

July 10, 2023

Benjamin R. Handel

Associate Professor of Economics

University of California at Berkeley

Phone: (609) 240-5199 Email: handel@berkeley.edu

Primary Fields: Industrial Organization, Health Economics

Academic Positions

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Berkeley | 2016–present |
| Director, Gilbert Center for Applied Economics | 2017–present |
| Co-Director, Insurance Working Group, National Bureau of Economic Research | 2016–present |
| Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research (Health Care, Industrial Organization, Public Economics) | 2016–present |
| Editor, Review of Economics and Statistics | 2019–present |
| Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Berkeley | 2012–2016 |
| Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research (Health Care, Industrial Organization) | 2011–2016 |
| Postdoctoral Fellow, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | 2010–2011 |

Education

| | |
|--|------|
| Ph.D. Economics, Northwestern University | 2010 |
| M.A. Economics, Northwestern University | 2005 |
| A.B Economics, Princeton University (concentrations in Applied Mathematics and Finance) | 2004 |

Honors / Awards

| | |
|---|------|
| ASHEcon Medal (top health economist under 40) | 2018 |
| NIHCM Research Award (top health econ research paper) | 2018 |
| Frisch Medal, Econometric Society | 2016 |
| NSF CAREER Award | 2016 |
| Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow in Economics | 2015 |
| Review of Economic Studies European Tour | 2010 |

Publications

Optimal Long-Term Health Insurance Contracts: Characterization, Computation, and Welfare Effects

Review of Economic Studies, forthcoming

(joint with Soheil Ghili, Igal Hendel, and Michael Whinston)

Employer Risk-Adjustment Transitions with Inertial Consumers: Evidence from CalPERS

Journal of Risk and Insurance, 2023, 1-29.

(joint with Nianyi Hong, Lynn Mei Hua and Yuki Ito)

The Affordable Care Act after a Decade: Industrial Organization of the Insurance Exchanges

Annual Review of Economics, Vol. 14, 2022, 287-312.

(joint with Jonathan Kolstad)

Industrial Organization of Health Care Markets

Handbook of Industrial Organization, Vol. 4, 2021, eds. K. Ho, A. Hortacsu, A. Lizzeri

(joint with Kate Ho)

The Role of Commitment Contracts, Price and Information in Preventive Health Investments: Evidence from Randomized Evaluations in India

Review of Economics and Statistics, Vol. 103(5), 2021, pp. 835-856.

(joint with Liang Bai, Ted Miguel, and Gautam Rao)

Information Frictions and Adverse Selection: Policy Interventions in Health Insurance Markets

Review of Economics and Statistics, Vol. 101(2), 2019, pp. 326–340

(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad and Johannes Spinniwjn)

Behavioral Health Economics

Handbook of Behavioral Economics – Foundations and Applications, Vol. 2, 2019, pp. 459–902.

(joint with Amitabh Chandra and Josh Schwartzstein)

Frictions or Mental Gaps: What’s Behind the Information We (Don’t) Use and When Do We Care?

Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol. 32(1), 2018, pp. 155–178

(joint with Joshua Schwartzstein)

What Does a Deductible Do? The Impact of Cost-Sharing on Health Care Prices, Quantities, and Spending Dynamics

Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 132(3), 2017, pp. 1261–1318

(joint with Zarek Brot-Goldberg, Amitabh Chandra and Jonathan T. Kolstad)

Select Coverage: Vox, New York Times, CBS Moneyline, Forbes, NBER Digest, Conversation, Center for Health Journalism, Center for Health Journalism -2, California Healthline , Kaiser Health News

Equilibria in Health Exchanges: Adverse Selection vs. Reclassification Risk

Econometrica, Vol. 83(4), 2015, pp. 1261–1313 (lead article, recipient of Frisch Medal)
(joint with Igal Hendel and Michael Whinston)

Health Insurance for “Humans”: Information Frictions, Plan Choice, and Consumer Welfare

American Economic Review, Vol. 105(8), 2015, pp. 2449–2500
(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad)

Select Coverage: Huffington Post, New York Times, Incidental Economist

Robust New Product Pricing

Marketing Science, Vol. 34(6), 2015, pp. 864–881
(joint with Kanishka Misra)

Getting the Most from Marketplaces: Smart Policies on Health Insurance Choice

Brookings Hamilton Project: Discussion Paper 2015-08

(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad)

