

Department of Economics

The MIT Economics Department is one of the world's top institutions for economics research and education. Our faculty balance groundbreaking research with substantial commitments to undergraduate and graduate education, professional leadership, and public service. The department attracts exceptional graduate and undergraduate students and prepares them, through world-class instruction and research opportunities, for further academic work and careers in academia, finance, and government.

Priorities and Highlights

In academic year 2023, the Economics Department strategically grew our faculty, refined and expanded our academic offerings, and secured new resources to support our faculty's groundbreaking research.

Faculty Growth

The Economics Department had an exceptional year for faculty recruitment. We finalized the hires of Isaiah Andrews and public economist Nathaniel Hendren, senior faculty who are stars in their respective fields, and successfully recruited Jacob Moscona, a gifted and prolific political and environmental economist who was a standout on the junior job market this year. With these hires, two previous hires who will be starting in July 2023, and active and planned searches, the department is poised to have a full, well-rounded faculty roster after years of strategic growth in understaffed areas and emergent fields.

Research

Our faculty had more than 50 papers appear in the press this year. Some of these noteworthy publications are detailed below. New books from Amy Finkelstein and Institute Professor Daron Acemoglu provided timely, culturally relevant frameworks for demystifying health insurance markets, reconstructing the American healthcare system, and making technological innovation work for all. The exciting new Shaping the Future of Work initiative led by Acemoglu, David Autor, and Simon Johnson of MIT Sloan continued to grow and produce research on the effects of automation and globalization, the implications of artificial intelligence (AI), and the types of new work shaping the labor market. With the recent hire of Nathaniel Hendren, the department will soon become home to work from Policy Impacts, an applied research program founded and co-led by Hendren that provides tools for government policymakers evaluating the effectiveness of social programs.

Economics Education

A pilot cohort enrolled in the new Course 6-14 Master of Engineering (MEng) program administered jointly by the Economics Department and the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS). We've seen high enrollment for the full rollout of the MEng, again demonstrating the demand for the unique combination of skills provided by Course 6-14. This spring, the department began evaluating innovative, well-received reforms to our PhD curriculum that we introduced on a trial basis in 2019. Findings will form the basis for faculty discussions in the year ahead and help shape

future refinements to the curriculum. We continue to have enormous demand for our undergraduate offerings, with almost 2,000 students taking undergraduate economics classes in AY2023.

Expansion and Development Efforts

The ongoing shift of economics to large-scale, lab-based models has placed continuing strain on the department's financial, space, and personnel resources. We are, in some sense, victims of our own success, with a robust program like The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) setting the standard for our labs. With the growth of Blueprint Labs, Shaping the Future of Work, and Policy Impacts, we continue to be leaders in this area. But as the demand for resources increases, faculty retention and recruitment will depend critically on our ability to support faculty research in this model.

As such, our department leadership has continued to work closely with MIT's resource development teams on building an endowment that will provide sustainable new investment in the economics faculty's groundbreaking research initiatives. A research-focused campaign led by former MIT Corporation member and economics visiting committee chair Roger Altman has garnered millions in commitments, and we are committed to building that fund further in the years ahead.

Faculty

Leadership and Updates

AY2023 was Glenn Ellison's fourth and final year as department head. Jonathan Gruber will take over the position in July 2023. Arnaud Costinot served his second consecutive year as associate head and will continue in the role for the coming year.

Department promotions taking effect in the coming year include Martin Beraja, from assistant professor to untenured associate professor; Tobias Salz, from assistant professor to untenured associate professor; and Frank Schilbach, from untenured associated professor to tenured associate professor.

In spring 2023, the department finalized the hires of:

- Isaiah Andrews PhD '14, a lauded econometrician who develops methods of statistical inference to address key challenges in economics, social science, and medicine. Andrews was previously an assistant and associate professor in the Economics Department and is rejoining MIT from Harvard University. He is the 2021 winner of the prestigious John Bates Clark Medal for the best economist in the nation under the age of 40; being able to successfully recruit a recent Clark winner is a tremendous accomplishment.
- Nathaniel Hendren PhD '12 is joining the department from Harvard University. Hendren is a public economist who studies economic mobility and opportunity and offers new tools for government policymakers evaluating the effectiveness of social programs. He founded and co-directs two robust independent research initiatives: Policy Impacts and Opportunity Insights.

