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SAME AS IT EVER WAS: GENDER, RACE, AND ETHNICITY DIFFERENCES IN PROMOTION FOR ACADEMIC ECONOMISTS

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Same As it Ever Was: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity Differences in Promotion for Academic Economists

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ABSTRACT

Using data from Academic Analytics 2009-2022 linked to publications and multiple approaches of identifying race, we examine gender and racial/ethnicity differentials in promotion of economists in economics and non-economics departments. Results are mixed. The share of Black economists remains at 3%. Huge gender penalties in promotion to both associate and full not explained by productivity continue in economics departments. There are no gender penalties in promotion to associate for economists in non-economics departments, although some in promotion to full. There are hardly any significant racial penalties in promotion to either rank, although statistical significance is difficult with such small samples.

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Same As it Ever Was: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity Differences in Promotion for Academic Economists

Recent work has documented the underrepresentation of women in the economics profession and lower tenure and promotion rates of these women (Kahn 1993, Ginther and Kahn 2004, Ginther and Kahn 2014, Lundberg and Stearns 2019, Ginther and Kahn 2021, Auriol et al 2022, Chari 2023, and Kleemans and Thornton 2023). The extreme under-representation of African Americans, Native Americans and Hispanics among economists PhDs and faculty has been the topic of some recent work (Bayer and Rouse 2016, Mixon and Upadhyaya 2024, Price and Sharpe 2020), but there have been no studies of racial differences in tenure and promotion of economists, in part due to lack of data on economists of color. Also, much past research about promotion of women economists has focused on faculty in economics departments; we are aware of only one paper that examines the careers of women economists working outside economics departments (Taylor, Cortes, and Hearn 2019, on economists in schools of public affairs). In the current study, we update the evidence on gender differences in promotion to associate and to full professor with more extensive, very recent data, and also measure race/ethnicity differences in academic promotion of economists. Further, we describe the gender and racial promotion differences not only for economists within standard economics departments, but also for economists in other academic departments and schools.

Our analysis uses data from the 2009-2022 waves of Academic Analytics supplemented with a variety of evidence that allows us to categorize faculty by race and to identify economists both inside and outside of economics departments. Approximately one-third of academic economists are employed outside of economics departments. As in previous studies using smaller samples of the Academic Analytics data, we find women significantly disadvantaged in promotion to associate and full professor in economics departments. However, woman

economists are not disadvantaged in promotion to associate professor in non-economics departments. We find no significant racial differences in promotion to associate professor or full professor in economics departments. Outside economics departments, there are significant and opposite differences in the promotion to associate professor of Black economists depending on the universities' research-intensity.

I. Data and Methods

This study uses data from the 2009-2022 waves of Academic Analytics, a company that provides data and analysis to many higher education institutions. The Academic Analytics data includes publications, grants, citations and awards. Our sample includes annual data of all faculty provided by 314 higher education institutions in the US, including 145 institutions listed by the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education Institutions as "Research Very High" and 169 institutions classified as "Research High" or as non-doctoral institutions.[1]

We linked the Academic Analytics data to several sources to identify economists in non-economics departments. We linked publications from Academic Analytics to economics journals curated by the Australian Business Deans Council[2] (ABDC) to identify the share of publications by faculty members in economics journals. We then define economists as those faculty a) employed in an economics, agricultural economics or applied economics department, or b) someone who published an average of 59% of their publications in economics journals over their careers,[3] or c) identified as a Black economist by Mixon & Upadhyaya (2024). Our sample of economists in non-economics departments will undercount economists employed in public

[1] Academic Analytics was used in both Ginther and Kahn (2021) and Kleemans and Thornton (2023). It has expanded its data coverage of universities over time. There were 195 total institutions in 2009, 247 by 2015 and 314 by 2022. As a result, the sample used those previous articles is much smaller than the sample used in this study.
[2] https://abdc.edu.au/abdc-journal-quality-list/
[3] We chose the 59% threshold since this reflected the publication share of co-author Shulamit Kahn, an economist employed in a non-economics department.

policy departments because the ABDC economics journals list does not include policy journals. We also merged in REPEC rankings of economics departments.[4]

Academic Analytics identifies gender for most (but not all) faculty but does not collect data on race or ethnicity. We imputed race and ethnicity using two algorithmic approaches described in the appendix. When the two algorithms agree on the race of the individual, we use that information to assign race. The race algorithms do a reasonable job of identifying Hispanic and Asian races. However, if the name is rare or if the name is "White sounding," the algorithms will misidentify Black economists. To partially address this problem, we used the list of the 200 top-cited Black economists from Mixon & Upadhyaya (2024) and names of board members and past presidents of the National Economics Association.

