05 February 2024

Ana Paula Melo
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To the mentorship program's co-directors:

I am applying for the *Mentoring Program to Support NSF Grant Proposal Development by Faculty Members at Minority-Serving Institutions*.

I am an applied microeconomist focused on studying inequality in opportunity within the fields of economics of education and development economics.

I started my appointment at Howard University in August 2021, and I have since applied to the following external grants:

1. January 2023: **The Agency Fund**. Status: rejected.
2. January 2023: **Equitable Growth** (LOI only). Status: rejected.
3. April 2023: **J-PAL** (Jobs and Opportunity). Status: rejected.
4. August 2023: **UCL Stone Center**. Status: rejected.
5. October 2023: **J-PAL** (Call: Jobs and Opportunity, Brazil). Status: accepted. Amount: BRL 200,000 (~ USD 40,000). Role: co-PI.
6. January 2024: **NCER/IES** (Call: Digital Learning Platforms to Enable Efficient Education Research Network). Status: submitted. Role: consultant. (submission through E4, Northwestern University).

Please, contact Dr. Kim Lewis, Associate Dean of Research, to attest to the presence of institutional support for grant applications. She is expected to also send a confidential letter of support.

Thank you for your consideration,



Ana Paula Melo
Assistant Professor in Economics
College of Arts and Sciences
Howard University

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Employment

Howard University
Assistant Professor, Department of Economics — Fall 2021 - Current

Other affiliations

Northwestern University, Visiting Scholar, E4, School of Educ. and Social Policy — 2023 - present
J-PAL, Invited Researcher for the Latin American and the Caribbean office/JOI — 2021 - present
Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP), Graduate Research Fellow — 2019 - 2021
University of Chicago, Visiting Researcher, Center for the Econ. of Human Development — 2014 - 2015

Education

University of Wisconsin-Madison — 2016 - 2021
PhD in Agricultural & Applied Economics
University of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil — 2013 - 2016
M.Sc. in Economics
University of Espirito Santo, Vitoria, Brazil — 2008 - 2011
B.A in Economics

Peer-reviewed publications

The enduring pursuit of public science at US land grant universities (2021)
with Bradford L. Barham and Jeremy Foltz. *PLOS ONE*. 16(11).

Earnings, Wages, and Poverty Outcomes of US Farm and Low-Skill Workers (2020)
with Bradford L. Barham and Thomas Hertz. *Applied Economic Perspectives & Policy*. 42: 307-334.

Book Chapters

Academic engagement, commercialization, and scholarship: empirical evidence from agricultural and life scientists at US land grant universities (2021)
with Bradford L. Barham and Jeremy Foltz, NBER Chapters, in: *Economics of Research and Innovation in Agriculture*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc.

Work in progress

Working papers:
"Affirmative action, college access and major choice: redistribution and opportunity for social mobility"
"Temperature, effort, and achievement"
with Mizuhiro Suzuki
"Temperature and bureaucracy: empirical analysis on auditing reports in Brazil"
with Mizuhiro Suzuki
"Affirmative action and demand for schooling: evidence from a nation-wide policies"
with Ursula Mello

Registered RCT trials:
AEARCTR-0012396: "Mentorship networks and the early career outcomes of college-educated women,"
with Ursula Mello and Maria Oaquim

Workshops, Conferences and Seminar Presentations

2023 * Planned + Invited
University of Illinois-Chicago*+, SBE*+, LACEA*+, SESP-NU*+, UFPB*+

2022
PUC-Rio+ (guest lecturer), APPAM Fall Research Conference, North East Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC), EESP-FGV+, NBER SI Development Economics, Universidade Católica de Brasília+, Urban Institute+, Insper+, Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), CSWEP CeMENT Workshop

2021
North East Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC), Seminários SBE de Economia Aplicada+, PUC-Rio+ (guest lecturer), Midwest International Economic Development Conference, Howard University+, AEA/ASSA Conference (Poster)

2020
Southern Economics Association (SEA) Annual Meeting, Grupo de Estudos em Políticas Públicas+ (GEPP, Brazil), APPAM Virtual Fall Research Conference, Summer Undergraduate Research Group in Economics+ (SURGE), Development Economics Workshop - UW-Madison, The Sadie Collective Conference (Poster)

2019
NBER Conference - Economics of Research and Innovation in Agriculture, H2D2 Research Day - University of Michigan (Poster)

Grants, Honors & Fellowships

J-PAL, Jobs and Opportunity Initiative Brazil (2024): "Mentorship networks and the early career outcomes of college-educated women", with Ursula Mello and Maria Oaquim [BRL 199,187.00, ≈ USD 41,000]

Northwestern University (2023): Visiting scholar fellowship, E4, SESP, Northwestern University

Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award (*Honorable Mention*), AAE Dept., UW-Madison (2020)

Research Scholar, The Sadie Collective (2020)

Student Research Grant Competition Award, UW-Madison (2020)

Scott Kloeck-Jenson International Pre-Dissertation Travel Grant (2019)

Department Research Grant, AAE, UW-Madison (2019)

Department Travel Grant, AAE, UW-Madison (2019)

Barbara Forrest Research Paper Prize (*Honorable Mention*) (2018)

São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) Thesis Fellowship (2013-2015)

FAPESP/BEPE Research Internship Abroad Fellowship (2014-2015)

Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), M.Sc. Fellowship (2013)

Professional Service and Membership

Referee for: Economics of Education Review, Journal of Human Capital, Brazilian Econometric Society Conference (scientific committee)

Mentoring program (REPP) - coordinator	since 2021
Member of The Brazilian Black Economists Network (PT: REPP)	since 2020
Equity in Hiring Review Committee, AAE UW-Madison	2020-2021
Vice-president Taylor-Hibbard Club, AAE graduate student group	2019-2020
AAE Graduate Committee Student Representative	2018-2019
President Taylor-Hibbard Club, AAE graduate student group	2017-2018

Media

EconomistAs (host: Paula Pereda and Laura Karpuska), InequaliTalks (host: Clémentine Van Effenterre); Folha de São Paulo (Opinion, with Michael França); Folha de São Paulo (interview)

Teaching

Howard University

Undergraduate/Graduate - ECON-175/ECOG-204: History of Economic Thought	Fall 2022
Undergraduate - ECON-002: Principles of Economics II	Spring 2022
Undergraduate - ECON-180: Elementary Statistics for Business and Economics	Spring 2022
Undergraduate/Graduate - ECON-175/ECOG-204: History of Economic Thought	Fall 2021

University of Wisconsin-Madison (Teaching Assistant)

Graduate - PA 880 - Microeconomic Policy Analysis	Fall 2020
Undergraduate - AAE 374 - The Growth and Dev. of Nations in the Global Econ	Spring 2020

Work Experience

The World Bank, Poverty & Equity Global Practice

Consultant (Short-Term Consultant)	May - August 2017
Consultant (Short-Term Consultant)	July 2016

Ayrton Senna Institute & Insper, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Research Professional at *eduLab21*	July 2015 - June 2016

Languages and Computer Skills

Speaks: Portuguese (Native), English (Fluent), French (Intermediate), Spanish (Intermediate)
Programming: Stata, R, Latex

Inequality in college access and early career outcomes in Brazil

Principal investigators: Ursula Mello (INSPER), Ana Paula Melo (Howard University), and Maria Oaquim (Princeton University)

The labor market returns to college are well known, with women and racial minorities fairing behind white men in career outcomes. Explanations include differences in attitudes toward job search, network availability, information, and aspirations, which influence how students choose their first occupation after college, apply for jobs, and build their career prospects during the early stages of the job market. Intersectional differences among women in the labor market are also salient. College enrollment of women from low-income backgrounds and women from a racial minority group is increasing. Yet, they face challenges in college completion and transitioning from higher education to the labor market. Relative to their more economically affluent and white peers, socially disadvantaged women and women of color have limited exposure to role models, people with experience navigating college-job transitions, and professional networks.

What is the degree of gender inequality (and its intersectionality) in college completion and early career outcomes? How much of this inequality is explained by college and major sorting? Can low-cost interventions mitigate such disparities and improve the outcomes of vulnerable groups? Can mentorship programs improve vulnerable women's attitudes toward job search and early career prospects?

We plan to answer these questions in two steps. First, we will use Brazilian administrative data to document the extent of gender inequality in college graduation and early labor market outcomes by observing the universe of college students in Brazil in the census of higher education matched with employer-employee matched data (RAIS) and the Firm Ownership data. Second, we will evaluate how a tailored one-to-one mentorship program targeted at female college students transitioning to the labor market in Brazil can reduce such inequalities.

Our project will provide evidence of a pressing issue related to youth employment and college-to-labor market transitions in low and middle-income countries. It is well-known that information about job opportunities can be particularly costly in low and middle-income settings. Thus, job seekers tend to underinvest in their search and fail to communicate their qualifications to employers. These barriers are particularly salient for low-income and non-white individuals and women working in male-dominated fields. Brazil is a particularly relevant context given the recent rise in access to college among women of low socioeconomic status following the affirmative action policies enacted in the past twenty years, the world's most extensive preferential admissions policy. While these policies leveled the playing field at admissions, inequalities persist during their college years and early career outcomes. For instance, one year after graduation, low-income, non-white female college graduates employed in the formal sector earn 30% less than their white high-income counterparts and 45% less than their white-male high-income counterparts.