

LEXIN CAI

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U.S. Citizen
<https://lexincai.github.io>

EDUCATION

Expected 2026	Ph.D. in Economics, Cornell University
2015	M.S. in Social Policy, University of Pennsylvania
2013	B.S. in Public Administration, Renmin University of China

RESEARCH FIELDS

Labor Economics, Public Finance, Economics of Education

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Long-Term Effects of Universal Free School Meal Policies: Evidence from the Community Eligibility Provision”

“Effects of Work Requirements in Means-Tested Programs” (with Pauline Leung and Hyewon Kim)

“Work Requirements in SNAP and Postsecondary Enrollment” (with Meredith Welch)

WORK EXPERIENCE

2022–2024	Research Assistant for Prof. Zhuan Pei, Cornell University
2021–2022	Research Assistant for Prof. Pauline Leung, Cornell University
2018–2020	Research Analyst, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
2016–2018	Research Associate, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
2015–2016	Intern, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
2014–2015	Intern, World Wildlife Fund

RESEARCH GRANTS

2025	Russell Sage Foundation Dissertation Research Grant
2024	Policy Impacts Early-Career Scholars Grant
2024	Cornell Labor Economics Small Grant

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

2025	Jerry Ellig Award for Best Student Presentation, SBCA Annual Meeting
2023–2024	Jain Family Institute - Brooks School Fellow
2022	Outstanding TA Award, Cornell Brooks School of Public Policy
2020–2025	Sage Fellowship, Cornell University
2014	Dean’s Merit Award, University of Pennsylvania
2012	Global KU Scholarship, Korea University
2010–2013	National Scholarship, Renmin University of China (x3)

PRESENTATIONS

2025	Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), Society for Benefit-Cost Analysis (SBCA), FLX Economics of Education Workshop*, Policy Impacts*, APPAM*
2024	Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM) * <i>scheduled</i>

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2022	Teaching Assistant, Behavioral Economics and Public Policy, Cornell University
Fall 2021	Teaching Assistant, Economics of the Public Sector, Cornell University

SERVICE

2022–2025	Executive Board Member, Diversity in Cornell Economics
2022–2024	Student Representative, Cornell Economics Committee for Student and Faculty Engagement
2021–2022	Social Co-chair, Cornell Graduate Students in Public Policy
2014–2015	Co-founder, Wonk Tank, Penn Wharton Public Policy Initiative

POLICY WRITING

“The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Includes Earnings Incentives” (with Elizabeth Wolkomir, 2019)

“House Farm Bill Would Increase Food Insecurity and Hardship” (with Ed Bolen et al., 2018)

“President's Budget Would Cut Food Assistance for Millions and Radically Restructure SNAP” (with Dottie Rosenbaum et al., 2018)

“Administration's 2018 Budget Would Severely Weaken and Cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program” (with Dottie Rosenbaum et al., 2017)

“Community Eligibility Adoption Rises for the 2015–2016 School Year, Increasing Access to School Meals” (with Becca Segal et al., 2016)

OTHER

Programming	Stata, R, SAS, LaTeX
Data clearance	U.S. Census Bureau Special Sworn Status
Languages	Mandarin (native), English (fluent), Cantonese (fluent), Korean (basic)

REFERENCES

Zhuan Pei (Chair)	Associate Professor, Cornell University zhuan.pei@cornell.edu
Maria Fitzpatrick	Professor of Economics and Public Policy, Cornell University maria.d.fitzpatrick@cornell.edu
Pauline Leung	Assistant Professor, Cornell University pleung@cornell.edu
Benjamin Goldman	Assistant Professor, Cornell University bgoldman@cornell.edu

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