

Western Illinois University  
2021 Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Conference

**Abstract**

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Recorded Scholarly Presentation

Major: Liberal Arts and Sciences

Faculty Mentor: Tammy Werner

**Policy Brief on Raising the Minimum Wage to \$15 an hour.**

**Nicole Quinn**

This presentation provides an overview of the research conducted for a project as a part of the Senior Capstone course in the Liberal Arts and Sciences. The research demonstrates the need for implementation of the \$15 minimum wage at a Federal Level. The policy brief will include the summary of the history of the minimum wage and how the current minimum wage is negatively affecting those who rely on it. The minimum wage has not kept up with productivity over the last 50 years and the majority of profits made by major corporations are going to the people in executive levels, while the workers' wages have remained stagnant. I also explore how the minimum wage disproportionately negatively affects women and minority groups. I provide a brief snapshot of the cost of living in various places throughout the country and dispel current myths and public misperceptions about the minimum wage. The brief also addresses the urgency of this issue and the social inequalities that are exacerbated by people earning a non-livable wage.