

Stephen D. O'Connell

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Last Updated: 13 April 2026

CURRENT	Emory University, Department of Economics Associate Professor Assistant Professor	Sep 2022 - Present Sep 2018 - Aug 2022
PREVIOUS	Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Economics Postdoctoral Fellow	Jul 2016 - Jun 2018
EDUCATION	The Graduate Center at City University of New York Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Economics Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in Economics Boston College Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Economics	Jun 2016 Sep 2013 May 2007
AFFILIATIONS	Yale University, Economic Growth Center Visiting Faculty Becker Friedman Institute, University of Chicago Visiting Senior Research Associate JPAL/IPA Displaced Livelihoods Initiative Invited Researcher Households in Conflict Network Affiliate IZA Institute of Labor Economics Research Fellow Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá Visiting Faculty	Mar 2026 - Apr 2026 Jan 2025 - May 2025 Aug 2023 - Present Apr 2020 - Present Dec 2015 - Present Summer 2016
RESEARCH	PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS Jackson Schneider and Stephen D. O'Connell, "Gender differences in the adequacy of poverty-targeted food assistance programs," <i>World Development</i> , 2025. Ryan Brown, Hani Mansour, Stephen D. O'Connell, and James Reeves, "Gender Differences in Political Career Progression," <i>Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization</i> , 2025. Onur Altındağ, Stephen D. O'Connell, and Rim Achour, "Geographic poverty targeting in social protection programs: Evidence from a nationwide policy experiment," Working paper. 2025. Chris Karpowitz, Stephen D. O'Connell, Jessica Preece, and Olga Stoddard, "Strength in Numbers? Gender Composition, Leadership, and Women's Influence in Teams," <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> , 2024. Stephen D. O'Connell and Lucas F. Mation, "Tell us what you need: Matching public job training to local skill demand with employers' input," 2023. Onur Altındağ, Stephen D. O'Connell, "The short-lived effects of unconditional cash transfers to refugees," 2023. <i>Journal of Development Economics</i> . (Original full-length working paper: "Unconditional cash-based assistance to the poor: What do at-scale programs achieve?," 2021.) Josh McCrain, Stephen D. O'Connell, "Experience, institutions, and candidate emergence: The political career returns to state legislative service," 2022. <i>Political Science Research and Methods</i> .	

Ryan Brown, Hani Mansour, Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Does local female political representation empower women to run for higher office? Evidence from state and national legislatures in India,**” 2022. *World Bank Economic Review*.

Onur Altındağ, Stephen D. O’Connell, Aytug Sasmaz, Zeynep Balcioglu, Paola Cadoni, Matilda Jerneck, Aimee Kunze Foong, “**Targeting humanitarian aid using administrative data: model design and validation,**” 2021. *Journal of Development Economics*.

Kevin Croke, Andualem Mengistu, Stephen D. O’Connell, and Kibrom Tafere, “**The Impact of Ethiopia’s Health Facility Construction Campaign on Health Service Utilization and Outcomes: A Secondary Analysis of Spatially-Linked Survey and Facility Location Data,**” 2020. *BMJ Global Health*.

Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Can quotas increase the supply of candidates for higher-level positions? Evidence from local government in India,**” *Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 102, no. 2, pp. 65-78, 2020.

Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Political inclusion and educational investment: Estimates from a national policy experiment in India,**” *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 135, pp. 478-487, 2018.

Hunt Allcott, Allan Collard-Wexler, and Stephen D. O’Connell, “**How Do Electricity Shortages Affect Industry? Evidence from India,**” *American Economic Review*, vol. 106, no. 3, pp. 587–624, 2016.

Klaus Desmet, Ejaz Ghani, Stephen D. O’Connell and Esteban Rossi-Hansberg, “**The Spatial Development of India,**” *Journal of Regional Science*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 10–30, 2015.

Ejaz Ghani, William R. Kerr, and Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Political Reservations and Women’s Entrepreneurship in India,**” *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 108, pp. 138–153, 2014.

Ejaz Ghani, William R. Kerr, and Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Local Industrial Structures and Female Entrepreneurship in India,**” *Journal of Economic Geography*, vol. 13, no. 6, pp. 929–964, 2013.

Ejaz Ghani, William R. Kerr, and Stephen D. O’Connell, “**Spatial Determinants of Entrepreneurship in India,**” *Regional Studies*, vol. 48, no. 6, 2013 (special issue).

IN PROGRESS

ONGOING PROJECTS

Andrea Caflisch, Daniel Masterson, Stephen D. O’Connell, and Julia Smith-Omomo, “From Displacement to Resilience: Economic Recovery Aid and Social Cohesion in Post-War Iraq,” At-scale field experiment; Baseline collected June 2024. Partners: IOM Iraq. Funding: IOM Iraq; JPAL/IPA Displaced Livelihoods Initiative \$227,885.

Stephen D. O’Connell and Nicholas Skelley, “Endogenous household reorganization and social welfare program manipulation,” 2022.

TEACHING

Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA

Honors Thesis Seminar

Econometrics I

Causal Inference/Policy Analysis

Undergraduate Research in Economics

Labor Economics (Graduate)

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Bogotá, D.C., Colombia

Behavioral Economics

Jun 2016

Hunter College, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA

Econometrics I

Aug 2011 – May 2014

Economic Development

Aug 2012 – Dec 2012

Advisor, Senior Honors Thesis (2 students)

Jan 2013 – May 2013

**STUDENT
MENTORING**

College Research Mentorship Programs

SIRE

2018 - 2019: Belicia Rodriguez

CLSS

2018 - 2019: Andrew Kliewer

SURE

Summer 2021: Nicholas Skelley

Summer 2025: Lucy Liu

Economics Dept. Honors Program

Since 2018

Thesis Advisor

2018 - 2019: Reiko Laski. Placement: Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.

