August 2026

Stephen Wu
Economics Department
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Current Appointment
Irma M. and Robert D. Morris Professor of Economics, Hamilton College, 2020 – present

Former Appointments
Lecturer, Princeton University 1999-2000
Assistant Professor of Economics, Hamilton College, 2000 – 2006
Associate Professor of Economics, Hamilton College, 2006 – 2012
Professor of Economics, Hamilton College, 2012 – 2020

Education
Brown University, Sc.B., Applied Mathematics-Economics, 1995
Princeton University, M.A., Economics, 1997
Princeton University, Ph.D., Economics, 2000

Publications, Working Papers, and Works in Progress
"Forecasting Job Placements of Economics Graduate Students," (with Alan Krueger), Journal of Economic Education, Winter 2000, 31(1): 81-94.

"Adapting to Heart Conditions: A Test of the Hedonic Treadmill," Journal of Health Economics, July 2001, 20(4): 495-508.

"The Effects of Health Events on the Economic Status of Married Couples," Journal of Human Resources, Winter 2003, 38(1): 219-230.

"Sickness and Preventive Medical Behavior," Journal of Health Economics, July 2003, 22(4): 675-689.

"Portfolio Choice and Health Status," (with Harvey Rosen), Journal of Financial Economics, June 2004, 72(3): 457-484, reprinted in Michael Haliassos, Ed., Household Finance, Volume 1, 2015.

"Fatalistic Tendencies: An Explanation of Why People Don't Save," B.E. Journals in Economic Analysis and Policy: Contributions to Economic Analysis and Policy, 2005, 4(1): Article 11, 1-21.

"Where do Faculty Receive their PhDs? A Comparison Across Six Disciplines," Academe, July/August 2005, 91(4): 53-54.

"Recent Publishing Trends at the AER, JPE and QJE," Applied Economics Letters, January 2007, 14(1): 59-63.

"The Search for Economics Talent: Doctoral Completion and Research Productivity," (with Wayne Grove), American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings, May 2007, 97(2): 506-511.

"Is Trade Good for Your Health?" (with Ann Owen), Review of International Economics, September 2007, 15(4): 660-682.

"Financial Shocks and Worry about the Future," (with Ann Owen), Empirical Economics, November 2007, 33(3): 515-530.

"Objective Confirmation of Subjective Measures of Human Well-Being: Evidence from the USA," (with Andrew Oswald), Science, January 2010, 327(5965): 576-579.

"Early Decision and College Performance," (with Elizabeth Jensen), Economics of Education Review, August 2010, 29(4): 517-525.

"Identity and Environmentalism: The Influence of Community Characteristics," (with Ann Owen and Julio Videras), Review of Social Economy, December 2010, 68(4): 465-486.

"Fatalism and Savings," (with Joel Shapiro), Journal of Socio-Economics, October 2011, 40(5): 645-651.

"Well-being Across America: Evidence from a Random Sample of One Million Americans," (with Andrew Oswald), Review of Economics and Statistics, November 2011, 93(4): 1118-1134.

"Dark Contrasts: The Paradox of High Rates of Suicide in Happy Places," (with Mary Daly, Andrew Oswald, and Daniel Wilson), Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, December 2011, 80(3): 435-442.

"Factors Influencing Student Performance in Economics: Class and Instructor Characteristics," (with Wayne Grove), International Handbook on Teaching and Learning Economics, December 2011: 351-359.

"The Influence of Social Relationships on Pro-Environment Behaviors," (with Julio Videras, Ann Owen, and Emily Conover)," Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, January 2012, 63(1): 35-50.

"More Information Isn't Always Better: The Case of Voluntary Provision of Environmental Quality," (with Ann Owen and Julio Videras), Economic Inquiry, July 2012, 50(3): 585-603.

"Heat Waves, Droughts, and Preferences for Environmental Policy," (with Ann Owen, Emily Conover, and Julio Videras)," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Summer 2012, 31(3): 556-567.

"Social Comparisons and Life Satisfaction across Racial and Ethnic Groups: The Effects of Status, Information and Solidarity," (with Lewis Davis), Social Indicators Research, July 2014, 117(3): 849-869.