Approximately 3,500 economists in Academic Analytics were missing gender or had disagreement in predicted race. To address this, we conducted web searches by name and used photographs or degrees from HBCUs to assign race. Photographs, biographies, and course reviews in "Rate My Professor" were used to categorize people by gender. Despite these extensive efforts, it is likely that race and to a lesser extent, gender is measured with error, and particularly, that we have not identified all Black economists. The appendix provides more details on how the data sources were linked together and how race and gender were validated.

Our full sample contains 10,530 economists employed in tenure stream academia between 2009-2022 (Appendix Table 1). 63% are employed in economics departments when first observed, and 66% of economists at research-intensive universities are in economics departments. An additional 24% are employed in business fields including finance. Figure 1 shows time trends in the share of economists that are female, Asian, Hispanic, Black, and

[4] https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.usecondept.html.

employed in non-economics departments, respectively. The share of economists working in non-economics departments increased from 30% to 34% over this period. The share of females and Asians increased rapidly over the period 2009-2022 by eight and seven percentage points to 27% and 20% respectively. The share of Hispanic economists increased, but only to 6%. However, the share of Black economists remained flat during the entire period, with Black economists only making up only 3% of the sample.[5]

As we did in our previous study, we estimate a Cox proportional hazard model of the time between PhD and promotion to associate professor.[6] To do this analysis, we created a subset of the sample who were assistant professors "at risk of" being promoted to associate professor. Specifically, we included faculty who received PhDs starting 2007 that were first observed as tenure-track assistant professors and who appeared in the data set at least twice. We follow these individuals across all universities that were part of the Academic Analytics universe.

We also study promotion to full professor as a function of time since PhD. We include only those economists who received their degree in 2002 or later and were first observed by Academic Analytics within seven years of receiving their doctorate. This sample will capture practically all years that a faculty member is at risk of being first promoted to full.[7]

Controls in our analyses of promotion include PhD degree year; whether the university was public or private; whether the university was categorized by Carnegie as "Very High

[5] During our sample period, the number of universities included in the Academic Analytics sample increased and therefore the numbers in each group increased, but this did not change the shares.
[6] All faculty are identified by rank but not all universities reported tenure status. In the entire sample, 33% had tenure status either unknown or missing. As a result, we can only study changes in rank.
[7] Note that the "at risk" period encompasses time from degree to promotion to associate to promotion to full. We do not start at the point of promotion to associate because we do not always observe when (and whether) they are promoted to associate.

Research" or as "High Research," dummy variables for department type, and time-varying variables for the cumulative number of publications, citations, and grants received and for the cumulative amount of grant dollars received from 2004 until that date. We use an inverse hyperbolic sine (IHS) transformation of productivity numbers given the presence of many zero values. We also divide the hazard analyses by department type: For those in economics departments, we do separate analyses for top 20 and not top 20 departments; for those in non-economics departments, we do separate analyses for "very high research" or not.

II. Results

Table 1 shows the coefficients on gender and race from hazard analysis of promotion to associate and full professor, first with no other variables included, and then with the entire set of control variables. While our previous research has examined gender differences in economics departments (Ginther and Kahn 2021), here we can examine both gender and race/ethnicity differences in the promotion of economists both within (top panel) and outside of economics departments (bottom panel).

A. Gender

The top panel of the table includes only economists in economics departments. The first column of Table 1 shows that, with only gender and race variables, there is a large gender difference in promotion to associate. Women on average are 24% less likely than men to escape the assistant-professor rank each period. Adding controls -- most importantly for productivity – decreases the gender difference to 19%. Note that our 2021 paper found a similar 15% gender difference, even though it included a much smaller sample of 798 economists (compared to 2,334 in Table 1)[8] and less accurate citation measures.

[8] Due to far fewer Academic Analytic institutions and, to a lesser extent, to the earlier 2018 end date.

