Ge (Sybil) Sun

Department of Economics
University of Notre Dame
3060 Jenkins Nanovic Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556 USA

Tel: +1 (574) 339-9196
gsun4@nd.edu
sybil-sun.github.io

Research Interests

Macroeconomics, Labor Economics, Development

Education

University of Notre Dame   Notre Dame, IN
Ph.D. in Economics   May 2026 (exp)
    Dissertation: *Labor Market Dynamics in Developing Economies:*
    The Role of Growth, Discrimination, and Rigidity
    Committee: Joseph Kaboski (Chair), Taryn Dinkelman, Zachary Stangebye

National University of Singapore   Singapore
M.Sc. in Financial Engineering   2020

Peking University   Beijing, China
M.A. in Economics   2020

Beijing Foreign Studies University   Beijing, China
B.A. in Economics (Minor: English Literature)   2016

Job Market Paper

"Expected Fertility, Labor Market Contracts, and the Gender Wage Gap"   2025

Abstract: This paper examines how employers' expectations about women's future fertility enlarge the gender wage gap in markets with labor contracts—standard settings in many occupations that require long-horizon, complex tasks. In such environments, salaries are preset based on expected match productivity, not solely on contemporaneous output; if employers anticipate workers' future fertility interruptions, they post lower wages today. Exploiting China's relaxation of the One-Child Policy as a quasi-experiment, a difference-in-differences design reveals that women's wages declined by 15.3% immediately after the reform, despite no short-term increase in actual births. To interpret these facts, I build a search and matching model with a joint household decision problem, in which fertility is given but uncontractable fertility-driven efforts are chosen. I further incorporate learning-by-doing human capital accumulation that depends on effort, which amplifies and propagates the impact of effort changes over time. Quantitatively, gender differences in expected productivity—rooted in the unbalanced division of household labor—account for nearly all of the pre-reform wage gap and about 80% of the post-reform widening. The policy implication is stark: women-protective rules that merely keep women employed through legislative contract provisions may not reduce the gap; by strengthening employers' present-value pricing, they can be offset by ex-ante wage markdowns applied to all women.

Working Papers

1. "Technology, Growth, and Skill Obsolescence" (with Rong Hai, Joseph Kaboski)   2025

2. "How Significant Is the Impact of a Negative Grade Shock?"
   (with Virna Vidal Menezes, Zhongheng Qiao)   2025

3. "Flexible Imputation of Incomplete Network Data" (with Weisheng Zhang)   2025

Teaching Experience

University of Notre Dame

1. Teaching Assistant, Econometrics   2024F & 2025S

2. Teaching Assistant, Statistics for Economics   2023F

3. Instructor, Development Data Boot Camp for Young Economists   Summers 2022–2023
   – developed the complete course materials that are still in use.

Peking University

1. Teaching Assistant, International Economics   2018F & 2019S

2. Teaching Assistant, Advanced Macroeconomics   2017F

Honors and Awards

1. NBER Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Program (runner-up) in Gender in the Economy   2025

2. Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts Dissertation Fellowship   2024–2025

3. Outstanding Teaching Assistantship Award   2024

4. Graduate Student Research Award   2023

Research Grants

1. BIG (Building Inclusive Growth) Lab Graduate Student Research Grant   2025

2. Kellogg Professionalization Grants   2024

Seminar and Conference Presentations

WEAI Annual Conference (2025); CES North American Conference (2025); SEA Annual
Meeting (2024)

Languages English (fluent); Mandarin Chinese (native)

References

Prof. Joseph Kaboski
Department of Economics
University of Notre Dame
+1 (574) 631-9906
jkaboski@nd.edu

Prof. Taryn Dinkelman
Department of Economics
University of Notre Dame
+1 (574) 631-0239
tdinkelm@nd.edu

Prof. Zachary Stangebye
Department of Economics
University of Notre Dame
+1 (574) 631-1054
zstangeb@nd.edu

Last updated: September 30, 2025