Select Coverage: Brookings Panel Video

Market Power, Transaction Costs, and the Entry of Accountable Care Organizations in Health Care

Review of Industrial Organization, Vol. 47, 2015, pp. 167–193

(joint with Ted Frech, Chris Whaley, Liora Bowers, Richard Scheffler, and Caro Simon)

Adverse Selection and Inertia in Health Insurance Markets: When Nudging Hurts

American Economic Review, Vol. 103(7), 2013, pp. 2643–2682 (lead article)

Select Coverage: New Yorker, Wall Street Journal, Incidental Economist, New York Times

Robust Firm Pricing with Panel Data

Journal of Econometrics, Vol. 174(2), 2013, pp. 165–185

(joint with Kanishka Misra and James Roberts)

A Behavioral Blueprint for Improving Health Care Policy

Behavioral Science & Policy, Vol. 3(1), 2017, pp. 53–66

(joint with George Loewenstein et al.)

Messaging and the Mandate: The Impact of Consumer Experience on Health Insurance Enrollment Through Exchanges

American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 105(5), 2015, pp. 105–109

(joint with Natalie Cox, Jonathan T. Kolstad and Neale Mahoney)

Wearable Technologies and Health Behaviors: New Data and New Methods to Understand Population Health

American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings, Vol. 107(5), 2017, pp. 481–485

(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad)

Commentary: Accountable Care Organizations and Narrow Network Insurance Plans

Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law, Vol. 40(4), 2015, pp. 705–710.

The Health Plan Environment in California Contributed to Differential Use of Telehealth During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Health Affairs, Vol. 41(12), 2022

(joint with Christopher Whaley, Yuki Ito, Jonathan Kolstad and David Cowling)

The Role of Information and Nudges on Advance Directives and End-of-Life Planning: Evidence from a Randomized Trial

Medical Care Research and Review, 2023.

(joint with Nianyi Hong and Allyson Root)

Topic Overview: Pharmacy Benefit Managers and Vertical Relationships in Drug Supply

book chapter in “The Economics of US Healthcare: Competition, Innovation, Regulation, and Organizations” ed. Filippo Lancieri, University of Chicago Stigler Center, 2023.

(joint with Zarek Brot-Goldberg and Catherine Che)

Working Papers

The Social Determinants of Choice Quality: Evidence from Health Insurance in the Netherlands

(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad, Thomas Minten, and Johannes Spinnewijn)

Managing Intelligence: Skilled Experts and AI in Markets for Complex Products

(joint with Jon Gruber, Samuel Kina, and Jonathan T. Kolstad)

What Do Insurers Do Differently From One Another? Evidence from Utah

(joint with Jonathan Holmes, Jonathan T. Kolstad, and Kurt Lavetti)

Pharmacy Benefit Managers and Vertical Relationships in Drug Supply

(joint with Zarek Brot-Goldberg and Catherine Che)

Social Spillovers and the Welfare Trap

(joint with Leonardo Bursztyn, Rafael Jimenez-Duran and Christopher Roth)

The Impact of Fatigue on Medical Decision-Making: Evidence from the ED

(joint with Bryan Chu, Jonathan Kolstad, Ulrike Malmendier, and Filip Matejka)

Outcomes-Based Payments and Physician Productivity: Evidence from Hawaii

(joint with Jonathan T. Kolstad, Allyson Root, and Michael Whinston)

The Impact of Price Transparency in Outpatient Provider Markets

(joint with Hunt Alcott, Kayleigh Barnes, Sherry Glied and Grace Kim)

Market Design in Health Care: New Directions, chapter requested for conference volume for NBER Conference on New Directions in Market Design.