- Jacob Moscona PhD '21 will join the department in July 2024 after completing the third year of a postdoctoral “Prize Fellowship in Economics, History, and Politics” administered by Harvard’s Joint Center for History and Economics and MIT’s J-PAL. Moscona works in political economy, innovation, and environmental economics.

Ashesh Rambachan, an econometrician who received his PhD from Harvard University, and Nina Roussille, a labor economist who earned her PhD from the London School of Economics, will also join the department as assistant professors in July 2023.

With these incoming faculty and the departures of Marios Angeletos (January 2023) and Clare Balboni (June 2023), the department is entering AY2024 with 37 faculty, one senior lecturer, three professors post-tenure, nine professors emeritus, and three faculty with primary appointments in the MIT Sloan School of Management (Sloan).

Faculty Searches

The department received a total of 438 applications through this year’s recruitment process for junior faculty. Our search committee and equal opportunity officer also took deliberate steps, built into all our searches in recent years, to identify outstanding women and minority candidates. This year’s hiring committee, chaired by Acemoglu, reviewed all applications. Eighteen applicants were selected for virtual interviews in January 2023 with the faculty in their respective sub-fields. Three of these candidates were then invited to present virtual seminars during the Independent Activities Period. After faculty deliberation, the department voted to make an offer to Jacob Moscona, who will join MIT Economics as an assistant professor on July 1, 2024.

This year, the department also conducted an open-rank search in the field of econometrics that led to the hire of Isaiah Andrews. An open rank search in public economics initiated in the previous academic year led to the successful hire of Nathaniel Hendren.

Visitors

Each year, the department hosts teaching and research visitors who lead courses, actively participate in our research seminars, and serve as informal advisors for our students. Four visiting faculty, four visiting scholars, and three postdoctoral economists lent their perspectives and expertise to our community in AY2023.

Nobel laureate Jean Tirole PhD '82, who visits the department from the Toulouse School of Economics each year, spent time meeting with students and faculty during weeklong visits in fall 2022 and spring 2023 and will return in July 2023 to deliver his well-attended course on advanced topics in economics.

Other visitors who taught departmental courses in AY2023 included:

- Tetsuya Kaji (Chicago Booth): 14.30 Introduction to Statistical Methods in Economics and 14.32 Econometric Data Science
- Maximilian Kasy (University of Oxford): 14.385 Nonlinear Econometric Analysis
- Sara Lowes (University of California at San Diego): 14.75 Political Economy and Economic Development and 14.773 Political Economy: Institutions and Development

- Jonathan Weinstein (Washington University): 14.121 Microeconomic Theory I and 14.18 Mathematical Economic Modeling

Economics students and faculty have had the opportunity to engage with visiting scholars: Vivek Bhattacharya (Northwestern University), Laura Gee (Tufts University), Myrto Kalouptsi (Harvard University), and Tomasz Strzalecki (Harvard University).

Faculty Honors and Awards

The excellence of our faculty was recognized with a wide range of honors and awards this academic year. A selection includes:

