Nicholas Dunagan
Curriculum Vitae

Email: nick@dunagan.org **Website:** nick.dunagan.org **Phone:** (512) 633-1288

Research Interests

Industrial Organization, Game Theory, Intellectual Property & Technology

Education

Ph.D. in Economics Aug. 2022 to Present
Clemson University
Clemson, SC
Fields: Industrial Organization, Trade

B.B.A. in Economics Aug. 2018 to December 2021
Texas State University
San Marcos, TX

Teaching Experience

Instructor Fall 2024 to Present
Clemson University
Clemson, SC
- International Economy (Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Summer 2025, Fall 2025, Spring 2026, Summer 2026, Fall 2026)

Teaching Assistant Fall 2022 to Summer 2024
Clemson University
Clemson, SC
- Principles of Microeconomics (Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023)
- Principles of Macroeconomics (Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2024)
- International Economy (Summer 2024)

Current Research

Job Market Paper
Dunagan, N. "Strategic Search in Patenting"

I develop a three-player game-theoretic model of patenting. An *applicant* chooses how extensively to search for prior art, determining the information brought into the patenting process and the claimed patent breadth. An *examiner* conducts additional search and might narrow the claimed breadth. A *challenger* conducts additional search and might challenge the patent. The public record from earlier search affects the likelihood of challenge by affecting the informativeness of later search. My equilibrium characterization yields comparative statics for how search and breadth respond to challenger filing costs, procedural standards, and examiner capacity. These results generate testable implications for patent breadth, grant outcomes, and post-grant challenge behavior.

Working Papers

Dunagan, N. "Strategic Search in Patenting: An Empirical Investigation"

Eaton, M., Dunagan N., & Stalvey B. "The Effects of Focused Deterrence on Crime and Community Outcomes in Philadelphia"

Focused Deterrence is a crime-reduction strategy that combines an increased probability and severity of punishment with direct communication of consequences to individuals identified as likely offenders. Philadelphia implemented Focused Deterrence in 2013 in response to rising gun violence. We estimate this policy's effects on crime rates as well as community downstream effects on rental pricing and housing valuations. Using a standard difference-in-difference design, we find that the number of shooting victims declined by 41.3 percent and gun crime incidents fell by 24.2 percent. Total reported crime incidents declined by roughly 13.8 percent, reflecting reductions in both violent and non-violent offenses. This reduction in crime resulted in increases in rental prices between 6.0 to 7.5 percent, and housing values from 3.6 to 7.0 percent. Together, these findings suggest that Focused Deterrence's crime-reduction effects extend beyond its direct targets, and that this broader improvement in neighborhood safety is capitalized into local housing and rental markets.

Eaton, M. & Dunagan, N. "Judicial Bias in Capital Sentencing in Early 20th Century South Carolina"

This paper investigates whether racial disparities existed in capital sentencing in South Carolina during the early twentieth century. We construct a novel dataset by digitizing the Report of the Attorney General to the General Assembly of South Carolina and county Criminal Journals, allowing us to observe capital case outcomes at a level of geographic and temporal detail not previously available for this period. Our empirical strategy exploits the rotation of judges across judicial circuits, which effectively randomized the assignment of judges to counties at different points in the year, generating plausibly exogenous variation in the judge presiding over a given capital case. Focusing on murder and rape—the principal capital offenses of the period—we examine whether sentencing outcomes varied systematically with the race of the defendant, and whether the race of the victim, and the interaction between defendant and victim race, further shaped these outcomes. By situating this analysis within an era of widespread societal discrimination, the paper contributes historical context to the ongoing discussion of judicial decision-making and racial disparities in the American criminal justice system.

Baier, S., Dunagan N., & Reesman, W. "Trade Shocks, Migration, and House Prices: The Role of Housing-Supply Elasticity"

Dunagan, N. "Radical Innovation and Innovation Strategy"

This paper investigates how radical innovations — those that disrupt and change existing knowledge and practices — can signal shifts in firm and industry level innovation strategies. Using a model that explores the choice between radical and incremental innovation, I examine the relationship between newly invented radical innovations and firms' innovation strategies. Through an analysis of patent and firm level data, I examine the particular effect radical innovation has on firms and industries based on their individual characteristics and technological similarity to the radical innovation.

Research Presentations

Southern Economic Association 96th Annual Meeting — Fall 2026
"Strategic Search in Patenting"
Houston, TX

Clemson Industrial Organization Economics Workshop — Spring 2026
"Strategic Search in Patenting"
Clemson, SC

Clemson Industrial Organization Economics Workshop — Fall 2025
"Strategic Search in Patenting"
Clemson, SC

Southern Economic Association 95th Annual Meeting — Fall 2025
"Strategic Search in Patenting"
Tampa, FL

Clemson Industrial Organization Economics Workshop — Spring 2025
"Radical Innovation and Innovation Strategy"
Clemson, SC

Clemson Industrial Organization Economics Workshop — Fall 2024
"Radical Innovation and Innovation Strategy"
Clemson, SC

Awards & Honors

Dr. Michael T. Maloney Annual Fellowship in Economics — 2025 to Present
Clemson University - John E. Walker Department of Economics

Graduate Assistant Excellence Award in Teaching — 2025
Clemson University - Powers College of Business

Economics Department Travel Grant — 2025
Clemson University - John E. Walker Department of Economics

Clemson University Graduate Student Government Travel Grant — 2024 - 2026
Clemson University - Graduate Student Government

Clemson University Department of Economics Graduate Assistantship — 2022 to Current
Clemson University - John E. Walker Department of Economics

Texas State University Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Economics — 2022
Texas State University - McCoy College of Business

Larry and Robin Kapavik Scholarship — 2020-2021
Texas State University

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Fall 2020
Texas State University

Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society Fall 2019
Texas State University

Specialized Skills

Technical: Python, STATA, R, C++, LaTeX, Bloomberg Terminal Training, Microsoft Office Suite

References

F. Andrew Hanssen
Professor of Economics
Clemson University
fhansse@clemson.edu

Charles Thomas
Clinical Professor
Clemson University
cjt@clemson.edu

Scott L. Baier
Associate Dean for Faculty Research, Professor of Economics
Clemson University
(864) 656-4534
sbaier@clemson.edu

Matthew S. Lewis
Professor of Economics
Clemson University
mslewis@clemson.edu