FOCUS
The Magazine of the DeVoe L. Moore Center

2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR
ISSUE 4

CENTER STAGE AT APEE
Mae Baltz Wins 2nd Place

DMC WRITERS IN THE NEWS
Commentary On & Beyond Florida

CONFERENCES & PRESENTERS
Record-Breaking DMC Presenters
Over the past 10 years, the DeVoe L. Moore Center has been steadily and intentionally building an experiential learning pathway that leads to professional work. This year, the center achieved another major milestone when it partnered with Reason Foundation, an internationally recognized public policy think tank, to embed Florida State students as compensated research assistants among its policy research teams.

These positions provide an unprecedented opportunity for our students as they directly experience a professional work environment and see firsthand the role policy research plays in achieving policy change. Four students have pioneered this program for the center: Mae Baltz, Danielle Waidley, Yolanda St. Fleur, and Madison Carlino.

This program caps a redesign of the center’s internship and professional development pathway. Resources from outside donors have allowed us to create a seamless trajectory for students interested in developing and honing their skills in policy analysis and research.

Students begin in their freshman and sophomore years by participating in our workshops, attending talks, and engaging in reading groups. During their junior and senior years, students can enroll in between 12 and 15 credit hours of academic coursework. These classes can fulfill their major requirements while working on center-related research projects. Now, before they graduate, students will be able to compete for professional positions at a leading think tank.

We are excited to see what the next year brings as we expand and scale these programs to provide new opportunities for what we believe are the most talented students in the nation.
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Fall 2021 Professional Development

Amazon Site Visit (Pictured)
On September 23, 2021, DeVoe Moore welcomed a group of 28 undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty to view the Amazon construction site. Mr. Moore introduced FSU students to the history of the project’s economic development process as well as to witness the rapid real time on the ground construction. FSU students learned firsthand about economic development, collaborative partnerships, and regulatory processes. Students left the experience thinking critically about the future growth and land use dynamics for the county and region.

Mentoring Student Research
The Spring 2022 semester was a very busy semester for student research conferences. The DMC’s preferred research path for undergraduate students is to continuously improve and refine their projects internally at the DeVoe L. Moore Center Symposium, then by engaging at the university-level in the Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS), interacting with state-level scholars and peers at the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference (FURC), and finally by applying and being selected to compete at the national-level at the Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEEE). Our graduate students traverse at a more rapid pace than our undergraduate researchers, going from internal presentations directly to external professional conferences.

The DMC collaborated with FSU’s Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) in order to facilitate the rapid forward research movement of seven rising scholars. Dr. Sam Staley served as the UROP mentor to one scholar: Eli McKown-Dawson. Dr. Crystal Taylor was the UROP mentor for six scholars: Camila Aponte, Arthi Solayappan, Chloe Wain, Ava Jowers, Olivia Rodrigue, and Cameron Mullin.

Dr. Taylor served as the research mentor to 18 student conference submissions. 10 undergraduate mentees presented work at the university-level. In addition to student posters, Dr. Taylor co-presented two different projects with DMC alumni Jacob Doty and Ben Mairs, bringing the external mentorship conference count up to 20. Not counting internal presentations, the DMC student researchers presented an impressive 22 times this year.
While MOOC certificates are a cost-effective, alternative method of education compared to traditional higher-education degrees, Andje's research focuses on why low-income and underrepresented groups do not take advantage of these low-cost (and often free) platforms.

When conducting her research, Andje found two distinct barriers that prevent individuals from using these platforms: lack of broadband internet access and lack of digital device ownership. Broadband connectivity gaps can have ramifications for the economy of entire communities.

When reviewing the demographics of groups without access to broadband internet and digital devices, results indicated that minorities faced the most significant gaps in access.

To help fill in these gaps, Andje suggests further research on the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (NTIA) and collaboration with public libraries to provide access to these platforms. If provided, access to devices and steady, high-speed internet, marginalized groups of people can make use of the different online resources available and perhaps better their socioeconomic positions in the long run.
In recent years, the political climate on college campuses has received increased attention. Multiple states have passed or considered measures to alter or monitor the tone of public discourse on college campuses. Additionally, “cancel culture” has become a common subject in the opinion sections of The New York Times and other national newspapers. The increased salience of the political climate on college campuses can also be seen in the frequent efforts of private polling firms to ascertain whether students feel able to express their strongly held beliefs in an academic setting. Through his research, Eli Mckown-Dawson examines how the strength and direction of students’ political ideology impact their views on these issues.

Statistical results indicate, consistent with numerous surveys, that students who identify as conservative feel less comfortable expressing themselves compared to those who identify as either moderate or liberal. Interestingly, conservative students also appear less likely to experience mistreatment on campus compared to other ideological groups. Both effects are statistically significant but strongly affected by the strength of a respondent’s ideology, which overshadows ideology itself as the best predictor of student opinion. Reasons for discomfort from students of any ideology are displayed on the right.

In other words, those students with strong political identities tend to feel more comfortable expressing themselves on campus but are also more likely to experience mistreatment, regardless of whether they are conservative or liberal. Thus, to the extent political expression is stifled, the effects appear primarily among students with more moderate views.

