

Otávio Braga

Duke University
Department of Economics
Durham, NC 27708

otaviolmbraga.github.io
otavio.braga@duke.edu
(+1) 984-377-1477
Citizenship: Brazil

Updated: October 22, 2026

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Duke University 2021–27 (expected)
— Fields: Household Finance, Real Estate, Empirical Macroeconomics

M.Sc. in Economics, São Paulo School of Economics – FGV 2018–20

B.A. in Economics, University of São Paulo 2013–16

References

David Berger (Chair)	Cosmin Ilut (Co-chair)	Nuno Clara
Dept. of Economics, Duke	Dept. of Economics, Duke	Fuqua School of Business, Duke
david.berger@duke.edu	cosmin.ilut@duke.edu	nuno.clara@duke.edu

Job Market Paper

Inflation Beliefs and the Indexation of Household Debt

with João Pugliese (Stanford University) and Lucas Iten (Central Bank of Brazil)

Abstract: *Economic theory dictates that inflation beliefs should shape household financial decisions, but establishing this link empirically has been a central challenge. We argue that such difficulty can be partly explained by the fact that many households do not understand their own financial exposure to inflation. To show this, we study households holding inflation-indexed debt, whose contracts establish a one-to-one relation between inflation and the growth of their nominal payments. In a survey experiment with Brazilian borrowers, we separately elicit forecasts for inflation and installments. Most respondents underestimate their own exposure, expecting payments below what their inflation forecasts imply. We cross-randomize two independent treatments informing respondents about (i) historical inflation and (ii) the payment increase implied by their own inflation forecast. We find that shifts in inflation beliefs affect households' financial planning only when paired with (ii), which makes their payment consequences explicit; (i) alone revises forecasts but leaves planning unchanged. Finally, we calibrate a consumption-savings model to show that borrowers tolerate inflation exposure in their indexed debt far more than the rational benchmark predicts, even after accounting for possibly biased inflation beliefs and the underestimation of their future debt burden.*

Working Papers

Consumer Misperceptions and Redistribution in Financial Products: Evidence from Brazilian Consórcios

with João Pugliese (Stanford University) and Lucas Iten (Central Bank of Brazil)

Property Taxes and Residential Mobility: Evidence from Tax Reforms in São Paulo

with Bomi Kang (Duke University)

Works in Progress

Reassessing Risk in Housing Markets: The Role of Selection

with Bomi Kang (Duke University)

Fellowships and Awards

Merit-based Head TA Bonus, Duke University Economics Department	2023, 2025
Summer Research Fellowship, Duke University Graduate School	2022, 2023
Graduate Fellowship, CAPES (Brazilian Federal Agency for Graduate Education)	2019, 2020
Graduate Fellowship, Fundação Getulio Vargas	2018
Honorable Mention, Best Senior Thesis in Economics, University of São Paulo	2016

Teaching Experience

Duke University

TA, Advanced Microeconomic Theory (Undergraduate)	Fall 2026
Head TA, Introduction to Econometrics & Data Science (Undergraduate)	Spring 2025
Head TA, Econometrics & Data Science (Undergraduate)	Spring 2023
Head TA, Introduction to Econometrics (Graduate)	Fall 2022

São Paulo School of Economics – FGV

TA, Quantitative Macroeconomics (Graduate)	Fall 2019
--	-----------

Work Experience

Duke University

Research Assistant for Cosmin Ilut

2023, 2024–25, 2026

Columbia University / London School of Economics

Research Assistant for François Gerard and Joana Naritomi

2019–21

São Paulo School of Economics – FGV

Research Assistant for Fernando Chague, Bruno Giovannetti, and Marcelo Fernandes

2020

Analyst, Fiesp (Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo)

2016–17

Programming

Matlab, Python, R, Stata

Languages

Portuguese (Native), English (Fluent), Spanish (Intermediate), French (Basic)