- Daron Acemoglu delivered the Distinguished Lecture on “Distorted Innovation: Getting the Direction of Technology Wrong” at the annual meeting of the American Economic Association.
- Joshua Angrist was elected to the National Academy of Sciences.
- David Autor was named a 2023 NOMIS Distinguished Scientist for his contributions to understanding the effects of technological change and globalization on jobs and earnings prospects for workers.
- Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo received Golden Plate Awards from the Academy of Achievement.
- Martin Beraja received a CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support his research on the role of government policy in stabilizing business cycles and responding to the challenges posed by new digital and automation technologies.
- Ricardo Caballero was recognized as the 2022 Outstanding Economist by the Latin American Center for Economic and Social Policies.
- Arnaud Costinot was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Amy Finkelstein received the American Society of Neuroradiology’s J. Arliss Pollock Award in recognition of her leadership in socioeconomics and health policy.
- Drew Fudenberg was named a distinguished fellow of the American Economic Association in recognition of his groundbreaking and influential contributions to economic theory.
- Simon Jäger was named to the leading German business magazine *Capital’s* list of “Top 40 under 40.”
- Benjamin Olken and Alexander Wolitzky were named fellows of the Econometric Society.
- Tobias Salz was awarded a 2023 Sloan Research Fellowship to support his work in empirical industrial organization.

Professional Service

MIT Economics faculty extend their professional impact through leadership at professional journals and professional societies. They also serve on a range of nonprofit and governmental initiatives, a testament to the department’s commitment to broader public service.

Journals

Many of our faculty hold associate editorships and editorial board positions, and several serve as editors and co-editors of top economics journals. Amy Finkelstein is the founding editor of *American Economic Review: Insights* and Benjamin Olken is editor of the *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. In 2022, Esther Duflo completed her sixth and final year as editor of the *American Economic Review*.

Co-editorships include Victor Chernozhukov at *The Econometrics Journal*, Arnaud Costinot at the *American Economic Review*, Anna Mikusheva at *Econometric Theory*, Parag Pathak at *Econometrica*, and Alexander Wolitzky at *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics*. Mikusheva and Wolitzky are also foreign editors of the *Review of Economic Studies*.

Professional Organizations

This year, David Autor served as vice president of the American Economic Association. Benjamin Olken continued to serve on the board of directors for The Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD). David Atkin and Dave Donaldson were research program directors for the International Growth Center. Jonathan Gruber was elected president of the Eastern Economic Association. James Poterba continued to serve as a trustee of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Poterba also continues to lead The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), the top academic economic research organization in the country. Directors and co-directors of NBER research programs during AY2023 included: Benjamin Olken (Development Economics), Amy Finkelstein (Health Care), and David Autor (Labor Studies). Parag Pathak co-directed the NBER working group on market design.

Public Service

Abhijit Banerjee continued to serve as a trustee for Save the Children and co-chair of the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel. David Autor was appointed to the US State Department's Foreign Affairs Policy Board and completed his 12th and final year as a trustee for the Urban Institute in Washington, DC. James Poterba served on the Congressional Budget Office's Panel of Economic Advisors and on the NSF's Social Experts Action Committee. Esther Duflo continued to serve as founding chairperson of the French Government's Fund for Innovation in Development.

Research

Selected Publications

Economics faculty had over 50 papers published in peer-reviewed journals this year, including 15 in the five general-interest economics journals widely considered the most prominent in our profession. They also released three topical and well-received books: *In Power and Progress: Our 1000-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity*, Daron Acemoglu and Sloan's Simon Johnson offer a new narrative on the history of human advancement and insights on redirecting our current period of technological development for widespread societal benefit. Amy Finkelstein's *Risky Business: Why Insurance Markets Fail and What to Do About It* (with Stanford's Liran Einav and Boston University's

Raymond Fisman) demystifies health insurance markets and offers practical solutions for the systemic issues that plague them. In a second book, *We've Got You Covered: Rebooting American Health Care* (also with Einav), Finkelstein proposes a comprehensive framework for the creation of a universal American health insurance system.