Eli plans to continue this research specific to Florida State University.
Mae Baltz was a finalist at The Association of Private Enterprise Education’s (APEE) annual Undergraduate Research Competition. Competing with 27 other students, Mae took second place in the 2022 event! Mae’s research project is titled, "The Effects of Sober Homes on Property Value in Palm Beach County." In this research, supervised by Dr. Crystal Taylor, Mae suggests that policymakers need to look more closely at establishing proper distances between sober homes and nearby residences.

Current policies are likely inefficient and the product of NIMBY (“Not In My BackYard”) interests to establish regulatory distance standards. Mae also suggests that more research should analyze the frequently overlooked issue of insurance fraud and consider performance-based payment systems such as the Patient-Centered Opioid Addiction Treatment (P-COAT) model.

Mae presented her research alongside two other DMC researchers: Yolanda St. Fleur and Danielle Waidley. DMC researchers have a history of ranking highly in this competition. Last year, Noah Dankner, a current senior majoring in economics, won first place for his work on deregulating land use in Miami, Florida, to promote housing development.
This year was monumental for the DMC’s presence at research conferences. In February, three DMC researchers were selected to present at the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference (FURC), an event spotlighting the top researchers in the state. Three DMC researchers presented at the American Association of Geographers (AAG) annual meeting. Similarly, three DMC researchers presented at the Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEE) annual undergraduate research competition. All of these researchers were mentored by the DMC’s Research Director, Dr. Crystal Taylor.

**Yolanda St. Fleur**

"College Student Housing Survey: A Case Study of Tallahassee, Florida"

FURC & APEE; Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) Scholar

**Chelsea Gow**

"Organizational Best Practices of Free Clinics in Florida"

Presented at AAG; Public Policy Researcher

**Samantha Murray**

"A Spatial Analysis of Sustainable Transport in Urban Areas: A Case of CollegeTown in Tallahassee, Florida"

Presented at AAG; GIS and CollegeTown Team Manager

**Danielle Waidley**

"Impact of School Quality on Leon County Housing Market"

Presented at APEE; Public Policy Researcher

What are college student housing preferences in Tallahassee?

What are the best organizational strategies that allow free clinics to thrive in a competitive healthcare setting?

How has the revitalization of Gaines Street impacted sustainable modes of transportation within CollegeTown?

Is there an association between housing prices and the quality of school zones?
DMC students and faculty alike publish commentary in publication outlets, including regular contributions to the *Tallahassee Democrat* and Gannett News Service. This year in particular was the time to make our voices heard: not only our mission but also our values. Included here are four students who were featured in various news outlets, as well as the DMC Director, Dr. Samuel Staley.

**STUDENT COMMENTARY:**

"DeSantis undermining individual freedom, conservative principles"
DMC Editorial and Public Affairs Manager Tia Nicholson explores how Governor DeSantis' bill to ban mask mandates contradicts the conservative principle of hands-off government.

"When it comes to views of campus climate, political ideology is important"
Public Policy Researcher Eli Mckown-Dawson reviews survey results from college and university campuses, finding that political ideology had an influence on likelihood of self-censoring.

"To end opioid scourge, rethink Palm Beach County sober home rules"
Public Policy Researcher Mae Baltz summarizes her research on Palm Beach County sober home regulations and their impact on housing prices. In this op-ed, she envisions new areas of regulation that should be considered.

"Now is the time for Tallahassee to leverage CollegeTown's economic benefits"
CollegeTown Researcher Ava Jowers explores the historical changes in Tallahassee's CollegeTown area. While doing so, Ava also suggests changes the city could make in order to leverage the area's full potential.

**FACULTY COMMENTARY:**

Dr. Samuel Staley (selected):
"Amazon distribution center provides lessons for promoting economic development"
"How the Disney debacle broke the back of Florida's conservative consensus"
"Florida's minimum wage reckoning not that far off the horizon"
How would you describe the Austrian School of Economics?

Austrian Economics "starts out with Methodological Individualism, the idea that we consider individual, not group behavior," when looking at the process of how individuals interact with the economy. Another key Austrian point is that "goods and services don't have intrinsic value built into them." We determine their value by what others value them, which is determined through market exchange, supply and demand. Holcombe concludes with the point that Austrians see knowledge as being decentralized in an economy.

Is it true that Austrians and Free Marketers are not the same thing?

"Free Market Economics a lot of the time is associated with the University of Chicago and Milton Friedman. Friedman was a great champion of free markets, but he took that neoclassical approach sort of extending from Alfred Marshall the supply and demand framework, as opposed to the market process approach. The work that he's done is focused more on the equilibrium outcomes in economics rather than looking at the market process. The Austrians, from a standpoint of political philosophy, tend to favor freedom for its own sake."

Out of all your research, what's your favorite topic?

"I've always found it more interesting as an economist to study governments rather than markets and the reason for that is if you buy into Adam Smith's idea of the Invisible Hand, market activity pretty much takes care of itself."

