

# Goya Razavi

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**Placement Director:** Steven Durlauf — sdurlauf@uchicago.edu — (608) 577-8186

## Education

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### University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy

Ph.D. in Public Policy	2019 – 2025
MA in Public Policy	2018 – 2019

### London School of Economics

MSc in Philosophy of the Social Sciences	2015 – 2016
BSc in Economics	2012 – 2015

## References

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Professor Steven Durlauf (Chair)  
University of Chicago  
Harris School of Public Policy  
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Professor James Heckman  
University of Chicago  
Department of Economics  
jheckman@uchicago.edu

Professor Dan Black  
University of Chicago  
Harris School of Public Policy  
danblack@uchicago.edu

Professor Atila Abdulkadiroğlu  
Duke University  
Department of Economics  
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## Research and Teaching Fields

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**Primary:** Labor Economics

**Secondary:** Economics of Education, Urban Economics

## Job Market Paper

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### Universal Higher Education and Upward Mobility: Degree Returns, Admission Policies and Student Sorting

**Abstract:** This paper examines how returns to colleges and majors, admission policies, and student sorting affect intergenerational mobility. I study this question in Denmark, where tuition-free colleges and generous living grants provide an ideal setting to investigate the sources of inequality that remain in the absence of financial constraints. Leveraging GPA admission cutoffs from a centralized matching algorithm, I apply a regression discontinuity design to examine whether students from low socioeconomic status (SES) benefit from selective degrees (college-major pairs). Scoring just above the cutoff for admission to a more selective degree raises low-SES students' income by 9% at age 30, partially closing the SES wage gap. I develop a joint model of degree selection and labor market outcomes, to disentangle the contribution of degree-specific returns from that of students' degree choices as sources of inequality. The model accounts for the impact of degree peer composition on outcomes. Estimates from the model reveal that returns to degree enrollment are higher for low-SES students than for high-SES peers across the distribution of degree selectivity. Furthermore, I find that the current GPA-based meritocratic admissions system is inefficient in terms of maximizing long-term earnings. Implementing need-affirmative admissions could reduce the SES wage gap by 15% through upward mobility of disadvantaged students, without adversely impacting displaced high-SES students. Notably, the SES wage gap could be eliminated if students selected degrees based on expected earnings returns.

## Working Papers

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Pricing Schools and Neighborhood Attributes (with James Heckman & Sadegh Eshaghnia), *NBER Working Paper #31371 (under review)*

The Dynastic Benefits of Neighborhood Sorting (with James Heckman & Sadegh Eshaghnia)

Neighborhood Effects and Children's Long-term Outcomes (with Sadegh Eshaghnia)

## Selected Work in Progress

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The Efficiency of Affirmative Action Policies: Evidence From China (with Runzhong Xu)

Neighborhood Mobility over the Life Cycle, Sorting, and Segregation (with James Heckman & Sadegh Eshaghnia)

## Invited Talks and Conferences

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**2025:** ASSA Annual Meetings (scheduled)

**2024:** Stone Center Inequality Working Group; European Meetings of the Urban Economics Association; Stone Center Summer School (poster); EEA-ESEM Congress; APPAM Fall Research Conference

**2023:** European Meetings of the Urban Economics Association; Inequality Working Group

**2022:** European Meetings of the Urban Economics Association

< **21:** LSE Economics Department, European Commission (DG GROW, DG TAXUD), European Investment Bank, LSE Reason, Knowledge and Values Colloquium

## Fellowships, Grants and Awards

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Urban Doctoral Fellowship, Mansueto Institute	2024
Harris Professional Development Fund Award, University of Chicago	2024
Dissertation Fellowship, University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy	2023
Luxembourg National Research Fund Fellowship (co-PI, \$200,000)	2019 – 23
PhD Scholarship, University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy	2019 – 23
Harris School of Public Policy Merit Scholarship, University of Chicago	2018
LSE Graduate Scholarship	2015

## Teaching Experience

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Inequality: Theory, Methods and Evidence (PhD-level), Professor Steven Durlauf	2024
Current Topics in Public Policy: Intergenerational Mobility, Professor Steven Durlauf	2022, 2023
Econometrics (PhD-level), Professor Steven Durlauf	2021
Social Interactions and Inequality (PhD-level), Professor Steven Durlauf	2020, 2021, 2023
Game Theory (PhD-level), Professor Konstantin Sonin	2020

## Research Experience

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<b>Research Associate</b> , <i>Center for the Economics of Human Development</i>	2024 –
Department of Economics, University of Chicago	
<b>Inequality Working Group</b> , <i>Stone Center for Research on Wealth Inequality and Mobility</i>	2023 –
Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago	
<b>Research Assistant</b> , Professors Steven Durlauf and James Heckman	2019 – 20

**Research Assistant**, Professors Tim Besley, Anders Jensen, and Pierre Bachas

2014 – 15

## **Professional Experience**

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Public Policy Advisor, PwC, Public Sector Consulting 2017 – 18

Economic Policy Officer, European Commission, DG Taxation and Customs Union 2016 – 17

Policy Analyst, United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, Policy Analysis & Public Affairs 2015 – 16

## **Service**

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MPP and PhD Academic Tutor, Harris School of Public Policy 2023

Mentor, Harris School of Public Policy 2020

PhD Student Admissions Committee, Harris School of Public Policy 2019 – 20

## **Additional Information**

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**Programming:** Stata, R, Python, Matlab, HTML

**Languages:** French, English, German (fluent); Luxembourgish and Dutch (intermediate)

**Citizenship:** Luxembourg and France

*This version: November 2024*