

# Colleen O'Briant

Updated September 20, 2024

Department of Economics  
Sam M. Walton College of Business  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR 72701 USA

(703) 336-3685  
cobriant@uark.edu  
<https://cobriant.github.io>

---

FIELDS OF INTEREST	Applied Econometrics, Machine Learning, Industrial Organization	
CURRENT POSITION	<b>University of Arkansas</b> Visiting Assistant Professor of Economics	Fayetteville, Arkansas Fall 2024-present
EDUCATION	<b>University of Oregon</b> Ph.D. in Economics Committee: Keaton Miller (Chair), Mark Colas, David Evans, Brittany Erickson	Eugene, Oregon June 2024
	<b>Virginia Commonwealth University</b> BFA in Painting, Printmaking, Drawing, and Extended Media	Richmond, Virginia 2009 – 2013
AWARDS	Graduate Teaching Award (University of Oregon Economics Dpt) First-Year Graduate Fellowship (University of Oregon Economics Dpt)	2023 2018
WORKING PAPERS	<b>The Econometrics of Inverse Reinforcement Learning</b> I bridge the gap between the Nested Fixed Point algorithm (Rust, 1987) and two Max-Margin Inverse Reinforcement Learning algorithms (Ng and Russell, 2000 and Abbeel and Ng, 2004) to estimate models of dynamic discrete choice on a GridWorld environment.	
	<b>Comparing Inverse Reinforcement Learning to Rust's Estimator</b> I analyze publicly available 2013 taxi data to compare the practical capabilities of Inverse Reinforcement Learning (IRL) and Nested Fixed Point (NFXP) methods in estimating payoffs for New York City taxi drivers during the morning commute.	
	<b>Limited Attention and New Product Adoption for Marijuana Dispensaries</b> I use an instrumental variables approach to measure how small business owners may misattribute noise for profit signals.	
TEACHING EXPERIENCE	<b>Visiting Assistant Professor (University of Arkansas)</b> ECON 30303 Microeconomic Theory ECON 43303 Economics of Organizations ECON 47603 Economic Analytics (Machine Learning) ECON 52403 Managerial Economics	2024 2024 2025 (Scheduled) 2025 (Scheduled)

**Independent Instructor (University of Oregon)**

EC 201 Principles of Microeconomics 2021, 2022  
EC 320 Introduction to Econometrics I 2023  
EC 421 Introduction to Econometrics II 2 x 2021, 2 x 2022, 2024

TALKS

**Teaching Programming with Tidyverse Koans** August 2023  
Cascadia R Conf (Seattle, WA)

**Doing Research using Org mode for Emacs** October 2021  
University of Oregon Economics Department Micro Group

SKILLS

**Programming**

Proficient in R, Rust, and SQL

Taught R to students in eleven different Economics courses at the University of Oregon and at the University of Arkansas

SERVICE

Co-President: UO Women in Economics Group 2021 – 2022  
Organizer: UO Microeconomics Brown Bag Group 2020 – 2021

REFERENCES

**Prof. Keaton Miller (Chair)**

Associate Professor  
University of Oregon  
Email: keatonm@uoregon.edu

**Prof. David Evans**

Associate Professor  
University of Oregon  
Email: devans@uoregon.edu

**Prof. Mark Colas**

Assistant Professor  
University of Oregon  
Email: mcolas@uoregon.edu

**Sharon Kaplan**

Placement Administrator  
University of Oregon  
Email: kaplan@uoregon.edu