Porter Olson

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Education

Brigham Young University, Provo, UT — Graduation April 2026
B.S. in Economics; Minors in Mathematics and Chinese
GPA: 3.93

Selected Coursework:
Graduate Econometrics (Frandsen); Graduate Asset Pricing Theory (Boyer, Diether);
Graduate Macroeconomic Theory (vom Lehn); Machine Learning Econometrics (Frandsen);
Deep Learning (Jenkins); Calculus I–III;
Microeconomic Theory I (Price); Microeconomic Theory II (Cardon);
Macroeconomic Theory I (Yim); Applied Econometrics (Pope);
Real Analysis (Lawlor); Linear Algebra; Computational Linear Algebra (Allen);

Research Interests

- Econometrics & Causal Inference
- Asset Pricing
- Labor & Education Economics
- Corporate Finance
- Machine Learning & AI in Economics

Research Experience

Economics Research Assistant, Brigham Young University — Sept 2024 – Present
Advisor: Dr. Tanner Eastmond

- Contributed to research on the returns to foreign language acquisition and the long-run effects of international exposure on political and social outcomes.
- Developed and implemented fuzzy-matching algorithms in Stata to link LinkedIn profiles with survey respondents, substantially improving individual-level data coverage.
- Conducted regression analysis and exploratory data analysis to evaluate key outcomes, assess functional-form assumptions, and test robustness of results.
- Web-scraped historical newspaper archives to construct mission-president fixed effects used as controls in regression analysis.

Economics Research Assistant, Brigham Young University — Feb 2024 – Sept 2024
Advisor: Dr. Joseph Price

- Scraped and cleaned county-level administrative data in Python for an analysis of FHA mortgages.
- Wrote large-scale matching scripts linking lottery winners to the 1880 U.S. Census.

- Oversaw and managed the training of 30+ BYU Pathways students to perform data transcription.

Quantitative Researcher, BYU Silver Fund Jan 2025 – Present
Supervisors: Brandon Bates, Brian Boyer

- Replicated and extended academic asset pricing anomalies (Betting Against Beta, Earnings Surprise Streak, In Search of Distress Risk, Lazy Prices).
- Conducted original NLP-based research using finetuned LLM models on 10-K filings.
- Implemented portfolio backtests using MSCI Barra risk models and constrained optimization.

Research Intern, Ag-Genius AI May 2025 - Aug 2025

- Designed and built a multi-modal convolutional neural network (CNN) to predict crop yields with an R^2 of 0.85.
- Engineered a crop identification algorithm using Sentinel-2 satellite imagery to detect winter wheat with 95% accuracy.
- Conducted original research on phenological stages, yield variation, and input costs to support model development and guide company strategy.

Air Force Research Lab Scholar, USRA Summer 2018
Mentor: Shawn Young Program: Space Vehicles

- Conducted computational research on Solar Energetic Particle (SEP) trajectories in Earth's magnetosphere using large-scale MHD simulations.
- Developed Python-based analysis tools to generate 2D histograms and contour plots measuring SEP cutoff penetration with and without electric fields.
- Quantified differences in particle penetration by comparing counterfactual simulations, providing evidence that electric fields increase SEP penetration depth.
- Held interim Department of Defense Secret clearance at Kirtland Air Force Base.

Research Papers and Working Papers

- Olson, P., & Benner, O. (2024). The impact of Texas's ESG ban on financial and environmental outcomes (BYU Scholars Archive).

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, FIN 585: Graduate Asset Pricing Theory
Brigham Young University Winter 2026
Cantonese Instructor, Missionary Training Center
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 2021–2023

Technical Skills

Programming: Python, Stata, R, SQL, MATLAB, LaTeX
Machine Learning: PyTorch, TensorFlow, scikit-learn, transformers, PEFT
Data Analysis: Polars, Pandas, Matplotlib, Selenium, bs4, geopandas, xarray, cvxpy
Languages: Mandarin (advanced), Cantonese (advanced)