Table 1 also shows separate gender penalties for economists in top-20 economics departments and in other economic departments. The results suggest a marked difference: there is a highly significant 21% gender difference in the hazard rate in top 20 departments, while the gender difference shrinks to 13% and is not significantly different from 1 for lower-ranked departments. This result is only suggestive because the difference between coefficients is not itself significant.

As explained earlier, we identify faculty in non-economics departments as economists based on whether they publish predominantly in economics journals. Within the groups of tenure-track new faculty, the number of economics PhDs in non-economics departments is 56% of that in economics departments. We further separate non-economics departments into whether their university is very-high-research or not. The bottom left panel of Table 1 shows no gender differences in promotion to associate professor outside economics department; with all controls, the estimated coefficient on female for all universities together is .99.

To investigate whether there has been recent narrowing of the gender gap, we also divided our sample by cohort, and separately estimated promotion hazard models for those with degrees conferred in 2013 or later, and those with earlier degrees (over a comparable number of years).[9] We found no significant change over time in the gender gap in economics departments, and no gender gap in non-economics departments in either period.

We have modeled the likelihood of being promoted to full professorships as a function of time since PhD. (We cannot model from promotion to associate, since our data starts only in 2009 and will not capture the time of promotion to associate for many observed in 2009.) We included only those who are first observed within 7 years of PhD (thus limiting ourselves to

[9] Estimates available from authors on request.

those with degrees from 2002 or later) so we were likely to catch promotions to full as they occurred. The right panel of Table 1 gives the results from hazard analysis of promotion to full professorship as a function of year from degree. There is a large gender difference in promotion to full professorship among economics departments as a whole; however, the gender gap in promotion to full is smaller and not significant in the top-20 economics departments, while it is a highly significant 42% in promotion to full professor outside of the top-20 departments (top right). Outside of economics departments, the situations are reversed: women economists have a disadvantage in achieving full professorships in very-high research universities, but not in less research-intensive universities (bottom right). Again, we must consider the differences across types of departments as only suggestive in light of large standard errors.

B. Race

Coefficients on race are also reported in Table 1. In economics departments, in contrast to gender, race does not seem to affect promotion to either associate or full professor. That is, there is no evidence of a significant impact on promotion of either being Black, Asian or Hispanic on the rate of promotion to associate professor in economics departments (top panel of Table 1) or on the rate of promotion to full (top panel of Table 2). The samples of Black economists in economics departments are very small: 60 at risk of promotion to associate (34 of whom are in top 20 departments) and 89 at risk of promotion to full (57 in top 20), so it is not surprising that we do not achieve statistically significant results. Yet there are substantial numbers of Asian economists (for instance, 569 at risk of promotion to associate, of whom 298 are in top 20 departments), and nevertheless there is no suggestion that they fare differently in promotion to either rank than White economists within economics departments. The coefficients on Hispanic

are also insignificant, but we note that those we identify (from name) as Hispanic are likely to include economists from Latin America or Spain, and not just Hispanics from the US.

The situation is somewhat different among economists *not* in economics departments. In particular, Black economists are significantly less likely to be promoted to associate professor in universities that are very high research, but significantly *more* likely to be promoted in the smaller sample in universities not considered very high research (Table 1 bottom left panel). Again, the number of Black economists is small (45 at risk of promotion to associate, of whom 19 are in very high research universities), so we are reluctant to put much emphasis on these results. However, there are no significant race/ethnicity differences for promotion to full (Table 1 bottom right panel).

Similarly, there is no evidence that Asian or Hispanic economists are treated significantly differently than White economists either in promotion to associate (Table 1 bottom left panel) or in promotion to full (Table 1 bottom right panel).

Finally, we ran separate hazard models by gender to investigate whether there are intersectional differences between gender and race in either promotion to associate or to full professor.[10] We do not find that women of color are disadvantaged any more than White women.

III. Discussion

In this paper, to better understand academic promotion dynamics, we used data from Academic Analytics and linked it with information on publication field to identify economists working in non-economics departments. We also used a variety of methods to identify the race of economists in our sample. Our study confirms the well-documented gender gap in promotion to associate and full professor in economics departments identified by Ginther and Kahn (2004,

[10] Estimates available from authors on request.

2014, 2021) and Kleemans and Thornton (2023). Our new results based on a larger sample suggest that women in Top 20 economics departments have a large promotion gap at the associate professor level.[11] For promotion to full, however, gender differences are largest in non-top-20 economics departments.

