Arashk Afshar

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Research Fields

Microeconomic Theory, Public Economics, Political Economy

Education

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Ph.D., Economics (expected May 2027)
M.A., Economics, 2023
Advisor and Dissertation Committee Chair: Oriol Carbonell-Nicolau

University of Washington Tacoma, Tacoma, WA
B.A., Business Administration (Finance), *Summa Cum Laude*, 2019
B.S., Mathematics, *Magna Cum Laude*, 2019

Green River College, Auburn, WA
A.A., Business, *Highest Honors*, 2016

Job Market Paper

Progressive Taxation and Dynamic Wealth Inequality under Luxury Saving

When the rich save a rising share of their wealth, a tax can compress the distribution at every date and still leave the sequence pulling apart. The classical characterizations hold within a period. Across periods they have no counterpart. What governs the trajectory is whether a second levy on accumulated wealth takes back what accumulation spread apart. An income tax never does. A wealth tax can, and I give an example where it compresses at both dates while the sequence diverges anyway.

Working Papers

The Myth of the Informed Voter

Campaign money buys attention, not information. Even when voters are fully informed, the election turns on which issues a campaign makes salient: with spending unbounded, the loudest issue becomes decisive and its owner wins however narrow her support elsewhere. A binding cap keeps any issue from commanding a majority of attention and leaves the election settled across many, though whether that seats the broadly representative candidate depends on the electorate.

Work in Progress

Progressive Taxation and Wealth Inequality with Forward-Looking Savers

A dynamic extension with forward-looking agents. The question is whether the non-convergence result depends on myopia. It does not. Agents who anticipate the returns to accumulation save harder still. Containing the divergence then takes marginal-rate progressivity, a stricter standard than average-rate.

Presentations

- *Progressive Taxation and Dynamic Wealth Inequality under Luxury Saving*. Microeconomic Theory Workshop, Rutgers University, October 2026.
- *The Myth of the Informed Voter*. Microeconomic Theory Workshop, Rutgers University, 2024.

Teaching

Thirteen sections as instructor of record at Rutgers across five courses, eleven in upper-level economics (300/400), with regular-semester enrollments up to sixty-five. Designed each of the three electives around a semester-long policy analysis paper, presented at both proposal and final stages.

- **Econ 440: Economics of Income Inequality and Discrimination.** Spring 2025, Spring 2026. Designed the course and syllabus.
- **Econ 438: Education Economics.** Fall 2026 (in progress). Designed the course and syllabus.
- **Econ 402: Labor Economics.** Summer 2024, Summer 2025, Summer 2026. Designed the syllabus.
- **Econ 320: Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis.** Summer 2023 (2 sections), Fall 2025 (2 sections), Spring 2026. Taught from a fully calculus-based treatment.
- **College Writing 101**, Department of English. Fall 2023 (2 sections).

Teaching Service: **Panelist and Breakout Facilitator**, New Teaching Assistant Orientation, Institute for Teaching, Innovation, and Inclusive Pedagogy (TIIP), Rutgers University, August 2025. Shared teaching experience and led a breakout session for more than 100 incoming teaching assistants.

Primary Teaching Fields: Public Economics and Taxation; Microeconomic Theory and Game Theory; Industrial Organization; Labor Economics; Economics of Education

Teaching Award

Sidney I. Simon Award, 2024. For outstanding teaching by a graduate student, Department of Economics, Rutgers University.

Other Academic Experience

- Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University, 2021–2024
- Research Assistant, University of Washington Tacoma, 2018–2019

Honors and Fellowships

- Nominated, President's Medal, University of Washington Tacoma, 2019
- Interdisciplinary Award, for outstanding treatment of mathematics within other areas of study, University of Washington Tacoma, 2019
- *Pi Mu Epsilon* (mathematics, 2017) and *Beta Gamma Sigma* (business, 2016) honor societies
- Multiple merit scholarships, University of Washington Tacoma and Green River College

Software and Languages

Python, R, Stata, MATLAB, LaTeX · English (fluent); Farsi (native)

References

Oriol Carbonell-Nicolau (Advisor and Committee Chair)
Professor of Economics, Rutgers University · carbonell-nicolau@rutgers.edu

Richard P. McLean (Committee member)
Distinguished Professor of Economics, Rutgers University · rpmclean@economics.rutgers.edu

Andrew Mackenzie (Committee member)
Assistant Professor of Economics, Rutgers University · andrew.k.mackenzie@rutgers.edu