Ph.D. Student Advising

Mitchell Hoffman (Primary Advisor) 2013 – Toronto Rotman Business School
Daniel Gross (Primary Advisor): 2015 – Harvard Business School
Juan Pablo Atal (Primary Advisor): 2016 – University of Pennsylvania
Thomas Beckford (Primary Advisor): 2016 – Analysis Group
Christopher Whaley (Primary Advisor): 2016 – RAND
Natalie Cox (Primary Advisor): 2017 – Princeton
Jordan Ou (Co-Adviser): 2017 – Analysis Group
Katalin Springel (Primary Adviser): 2017 – Georgetown
Tiffany Tsai (Co-Adviser): 2019 – National University of Singapore
Jennifer Kwok (Primary Adviser): 2019 – University of Illinois at Chicago
Zarek Brot-Goldberg (Primary Adviser): 2019 – University of Chicago Harris
Zhenia Iarmosh (Primary Adviser): 2019 – Penn State
Allyson Root (Co-Adviser): 2019 – Amazon
Grant Graziani (Co-Adviser): 2020 – VA Postdoc
Jonathan Holmes (Primary Adviser): 2021 – University of Ottawa
Nianyi Hong (Primary Adviser): 2021 – Congressional Budget Office
Helen Willis 2022, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
Alexey Sinyashin 2022, Charles River Associates
Kayleigh Barnes (Co-Adviser) 2023 – Federal Reserve Board
Alon Rubinstein (Primary Adviser) 2023 – Wharton (post-doctoral fellowship)
Thomas Krussig (Primary Adviser) 2023
Bryan Chu (Primary Adviser) 2024 (expected)
Felipe Arteaga Ossa (Committee Member) 2024 (expected)
Yuki Ito (Primary Adviser) 2025 (expected)
Yikun Jiang (Primary Adviser) 2025 (expected)
Mingduo Zhao (Co-Primary Adviser) 2025 (expected)
Carlos Paramo (Primary Adviser 2025 (expected)
Catherine Che (Primary Adviser) 2026 (expected)

Tarso Medeira (Committee Member): 2015 – Amazon
Matthew Eisenberg (Committee Member): 2015 – Department of Justice
Sheng Li (Committee Member): 2015– NERA Economic Consulting
Alexis Pozen (Committee Member): 2015– SUNY
Paolo Zacchia (Committee Member) 2015
Yujin Kim (Committee Member): 2016
David Silver (Committee Member): 2016 – Princeton
Andy Chen (Committee Member): 2016
Marion Aouad (Committee Member): 2017 – UC Irvine
Zachary Zhong, (Committee Member) 2017 – University of Toronto
Fenella Carpena, (Committee Member) 2017 –Oslo
Xinxin Wang (Committee Member) 2017

Siboluo (Committee Member) 2018
 Chaoran Guo (Committee Member) 2018
 Hyo Kang (Committee Member) 2019
 Xin Chen, (Committee Member) 2020
 Oren Reshef, (Committee Member) 2020 – Washington University Olin School of Business
 Avner Shlain, (Committee Member) 2020 – University of Chicago Booth School of Business
 Jaemin So, (Committee Member) 2020 – Amazon
 Kwabena Donkor, (Committee Member) 2020 – Stanford Graduate School of Business
 Scott Kaplan (Committee Member) 2021, U.S. Naval Academy
 Andres Gonzalez Lira (Committee Member) 2021, Yale (post-doctoral fellowship)
 Eva Lyubich (Committee Member) 2022, US Census Bureau
 William Morrison (Committee Member) 2023
 Lynn Mei Hua (Committee Member) 2023 – Georgia State Risk and Insurance
 Kaveh Danesh (Committee Member) 2023
 Tianyu Han (Committee Member) 2024 (expected)
 Leila Safavi (Committee Member) 2024 (expected)
 Mengyao Huang (Committee Member) 2025 (expected)
 Yunhao Huang (Committee Member) 2025 (expected)
 Yunbo Liu (Committee Member) 2025 (expected)
 Nadav Tadelis (Committee Member) 2026 (expected)
 Grady Killeen (Committee Member) 2026 (expected)

Grant Funding

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Commonwealth Fund Pharmacy Benefit Managers and Vertical Relationships in Drug Supply Amount: \$191,872 | Aug 2022–July 2024 |
| Arnold Ventures Grant Pharmacy Benefit Managers and Vertical Relationships in Drug Supply Amount: \$191,872 | Aug 2022–July 2024 |
| Arnold Ventures Grant Competition Policy and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) Amount: \$270,000 | Aug 2020–Jan 2022 |
| CalPERS: Health Insurance Plan Migration and Menu Design Amount: \$155,000 | Jun 2019–Dec 2020 |
| National Institute of Aging, Principal Investigator “The Role of Information Technology & Treatment Heterogeneity in Population Health” Amount: \$820,000 | Sep 2017–Jun 2022 |