A selection of other faculty research published during AY2023 includes:

- Alberto Abadie: “When Should You Adjust Standard Errors for Clustering?” (with Susan Athey, Guido Imbens, and Jeffrey M. Wooldridge), *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (lead article).
- Daron Acemoglu: “Tasks, Automation and the Rise in US Wage Inequality,” (with Pascual Restrepo), *Econometrica* and “Weak, Despotic or Inclusive? How State Type Emerges from State versus Civil Society Competition,” (with James A. Robinson), *American Political Science Review*.
- Joshua Angrist: “Choice and Consequence: Assessing Mismatch at Chicago Exam Schools,” (with Parag Pathak and Roman Zarate), *Journal of Public Economics*.
- David Atkin: “Volatility and the Gains from Trade,” (with Treb Allen), *Econometrica*.
- David Autor: “An Evaluation of the Paycheck Protection Program Using Administrative Payroll Microdata,” (with David Cho et al), *Journal of Public Economics*.
- Abhijit Banerjee: “Depression and Loneliness among the Elderly in Low- and Middle-Income Countries,” (with Esther Duflo, Frank Schilbach et al), *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.
- Martin Beraja: “A Semi-structural Methodology for Policy Counterfactuals,” *Journal of Political Economy*.
- Ricardo Caballero: “A Note on Temporary Supply Shocks with Aggregate Demand Inertia,” (with Alp Simsek), *American Economic Review: Insights*.
- Victor Chernozhukov: “De-Biased Machine Learning of Global and Local Parameters Using Regularized Riesz Representers,” (with Whitney Newey and Rahul Singh), *Econometrics Journal*.
- Arnaud Costinot: “Robots, Trade, and Luddism: A Sufficient Statistic Approach to Optimal Technology Regulation,” (with Iván Werning), *Review of Economic Studies*.
- Dave Donaldson: “Imports, Exports, and Earnings Inequality: Measures of Exposure and Estimates of Incidence,” (with Arnaud Costinot et al), *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
- Esther Duflo: “Effects of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Cash Transfers on Older Persons Living Alone in India: A Randomized Trial,” (with Abhijit Banerjee and Frank Schilbach et al), *Annals of Internal Medicine*.
- Amy Finkelstein: “Why is End of Life Spending So High? Evidence from Cancer Patients,” (with Dan Zeltzer et al), *Review of Economics and Statistics* and “Out of the Woodwork: Enrollment Spillovers in the Oregon Health Insurance Experiment,” (with Adam Sacarny and Katherine Baicker), *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*.

- Drew Fudenberg: “A Reputation for Honesty,” (with Ying Gao and Harry Pei), *Journal of Economic Theory*.
- Jonathan Gruber: “Saving lives by tying hands: the unexpected effects of constraining health care providers,” (with Thomas P. Hoe and George Stoye), *Review of Economics and Statistics* and “Behavioral Responses to Wealth Taxes: Evidence from Switzerland,” (with Marius Brühlhart, Matthias Krapf, and Kurt Schmidheiny), *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*.
- Simon Jäger: “The German Model of Industrial Relations: Balancing Flexibility and Collective Action,” (with Shakked Noy and Benjamin Schoefer), *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.
- Stephen Morris: “Coordination and Continuous Stochastic Choice,” (with Ming Yang), *Review of Economic Studies*.
- Whitney Newey: “Locally Robust Semiparametric Estimation,” (with Victor Chernozhukov et al), *Econometrica*.
- Benjamin Olken: “Electronic Food Vouchers: Evidence from an At-Scale Experiment in Indonesia,” (with Abhijit Banerjee et al), *American Economic Review*.
- Parag Pathak: “The Long-Term Effects of Universal Preschool in Boston,” (with Guthrie Gray-Lobe and Christopher R. Walters), *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
- Robert Townsend: “The Village Money Market Revealed: Financial Access and Credit Chain Links Between Formal and Informal Sectors,” (with Parit Sripakdeevong), *Annual Review of Financial Economics*.
- Christian Wolf: “Instrumental Variable Identification of Dynamic Variance Decompositions,” (with Mikkel Plagborg-Møller), *Journal of Political Economy*.
- Alex Wolitzky: “Unobserved-Offers Bargaining,” *American Economic Review*.

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

Directed by Economics Department faculty members Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Benjamin Olken, J-PAL seeks to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is based on scientific evidence. Since J-PAL’s founding in 2003, more than 600 million people have been reached by programs and policies informed by J-PAL evaluations.

