

Seth M. Smith

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EDUCATION

The University of Georgia, Terry College of Business

Ph.D. in Economics

Dissertation: Essays in Industrial Organization

Athens, GA

Aug 2021 – Expected May 2026

The University of Minnesota

B.S. in Economics and B.S. in Statistics

Minors: Mathematics and Computer Science

Minneapolis, MN

Aug 2017 – May 2021

WORKING PAPERS

Non-Linear Pricing under Quantity and Tax Interventions: Market for Fountain Soda

- Presentations
 - 2025 Southern Economic Association (Upcoming)

Abstract: In the sugar-sweetened beverage market, firms use nonlinear menu pricing to sell different drink sizes, distorting quantities for low-valuation consumers. These distortions change how taxation affects supply, making a Pigovian tax calibrated to the externality from excess sugar consumption welfare-suboptimal. A size restriction, similar to New York City's 2012 proposed but unimplemented maximum drink size, offers an alternative approach by directly constraining portion sizes. I compare welfare under these two approaches, accounting for firms' optimal menu responses. I identify two testable conditions under which size restrictions yield higher welfare than taxes: (1) the externality is small enough that a planner would not further reduce the smaller drink size, or (2) the monopolist's distortion for low-type consumers is so large that the planner prefers a pooling allocation. Using convenience store data, I find that 76 to 90 percent of stores would be better served by a size restriction, driven by the fact the modal store sells four larges for every small.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Shrinkflation and Price Adjustment Mechanisms in Convenience Retail

- I develop a model in which rising costs lead firms to use price discrimination that takes the form of shrinkflation. The model shows how firms reduce package sizes and narrow the set of consumers they serve while keeping nominal prices fixed. It provides a theoretical foundation for the product downsizing observed in convenience retail markets.

Product Liability, Innovation, and Safety Regulation in the Market for Table Saws

- I analyze how product-liability standards and regulatory policy shape innovation incentives in the U.S. table-saw industry. I use NEISS injury data and CPSC rulemaking developments to evaluate the efficiency and welfare implications of adopting safety technologies.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ECON 2106 – Principles of Microeconomics

Instructor of Record

- Instructor rating: 4.35/5
- Course difficulty rating: 4.4/5

University of Georgia

Fall 2024

Teaching Assistant

University of Georgia

- ECON 8080 [G] / 4750 [U] – Introduction to Econometrics (F21,F23,S24)
- ECON 5900 [U] – Senior Thesis (F22,S23)
- ECON 4950 [U]– Competitive Strategy (F25)
- ECON 4350 [U]– Industrial Economics (S24)
- ECON 4100 [U]– Monetary Economics (S24)

Research Assistant

University of Georgia

Summers 2022-25

- Research Assistant for John Turner

AWARDS & SCHOLARLY HONORS

- Swift Undergraduate Teaching Fellowship [Georgia] (2025)
- Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program [Minnesota] (2020)
- Wharton IDDEAS Program Recipient [Wharton-UPenn] (2019)
- Barbra Newsome Internship Award [Minnesota] (2018)

SKILLS

Languages: R, Julia, Python, MATLAB, L^AT_EX, HTML (markup), C, OCaml

REFERENCES

John Turner (Chair)

Jasper N. Dorsey Chair of Public Utilities

Economics

The University of Georgia

jltturner@uga.edu

Peter Newberry (Dissertation Committee)

Associate Professor Economics

The University of Georgia

pwnewberry@uga.edu

Jeff Thurk (Dissertation Committee)

Principal Economist at Amazon Web Services

Amazon

jeff.thurk@gmail.com