

# Curriculum Vitae



## **Simona Balazs**

University of Kentucky

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## **EDUCATION**

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### **University of Kentucky, KY**

Doctoral Candidate in Educational Policy and Evaluation Studies (EPE)

### **University of Nevada, NV**

Master of Science in Resource and Applied Economics

### **University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (USAMV), Romania**

Bachelor of Science in Economic Engineering in Agriculture

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

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**May 2017 - present: Research Director**, Blueprint Kentucky (*formerly CEDIK*), University of Kentucky (UKY).

**March 2015 - May 2017: Research Associate**, Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK), University of Kentucky (UKY).

**August 2006 - March 2015: Research Assistant**, University of Kentucky, KY.  
Centers: CEDIK (Community and Economic Development Initiative of KY), RHWP (Rural Health Works Program), EPE (Education Policy and Evaluation).

**August 2003 - July 2006: Research Assistant**, University of Nevada, Reno.  
Center: UCED (University Center for Economic Development).

**September 2002 - July 2003: Accountant** Office for Consumer Protection, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

## GRANTS

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1. Alison Davis (PI), Simona Balazs (Co-I), \$95,974, “Economic Impact of CHFS”, KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services.
2. Alison Davis (PI), Simona Balazs (Co-I), \$63,000, “Economic Impact of Circular Economy”, KY Energy and Environment Cabinet.
3. Alison Davis (PI), Simona Balazs (Co-I), Sarah Bowker (Co-I), Tyler McDaniel (Co-I), Dan Kahl (Co-I), Brandi Quilian (Co-I), \$443,292, “National Recycling, Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal”, KY Energy and Environment Cabinet.
4. Alison Davis (PI), Simona Balazs (Co-I), Melody Nall (Co-I), Rebekah Burton (Co-I), \$148,200, “ Providing Resources and Opportunities through Partnerships Locally (PROPEL) Initiative”, Mississippi State University.
5. Jayoung Koo (PI), Melissa Bond (Co-I), Shane Burton (Co-I), Mercedes Maness (Co-I), Simona Balazs (Co-I), \$50,000, “To support Integration of Creative Placemaking into Cooperative Extension programming”, National Endowment for the Arts.

## CENTERS and LARGER PROGRAMS

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1. Center for Economic Analysis for Rural Health (CEARH), <https://cearh.ca.uky.edu/>
2. Housing Engagement and Research Initiative (HERI), <https://heri.uky.edu/>
3. County Data Profiles, <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/countydatapfiles>
4. Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA survey design, implementation, analysis and reports, since 2015, <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/CHNA>
5. Brownfield Technical Assistance, <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/brownfields>
6. MIT REAP (Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program), <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/what-we-do/completed-projects/mit-reap-6>
7. Create Bridges, <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/create-bridges>
6. Kentucky Promise Zone Downtown Revitalization Project (POWER grant), <https://blueprintkentucky.ca.uky.edu/what-we-do/completed-projects/seky-downtowns>

## PUBLICATIONS and TECHNICAL REPORTS

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1. Balazs, Simona and A. Davis (2025). “Connecting Kentucky Veterans to Agricultural Opportunities. Year Two Program Evaluation Review”. Evaluation report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
2. Simona Balazs and A. Davis (2025). “Economic Implications of Transitioning from Soybean Farming to Solar Farming in Kentucky”. Technical report. Blueprint Kentucky (formerly CEDIK).
3. Simona Balazs (2024). “AHEAD project survey results”. Technical report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
4. Simona Balazs and A. Davis (2024). “COCS Campbell County”. Technical report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.