This year, J-PAL helped advance evidence-based policy by initiating a partnership with the Government of Odisha, India and the non-government organization Breakthrough to introduce evidence-based gender equity programming to 23,000 government schools. J-PAL embedded staff within governments to help advance the use of evidence on social inclusion in Spain and education in France. J-PAL secured a substantial grant from Community Jameel and Co-Impact focused on building government partnerships to apply evidence in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), South Asia, and Southeast Asia.

During AY2023, J-PAL launched three new initiatives: the Science for Progress Initiative, to help ensure that funding and supporting scientific research is efficient, effective, and equitable; the Learning for All Initiative, to generate research in key open areas related to foundational literacy and numeracy and holistic skills; and the Displaced Livelihoods

Initiative, to generate evidence to inform policies and programs that can foster sustainable livelihoods for displaced and host communities.

J-PAL has grown to include over 800 affiliated researchers within its network and has furthered its efforts to diversify the field of economics by revamping how it adds new invited researchers through a self-nomination form. Following the success of J-PAL's African and Indian Scholars Programs, J-PAL selected the first cohort of MENA Scholars.

As J-PAL commemorates its 20th anniversary, it remains committed to its mission of evidence-based policy and poverty alleviation, expanding partnerships and innovative research to impact millions of lives worldwide.

J-PAL North America

J-PAL North America (J-PAL NA), led by Amy Finkelstein and University of Chicago professor Matt Notowidigdo, uses randomized evaluation methods to study the efficacy of public policies in North America. Since its launch almost 10 years ago, J-PAL NA-affiliated researchers have provided valuable policy insights through more than 250 randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

J-PAL NA's major research efforts include the Health Care Delivery Initiative, which catalyzes research on how the use of health care services affects patient outcomes and costs; the Social Policy Research Initiative, which supports randomized evaluations on education, crime and violence prevention, employment, housing, and more; the State and Local Innovation Initiative, where J-PAL researchers work closely with government leaders to form new RCTs and help answer high-priority policy questions; and the new Leveraging Evidence and Evaluation for Equitable Recovery project, which equips state and local governments to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic using data-driven evidence. In 2024, J-PAL NA will embark on a planning year around how to effectively support new RCT research on racial equity.

J-PAL NA also develops resources and provides project management to support high-quality research. Staff translate research into policy lessons that partners can apply to their local contexts and facilitate the replication and expansion of evidence-based programs to measurably improve life outcomes and reduce poverty. To date, J-PAL NA has reached more than 35 million people in North America through the scale-up of effective programs evaluated by its research network. More than \$518 million has been shifted towards evidence-based programs because of J-PAL North America's work.

Blueprint Labs

Blueprint Labs (Blueprint) is a non-partisan research lab with scholars and staff who bring unique expertise in economics to study pressing challenges in education, health care, and the workforce. Blueprint continues to generate substantial new investment in its work. Amid this growth, the lab is more motivated than ever to fulfill its mission of uncovering the consequences of policy decisions to improve society.

During AY2023, Blueprint scholars released 34 publications, using market design, research design, and other rigorous methodologies to produce exciting new insights. Blueprint Labs was also thrilled to celebrate the well-deserved achievements of its

researchers. In addition to the faculty honors detailed above, Blueprint Affiliate Peter Hull was awarded a 2023 Sloan Research Fellowship.

Blueprint’s education team studies systems and policies, helping policymakers design more equitable education systems. Blueprint Director Parag Pathak and co-authors published a paper studying the long-term effects of preschool attendance. The findings show that preschool enrollment boosts college attendance, high school graduation, and SAT test scores. Preschool also improves behavioral outcomes, such as lowering juvenile incarceration. This study has been cited widely in national policy conversations and the media.

In the health care realm, Blueprint Co-Director Nikhil Agarwal and co-authors conducted an experiment to examine the ideal design of radiologist-AI collaboration and its impacts. On their own, AI predictions were more accurate than nearly two-thirds of radiologists. However, when radiologists were given access to AI, their average performance did not improve. The researchers find that AI-radiologist collaboration is ineffective, and radiologists should work **next to** rather than **with** AI.