"Happiness as a Driver of Risk-Avoiding Behaviour: Theory and an Empirical Study of Seatbelt Wearing and Automobile Accidents," (with Jan-Emmanuel DeNeve, Robert Goudie, Sach Mukherjee, and Andrew Oswald), Economica, October 2014, 81(324): 674–697.

"Criminal Records and The Labor Market for Professional Athletes: The Case of the National Football League," (with Kendall Weir '12), Journal of Sports Economics, December 2014, 15(6): 617-635.

"Are Pregnant Women Happier? Racial Differences in the Relationship Between Pregnancy and Life Satisfaction," (with Paul Hagstrom), Review of Economics of the Household, September 2016, 14(3): 507-527.

"The Effects of Cueing and Framing on Attitudes Towards Gun Control and Gun Rights", Social Sciences, February 2018, 7(2), 29.

"The Taste for Status in International Comparison" (with Lewis Davis), Journal of Happiness Studies, August 2020, 21(6): 2237-2256

"Leadership Matters: Police Chief Race and Fatal Shootings by Police Officers", Social Science Quarterly, January 2021, 102(1): 407-419.

"The Wellbeing of Refugees in the United States: Evidence from Utica, NY," (with Paul Hagstrom and Javier Pereira), Journal of Refugee Studies, March 2021, 34(1): 614-633.

"Religion and Refugee Well-Being: The Importance of Inclusive Community" (with Stephen Ellingson, Paul Hagstrom, and Jaime Kucinskas), Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, June 2021, 60(2): 291-308.

"Sharing Common Roots: Student-Graduate Committee Matching and Job Market Outcomes" (with Qi Ge and Chenyu Zhou), Southern Economic Journal, October 2021, 88(2): 828-856.

"Assessing the Relationship Between Health and Household Portfolio Allocation," Financial Planning Review, December 2021, 4(4): e1128.

"Income Improves Well-Being: Evidence from South Africa" (with Mo Alloush), Economic Development and Cultural Change, January 2023, 71(2): 485-517.

"Priming Past Experiences and Preferences for Redistribution" (with Jeffrey Cross and Wei Zhan), Economics Bulletin, March 2023, 43(1): 53-73.

"Impact of Sports Gambling on Mental Health" (with Cody Couture and Jeffrey Cross), Economics Letters, October 2024, 243: 111922.

"How Do You Say Your Name? Difficult to Pronounce Names and Labor Market Outcomes" (with Qi Ge), American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, November 2024, 16(4): 254-279.

"Can You Mitigate Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching? Evaluating Alternative Methods of Soliciting Feedback" (with Ann Owen and Erica DeBruin), Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, May 2025, 50(3): 442-457.

"Can Student Evaluations Be Made More Representative? Testing Alternative Strategies" (with Erica DeBruin and Ann Owen), Studies in Higher Education, February 2026, 51(2): 326-339.

"Doctoral Origins and Gender and Racial/Ethnic Backgrounds of College Faculty", International Journal of Research in Education, Humanities, and Commerce, March-April 2026, 7(2): 26-32.

"Teaching Happiness (Economics) in Your Dismal Science Courses" (with Kristen Cooper, Ori Heffetz, John Ifcher, and Ekaterina Oparina), Journal of Economic Education, April-June 2026, 57(20): 182-196.

"The Health Effects of Urgent Care Center Entry: The Case of *WellNow*" (with Eliane Barker), Economics and Human Biology, May 2026, 61(2): 101588.

"Impact of Sports Betting on Physical Activity" (with Cody Couture and Jeffrey Cross), under review

"Discrimination Against Transgender Patients in Primary Care: Evidence from an Audit Study" (with Madison Harland), under review

"The Impact of Insurance Status on Access to Dental Care: Evidence from a Nationally Representative Audit Study" (with Jeffrey Cross and Evelyn Skoy), in progress

"Urgent Care Center Entry and Hospital Case Mix" (with Eliane Barker), in progress

"The Relationship Between Religious Beliefs and Practices and Subjective Well-Being", in progress

