

Will Rafey

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Current Academic Positions

University of California, Los Angeles Assistant Professor, Department of Economics	7/2021–
National Bureau of Economic Research Faculty Research Fellow, Environment and Energy Economics Faculty Research Fellow, Industrial Organization	4/2023– 4/2024–

Former Academic Positions

University of California, Berkeley Ciriacy-Wantrup Postdoctoral Fellow	7/2020 – 6/2021
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Education

MIT, Ph.D., Economics	2020
Cambridge University, Trinity College, M.A.St., Mathematics (Part III), <i>merit</i>	2014
Harvard College, B.A., Social Studies, <i>summa cum laude</i>	2013

Research Interests

Environmental Economics, Industrial Organization

Publications

1. “Conservation priorities and environmental offsets: Markets for Florida wetlands” (with Daniel Aronoff)
American Economic Review, forthcoming.
2. “Droughts, deluges, and (river) diversions: Valuing market-based water reallocation”
American Economic Review, 113(2): 430–471, February 2023.
3. “Mirage on the horizon: Geoengineering and carbon taxation without commitment” (with Daron Acemoglu)
Journal of Public Economics, 219, 104802, March 2023.
4. “Competing discourses of energy development: The implications of the Medupi coal-fired power plant in South Africa” (with Benjamin Sovacool)
Global Environmental Change, 22(3): 1141–1151, August 2011.

Current and Ongoing Projects

- “Measuring Water Misallocation in California”
- “Measuring Agricultural Water Depletion from Space” (with Eric Edwards, Bryan Leonard, Andrew Ayres)
- “Energy and Production in U.S. Manufacturing” (with Eva Lyubich, Joe Shapiro, Reed Walker)
- “Toxic Plants and Market Structure” (with Irene Jacqz)
- “Water Investment and Pricing” (with Yangkeun Yun)
- “Hydrological Priorities and Endangered Species” (with Sage Haroche)

Teaching

UCLA

Econ 271a, Industrial Organization, Price Policies, and Regulation (PhD)	Fall 2022–25
Econ 272a, Advanced Topics in Industrial Organization (PhD)	Winter 2022
Econ 134, Environmental Economics (UG)	Winter 2022, Fall 2022–25
Econ 189, Advanced Honors Seminar (UG)	Winter, Fall 2022

MIT

14.475, Environmental Economics, TA (PhD)	Spring 2020
14.13, Psychology and Economics, TA (UG)	Spring 2020
14.000, Math Camp (PhD)	Fall 2016, 2017, 2018

Harvard

Math 23a–b, Linear Algebra & Real Analysis I–II, TA (UG)	Fall 2012, Spring 2013
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Fellowships and Honors

Lone Mountain Fellow, Property and Environment Research Center (Bozeman, MT)	2025
Berck and Lisa Cheng Undergraduate Teaching and Mentoring Award	2023–24
Faculty Affiliate, UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation	2022–23
Research Fellow, UCLA Ziman Center for Real Estate	2022–23
Campbell Fellow in Environment & Energy, Hoover Institution, Stanford University	2023
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow	2014–19
Price Theory Scholar, Becker-Friedman Institute, University of Chicago	2016
Harvard-Cambridge Fellow, Lt. Charles H. Fiske III Scholar at Trinity College	2013–14
Hoopes and Alexis de Tocqueville Prizes (best undergraduate thesis in Social Studies)	2013
Phi Beta Kappa (Junior 24)	2012

Research Grants

Hellman Fellowship, UCLA	2023–24
Ziman Center Research Grant	2022–23
UCLA Pandemic Relief Grant	2021–22
George and Obie Schultz Fund Grant	2016–18
MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative Seed Grant (P.I.s: P. Pathak & D. McLaughlin)	2015–17
MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives Research Travel Grant	2016
MIT Priscilla King Gray Public Service Center IAP Fellowship	2015

Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Summer Research Grant 2012
Kenneth I. Juster Fellowship 2012

Presentations

2025–2026. Arizona State University (scheduled); Columbia Business School; Columbia University; NBER Agricultural Risks; PERC; Pomona (scheduled); Texas A&M (scheduled); University of California, Davis (scheduled); UCSB Occasional Workshop; Washington University, St. Louis (scheduled); Yale School of the Environment.

2024–2025. AEA/ASSA Transportation and Public Utilities Group; CREST/ENSAE/Polytechnique; Duke Applied Micro Jamboree; European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association, Berlin; Stanford University Hoover Institution, Markets vs. Mandates; KU Leuven; North American Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society; Texas A&M IO Day; Toulouse School of Economics; University of British Columbia; University of Chicago EPIC Junior Workshop; University of Texas, Austin; University of Wisconsin, Madison.

2023–2024. University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Riverside; University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Heartland Environmental and Resource Economics Workshop; NBER IO Spring Meeting; Northwestern University; NYU Stern; Stanford GSB Conference on Advancing Sustainable Water Management; Yale University.

2022–2023. University of Chicago Becker-Friedman Institute IO+ Conference; Rice University; Stanford University Hoover Institution; NBER Summer Institute EEE.

2021–2022. Stanford GSB; University of California, San Diego; University of Southern California.

2020–2021. Brookings Institute (Zoom); LSE Workshop in Environmental Economics (Zoom); Monash Business School (Zoom); University of California, Berkeley (Zoom); Western Economic Association Annual Conference (Zoom).

2019–2020. MIT; NBER Summer Institute EEE; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Toronto; University of Wisconsin-Madison; Wharton.

2018–2019. University of California, Berkeley Advanced Workshop on Climate Change Economics; University of Oslo Workshop on Political Economy of the Environment.

Professional Service

Referee for *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *AEJ: Economic Policy*, *AEJ: Microeconomics*, *American Economic Review*, *AER: Insights*, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, *Ecological Economics*, *Econometrica*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *JPE: Microeconomics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Urban Economics*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Science*

Co-organizer, NBER Summer Institute, Environmental & Energy Economics 2025
Program Committee, European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association 2025
Technical Contributor, Fifth National Climate Assessment of the United States 2022–23
Selection Committee, Harvard-Cambridge Fellowship 2016–19

Updated: March 12, 2026