NBER Business Income Taxation Workshop
**Application**
September $4^{th}$, 2020

Cristóbal Otero
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*Cover Letter*

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a (fourth-year) Ph.D. Candidate in the Economics Department at the University of California, Berkeley. My areas of interest are labor economics and public finance. Before my PhD studies, I studied political philosophy at the LSE and economics at PUC-Chile.

I have attached my CV (including my PhD coursework) and a one-page essay explaining my motivation for attending the NBER Business Income Taxation Workshop. Gabriel Zucman, Associate Professor of Economics at UC Berkeley, is my recommendation letter writer. I would be happy to provide any additional information you may require.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cristóbal

# Cristóbal Otero


CONTACT INFORMATION

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Public Finance, Public Policy

EDUCATION

**University of California - Berkeley**
Ph.D. Economics 2017-

**London School of Economics (LSE)**
M.Sc. Philosophy of the Social Sciences 2016

**Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC)**
M.A. Economics (Honors) 2013
B.A. Business & Economics (Honors) 2012

COMPLETED PHD COURSES:

**First year:** Economic Theory (E 201A & 201B), Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 202A & 202B), Econometrics (ECON 240 A & B), Introduction to Economic History (ECON 210A)

**Second year:** Public Economics (ECON 230A & 230B), Labor Economics (ECON 250A & B), Applied Econometrics (ECON 244), Industrial Organization (ECON 220A)

RESEARCH AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Research Assistant**
Gabriel Zucman, Associate Professor of Economics, UC Berkeley 2020-
Tomás Rau, Associate Professor of Economics, PUC 2012-2013

**Teaching Assistant**
*Department of Economics, UC Berkeley:* Global Inequality and Growth (Gabriel Zucman), Economic Analysis–Micro (Daniel Acland)

*Department of Economics, PUC:* Microeconometrics, Econometric Theory II, Econometric Theory I (x 2), Applied Economic Analysis (Head TA), Econometrics (x 2), Monetary Macroeconomics, Macroeconomics I, Principles of Economics (x 2)

PUBLICATIONS

"National institutions and regional development at borders: evidence from the Americas", with Francisco Gallego, César Huaroto & Alejandro Saenz. *Applied Economics, Forthcoming*

WORKING PAPERS

"Food Labeling", with Nano Barahona, Joshua Kim, & Sebastián Otero

"The Economics of Public Pharmacies: Quasi- and Experimental Evidence from Local Markets", with Juan Pablo Atal, José Ignacio Cuesta & Felipe González

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

"Wage effects of Corporate Taxation: Evidence from California"
"The Effects of Managers Selection and Pay on Public Health Outcomes: Evidence from Chile" with Pablo Muñoz

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

2019 Western Economic Association Annual Conference, San Francisco; Impact Evaluation Network Annual Meeting, Medellín; DevLunch, UC Berkeley; IO Lunch, UC Berkeley.
2018 DevLunch, UC Berkeley

## Honors, Scholarships & Fellowships

2020 *George Break Prize*, for outstanding performance in Public Finance courses, UC Berkeley
2019 *Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award*, UC Berkeley
2017 *Economics Department Fellowship*, 2017-2021, UC Berkeley
2015 *Academic Excellence Scholarship for Masters Studies Abroad*, Conicyt, Chile
2013 *Maximum Distinction for Thesis*, M.A. in Economics, PUC
2013 *Academic Excellence Award*, M.A. in Economics, PUC
2013 *"Raúl Yver Oxley" Prize*, to highest GPA in graduating class of Economics, B.A., PUC
2012 *Academic Excellence Scholarship for Masters Studies*, Conicyt, Chile
2012 *Top 100 young Chilean leaders*, "El Mercurio" Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez
2007 *Academic Excellence Award*, B.A. Business & Economics, PUC

## Research Grants

2019 *Student Research Award*, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, UC Berkeley
2018 *Graduate Student Research Funding (Spring)*, Center on Global Poverty and Development, Stanford (Co-PI)
2018 *Microsoft Azure Sponsorship*, Microsoft Research (Co-PI)
2017 *Computational Social Science Fellowship*, Stanford (Co-PI)

## Professional Experience

**Consultant**, Chilean National Productivity Commission (CNP) 2017
**Cabinet Advisor**, Ministry of Economy, Government of Chile 2014 - 2015

Last update: Sept, 2020

*Why attend this Workshop?*

This workshop comes at a perfect time for me. Until now, my research has broadly examined public policies tackling pressing social issues, borrowing empirical tools from the IO literature. As I am wrapping up these projects, I am looking into new ideas for my dissertation. I am particularly eager to delve into taxation and inequality research.

To be sure, I have invested deeply in the business taxation literature. I took the public finance field and I was awarded the George Break prize for the best performance in the field courses. I have written several non-academic pieces on tax reform. I am also currently editing a book on taxation from an interdisciplinary perspective, to inform the tax policy debate in my home country of Chile. I have also become very familiar with taxation research due to my experience as a research assistant to Professor Gabriel Zucman.

Broadly, I am interested in understanding how firms react to corporate taxation and its incidence on workers. Ideally, I would like to introduce empirical methods from other fields. One preliminary idea is to exploit changes in the formula determining how multi-state firms apportion their tax liabilities in the state. For example, in 2010, California moved from a double-weighted sales formula – where sales count twice as much as payroll and property in determining liability – to a formula solely based on sales. This policy shift implied a positive or negative change in the effective corporate rate faced by firms, depending on how much of their payroll, property, and sales were based in California. This setting provides a unique opportunity to study the incidence of taxation on wages. Recent theory and evidence suggest that the firms that saw a tax increase would pass some of the tax burden to workers. However, since California's apportionment formula is solely based on sales, increasing California's workers' wages would also be in the firm's interest, to reduce its tax liability. The reason is that expanding the payroll share in California would decrease the payroll share elsewhere and therefore reduce the overall apportioned share.

I see this workshop as an opportunity to keep up to date on the business taxation literature, discuss new research ideas that could fit in my dissertation, and engage with faculty and peers working and interested in taxation and inequality.

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September 4, 2020

Dear Colleague:

This letter is to recommend **Cristóbal Otero** for the NBER Graduate Student Workshop on Business Income Taxation that will take place on October 1st, 2020.

Cristóbal is a fourth-year graduate student in the economics department at Berkeley and I am a member of his PhD dissertation committee. Cristóbal is an extremely promising young scholar with interest in taxation and applied microeconomics more broadly. He has also been deeply invested in the policy debate about taxation and business taxation in Chile. With another student from our program, Damián Vergara, he co-wrote a series of in-depth media articles about business tax reform in Chile in 2019, available on his website.

Cristóbal would benefit immensely from the workshop and I recommend him to you in the strongest possible terms.

Sincerely,
Gabriel Zucman