2019 - 2020: Miaomiao Zhang. Placement: HBS Strategy Group Predoctoral Research Fellowship.

2020 - 2021: Junaid Ahmed. Placement: Georgia Tech Masters in Computer Science.

2021 - 2022: Raoul Dubey. Placement: NERA Economic Consulting. 2022 - 2023: Jackson Schneider.

Placement: LSE MSc in Development Studies.

2024 - 2025: Tianqi Zhang

2024 - 2025: Ettan Patel

2025 - 2026: Lucy Liu

Committee member

2018 - 2019: Lucy Hansen, Claudia Hurowitz

2019 - 2020: Andrew Kliewer (Pol. Sci.), Raya Machaca

2020 - 2021: Jasmine Cui, Benjamin Weiner

2021 - 2022: Angela Choksi, Nicholas Skelley

2022 - 2023: Matthew Angelo Fernandez Joesoep, Steven Luo, Jackson Pentz

2023 - 2024: Harper Wang, Elaine Han

2024 - 2025: David Lee (Pol. Sci.)

2025 - 2026: Jacky An (DDS)

Economics Dept. Ph.D. Program

Dissertation Committee Member

Kaylyn Sanbower, "Essays on the Effects of Information Disclosure in Hospital Markets" (2022)

Sam Wunderly, "Studies of the Relationships Between Labor Unions, the Labor Environment, and Health" (2022)

Katie Leinenbach, "Essays on Marijuana Use in Older Adults" (2025)

**COLLEGE/
DEPARTMENT
SERVICE**

Economics Dept. Honors Program

Coordinator

Aug 2018 - Present

Economics Dept., Undergraduate Research

Director

Aug 2020 - Present

Economics Dept. Social Media Committee

Appointed Member

Spring 2019 - Spring 2021

Emory College Honors Program Standing Committee

Elected Member

Fall 2019 - Spring 2021, Ran for reelection Spring 2021

Emory College Faculty Senate

Senator (elected)

Aug 2025 - May 2028

Emory University School of Law - Center for Law and Social Sciences

Invited Board Member

Spring 2020 - Present

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES 2026: Yale University, APSA, ACPE. 2025: University of Notre Dame. 2022: WFP, JDC. 2021: BREAD, UNHCR, PacDev, University of Georgia. 2020: JDC. 2019: Brigham Young University, UGA, William & Mary, Georgia Tech “Challenges in Development”, Western Economics Association. 2018: Emory University. 2017: APPAM; SEA; NEUDC; The World Bank; EPED; Secretaria Especial do Assuntos Estratégicos, Presidência da República (Brasil); Ministério da Indústria, Comércio Exterior e Serviços (Brasil). 2016: Oklahoma State University, Univ. Javeriana Bogotá, IFPRI, Banco de la Republica (Colombia), NEUDC, Trinity University. 2015: Univ. of California, Riverside, IZA/World Bank Conference on Employment and Development, Univ. of Cologne, The World Bank, DEVPEC, Cornell Dyson GSA, APPAM. 2014 and previous: NEUDC, Universidad de los Andes, NYSEA 2012, MEA 2012.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE Referee: American Economic Review, Review of Economic Studies, Econometrica, Journal of Political Economy, Review of Economics and Statistics, Economic Journal, American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, European Economic Review, Journal of Development Economics, World Development, World Bank Economic Review, Journal of Public Economics, Economics of Education Review, Journal of Development Effectiveness, Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, Management Science, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Econometric Reviews, Feminist Economics, PNAS Nexus, Journal of Regional Science, Journal of Economic Geography*, Regional Studies, Journal of Comparative Economics, Journal of Economic Education, Spatial Economic Analysis. Other review: 3ie grant review, NSF SBS (Economics) Grant Review, World Bank KCP Program Grant Review, World Bank Development Impact/i2i Grant Program, DFID-IZA Growth in Labor Markets Research Grant Program, Oxford University Press.

- GRANTS & AWARDS**
- JPAL/IPA Displaced Livelihoods Initiative, \$227,885 for “*From Displacement to Resilience: Aid, Economic Recovery, and Social Cohesion in Post-War Iraq*” (co-PI with Andrea Caflisch, Daniel Masterson, and Julia Smith-Omomo.)
 - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2018-2023: \$693,655, for “*Design and Evaluation of Targeted Humanitarian Cash Transfers*” (Co-PI with Onur Altındağ.)
 - Russell Sage Foundation, 2021-2022: \$34,222, for “*Leadership Structure, Group Gender Composition, and Women’s Influence in Groups: A Field Experiment*”
 - Emory University Research Committee (URC) Halle Institute for Global Research Award, 2021-2022: \$28,824, for “*Ethnic Diversity, Economic Integration of Refugees, and Firm Behavior: Insights from a field study in Southeastern Turkey*”
 - Emory PERS Grant, 2019-2020: \$8,500
 - The World Bank/ComPEL, \$25,000. Co-PI with Andreas Menzel (CERGE-EI). April 2017.
 - National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program—2012 Honorable Mention
 - World Bank 2012 Finance and Private Sector Development (FPD) Academy Award: “Local Industrial Structures and Female Entrepreneurship in India”
 - Chancellor’s Fellowship, City University of New York, 2010-2015.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

The World Bank , Washington, DC, USA	
Lead Specialist/Principal Investigator (occasional)	May 2016 – Jun 2018
Consultant (occasional)	Jan 2010 – May 2016
Compass-Lexecon , Washington, DC, USA	
Analyst	Jun 2007 – Jan 2010

LANGUAGES English: native; Spanish: fluent (speaking, reading, writing).