Onupurba Das

Ph.D. Economics

Department of Resource Economics
University of Massachusetts Amherst
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Education

September 2026 **Ph.D. Economics**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.
Dissertation: *Political Representation, the Environment, and Well-Being in India*
Committee: Jamie T. Mullins (Chair), Debi Prasad Mohapatra, Jessica Pearlman, Timothy Randhir
Fields: Environmental Economics (primary); Development Economics, Political Economy, Gender

2015 – 2017 **M.Sc. Economics**, *Madras School of Economics*, Central University of Tamil Nadu, India.

2010 – 2013 **B.A. Economics**, *Madras Christian College*, University of Madras, India.

Professional Experience

2023 – 2026 **Quantitative Methodology Consultant**, *Institute for Social Science Research*, UMass Amherst.
Advised faculty and student researchers across the social sciences and public health on research design, quantitative methods, and Stata; designed and taught methods workshops.

2023 – 2025 **Econometrics and Data Science Fellow**, *Amherst College*.
Advised senior honors thesis students on econometrics, Stata, and research design; held open hours for students in quantitative coursework.

2013 – 2014 **Analyst**, *Goldman Sachs*, Bangalore, India.

Research

Job Market Paper

2026 **Caste Reservations, Development, and Forest Cover in India**.
Paper
Leveraging the quasi-random rotation of chairperson reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) across 5,033 village councils in Karnataka, India (1994–2010), I estimate the effects of marginalized communities' representation in leadership on satellite-measured nighttime lights and forest cover. SC/ST-led councils see higher local economic activity but lower forest cover, with larger effects under ST leadership, revealing trade-offs between development and conservation.

Submitted

2026 **A Decade Later and Still Waiting: The Epidemiology of Nonventilator Hospital-Acquired Pneumonia in the United States**, *with Dian L. Baker, Jessica Pearlman, & Karen K. Giuliano.*

Working Papers

2026 **Political Reservations for Women, Implementational Bias, and the Provision of Environmental Public Goods in Rural India**, *with Jamie T. Mullins.*
Paper

2024 **Temperature, Particulate Matter, and Mental Health in India**, *with Jamie T. Mullins & Kavita Sardana.*
Paper

Research Assistant Experience

2025 – 2026 **Karen K. Giuliano & Dian L. Baker**, *Elaine Marieb Center for Nursing and Engineering Innovation, UMass Amherst (Giuliano); School of Nursing, California State University, Sacramento (Baker).*
Analyzed HCUP data on the outcomes of hospital-acquired pneumonia, including mortality, length of stay, discharge status, and total charges.

2019 **Jamie T. Mullins**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.

2018 **Jamie T. Mullins & Daniel Lass**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.

Fellowships & Awards

2025 **Travel Grant, ASSA Annual Meeting**, *Office of Inclusion and Engagement*, UMass Amherst.

2018 – 2022 **Research Enhancement and Leadership (REAL) Fellowship**, *Graduate School*, UMass Amherst.

2021 **Summer Research Fellowship**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.

2020 **Vijay Bhagavan Teaching Assistant of Distinction Award**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.

Teaching

Instructor of Record, UMass Amherst

2023 – 2024 **Math Camp for Incoming Graduate Students**, *Department of Resource Economics*, two-week preparatory course for Mathematical Methods for Economics (ECON 751).
Summer 2024, Summer 2023

2022 – 2023 **Don't Panic: A Guide to College, Economics, and the World Beyond (RES-ECON 191)**, *Department of Resource Economics*, First-Year Seminar, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.
Fall 2023, Fall 2022

2019 – 2022 **Environmental Economics (RES-ECON 262), Online**, *Department of Resource Economics*, offered through University Without Walls, Continuing & Professional Education.
Summer 2022, Summer 2020, Summer 2019

2019 – 2020 **Understanding Resource Economics (RES-ECON 191)**, *Department of Resource Economics*, First-Year Seminar, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.
Fall 2020, Fall 2019

Workshops, Institute for Social Science Research, UMass Amherst

2023 – 2026 **Stata Workshop Series**.
Introduction to Stata; Data Management in Stata with Multiple Datasets; Say it with a Graph!; Stata for Research: Organize Your Workflow; Loops and Macros with Stata (Advanced Data Management).
Two workshops per semester, in person and online.

Advising

2023 – 2025 **Consultant to Honors Thesis Students**, *Amherst College*.

2023 **Undergraduate RA Supervisor**, *Department of Resource Economics*, UMass Amherst.

2019 – 2022 **Supervisor of Undergraduate TAs**, *First-Year Seminar, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.*

2018 – 2020 **Peer Mentor**, *REAL Fellowship*, UMass Amherst.

Teaching Assistant, UMass Amherst

Graduate Econometric Methods; Probability Theory and Statistical Inference

Undergraduate Cost-Benefit Analysis; Decision Analysis; Environmental Economics; Computing: Foundations to Frontiers; Intermediate Statistics for Business and Economics; Quantitative Methods in Applied Economics

Conferences & Guest Lectures

Conference Presentations

2025 **Allied Social Science Associations (ASSA) Annual Meeting**.
Political Representation, Forest Cover and Development in Rural India

2021 **Eastern Economic Association Annual Conference**.
Women in Political Leadership and Deforestation in Rural India

2020 **Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association Annual Meeting**.
Gender Based Reservations in Politics and Deforestation in Rural India

2018 – 2022 **Resource Economics Annual Graduate Conference**, *UMass Amherst.*

Guest Lectures and Panel Discussions

2023 – 2024 **Guest Lecture**, *Senior Departmental Honors Seminar*, Amherst College.

2022 **Guest Lecture**, *Environmental Economics (RES-ECON 262)*, Department of Resource Economics, UMass Amherst.

2021 **Panelist**, *Women in Economics*, Department of Economics and Department of Resource Economics, UMass Amherst.

Service

2019 – 2024 **Co-Founder**, *Progressive South Asians*, Western Massachusetts.

2021 – 2023 **Co-Chair**, *Graduate Students of Color Association*, UMass Amherst.

2021 – 2023 **Senator**, *Graduate Student Senate*, UMass Amherst.

2021 **Co-Organizer**, *Dalit History Month Special, Breakfast with Du Bois*, W.E.B. Du Bois Library and Progressive South Asians, UMass Amherst.

2019 – 2021 **Executive Board Member**, *Graduate Students of Color Association*, UMass Amherst.

2019 – 2021 **Executive Committee Member**, *Resource Economics Graduate Council*, UMass Amherst.

2019 – 2020 **Steward**, *Graduate Employee Organization*, UMass Amherst.

Skills

Software Stata (advanced), R, ArcGIS, LaTeX, SPSS, MATLAB

Languages English, Bengali, Hindi, Kannada (spoken)

References

Dr. Jamie T. Mullins
(Dissertation Committee Chair)
Associate Professor
Department of Resource Economics
UMass Amherst
✉ jmullins@umass.edu

Dr. Jessica Pearlman
(Dissertation Committee Member)
Director of Research Methods Programs,
Institute for Social Science Research
UMass Amherst
✉ jpearlman@umass.edu

Dr. Bernard Morzuch
Emeritus Professor
Department of Resource Economics
UMass Amherst
✉ morzuch@umass.edu