattias Polborn (Primary Advisor), mattias.polborn@vanderbilt.edu, 615-875-8113
Prof. John Weymark, john.weymark@vanderbilt.edu, 615-322-1437
Prof. Alan Wiseman, alan.wiseman@vanderbilt.edu, 615-322-6241
Prof. Mattias Polborn (Placement Director), mattias.polborn@vanderbilt.edu, 615-875-8113

M.A. in Economics, 2017

Vanderbilt University, Center for Teaching
Certificate in College Teaching, 2018

Undergraduate Education

Temple University
B.A. in Economics, minor in Mathematics, *summa cum laude*, May 2015

Fields

Primary: Political Economy, Public Economics
Secondary: Microeconomic Theory

Honors and Fellowships

Graduate Fellowship and Topping-Up Award, Vanderbilt University, 2015-2020
Kirk Dornbush Summer Research Grant, Vanderbilt University, 2017
Rendigs Fels Award for Teaching Excellence, Vanderbilt University, 2017
Household International Award for Best Research Paper, Vanderbilt University, 2018
Kirk Dornbush Dissertation Fellowship, Vanderbilt University, 2019

Teaching

Vanderbilt University, Instructor
Principles of Macroeconomics, Summer 2018

Vanderbilt University, Teaching Assistant
Ph.D. Level Microeconomic Theory I, Fall 2017 and Fall 2018
International Finance, Spring 2018 and 2019

Macroeconomic Models for Policy Analysis, Spring 2018 and 2019
Social Choice Theory, Spring 2017
Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory, Fall 2016 and Spring 2017

Vanderbilt University, Law and Economics Tutor
Ph.D. Level Microeconomic Theory II, Spring 2017
Ph.D. Level Mathematics for Economics, Summer 2019

Research Papers

“Uncertain Policy Implementation with Public Information” [[Job Market Paper](#)]

I analyze the effects of policy vetting on a politician’s incentive to implement her proposal. In my model, the voter and the politician are uncertain both about the politician’s competence and whether her proposal is good for the voter. Vetting provides a public signal about the probability the policy will benefit the voter. More competent politicians are more likely to propose good policies, so the voter can use the results of vetting to update his beliefs about the politician’s competence. I find that the politician is only willing to take a risk by implementing her policy when the beliefs about her are sufficiently poor. Consequently, public vetting can create a perverse incentive for the politician to implement her policy proposal only if it is sufficiently unlikely to help the voter. If only the politician observes the results of vetting, she implements her policy only when its expected outcome is sufficiently high, because her policy information does not directly affect the voter’s beliefs about her. Consequently, public vetting may impede efficient policymaking and leave voters worse off.

“Two Candidate Competition of Differentiated Policy Sets”

In the classical spatial model of two candidate competition, an equilibrium exists only if the distribution of voter ideal points is such that every median hyperplane passes through a single policy. The necessity of this condition crucially depends upon both candidates being able to propose any policy in a Euclidean space. I assume that each candidate is affiliated with a party which restricts the policies that its candidate can propose and that voters have Euclidean spatial preferences. I show that if the candidates can only make proposals from disjoint sets of policies, then an equilibrium exists if each median hyperplane passes through a region with a nonempty interior that contains the equilibrium policy. An equilibrium, if it exists, is generically robust to perturbations of the voters’ ideal points.

Works in Progress

“Campaigning to Persuade”

“International Bargaining and Diversionary Signals of Commitment” (with Dmitriy Nurullayev)

“Limited Probes in Conflict Bargaining” (with Dmitriy Nurullayev)

Professional Activities

Presentations of Work

“Two Candidate Competition on Differentiated Policy Sets”

North American Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society, Univ. of Washington (2019)

Graduate Student Brown Bag Seminar, Vanderbilt (2019)

Graduate Student Brown Bag Seminar, Vanderbilt (2018)

“Uncertain Policy Implementation with Public Information”

Formal Theory Workshop, Washington Univ. of St. Louis (2019)

Economics Graduate Student Conference, Washington Univ. of St. Louis (2019)

Young Economists Symposium, Columbia (2019)

Departmental Political Economy Seminar, Vanderbilt (2019)

Graduate Student Brown Bag Seminar, Vanderbilt (2018, 2019)

Referee

Social Choice and Welfare

Content Creation

US Academic Decathlon Economics Editor (Spring 2019 to Present)

Top Hat Economics Question Writer & Checker (Summer 2018)

Service

Job Market Workshop, Organizer/Coordinator, Vanderbilt (2019)

Council of Economics Graduate Students, Representative, Vanderbilt (2018-2019)

Conference and Workshop Participation

Teaching Assistant Orientation, Expert TA Panel, Vanderbilt (2019)

Frontiers in Formal Political Theory, Vanderbilt (2018)

Computational Skills

Matlab, Python, R