

## **CHEN GAO**

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### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, May 2022 (expected)

Dissertation Title: *Essays in Empirical Industrial Organization*

Main advisor: Marc Rysman

Dissertation Committee: Marc Rysman, Jihye Jeon, and Jordi Jaumandreu

M.A., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, 2016

B.S., Chemistry, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China P.R., 2014

B.E., Economics (second major), Tsinghua University, Beijing, China P.R., 2014

### **FIELDS OF INTEREST**

Empirical industrial organization, applied microeconomics

### **WORKING PAPERS**

“Bargaining and Merger in Vertical Relationships: Empirics of Packaged Food with Limited Data,” September 2021. Job Market paper [PDF].

### **WORK IN PROGRESS**

“Front of Package Labeling and Consumer Learning”

### **PRESENTATIONS**

European Association for Research in Industrial Economics, Bergen, Norway, 2021 (Online)

Department seminar at University of Connecticut, 2021 (Online)

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

Dean’s Fellowship, Boston University, Fall 2016 – Spring 2021

Award of Academic Excellence, Tsinghua University, Spring 2011

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Research Assistant for professor Pierre Perron, Fall 2021

Summer Associate Intern, Analysis Group, Boston, 2019

Research Assistant, the Import-Export Bank of China, Beijing, Summer 2013

Research Assistant, Northeastern Security Shanghai Branch, Shanghai, Summer 2013

#### **REFeree EXPERIENCE**

*Agribusiness: an International Journal*

#### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Teaching Assistant, Statistics for Economists, Department of Economics, Boston University,  
Spring 2018 - Spring 2019, Fall 2020 – Spring 2021

Teaching Assistant, Market Structure and Industrial Organization, Department of Economics,  
Boston University, Spring 2019, Spring 2020

Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis, Department of Economics,  
Boston University, Fall 2019

Teaching Assistant, Market Organization and Public Policy, Department of Economics,  
Boston University, Spring 2020

Teaching Fellow, Elementary Mathematical Economics, Department of Economics, Boston  
University, Fall 2017 – Spring 2018

#### **LANGUAGES**

Fluent in English, native in Chinese

#### **COMPUTER SKILLS: STATA, MATLAB, PYTHON, LaTeX**

#### **CITIZENSHIP/VISA STATUS: China, P.R./F1**

#### **REFERENCES**

##### **Professor Marc Rysman**

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##### **Professor Jordi Jaumandreu**

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### **Bargaining and Merger in Vertical Relationships: Empirics of Packaged Food with Limited Data** (Job Market Paper)

This paper simulates vertical mergers in industries with vertical bargaining and limited data. Vertical mergers promote efficiency by eliminating double marginalization and lowering upstream rival wholesale prices, but harms welfare by increasing downstream rival costs and introducing upward pricing pressure on retail prices. To simulate vertical integration in industries with limited data, I first develop a method to estimate vertical bargaining power between retailers and manufacturers, and then simulate vertical mergers of firms with various sizes. I use simulation results to demonstrate the relative magnitude of both pro- and anti-competition incentives, and that the overall effect depends on market concentration.

### **Front of Package Labeling and Consumer Learning**

This paper studies consumer learning front-of-package (FOP) nutrition labels on ready-to-eat cereals. Major cereal manufacturers start to voluntarily introduce small and simplified nutrition labels on the front of packages in 2007, but it's unclear how consumers learn about such introduction and how these labels change consumer purchasing decisions. With a panel data on consumer purchasing history, I build a structural model of consumer learning and estimate their demand. Cereals inform consumers about their healthfulness through FOP, and those without FOP are subject to information spillover from other products with FOP. Results suggest that consumers prefer cereals with FOP indicating high healthfulness, and cereals without FOP are interpreted as unhealthy ones. Consumer notice the introduction of FOP very quickly.