In addition to conducting groundbreaking research, Blueprint is committed to ensuring that its findings have real-world impact. Over the past year, Blueprint grew the School Access and Quality Fellowship, a year-long program for education leaders focused on equity. The fellows study cutting-edge research, form a national network of peers, and reflect on their enrollment practices. The policies enacted by this year’s cohort impacted more than 2.3 million students.

Shaping the Future of Work

This year, the Shaping the Future of Work Initiative launched under the leadership of Daron Acemoglu, David Autor, and Simon Johnson (Sloan), to analyze the forces that are eroding job quality and labor market opportunities for non-college workers and identify innovative ways to move the economy onto a more equitable trajectory. This initiative allows Acemoglu, Autor, and Johnson to build on their extensive work on policy-relevant economics research that will answer key questions about the decline in labor market opportunities for workers who do not have four-year degrees. The initiative’s research focuses on four main themes: changing rent-sharing in the economy; automation, inequality, and productivity; growing regional disparities; and determinants of job quality. Recent publications receiving extensive media coverage include “The Unexpected Compression: Competition at Work in the Low Wage Economy,” by David Autor, Arindrajit Dube, and Annie McGrew, and *Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity*, by Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson.

In the past year, the team has expanded to include a director and two additional pre-doctoral research fellows, bringing the total to five. As part of the launch process, the Initiative has received official approval for its name from MIT, hosted its first event, and produced a range of new research. On April 14, 2023, in collaboration with the MIT Sloan Executive MBA program, the Shaping the Future of Work Initiative co-hosted its first event, a discussion between former Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and select MIT faculty on how to use policy to shape the future of work and what the future of bipartisanship might look like. Following that meeting, Baker participated in a “fireside chat,” moderated by Simon Johnson, with approximately 150 participants.

Over the coming year, the initiative plans to host visiting faculty and its first postdoctoral fellow, launch a website, and develop an event series that will translate research into practice by fostering discussion among students, scholars, policymakers, and practitioners who are shaping the future of work.

Education and Students

PhD Program

The Economics PhD program at MIT is highly selective and consistently attracts students with the potential to make impactful contributions to the field. The department received 888 applications for the 2023 PhD admissions cycle, roughly the same as the prior year. A total of 24 prospective students were admitted this year and invited to campus in March for a two-day preview of life as an economics graduate student at MIT. Twenty of these students and three previous deferrals will join our PhD program in fall 2023, and three newly admitted students are deferring enrollment to future years. The incoming cohort of 23 students includes eight women and nine international students.

Our most recent doctoral graduates have secured faculty positions at leading schools, including Harvard University, Yale University, the University of California at Berkeley, Northwestern University, New York University, and Boston University's Questrom School of Business. Others have accepted positions at finance, technology, and consulting organizations, including the World Bank and Amazon.

The department's highest honor for doctoral students, the Robert M. Solow Prize for Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching and Research, was awarded in May 2023 to graduating students Joel Flynn (macroeconomics), Giacomo Lanzani (theory), and Rahul Singh (econometrics). Lanzani and Singh were among the seven students selected to present at the prestigious *Review of Economic Studies* tour in May 2023.

Our faculty invest significant time in mentoring students, attending weekly student-faculty advising lunches, and continuously shaping a curriculum that equips students for success in their future research and careers. In 2019, the department adopted an experimental reform of our PhD curriculum in response to concerns about student mental health and well-being. The reforms loosened the core course requirements for first-year students, replaced second-year general exams with a research paper and associated course, and eliminated the requirement for a third-year paper. In spring 2023, the department established a committee to assess the impact of these reforms and offer future recommendations. Our faculty will further discuss and vote on proposed changes this fall.