Building on this analysis, we used publications to identify economists working *outside* of economics departments (approximately one-third of all economists). In contrast to our findings for economics departments, we found no gender gap in promotion to associate professor for economists working in non-economics departments. However, the gender gap in promotion to full professor in non-economics department is large and similar to that in economics departments. The fact that research productivity does not explain these gender gaps in promotion at either level should remain a *source of considerable concern* to the profession.

Given the robustness of the gender gap in promotion, we were surprised to find little evidence of a race/ethnicity gap in promotion. There is no significant race gap in promotion to associate or full professor in economics departments. Our only evidence that Black economists are significantly disadvantaged is for promotion to associate professor in non-economics departments in very high research institutions, although they are advantaged in less-research intensive universities. We found no evidence of intersectional promotion penalties for women of color.

Taken together, this analysis shows a mixed picture related to gender and race for economists in academia. Clearly, the share of female and Asian economists has increased, but there has not been any increase in the share of Black economists. Huge gender penalties in promotion that are not explained by productivity measures continue in economics departments,

[11] This result is in contrast to the findings in our 2021 panel based on a much smaller sample of economics departments only which found a significant negative gender effect only at less-research intensive universities.

but not among economics faculty in other departments. There are hardly any significant racial penalties in either promotion to either rank, although statistical significance is difficult to obtain with such small numbers.

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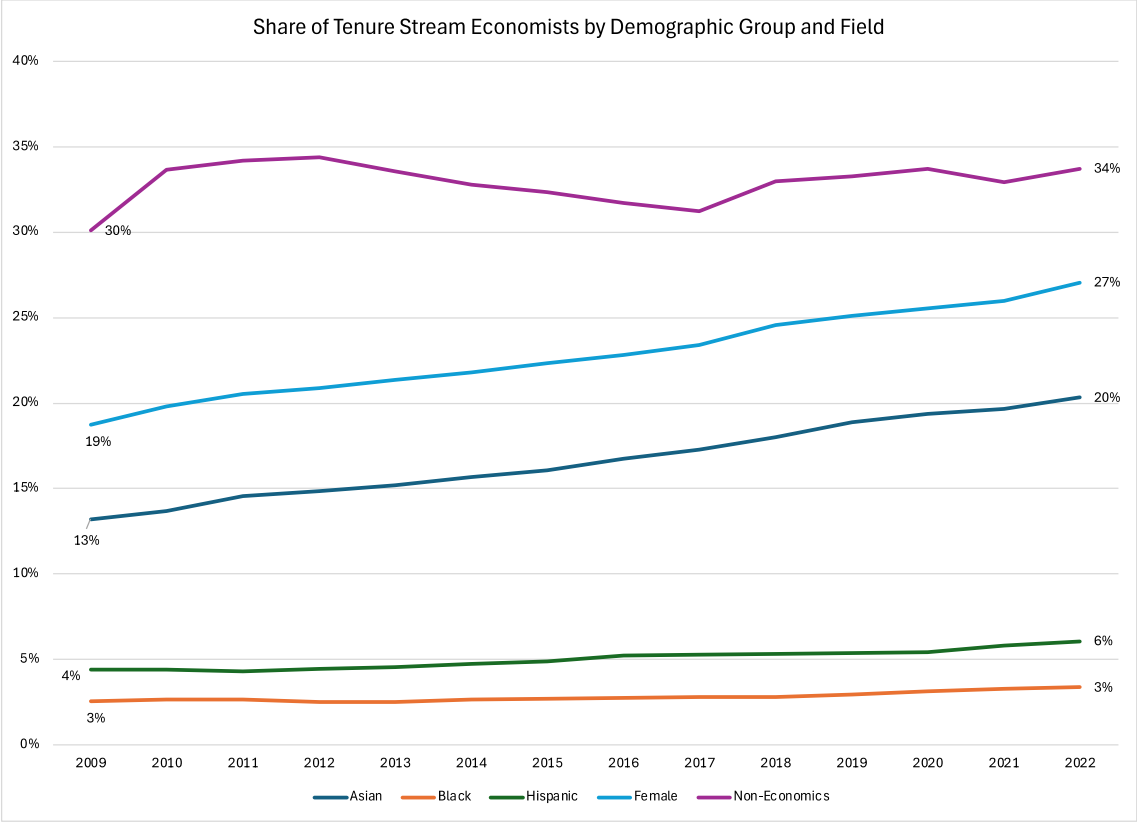

Figure 1: Share of Tenure Stream Economists by Demographic Group and Field, 2009-2022. Source: Academic Analytics.

