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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Office Contact Information

Department of Economics, Perelman Center for Political Science and Economics, 133 South 36th Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19104
Office 548.

Personal Information: *Citizenship:* Chilean, Italian. *Languages:* Spanish (native), English.

Undergraduate Studies:

Bsc. in Economics, School of Economics and Business, University of Chile, highest honors, 2012-2017

Masters Level Work:

MSc. in Economics, School of Economics and Business, University of Chile, highest honors, 2017-2018.

Graduate Studies:

University of Pennsylvania, 2019 to present.

Thesis Title: “Essays in Macroeconomic Development”

Expected Completion Date: June 2025

Thesis Committee and References:

Guillermo Ordoñez (advisor), Professor of Economics, ordonez@econ.upenn.edu, (215) 898-1875

Dirk Krueger, Professor of Economics, dkrueger@econ.upenn.edu, (215) 573 1424

Joachim Hubmer, Assistant Professor of Economics, jhubmer@sas.upenn.edu, (215) 898-1875

Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Macroeconomics

Secondary fields: Development, Labor

Teaching Experience:

Certificate in College & University Teaching, Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning & Innovation,
University of Pennsylvania

As instructor at the University of Pennsylvania:

Summer, 2022 Intermediate Macroeconomics

Summer, 2021 Statistics for Economists

As teaching assistant at the University of Pennsylvania:

Spring, 2024 International Economics, Professor Iourii Manovskii

Fall, 2023 Industrial Organization, Professor Juan Pablo Atal

Spring, 2023 Finance and Growth, Professor Iván Luzardo

Fall 2020 Introduction to Microeconomics, Professor Anne Duchene

As teaching assistant at the University of Chile:

Spring, 2018 Microeconomics II, graduate, Professor Juan Pablo Torres

Fall, 2018 Microeconomics I, graduate, Professor Juan Pablo Torres

Research Experience and Other Employment:

Fall, 2021 Research assistant for Professors Harold Cole and Guillermo Ordoñez
Fall, 2018 Intern at the Labor Markets Division of the Interamerican Development Bank
2016-2019 Research assistant for Professors Adriana Piazza, Jorge Lorca,
Juan Pablo Torres, and Francisco Marcet

Professional Activities:

2024 Penn Money Macro Seminar, University of Pennsylvania
2024 Macroeconomics across Time and Space Conference (poster session), Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia
2022-24 Penn Student Macro Lunch Seminar, University of Pennsylvania
2020 Young Economist Symposium organizer
2018 Dynamic Games and Science VI, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Madrid
2018 Economic Theory Workshop, Pontificia Universidad Católica Valparaíso, Valparaíso
Journal Referee: Journal of Economic Theory

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2021 Edwin Mansfield Graduate Student Teaching Prize
2019-2024 Penn Graduate Student Fellowship
2017 Masters Scholarship, National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research, Chile
2017 Masters Scholarship, University of Chile

Research Papers:

“Self-employment as Self-insurance” (Job Market Paper)

This paper investigates the role of microentrepreneurship as a substitute for unemployment insurance in developing countries. Using microenterprise survey data from Latin American countries, I document that a significant proportion of microentrepreneurs—ranging from 15% to 39%—start firms because they do not find jobs. These *necessity entrepreneurs* operate smaller, less profitable firms and experience higher income gains when transitioning to wage employment. I propose a two-sector model of occupational choice with labor market frictions, where workers can become self-employed to avoid unemployment. I calibrate the model for Mexico and show that self-insurance through self-employment decreases unemployment by 0.9 p.p. and reduces welfare losses due to unemployment risk by 22%. Despite the presence of this additional channel of insurance, introducing a non-contributory unemployment insurance system increases welfare and is strongly progressive.

“Informality, Inflation, and Fiscal Progressivity in Developing Countries, with Joao Ritto

Developing economies have large informal sectors made up of small firms that avoid taxation and rely predominantly on cash. Poorer households purchase a larger proportion of their consumption bundle from informal firms. We develop a general equilibrium model with a formality decision by firms and consumption bundle decision by households that matches these facts and calibrate it to evaluate the implications of different revenue-equivalent choices of consumption taxes and inflation for aggregate output, the size of the informal sector, and fiscal progressivity.

Research Paper(s) in Progress

“Older and Wiser: Entrepreneur Age and Development”, with Alex Sawyer

Using data from a large cross-section of countries, we document a novel fact about cross-country differences in entrepreneurship: richer countries have older self-employed. This result holds within education groups, industries, and is robust to controlling for differences in demographics. We calibrate a stylized OLG version of the benchmark macro-development model with financial frictions and show that modeling financial development as a progressive relaxation of collateral constraints generates the opposite result. We explore the role that on-the-job managerial human capital accumulation plays in rationalizing these findings.