"The interesting question in economics is 'What's government doing? Why do we need government?' And even in a relatively free market economy like the U.S., more than a third of economic resources are allocated through government. So I've always found economic analysis of government more interesting than that of markets."
"The DMC provides exceptional intrapreneurial opportunities to its employees and interns. The DMC provides real world work experience that pays off in the job market. I accepted an offer as a Data Scientist, at Northrop Grumman in Los Angeles. In my interview, they were very impressed with my experiences with the Data Analytics Group and its founding."

Tyler Worthington, '16
Data Analytics Mgr.

"In my time with the DMC I've grown immensely in my research and writing skills. As an economics major, research is an avenue I knew I could take professionally but that always felt out of reach as an undergraduate. The DMC, however, has given me the opportunity to conduct my own research and immerse myself in every step of the research process. I've also made leaps in my professional writing capabilities through the center."

Mae Baltz, '22
Public Policy

"As I'm looking back on my past, it was the DMC that got my foot in the door to get my first corporate internship with Citibank. Then from there, that internship and the DMC led me to get interviews with companies such as Apple, Microsoft, Cisco, and so on. They all asked about us. And now, this past semester with the DMC has led me to realize I love project management and I decided to go with a PM internship with Cisco!"

Janelle Otero, '20
Data Analytics Mgr.

"The DeVoe L. Moore Center has provided me with the invaluable opportunity to perform research that requires both personal initiative and cooperation with others. Interning with the DeVoe L. Moore Center is an excellent way to prepare oneself for the workplace. Additionally, the freedom to choose the direction of one's research is a component of the DMC that fosters self-accountability to a degree that is difficult to obtain by other means."

Kyle Ringers, '22
Public Policy

"Working at the DMC allowed me the freedom to conduct my own independent research and make it relevant to my own personal interests. As well, being able to interact with so many students who all have starkly different life goals expanded my perception of the professional world and made me realize all of the amazing things that students are truly capable of achieving."

Maia Hass, '20
Public Policy & Social Media

"My experience with the DMC was definitely noteworthy. The staff truly cared about the success of each intern and was always there to help with any questions or concerns along the way. The remote work of the DMC allows individuals to take on their own projects without being 'micromanaged,' and the freedom we have allows us to do work based on our own interests."

Tala Halaby, '20
Data Analytics
The DeVoe L. Moore Center comprises four working groups: Data Analytics, Public Policy (including Eminent Domain and CollegeTown), Editorial, and Public Affairs. Woven into each group is the DMC's evidence-based philosophy: a commitment to integrity through high-quality, professional work that is rigorously researched, reviewed, and edited. Procedures are based on national think tanks, leading public affairs organizations, and institutions that practice investigative journalism. Each intern leaves the center with marketable skills, professional experience, and integrity.

PUBLIC POLICY

2021-22 TEAM
Mae Baltz
De'Shawn Brundidge
Ashira Casanova
Nataly Chalco-Lopez
Noah Dankner
Chelsea Gow
Eli Mckown-Dawson
Kyle Ringers
Yolanda St. Fleur
Danielle Waidley
Pe'Keiydra Williams

The Public Policy group focuses on generating evidence-based policy analysis in the center’s core issue areas of entrepreneurship, regulation, and government transparency. Research and analysis is distributed via policy reports, blog articles, op-eds, and policy briefs.
The Eminent Domain team analyzes property acquisitions authorized by the local Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency for the construction of the Capital Cascades Trail, a multimodal, green infrastructure project. The team assesses the acquisitions and displacements due to the project through a review of public records, compensation agreements, court documents, communication logs, and historic GIS parcel data.

The Data Analytics group focuses on maintaining, analyzing, modeling, and distributing data that inform public policy decisions. The primary output of the group is the data-driven transparency website, floridaopengov.org. Interns are also expanding their skill set with GIS work, Tableau, and more. Interns procure data from local, state, and national agencies to identify information relevant to governmental, regulatory, and political spheres. Interns are further involved in interpreting the data for practical application.

The GIS and CollegeTown team analyzes the success of Tallahassee’s CollegeTown region which lies between Florida State University and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. They study how the area developed over the past 20 years utilizing historic and present data based on property values, land use classification, income, and more.
Looking for an Internship?

Join our collaborative group of interns in the pursuit of interdisciplinary research that benefits the state of Florida and beyond. Internships are tailored to you and your aspirations; what are you waiting for? For more information, contact Dr. Samuel R. Staley at sstaley@fsu.edu.

EDITORIAL

The Editorial team facilitates the publication of all reports, policy briefs, articles, and additional written products for public engagement. The team consists of skilled writers and editors primarily affiliated with the FSU English department’s Editing, Writing, and Media major. They work with all interns to provide constructive criticism and guidance during the writing and publication process. Faculty at the DMC also supervise and actively engage in expert and external peer review for publications, including blog articles. They also conduct multiple writing-related workshops.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Public Affairs team handles the community outreach operations of the center which include creating social media campaigns via our Social Impact Program, publishing newsletters for the general public, releasing public policy reports, and educating students on campus about the center’s mission and values.
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The DeVoe L. Moore Center actively posts information regarding events, publications, accomplishments, and more. To ensure you are the first to receive updates and important information, follow us on all of our media platforms!
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