Table 1: Proportional Hazard Estimates of Gender and Race/Ethnicity Differences in Promotion to Associate and Full Professor by Department Type, 2009-2022.

Economics	Promotion to Associate Professor				Promotion to Full Professor			
	Full Sample	Full Sample	Top 20 Departments	Non-Top 20 Departments	Full Sample	Full Sample	Top 20 Departments	Non-Top 20 Departments
Female	0.758***	0.815***	0.793***	0.868	0.724***	0.745***	0.870	0.583***
	(0.053)	(0.057)	(0.069)	(0.096)	(0.077)	(0.084)	(0.115)	(0.115)
Black	0.725	0.849	0.814	0.922	1.144	1.408	1.236	1.600
	(0.145)	(0.170)	(0.224)	(0.239)	(0.329)	(0.423)	(0.497)	(0.631)
Asian	0.966	0.998	0.884	1.157	0.939	1.100	1.294	0.891
	(0.073)	(0.074)	(0.089)	(0.128)	(0.137)	(0.156)	(0.219)	(0.204)
Hispanic	0.844	1.002	1.016	0.946	0.862	1.107	1.074	1.159
	(0.091)	(0.103)	(0.129)	(0.163)	(0.096)	(0.120)	(0.148)	(0.202)
Observations	12,141	12,141	6,581	5,560	19,514	19,514	10,646	8,868
Individuals	2,334	2,334	1,338	1,095	3,023	3,023	1,771	1,404
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-Economics	Promotion to Associate Professor				Promotion to Full Professor			
	Full Sample	Full Sample	Very High Research	Not Very High Research	Full Sample	Full Sample	Very High Research	Not Very High Research
Female	0.936	0.986	0.959	1.230	0.672**	0.710**	0.662**	1.006
	(0.085)	(0.097)	(0.108)	(0.226)	(0.110)	(0.116)	(0.126)	(0.355)
Black	1.166	1.154	0.574*	1.659*	1.165	1.366	1.227	1.300
	(0.214)	(0.233)	(0.166)	(0.475)	(0.378)	(0.440)	(0.495)	(0.757)
Asian	1.126	1.054	1.008	1.296	0.602	0.647	0.509	0.962
	(0.120)	(0.114)	(0.126)	(0.258)	(0.226)	(0.267)	(0.272)	(0.551)
Hispanic	0.859	0.944	0.817	1.238	0.852	0.898	0.928	0.795
	(0.145)	(0.173)	(0.209)	(0.350)	(0.152)	(0.154)	(0.182)	(0.324)
Observations	6,159	6,159	4,793	1,366	9,558	9,558	7,507	2,081
Individuals	1,318	1,318	1,011	343	1,753	1,753	1,356	449
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Hazard Ratios and robust standard errors in parentheses from Cox Proportional Hazard model estimates of promotion to associate professor. A coefficient of 1 on a dummy indicates no impact. Models in Columns 2–4 also include controls for public/private university, degree year, dummies for Carnegie "Very High Research" and "High Research", dummy variables for department type, and time-varying variables for the cumulative number of publications, of citations, of grants received, and grant dollars received from 2004 *** p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.10.

Appendix: Data Linkage Methods and Supplementary Tables

We linked the Academic Analytics data to several other data sources in order to identify economists in non-economics departments as well as the race and gender faculty members. Academic Analytics identifies the Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) of publications of all faculty in their data set from 2004 to 2022. We linked these publication DOIs to the Crossref[12] data set to retrieve the ISSN of the journals publishing the papers. We then linked the ISSN of journal publications in Academic Analytics to the ISSNs of economics journals curated by the Australian Business Deans Council[13] (ABDC) to identify the share of publications by faculty members in economics journals. A person was defined as an economist if they were: a) employed in an economics, agricultural economics or applied economics department; b) if over their career they published an average of 59% of their publications appear in economics journals;[14] or c) they were identified as Black economists by Mixon & Upadhyaya (2024). Our measure of economists in non-economics departments will likely undercount economists employed in policy departments because policy journals such as *Research Policy* or the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* are not considered economics journals in the ABDC list. Our definition of economists working in non-economics departments was deliberately conservative. We also merged on the top 25% of economics departments using data from REPEC.[15]

