

NCUR Application

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Class: Senior

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College/School: Business

Department/Major:
Economics

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Title of Presentation:

Alleviating the Wage Penalty, the Effect of Regular Exercise on Wages of Overweight Women

BHSU IRB, IACUC or Biosafety #:

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Abstract:

An unfortunate fact about being a part of the labor market is that many individuals in our society face a wage penalty for something that has nothing to do with their ability or skill, such as gender or appearance. For instance many Americans face a wage penalty just because of their gender. Today, women make seventy-seven cents for every dollar that a man makes (Council of Economics Advisors 1). When this differential is adjusted for age, experience, industry, union status, marital status, and full time versus part time work, women make ninety cents for every dollar that men make (Council of Economics Advisors 4). Within the labor market, women also suffer wage penalties much more severely than men for factors like being a parent or for being overweight. In fact, a woman can have an eleven percent wage penalty for being overweight and up to a twenty five percent penalty for being obese while men see no such effect (Debaumont). Economists are unable to determine why this penalty for a higher BMI is observed for women and not for men. However, it is speculated that it could be due to lower productivity, discrimination by employers, and discrimination by customers, or lower confidence and self-esteem on the part of the female employee. Overweight employees may have lower energy levels and many health consequences that could negatively affect their work. Also, employees with low self-esteem due to their appearance may have a harder time communicating with their peers and making sales. This could be a contributing factor in the penalty that overweight women see. However, there is a trait that has the opposite effect on individuals. People that exercise regularly encounter many benefits including higher productivity and energy levels as well as higher self-esteem. For my project I will try to prove that exercising regularly helps alleviate the negative wage penalty that

overweight women see in the workplace. I will try to prove that even overweight women encounter positive wage benefits from exercising. I will use surveys from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to collect data on wages and health conditions for thousands of individuals. I will run a regression to try and prove that regular exercise lessens the negative effects previously described. In my regression I will control for education level and job tenure and look at wage and BMI information for thousands of women to prove this relationship. Works Cited Debaumont, Ronald, Dr. "Wage Discrimination." Labor Economics. Black Hills State University. 15 Oct. 2015. Lecture. Gender Pay Gap: Recent Trends and Explanations, Issue brief. N.p.: Council of Economics Advisors, 2015. Print

I certify that: My project is at or near completion and the abstract accurately represents my findings:

Yes

Statement of Student Responsibilities:

If my project is accepted for NCUR and I receive funding, I agree to:

- complete my project before departure
- make a trial presentation to my faculty advisor before departure
- present my paper/project at NCUR and attend other sessions
- all required IRB, IACUC and Biosafety approvals have been received
- give presentation at Black Hills Research Symposium (BHRS)
- Represent BHSU in a professional & responsible manner