Master's Programs

Data, Economics, and Development Policy

The MITx MicroMasters Program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP), created by MIT Economics and J-PAL in 2017, allows online learners from around the world to gain a strong foundation in microeconomics, development economics, and data analysis. Approximately 50,000 learners from more than 200 countries and territories have enrolled in at least one of the DEDP courses, paying according to their income. At the close of this year, 982 learners have earned the full DEDP MicroMasters credential by completing three core and two elective courses.

Students who earn the credential can apply to the residential DEDP Master's program, led by faculty director Sara Fisher Ellison, and earn a Master of Applied Science in Data, Economics, and Development Policy in just eight months. Students take a spring semester of coursework and complete summer internships with organizations such as Evidence for Policy Design, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Graduates receive their degrees in September.

DEDP students have gone on to pursue PhDs in economics and related fields, work at organizations such as the World Bank, J-PAL, Innovations for Poverty Action, and Evidence for Policy Design, and found or lead their own organizations, including PolicyEngine and Republica.org.

Updates from AY2023 include:

- In September 2022, 31 students received their DEDP Master's degrees.
- In January 2023, the DEDP program enrolled its fourth cohort of 21 students from 15 countries.
- The program admitted 21 new students in March 2023, and the fifth cohort of 19 students will begin in January 2024. Five new admits deferred to future years; three previous deferrals are enrolling next year.

Given its tremendous success, the DEDP program has launched a new Public Policy track focused on domestic policy, which the team will continue to grow in the year ahead. The DEDP program is in the process of formalizing a change in its name to Data, Economics, and Design of Policy to encompass this exciting new work.

Master of Engineering in Computer Science, Economics, and Data Science

This year, Economics and EECS launched a new MEng program that offers advanced classwork and masters-level thesis work for undergraduate majors in Course 6-14: Computer Science, Economics, and Data Science. Graduates of the program will be well prepared for research careers and the job market, where the combination of skills in computer science, data science, and economic analysis is highly sought after. All students studying Course 6-14 as a primary or secondary major are eligible to apply for admission to the 6-14 MEng program after completion of their junior year in the bachelor's program. A small cohort piloted the program in academic year 2023, and it will be broadly offered in the coming year. We expect that the master's extension will be a valuable and well-utilized option moving forward, given the consistently high enrollment in the Course 6-14 major and the success of other MEng degrees offered by EECS.

Undergraduate Program

A total of 125 students were enrolled as Course 6-14 majors during AY2023, with 21 students enrolled in the traditional economics major (Course 14-1) and 15 enrolled in the mathematical economics major (Course 14-2). The number of Course 14 majors has remained relatively consistent, suggesting that, despite its growth, Course 6-14 is not attracting students away from our other undergraduate programs.

The department offers several topical undergraduate courses designed to broaden early engagement with the study of economics:

- 14.009 Economics and Society’s Toughest Problems, our first-year student discovery class, was taught by Esther Duflo in fall 2022 and had 47 students enrolled.
- 14.13 Economics and Psychology, taught by Frank Schilbach, had 211 students.
- 14.73 The Challenge of World Poverty, taught by Schilbach and Duflo, had 35 students.

Our other introductory courses, 14.01 Principles of Microeconomics and 14.02 Principles of Macroeconomics, had 401 and 277 students, respectively. Total undergraduate enrollments held steady in AY2023, with a total of 1,824 students registered in economics courses.

The MIT Undergraduate Economics Association supports outside-the-classroom education through social activities and a public lecture series. This year, Harvard’s Yannai Gonczarowski—the university’s first faculty member to be jointly appointed in Economics and Computer Science—delivered a lecture on computer science-inspired economic theory.

Conclusion

The Department of Economics continues to uphold the traditions of excellence in research and education that make it one of the strongest economics programs in the world. Looking ahead to academic year 2024, department priorities include recruiting new faculty in macroeconomics and environmental economics, working with MIT leadership and resource development to secure additional resources for our faculty’s innovative research, and evaluating and refining our graduate curriculum.

Glenn Ellison

Department Head

Gregory K. Palm (1970) Professor of Economics