5. Alison Davis and S. Balazs (2024). "Economic Impact of CHFS services". Deliverables: state report, policy brief, and county-level profiles. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
6. Alison Davis and Simona Balazs (2023). "The Influence of the Agricultural Cluster on the Fayette County Economy". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
7. Simona Balazs and Alison Davis (2024). "The economic Impact of A Rural Hospital on a Local Economy". FORPH working paper, under review.
8. Balazs, Simona and A. Davis (2023). "Connecting Kentucky Veterans to Agricultural Opportunities. Year One Program Evaluation Review". Evaluation report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
9. Barton, Shane and S. Balazs (2023). "Wendover Events Center Feasibility Report". Technical report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
10. Barton, Shane and S. Balazs (2022). "Southeast KY African American Museum and Cultural Center (SEKYAAMCC) Feasibility Report". Technical report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
11. Balazs, Simona and A. Davis (2022). "The Importance of Agriculture for Kentucky". Technical report. Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
12. Alison Davis, Simona Balazs, & Joe Kercksmar (2022). "Woodford County Housing Study". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
13. Owen, Andrew, A. Davis and S. Balazs (2022). "County-level Availability of Obstetric Care and Economic Implications of Hospital Closure on Obstetric Care". Policy brief. Center for Economic Analysis of Rural Health.
14. Joe Kercksmar, A. Davis and S. Balazs (2020). "Housing Availability". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
15. Joe Kercksmar, A. Davis and S. Balazs (2020). "Housing in Kentucky Overview". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
16. Simona Balazs and A. Davis (2019). "Economic Impact of Race Horse Industry to Iowa's Economy". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
17. Kahl, Dan and Simona Balazs (2018). "2017 Community and Economic Development Professional Development Assessment for the Southern Region". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
18. Davis, Alison F., J Kercksmar and S. Balazs. (2018). "Housing Market Analysis in Bourbon County, KY". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
19. Davis, Alison F and S. Balazs. (2018). "The Economic Importance of Breckinridge Hospital". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
20. Davis, Alison F., Balazs, S. E. (2018). "Supply Chain Report: Corn, Soybean, Beef (Kentucky and Tennessee)". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
21. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2018). "Economic Impact of Union College". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
22. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2017). "An Evaluation of the Stronger Economies Together Program". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
23. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2017). "Economic Impact of Agriculture in Woodford County". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
24. Davis, Alison F., J Kercksmar and S. Balazs (2017). "The Cost of Community Services in Fayette County". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.

25. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2017). "Wage and Benefit Survey for KYNDLE". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
26. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2017). "The Influence of the Agricultural Cluster on the Fayette County Economy". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
27. Davis, Alison F. and S. Balazs (2017). "Industrial Leakage Analysis for Eastern Kentucky". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
28. Dumitras, Diana E., Muresan, I. C., Jitea, I. M., Mihai, V. C., Balazs, S. E., and Iancu, Tiberiu (2017). "Assessing Tourists' Preferences for Recreational Trips in National and Natural Parks as a Premise for Long-Term Sustainable Management Plans". *Sustainability* 9(9).
29. Balazs, Simona and A.F. Davis (2014). "The Economic Impact of Mental Healthcare Facilities in KY". Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.
30. Balazs, Simona and Alison Davis (2008). "The Impact of the State Loan Repayment Program". Rural Health Works Publication.
31. Balazs, Simona and Alison Davis (2008). "The Impact of Medicaid on the State of Kentucky". Rural Health Works Publication.
32. Balazs, Simona and Alison Davis (2007). "The Economic Impact of a Rural Physician to Kentucky". Rural Health Works Publication
33. Davis, Alison and S. Balazs. "The Economic Impact of a Rural Primary Care Physician and the Potential Health Dollars Lost to Out-migrating Health Services," Rural Health Works Publication
  - Menifee County, April 2007
  - Estill County, April 2007
  - Ballard County, May 2007
34. Balazs, Simona and Alison Davis, "The Economic Impact of the Local Health Care System," Rural Health Works Publication,
  - Rowan County, February 2007
  - Estill County, December 2006
  - Pike County, October 2006
  - Perry County, October 2006
35. Harris, Thomas and Simona Balazs (2006). "Economic Diversification and Comparative Advantage: Nevada Gross State Product 2004". University Center for Economic Development.
36. Fadali, Elizabeth, Thomas R. Harris, Kynda Curtis, Robert Dick, and Simona Balazs (2005). "Analysis of Potential Demands of Pinyon-Juniper Resources in Lincoln and White Pine Counties". University Center for Economic Development.
37. Harris, Thomas R., Alison Davis, Elizabeth Fadali, Gaylene Nevers, Joan Wright, Simona Balazs and Slavica Karastankovic (2005). "Identifying the Economic Drivers and Import Substitutes Opportunities for the Western Nevada Study Area with Application to Sparks: Executive Summary". University Center for Economic Development.
38. Harris, Thomas R and Simona Balazs (2005). "Analysis of socio-economic data and trends for the comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for Lincoln County: General Trends: Part I". University Center for Economic Development.

