James Campbell
An inquiry Into the Legal Standing of Rogue REMICs

The business of privatized mortgage loan securitization (Real Estate Mortgage Investment Conduits or “REMICS”) is so arcane and specialized that few people outside of that realm of investment knowledge understand, or even care to understand how loan securitization functions. However, if that difference is adequately explained, one can begin to understand why Rogue REMICs must be exposed as unlawful enterprises whose affiliates are not only able to disregard existing federal securities and tax laws, but are also able to circumvent state and local foreclosure laws at will. These ongoing violations result from the intentional and commonplace shortcutting of the proper mortgage loan securitization processes during the several years preceding the 2008 financial crisis. This Inquiry will not focus primarily on how and why Rogue REMICS violate federal tax and securities laws; although those aspects are part of the discussion by necessity. I will argue that all Rogues lack the perquisite legal standing to prosecute both judicial and non-judicial foreclosures. I will present compelling evidence that, in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, foreclosures by Rogues may have exceeded 10% of all foreclosures. I will further argue that county officials may be violating state laws by recording the documents that impart false legal standing to the Rogues.

David Gordon
If you Prohibit it, Bootleggers Will Come: A Mixed Methods Study of the Landscape of College Basketball Betting

Over the past 25 years, betting on sports in the United States has increased dramatically. Only 1% of an estimated $500 billion dollar industry of sports wagers placed in the United States is done legally. With so much money at stake, incentives for corrupt gamblers to alter the outcome of a game are high. Gamblers can "fix" a match by offering payments to players to "throw the game", that is, to predetermine the outcome in exchange for payment (match fixing). My research addresses whether match fixing in college basketball can be detected and contained with the current policy framework.

Lisa Maynard
The Nicaragua Canal: Is the Assessment in line with National Environmental Law?

In 2013, the government of Nicaragua approved the concession for a 173 mile canal to the Hong Kong Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Company. As the Western Hemisphere’s second poorest nation, Nicaragua is attracted the promises of economic growth that may come as a result of the canal project. However, potential economic benefits may be offset by environmental and social damages that would likely occur as a result of the project. The Canal would bisect 16 watersheds, 15 protected areas, and 25 percent of Nicaragua’s rainforest, which would have high impacts on biodiversity, watershed
services, and indigenous communities. In 1996, Law No. 217 was enacted to regulate the use and conservation of the environment and natural resources of Nicaragua. My research compares the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment of the Nicaragua Canal to the Environmental provisions of Law No. 217. This analysis can help understand the legal viability of the ESIA under Nicaragua environmental laws.

Richard Meyer
*Exploring Issues of Access to Nutritious Foods in Seattle*

Hunger, obesity, and other food-related health issues continue to plague communities throughout the United States. As such, access to nutritious foods is a vitally important area of research. Recent studies show that socioeconomic factors, as well as race/ethnicity, are linked to issues of “access.” Furthermore, youth are at particular risk, in part because they are a target demographic for junk food companies. The purpose of this project is to explore the food environments surrounding Seattle public high schools for characteristics that might act to reinforce the known risks and barriers that youth face.

Oscar Meza-Garcia
*A Case Study of Inter-District Temporary Water Transfers in the Yakima River Basin*

Water marketing, or mechanisms to acquire and redistribute water such as temporary water transfers, can represent a valuable response to drought for irrigation districts, cities, and other major claimants to water. The Department of Ecology, the US Bureau of Reclamation, and a workgroup composed of members from various entities collaborated to develop the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (Integrated Plan) to better manage water resources and address ecosystem issues in the Yakima River Basin. The Integrate Plan addresses water marketing but it does not provide specifics on how major claimants to water will be encouraged to participate in water transfers. This case study examines the current water market in the Yakima River Basin and includes interview data from water resource managers of the major claimants. The findings will be utilized to explain the barriers major claimants face, the attractiveness of option contracts for temporary water transfers, and also to provide policy recommendations that encourage water market participation.

Michael S. Richmond
*Washington State Surplus, Creating a Larger Return on Investment of Tax Payer Dollars*

The topic of this study is Washington State vehicle surplus and whether a higher yield on tax payer investment in the purchase, sale and use of motor vehicles can be achieved. The hypothesis that will be addressed is, Can Washington State create a higher return on investment from tax payer dollars? To explore this hypothesis, I ask; a) What is the current policy? b) What is the perception of automotive educators on that policy? c) What are the returns currently and could they be improved through policy change? The methodology for testing the hypothesis will be by obtaining quantitative data from the state and other entities on vehicle purchases, costs, responses to surveys by automotive educators in the state of Washington and the number of students enrolled in programs and then calculating the return on investment.

Qualitative data will be explored to give a human context to the policies, education and the continued support of the two. While performing a literature review, I found it especially difficult to find any
previous articles or research pertaining to public surplus. Therefore I will be presenting information gathered from federal policies, Washington state policies, the Department of Enterprise Services, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the company Public Surplus LLC, the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, Educators from Universities, Polytechnics, Community and Technical Colleges, High Schools, Skill Centers and the group Economic Modeling Specialist International LLC that will provide this review with the content to explore my capstone.

Additional Comments: As a faculty in one of Washington State’s higher education institutions, I am constantly trying to find a way to enrich, update curriculum, and keep pace with the automotive repair industry. The innovation rate and cost of purchasing vehicles for student skill building are large barriers in my preparing students to become entry level technicians. I began this research to see if a policy modification pertaining to state surplus vehicles would assist in removing one barrier.

Maia Williams
"There's No Place Like Home": An Analysis of Rental Market Conditions and Coping Methods in the Emerald City

Rising rents, gentrification, homelessness, and other phenomena related to the Seattle area’s rental market conditions are of growing public concern, yet renters’ voices and lived experiences are absent from most public and policy conversations on the subject. This study will fill this gap through a mixed-methods study designed to collect data on rental market conditions and renter coping methods. Rental market conditions include unit availability, cost, and condition. Coping methods include living in smaller units or with more people, working additional jobs or hours, delaying life plans, or moving into less desirable areas. Quantitative and qualitative survey data was collected from a sample of 112 respondents currently living in the Seattle area. Additionally, 2 qualitative interviews were conducted to understand market conditions and coping methods in greater depth. Findings reveal that most renters surveyed find it a struggle to make ends meet at least some of the time, and that there is a significant correlation between the number of jobs respondents work and the self-reported impact of rent on both respondents’ workload (number of jobs/hours worked) and respondents’ education.