July 10, 2023

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| National Science Foundation, Principal Investigator “CAREER: Empirical Studies of Incentive Design, Information Technology Use, and Productivity in Physician Markets” Award Number: SES-1552824 Amount: \$450,000 | Mar 2016–Jul 2022 |
| National Science Foundation, Principal Investigator “Equilibria in Health Exchanges: Adverse Selection, Reclassification Risk, and Dynamic Contracting” Award Number: SES-1259770 Amount: \$146,832 | Jul 2013–Jun 2016 |
| Jameel Poverty Action Lab: North America “Deferring Agency at End-of-Life: The Role of Information and Advanced Directives” Amount: \$49,739 | Jun 2018–May 2019 |
| NBER Pilot Grant: Fatigue and Complexity in Physician Choice Amount: \$30,000 | 2020 |
| Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow, 2015 Amount: \$50,000 | Sep 2015–Sep 2017 |
| National Bureau of Economic Research P01 Pilot Grant, with primary funding source of National Institute on Aging “Understanding Physician Incentives and the Impact of Information and Information Technology” Amount: \$64,995 | Dec 2015–Jun 2016 |
| Jameel Poverty Action Lab: North America “Mobile-izing Medicine: The Impact of Accessible Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Quality of Hospital Care” Amount: \$49,457 | Nov 2015–Oct 2016 |
| Center on the Economics of Demography and Aging “Preventive Care Utilization and Health Effects of Physicians’ Incentives and Information” Amount: \$25,122 | Aug 2016 – Jul 2017 |
| Berkeley Center for Equitable Growth Grant for “Incentives for Preventive Health Care in India: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial” Amount: \$30,000 | 2012 |
| Berkeley Population Center Pilot Project Grant for “Understanding the Impacts of, and Demand for, Modern Health Care and Water Treatment in Rural India” Amount \$10,000 | 2012 |
| Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, for Accountable Care Organization and Antitrust Conference Amount: \$5,000 | 2011 |

July 10, 2023

UC Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment,
for Accountable Care Organization and Antitrust Conference
Amount: \$6,378 2011

Teaching

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Organizer, NBER Healthcare Bootcamp | 2018, 2019, 2022 |
| Graduate Industrial Organization, ECO 220A, UC Berkeley | Spring 2012–2023 (Yearly) |
| Health Economics, Undergraduate, ECO 157, UC Berkeley | Spring 2014, 2016–2018, 2022 |
| Topics in Economic Research, Undergraduate, ECO 191, UC Berkeley | Spring 2023 |

Additional Positions and Affiliations

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Placement Director, Berkeley Department of Economics | 2017–present |
| Faculty Awards Committee (member), Berkeley Academic Senate | 2018–2021 |
| Faculty Awards Committee (chair), Berkeley Academic Senate | 2021–present |
| Associate Editor, Journal of Political Economy | 2016–present |
| Associate Editor, RAND Journal of Economics | 2017–2020 |
| Board of Editors, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics | 2017–present |
| Co-Director, Berkeley Opportunity Lab | 2018–2020 |
| Faculty Affiliate, Center for Effective Global Action, Berkeley | 2015–present |
| Faculty Member, Health Services and Policy Analysis Program, Berkeley | 2013–present |
| Co-Director, Competition Policy Center, Berkeley | 2016–2019 |
| Junior Fellow, Department of Economics, Hebrew University | 2012–2016 |
| Consulting Researcher, Microsoft Research | 2010–2016 |

Other Honors / Awards

| | |
|--|------|
| Distinguished Teaching and Service Awards, UC Berkeley | 2020 |
| QJE Referee Award | 2019 |
| Early Career Scholar Achievement Award, American Risk and Insurance Association | 2018 |

July 10, 2023

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Kavli Fellow: Frontiers of Science Symposium | 2015 |
| Excellence in Refereeing Awards, <i>American Economic Review</i> | 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017 |

Other Employment

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Amazon Scholar | 2020–present |
| Consulting Expert, Cornerstone Research | 2017, 2022 |
| Consulting Expert, Bates White LLC | 2016–2020 |
| Analytics Advisor, Picwell | 2012–2016 |
| Scientific Advisor, Precision Health Economics | 2014–2016 |
| Consultant, Connected Health | 2011–2012 |