## **PAPERS and CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

1. Ann Savage, Doug Arbogas, Mercedes Fraser, Whitney Knollenberg, Daniel Eades, Simona Balazs. "Developing the Rural Tourism Institute". Conference presentation at 2025 NACDEP Conference, Charleston, WV.
2. Multiple contributors. "CREATE BRIDGES: Fostering Economic Development through Community Partnerships". Post-conference Session hosted at the 2023 NACDEP Conference, Houston, Texas.
3. Beka Burton, Simona Balazs, Alison Davis. "Lessons learned from implementing a statewide online BR&E communication platform". Conference presentation at the 2022 NACDEP Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.
4. Melissa Bond and Simona Balazs. "Evaluating Arts Extension: Challenges & Opportunities from 15 Years of Arts Engagement in Kentucky". Conference presentation at the 2022 NACDEP Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.
5. Nall Melody, S. Balazs, A. Davis. "Key Findings from the Community Needs Assessments". Poster presented at the 2019 Kentucky Rural Health Association (KRHA), Bowling Green, KY.
6. S. Balazs. "The Economic Overview of the Health Care System". Conference presentation at the 2018 Kentucky Rural Health Association (KRHA), Bowling Green, KY.
7. Troske, S., S. Balazs, A. Davis. "The Healthcare Industry by the Numbers," Conference presentation at the 2018 Kentucky Rural Health Association (KRHA), Bowling Green, KY.
8. Davis Alison, S. Balazs, R. Welborn "Evaluation of the Stronger Economies Together (SET) Program -- Phases V and VI". Paper presented at the 2018 NACDEP Conference, Cleveland, Ohio.
9. Fawcett Karen, S. Balazs, A. Davis. "It's the Way you Ride the Trail that Counts". Paper presented at the 2018 NACDEP Conference, Cleveland, Ohio.
10. Nall Melody, S. Balazs, A. Davis. "Key Findings from the Community Health Needs assessments (CHNA) 2016". Poster presented at the 2018 NACDEP conference, Cleveland, Ohio.
11. Balazs, S., J. Allen, A. Davis, G. Garrett. "Economic Gardening: Lessons Learned from Grow Kentucky". Poster presented at 2016 NACDEP Conference, Burlington, Vermont.
12. Balazs, S. (2014). "Students' Willingness to Pay to Study Abroad. Case Study: Romania". Working paper presented at 2014 Midwestern Regional Conference of the Comparative International Education Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.
13. Balazs, S. and L. Maynard. "The Linear Approximation of the Almost Ideal Demand System (LA/AIDS) Model: Application to Aggregated Data". Paper presented at the 2007 International Symposium "Prospects for 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium Agriculture" USAMV, Cluj, Romania.

## **TEACHING and TRAINING**

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1. Instructor of course: AEC 300 – Rural Spatial Economics, UKY, 2016-present.
2. Economic Overview Annual Training – Henry County Chamber of Commerce, KY, 2018-present.
3. Economic Overview Training - Extension Service Butler County, KY, 2019.
4. Survey Design and Implementation Training, CLICK, Western Kentucky University, 2016.

## **HONORS and AWARDS**

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2023: NACDEP Southern Region Best Training Material: SPARKS! Toolkit.  
2018: AAEA Best National Group Award: CEDIK  
2018: NACDEP Excellence in Teamwork Award, Runner-Up Team: Kentucky Promise Zone Downtown Revitalization Program  
2018: NACDEP Southern Region Teamwork Award, Winner: Kentucky Promise Zone Downtown Revitalization Program  
2010-2012: Recipient of Ezra Gillis Tuition Award (\$1,500/yr.), University of Kentucky  
2011: Recipient of International Students Tuition Award (\$1,000), University of Kentucky

## **CERTIFICATES and AFFILIATIONS**

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Member National Association for Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP)  
Member Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)  
Certificate Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program, MIT  
Certificate Business Retention and Expansion Specialist, University of Wisconsin  
Certificate Economic Gardening Specialist, Edward Lowe Foundation

## **SKILLS**

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Econometric analysis: STATA; SAS; SPSS; QDA Miner Lite; R; GAUSS.  
Economic impact modeling: IMPLAN  
Spatial analysis: ArcGIS, Business Analyst  
Data analytics and design: Tableau, InDesign

## **LANGUAGES**

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English (bilingual proficiency)  
Romanian (native)  
French (basic)  
Italian (basic)