



## 2024 James Buchanan Essay Contest

The Economics Department is sponsoring the James Buchanan Essay Contest with a first-place award of \$500 and a second-place award of \$250. This contest is open to all undergraduate economics students (major and minor). Prior award winners are ineligible for this contest. To enter this contest, students must write an economics essay discussing the topic:

*James Buchanan referred to himself, countless times, as a “little d democrat.” He believed that the people have an absolute right to govern themselves as they see fit. Yet Buchanan also devoted enormous amounts of effort and ink to explaining the importance of constitutional restraints upon the power even of democratically elected governments.*

*Some people insist that constitutional restraints on the powers of democratically elected governments put “democracy in chains” – and, hence, are undemocratic. Buchanan, in contrast, argued that genuine democracy requires that it be constrained by constitutional rules. What is Buchanan’s argument, and why is it valid – or, perhaps, invalid?*

### **Please include the following in your essay:**

- Name, G Number, and email address on the top right of the first page, include your name on each subsequent page
- Times New Roman 12-point font
- 2,500 words
- Submit 1 copy of the essay. Essays will be evaluated for cogency, economic reasoning, and persuasiveness.

### **DUE DATE AND SUBMISSION METHOD:**

- Essay files must be submitted in the following format:
  - First Name\_Last Name\_Name of Essay\_G#
  - Include name of essay contest in the subject of your email
- Submit essays by email (attach your essay as a PDF file) to [mbernier@gmu.edu](mailto:mbernier@gmu.edu) no later than Monday, March 18th, 2024, before 11:59 PM, EST.

**Note: No late submissions will be accepted.**

Essay winners will be contacted by the Department of Economics by email.