

# NATALIA I. VALDEZ GONZALEZ

## *Curriculum Vitae*

Department of Agricultural Economics  
Human Behavior Laboratory  
Texas A&M University  
📍 1500 Research Parkway, Suite 221  
College Station, Texas. 77845

✉ [nati@tamu.edu](mailto:nati@tamu.edu)  
@ [nativalgo.com](https://nativalgo.com)  
☎ (979) 422-1702

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

- ✧ Behavioral & Experimental Economics
- ✧ Food Economics
- ✧ Policy

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- ✧ Lecturer, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Tennessee Knoxville. January 2023 - Present.
- ✧ Lab Manager at the Human Behavior Lab, Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. September 2018 – Present.
- ✧ Graduate Assistant Researcher, Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. September 2016 – December 2022.
- ✧ Research Associate at the Center on Conflict and Development, Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. September 2014 - September 2016.
- ✧ Economist Intern, Office of Economics, United States International Trade Commission. June 2013 – August 2013.

## EDUCATION

- ✧ Ph.D., Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University, 2022  
Chair: Marco A. Palma
- ✧ M.I.A., International Development and Economic Policy, Texas A&M University, 2014
- ✧ B.A., Economics and French, Texas A&M University, 2012

## WORKING PAPERS

- [1] **Valdez Gonzalez, N.I.**, Palma, M.A., and A.L. Brown. “Social stigma and subsequent competitive behavior.” *Job Market Paper*
- [2] **Valdez Gonzalez, N.I.**, Kee, J.Y., Palma, M.A., and J.R. Pruitt. 2022. “The Relationship between Monetary Incentives, Social Status, and Physical Activity.” *Under Review*
- [3] Liu, H., Qu, N., He, Y., **Valdez Gonzalez, N.I.**, Palma, M.A., Chen, H., Jia-Ni, X., Choubey, A., Li, Y., Li, X., Meng, Y., Liu, H., Tu, L., Zhang, N., Yin, N., Conde, K.M., Wang, M., Bean, J.C., Han, J., Scarcelli, N.A., Yang, Y., Saito, K., Cui, H., Tong, Q., Sun, Z., Wang, C., Cai, X., Lu, L., and Y. Xu. 2022. “A retina-originated neural circuit transmits light signals to suppress feeding.”

## Other Articles

- [1] Kibriya, S., Tkach, B., Ahn, J., **Valdez Gonzalez, N.**, Xu, Z., & Y. Zhang. 2016. “The Effects of School-Related Gender-Based Violence on Academic Performance: Evidence from Botswana, Ghana, and South Africa.” USAID.

## WORKS IN PROGRESS

- [1] “Effect of light on food consumption and preferences” (with M.A. Palma)
- [2] “Fairness, transparency, and productivity” (with V. Vitaku)
- [3] “Preferences for competitiveness at varying levels” (with M.A. Palma)

## SELECTED ABSTRACTS

- [1] “Social stigma and subsequent competitive behavior” (with M.A. Palma and A.L. Brown) (**Job Market Paper**)

Social signaling influences economic behavior. For instance, individuals may exhaust resources to competitively signal higher levels of social status. Conversely, individuals may avoid signaling their status to minimize the stigma associated with low status. We conduct a laboratory experiment to explore how benefit eligibility stigma drives decisions to competitiveness. Similar to Friedrichsen, König, and Schmacker (2018), we induce a stigma associated with a benefit for the low status group. We then introduce a treatment in which the stigma is reduced by expanding the eligibility to a middle-status group in a plausible deniability treatment. While we do not observe evidence of a stigma affecting benefit take-up, we do observe a difference in preferences for competitiveness in a subsequent and unrelated task; namely, when individuals in the middle group qualify for the benefit their rate of competition is reduced by 33% compared to the treatment in which they do not qualify. A potential interpretation of our results would suggest expansion of eligibility of certain government assistance programs may produce unintended consequences for the newly eligible.

- [2] “The Relationship between Monetary Incentives, Social Status, and Physical Activity.”  
(with J.Y. Kee, M.A. Palma, & J.R. Pruitt)

We conduct an experiment to understand the role of social status and monetary incentives as motivation to increase physical activity. We distributed pedometer watches and assigned experimental conditions related to social status and monetary incentives. We find that social status alone does not induce a change in physical activity, however, when combined with monetary incentives, we find a heterogeneous effect. Individuals with low physical activity increase their steps by 12%, while those with high physical activity decrease their steps by 25%. Our results call for a cautionary approach for analyzing the role of social status for physical activity intervention programs.

## GRANTS

- [1] Graduate Student Travel Grant, \$250, November 2022
- [2] Graduate Student Travel Grant, \$250, October 2021
- [3] Graduate Student Travel Grant, \$350, July 2021
- [4] The International Foundation for Research in Experimental Economics (IFREE) Small Grants Program, \$10,000, October 2019

## REFeree ACTIVITIES

Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics, AAEA annual meeting abstract review  
(Experimental Economics and Agribusiness Management)

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- [1] Southern Agricultural Economics Association 2023, Oklahoma City, OK (scheduled)
- [2] Agricultural and Applied Economics Association 2022, Anaheim, CA
- [3] Economic Sciences Association North America 2021, Tucson, AZ
- [4] Economic Sciences Association Around-the-Clock meetings 2021, virtual (moderator)
- [5] Agricultural and Applied Economics Association 2021, Austin, TX (moderator)
- [6] Southern Agricultural Economics Association 2020, Louisville, KY (moderator)

## TEACHING

- ✧ Instructor for Microeconomic Applications to Ag & Resource Markets (AREC 550),  
Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, Spring 2023

- ✧ Co-Instructor for Research Methodology (AGEC 607), Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University, Spring 2021
- ✧ Teaching Assistant for Food Security, Climate, and Conflict (AGEC 489/689), Department of Agricultural Economics and Texas A&M University, Spring 2016, 2017
- ✧ Foreign Language Leader for French, Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, Spring 2014
- ✧ Teaching Assistant for French, Department of International Studies at Texas A&M University, 2010-2012

## HONORS & AWARDS

- ✧ The Graduate & Professional School Travel Scholarship, 2022
- ✧ 2022 AAEEA Travel Scholarship, 2022
- ✧ Graduate Research Assistantship, 2016-present
- ✧ ConDev Graduate Research Fellow, 2016
- ✧ Robert G. Cherry Graduate Fellowship, 2017-2018
- ✧ George and Barbara Bush Fellowship, 2013-2014
- ✧ Robert A Mosbacher, Sr Internship Award, 2013
- ✧ Bush School general scholarship, 2013

## SKILLS

- ✧ Software: Stata, Excel, Latex, oTree, iMotions, Python, R
- ✧ Languages: Native English and Spanish, Advanced French

## REFERENCES

Marco A. Palma  
Professor  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [mapalma@tamu.edu](mailto:mapalma@tamu.edu)

Ragan Petrie  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [rpetrie@tamu.edu](mailto:rpetrie@tamu.edu)

Edwin Price  
Professor & Howard G. Buffett Foundation Chair  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [ec-price@tamu.edu](mailto:ec-price@tamu.edu)

Alex L. Brown  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [alexbrown@tamu.edu](mailto:alexbrown@tamu.edu)

Yu (Yvette) Zhang  
Associate Professor  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [yzhang@tamu.edu](mailto:yzhang@tamu.edu)

Rodolfo Nayga  
Professor & Department Head  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Texas A&M University  
✉ [rudy.nayga@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:rudy.nayga@ag.tamu.edu)