Academic Analytics does not collect data on race or ethnicity. We used several approaches to identify race. We began by imputing race based on the first and last names of the

[12] https://www.crossref.org
[13] https://abdc.edu.au/abdc-journal-quality-list/
[14] We chose the 59% threshold since this reflected the publication share of Shulamit Kahn, an economist employed in a non-economics department.
[15] https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.usecondept.html.

respondents. We estimated the race based on the probability that a name is statistically more likely to be a certain race. Last name race probabilities were taken from the data with frequently occurring surnames in 2010 Census data.[16] Census provides data on 162,253 names with a frequency of 100 or more and the probabilities of them being one of the race categories (Comenetz, 2016). When last name is missing from the Census data, we supplement it with the dataset from Rosenman, et al (2022). Their data is based on the voters' registration files and additionally includes race probabilities for first names. Last names that are not in the Census data are rare last names, and in overall population, they represent only a small number of individuals. In our faculty dataset, the voter registration data increased last name-race matches by about 10%. This supplementation approach for last names is recommended by Rosenman *et al* because voters' data from select states are not representative of national race distributions. Because Census has more race categories that Rosenman, et al (2022), we combine American Indian or Alaska Native and two races from Census with the "Other" race category from Rosenman et al into the "other race" category.

We also used race probabilities for the first names from Rosenman, et al (2022). To combine all race probabilities into an estimated race variable we used two methods. In the first method, we simply put equal weight on the last and fist name probabilities and picked the race with the highest average probability. For this method, if the probability of either name is not available, the race variable is still estimated based on the last or first name that is available.

In the second method, we adjusted last name probabilities to the first name probabilities using conditional probability formula. This method estimates race only when first and last names are matched to race probability. When the two algorithms agree on the race of the individual, we

[16] https://www.census.gov/topics/population/genealogy/data/2010_surnames.html

use that information to assign race. The race algorithms do a reasonable job of identifying Hispanic and Asian races. However, if the name is rare or if the name is "white sounding," the algorithms will misidentify Black economists. For example, the race algorithms identified Federal Reserve Governor, Lisa Cook as white. To address this problem, we used the list of the top 200 cited economists from Mixon & Upadhyaya (2024) and matched this information by first and last name. We also used the names of board members and past presidents of the National Economics Association to identify Black economists.

Approximately 3,500 of the observations of economists had disagreement in predicted race or were missing information on gender. Using a third method, we conducted web searches by name and used that information to assign race, and in approximately 1,000 cases, gender. Although the Census will start using the new race category of Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) to the 2030 Census, individuals from this set of countries are categorized as white. Individuals from the Asian subcontinent are categorized as Asian. People from Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking countries are categorized as Hispanic. During our web searches, we used country of the bachelor's degree to assign race. Photographs, biographies, and course reviews in "Rate My Professor" were used to categorize people by gender. Despite these extensive efforts, it is likely that race and to a lesser extent, gender is measured with some error.

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Appendix Table 1: Distribution of Economists by Department and Institution Type

	Institution Type		
	Research Very High	Not Research Very High	Total
Field Categories			
Field Missing			
Frequency	34	166	200
Percent	0.40	7.79	1.90
Economics			
Frequency	5,563	1,116	6,679
Percent	66.24	52.35	63.43
Finance			
Frequency	645	266	911
Percent	7.68	12.48	8.65
Business & Law			
Frequency	1,306	350	1,656
Percent	15.55	16.42	15.73
Social & Behavioral Science			
Frequency	486	110	596
Percent	5.79	5.16	5.66
Education			
Frequency	93	35	128
Percent	1.11	1.64	1.22
Life & Health Science			
Frequency	87	32	119
Percent	1.04	1.50	1.13
Physical Science & Engineering			
Frequency	71	28	99
Percent	0.85	1.31	0.94
Humanities			
Frequency	113	29	142
Percent	1.35	1.36	1.35
Total			
Frequency	8,398	2,132	10,530
Percent	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number of Institutions	145	169	314

Source: Academic Analytics 2009—2022. Counts are based on the first time an individual is observed in the sample.