Honors, Grants, and Collaborations
Omicron Delta Epsilon Honor Society, Brown University (1994)
Magna Cum Laude, Brown University (1995)
Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni Teaching Prize, Princeton University (1999)
Lucas Grant, Hamilton College (2001)
Faculty Collaborator, Freeman Grant in Asian Studies, Hamilton College (2005)
Faculty Collaborator, Levitt Fellowship, Hamilton College (2004, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2021, 2022, 2025)
Faculty Collaborator, Emerson Fellowship, Hamilton College (2010, 2013)
Alpha Delta Phi Great Professor Award, Hamilton College (2011, 2024)
Dean's Scholarly Award for Notable Year Achievement, Hamilton College (2011, 2021)
Spencer Foundation Grant, "Assessment of Methods for Soliciting Student Feedback on Teaching" (2023)

Selected Media Coverage
Sports Gambling and Mental Health
NPR: March Madness is a Season for Betting, but Help for Problem Gambling is Hard to Find
Retirement Broadcast Network: Sports Betting Ensnares Young Men with ADHD

Fatalism and Doom Spending
Bloomberg Originals: Why Young People Are in So Much Debt
Bloomberg News: Gen Z and Spending/Saving Habits

Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching
Chronicle of Higher Education: What if You Can't Remove Bias from Course Evaluations?
Forbes: College Professors Tried to Reduce Gender Bias in Evaluations but Couldn't

Name Pronunciation and Job Outcomes
NPR: What's in a Name? Maybe a Job
Wall Street Journal: The Price People with Hard-to-Pronounce Names Pay in the Job Market
The Economist: How Big Is the Role of Luck in Career Success?
Washington Post: What's in an American Name?
Inside Higher Ed: The Difficult Name Penalty
Marginal Revolution: Difficult-to-Pronounce Names and Labor Market Outcomes

Police Chief Race and Fatal Police Shootings
Time Magazine: Leadership Matters
Washington Post: What Black Cops Know about Racism in Policing
Wall Street Journal: Where Most Police are White, a Black Chief Tries to Bridge the Divide

COVID-19
CNN: Risks and Benefits of Reopening
Newsweek: Covid Stimulus and Economic Recovery

Pregnancy and Happiness
Time Magazine: Black Women and Pregnancy

Character Concerns in the National Football League
New York Times: A Lesson in Intangibles
NPR: Character Concerns Versus Performance in the NFL

Suicide Rates and Happiness
New York Times: Happiest Places Post Highest Suicide Rates

Youth Attitudes on the Economy
CBS News: Black Teens More Optimistic than Peers

Happiness Across the United States
Wall Street Journal: The Drag of Devising a State-by-State Mirth Meter
New York Times: New York Ranks Last in Happiness Rating
New York Public Radio: Highs and Lows

Invited Presentations
American Economic Association Annual Meetings, Binghamton University, Cornell University, NBER Higher Education Working Group Meetings, Oberlin College, Princeton University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Syracuse University, Union College, Vassar College, Western Economic Association Annual Meetings, Wayne State University, Williams College

Recent Courses Taught
Introduction to Economics
Microeconomic Theory
Health Economics
Economics of Higher Education
Economics of Happiness
Senior Honors Research Seminar

Professional Service
Co-editor, International Journal of Wellbeing (2012-2017)
Associate Editor, Financial Planning Review (2019-23)
Editorial Board Member, International Journal of Wellbeing (2010-present)
Editorial Board Member, Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics (2013-present)
Member, World Wellbeing Panel (2018-present)
Member, American Economic Association Committee on the Job Market (2024-2027)

Departmental and College-Wide Service
Information Technology Committee (2002-2003)
Faculty Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (2003)
Dean of Admissions Search Committee (2003-2004)
Director of Financial Aid Search Committee (2004-2005)
Arthur Levitt Center for Public Affairs Council (2004-2006, 2012, 2016-2018)
Health Professions Advisory Committee (2005-2006)
Presidential Advisory Group (2005-2006)
Economics Department Chair (2007-2011, 2023-2024)
Middle States Accreditation Committee (2009-2010)
Academic Assessment Committee (2009-2015, 2018-2025)
Planning Committee (2012)
Faculty Appeals Board (2012-2016, 2022-2024)
Committee on Academic Policy (2013-2016)
Presidential Search Committee (2015)
Strategic Planning Steering Committee (2017)
Committee on Appointments (2017-2020, 2025-2026)
Education Studies Program Committee (2018-present)
Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching (2019-2022)

Director of Institutional Research Search Committee (2020)
Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Search Committee (2021-2022)
Educations Studies Acting Program Director (2025)
Faculty Mentor for New Faculty Orientation (2025-2026)