Rustin Partow

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Placement

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Education

Ph.D. Economics, University of California at Los Angeles, 2020.

M.A. Economics, University of Texas at Austin, 2013.

Dual B.S. Mathematics, Economics George Washington University, 2011.

Honors and Awards

UCLA Graduate Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2019-2020

All-UC Group Student Grant, 2017

Center for Economic History Student Grant, 2017

Proctor of the Year, 2016

UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship, 2016-2017

UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, 2016

UCLA Graduate Fellowship, 2013-2014

Fields

Labor Economics and Personnel Economics

Job Market Paper

The Inverted Job Ladder in Skilled Professions *[PDF]*

How do workers initially match with firms, and how do these matches improve over time? A large *job ladder* literature devoted to this question proposes a hypothesis in which poached workers move to better firms while displaced workers move to worse firms. This paper shows that the job ladder in skilled

professions is inverted, with downward-directed poaching and upward-directed displacement. I provide empirical evidence for this using a new historical dataset on lawyers. Guided by the evidence, I develop a model of dynamic labor market assignment that explains why skilled professions have an inverted job ladder. Each firm's comparative advantage is to hire a worker whose location in the talent distribution matches its own location in the job ladder. Firms privately learn how talented their workers are and only allow below-average worker types (lemons) to be poached. Hence, poached workers move down the ladder to firms that are more specialized in lemons. Workers are revealed to have been *under-placed* when they are retained. Thus, by temporarily removing the lemons problem, random displacements help under-placed workers move up the ladder. I structurally estimate the model in order to quantify misallocation and appraise potential labor market reforms. I estimate that more than 20% of output is lost to misallocation induced by informational frictions. I find support for the use of academic competition as a means of generating stronger pre-job market signals of talent in order to reduce misallocation.

Working Papers

Collusive Capacity [PDF] (with Daehyun Kim)

We add collusive capacity to the theory of collusion in dynamic oligopolies. In our model, firms accumulate just enough capacity to inflict standard Nash-reversion punishments. This voluntary restriction in capacity is both easily enforced, and significantly reduces incentives for individual firms to deviate from a collusive regime. As the number of firms goes to infinity, the critical discount factor required to sustain collusion converges to a number that is strictly below 1. Thus, our model challenges the standard intuition that collusion becomes harder as the number of firms increases.

Retention and Adapative Paysetting in Large Organizations (with Moshe Buchinsky and John deFiguereido)

Should government wages be marked to market indices? If so, which indices–occupational or spatial ones? Using administrative payroll data from the US federal government, we study the benefits of pay-indexation by estimating a structural model of employee quit behavior. To estimate the model, we exploit a natural experiment in federal pay-setting–the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1991 (FEPCA). FEPCA was designed to measure and correct pay gaps at a detailed occupation-by-location level. However, when it implemented FEPCA, the government averaged these pay gaps across 32 localities, targeting these macro pay gaps with locality-specific pay supplements, producing a Bartik-like variation in total pay. We use our estimated model to simulate the effects of other pay-indexation methods.

Employment

Teaching Assistant: University of California at Los Angeles 2015–2019.

Consultant: Bates White LLC 2011–2013.

Service

CC2PhD Program Mentor , 2018-2019

UCLA Graduate Economics Association Graduate Student Mentor

Languages

Speaking: English (native), Spanish (fluent), Farsi (proficient)

Programming: Highly proficient in Julia, Python, Stata, MATLAB, LaTeX, and Excel. Working knowledge of SQL, R, HTML, and Git.

References

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