KRISTY KIM

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BUSINESS ADDRESS:
Department of Economics
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DESIRED RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS:

PRIMARY	SECONDARY
Public Economics	Experimental Economics
Behavioral Economics	Labor Economics
Applied Microeconomics	

FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION: Public Economics, Behavioral Economics

DISSERTATION TITLE: "Essays in Behavioral Public Economics"

Expected Date of Completion:	May 2025
Principal Advisor:	Professor Emmanuel Saez
Other References:	Professors Dmitry Taubinsky and Danny Yagan

EDUCATION:

	DEGREE	DATE	FIELD
University of California, Berkeley	Ph.D.	2019-25	Economics
University of California, Berkeley	B.A.	2013-16	Economics

PAPERS:

"From Pensions to Personnel: The Incentive Effects of Retirement Benefits on Retention" [JMP] [Link]
With Caleb Wroblewski

Abstract: Private retirement plans are a crucial part of worker's compensation in the U.S. and have long been thought to influence labor supply. This study uses a cohort-based regression discontinuity design to examine how a change in the retirement plan at the largest U.S. employer, the Federal Government, impacted the retention of employees over the entire life cycle. We find that workers with a retirement plan that featured less valuable employer pensions but more portable retirement benefits were more likely to separate from the government. We find smaller, statistically insignificant effects in the first few years of employment but large reductions in the probability that workers remain with the government between 15 and 30 years after beginning federal service. We also find evidence that the effects are driven by highly productive workers, identified through supplemental compensation or early promotions. Hence, while the change in the plan saved the government money, it came at the cost of reduced retention of valuable employees. Our results suggest that employees respond to changes in the value of retirement benefits by leaving employers for better outside options, but that employees may be inattentive or job-locked early in their careers.

"Welfare and the Act of Choosing" [Link]
With Professors B. Douglas Bernheim and Dmitry Taubinsky, R&R at the *Journal of Political Economy*
Abstract: The standard revealed-preference approach to welfare economics encounters fundamental difficulties when the act of choosing directly affects welfare through emotions such as guilt, pride, and anxiety. We address this problem by developing an approach that redefines consumption bundles in terms of the sensations they produce, and measures welfare by blending choice-based methods with self-reported well-being techniques. In applications to classic social preferences paradigms, our approach shows that standard revealed-preference methods, including those that exploit choices over menus, mismeasure welfare because preferences depend on choice sets, while self-reported happiness and satisfaction are not sufficient statistics for welfare.

"Behavioral Responses to Taxation of Inherited Property" [in preparation]
With Sarah Baker
Abstract: This paper investigates the behavioral response to an increase in taxation of inherited property in California. We document parent-child transfers for two populous counties in California: San Francisco and Los Angeles County. We find large implied elasticities, with an additional 18 months of transfers in San Francisco County and an additional 11 months of transfers in Los Angeles County occurring prior to the implementation of the new policy. We disaggregate responses by Census tract income, and find that the top income decile in each county is the most elastic group. These estimates are much larger than what is typically found in the inheritance tax literature, and challenge the "control of wealth" theory of bequest planning. The magnitude of the short-run behavioral response cautions against transition windows for tax policy changes, as they can 1) delay expected government revenue sources and 2) exacerbate inequality in taxation if high-income households are more responsive than other groups.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

  RESEARCH:

Graduate Student Researcher, UC Berkeley (2020 - 2022)
    Dmitry Taubinsky (UC Berkeley) and Ben Handel (Gilbert Center)

Research Professional, Booth School of Business at UChicago (2017 - 2019)
    Richard Thaler and Devin Pope [Project 1] [Project 2] [Project 3]

Investment Funds Case Assistant for the Fund Formation Group, Cooley LLP (2016 - 2017)

  TEACHING:

Graduate Student Instructor, Department of Economics, UC Berkeley
    MBA Data Analytics (MBA200A) - Fall 2023
    Intro to Economics (ECON2) - Spring 2023
    MBA Data Analytics (MBA200A) - Fall 2022

Tutor, Department of Economics, UC Berkeley
    Public Economics (ECON131) - Fall 2021
    Intro to Economics (ECON1) - Spring 2020
    Intro to Economics (ECON1) - Fall 2019

Reader, Department of Economics, UC Berkeley
    Graduate Psychology and Economic Theory (ECON219A) - Fall 2021

Reader, Booth School of Business at UChicago
    MBA Consumer Behavior [37101] - Winter 2018

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

    2024   Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
    2022   Center for Retirement Research at Boston College Dissertation Fellow
    2020   National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships Program Awardee
    2016   Highest Distinction in General Scholarship and Highest Honors in Economics (summa cum laude)

ACADEMIC SERVICE:

    Referee for: *Journal of Public Economics*

    Small Grants Coordinator, Economists for Equity at Berkeley (2024)

    Seminar Coordinator, UC Berkeley
      Psychology and Economics Seminar Series (2022 - 2023)
      Psychology and Economics Student Group (2022 - 2023)

    Social and Community Development Chair, Economists for Equity at Berkeley (2021 - 2022)

    Chair, Graduate Economics Association at UC Berkeley (2020 - 2021)

SEMINAR AND CONFERENCES:

    2025   ASSA Annual Meetings
    2024   UC Berkeley Public Finance Seminar, UC Berkeley Labor and Public Finance Symposium
    2023   UC Berkeley Graduate Economics Mini Symposium (GEMS)
    2022   UC Berkeley Haas Psychology & Economics Seminar