

Zhuan Pei

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Current Positions

Associate Professor (with tenure), Department of Economics and Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy, Cornell University, November 2022-Present

Executive Director, Cornell FSRDC, Cornell University Center for Social Sciences, July 2022-Present

Research Fellow, IZA, 2021-Present

Other Positions

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy, Cornell University, July 2021-October 2022

Assistant Professor, Department of Policy Analysis and Management, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University, July 2015-June 2021

Research Affiliate, IZA, 2016-2021

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Princeton University, 2019-2020

Assistant Professor of Economics, Brandeis University, 2013-2015

Postdoc Economist, W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2012-2013

Education

Princeton University, Ph.D. in Economics, 2012

Carleton College, B.A. in Mathematics (with Distinction), *summa cum laude*, 2006

Working Papers

“[Further Education During Unemployment](#)”, with Pauline Leung, arXiv:2312.17123, December 2025. Previous versions: [arXiv:2312.17123v2](#) (2023); [Princeton Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #642](#) (2020).

“[Supercompliers](#)”, with Matthew Comey, Amanda Eng, and Pauline Leung, arXiv:2212.14105, updated December 2024. (First version: December 2022).

Work in Progress

“The Effects of Employment Incentives and Cash Transfers on Parent and Child Outcomes: Evidence from the Long-Run Effects of Welfare Reform Experiments”, with Amanda Eng, Hilary Hoynes, Pauline Leung, Jordan Matsudaira, Cynthia Miller, Kevin Rinz, and Mark van Dok.

Publications (Including Accepted)

“Disability Insurance Income Saves Lives”, with Alexander Gelber, Timothy Moore, and Alexander Strand, *Journal of Political Economy*, 131(11), 3156-3185, November 2023.

“Visual Inference and Graphical Representation in Regression Discontinuity Designs”, with Christina Korting, Carl Lieberman, Jordan Matsudaira, and Yi Shen, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 138(3), 1977-2019, August 2023. Working papers: [arXiv:2112.03096v2](#) (2023); [IZA Discussion Paper #14923](#) (2021); [Princeton Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #638](#) (2020).

“Local Polynomial Order in Regression Discontinuity Designs”, (open access [here](#)), with David S. Lee, David Card, and Andrea Weber, *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*, 40(3), 1259-1267, June 2022. Previous versions: [NBER Working Paper #27424 \(2020\)](#), [Princeton Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #622 \(2018\)](#), [Brandeis Economics Department Working Paper #81 \(2014\)](#).

“Are Sufficient Statistics Necessary? Nonparametric Measurement of Deadweight Loss in Unemployment Insurance”, with David S. Lee, Pauline Leung, Christopher J. O’Leary, and Simon Quach, *Journal of Labor Economics*, 39(S2), S455-S506, April 2021. Working paper version: [NBER Working Paper #25574](#).

“Poorly Measured Confounders are More Useful on the Left Than on the Right”, (open access [here](#)) with Jörn-Steffen Pischke, and Hannes Schwandt, *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*, 37(2), 205-216, April 2019. Working paper version: [NBER Working Paper #23232](#).

“The Devil is in the Tails: Regression Discontinuity Design with Measurement Error in the Assignment Variable”, with Yi Shen, *Advances in Econometrics*, volume 38 (*Regression Discontinuity Designs: Theory and Applications*) edited by Matias D. Cattaneo and Juan Carlos Escanciano: 455-502, May 2017. Working paper version: [Princeton Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #606](#) and [IZA Discussion Paper #10320](#).

“Regression Kink Design: Theory and Practice”, with David Card, David S. Lee, and Andrea Weber, *Advances in Econometrics*, volume 38 (*Regression Discontinuity Designs: Theory and Applications*), edited by Matias D. Cattaneo and Juan Carlos Escanciano: 341-382, May 2017. Working paper version: [NBER Working Paper #22781](#).

“Eligibility Recertification and Dynamic Opting-in Incentives in Income-tested Social Programs: Evidence from Medicaid/CHIP”, *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 9(1): 241-276, February 2017. Working paper version: [Upjohn Institute Working Paper 15-234](#).

“Inference on Causal Effects in a Generalized Regression Kink Design”, with David Card, David S. Lee, and Andrea Weber, *Econometrica*, 86(6): 2453-2483, November 2015. Working paper versions: [IZA Discussion Paper #8757](#); “Nonlinear Policy Rules and the Identification and Estimation of Causal Effects in a Generalized Regression Kink Design”, [NBER Working Paper #18564](#); “Quasi-Experimental Identification and Estimation in the Regression Kink Design”, [Princeton Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #553](#).

“The Effect of Unemployment Benefits on the Duration of Unemployment Insurance Receipt: New Evidence from a Regression Kink Design in Missouri, 2003-2013”, with David Card, Andrew Johnston, Pauline Leung, and Alexandre Mas, *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings*, 105(5): 126-130, May 2015. Working paper version: [NBER Working Paper #20869](#).

“Arecibo Multi-Epoch HI Absorption Measurements Against Pulsars: Tiny-Scale Atomic Structure,” with S. Stanimirović, J. M. Weisberg, K. Tuttle, and J. T. Green, *Astrophysical Journal*, 720: 415-434, September 2010.

“[Health Care: Time for a Check Up](#),” with Gabriel Wildau and Arthur Kroeber, *China Economic Quarterly*, Q3 2007.

Grants, Honors and Awards

[Jain Family Institute – Brooks School Senior Fellow](#), 2023-2025

PI, “[Effects of Work and Financial Assistance Policies on Child Outcomes: Long-Term Evidence from Welfare Reform Experiments](#),” *William T. Grant Foundation*, with Hilary Hoynes (co-PI), Pauline Leung (co-PI), and Jordan Matsudaira (co-PI), \$544,312, 2021-2025

Co-PI, “The Effects of Employment Incentives and Cash Transfers on Parent and Child Outcomes: Evidence from the Long Run Effects of Welfare Reform Experiments,” *Laura and John Arnold Foundation*, with Hilary Hoynes (PI), Pauline Leung (co-PI), and Jordan Matsudaira (co-PI), \$348,605, 2020-2023

PI, “Graphical Presentation in Regression Discontinuity Designs,” *Cornell University Institute of Social Sciences Small Grant*, with Christina Korting (co-PI) and Yi Shen (co-PI), \$10,000, 2019-2021

[Institute of Social Sciences Faculty Fellow](#), Cornell University, 2018-2019

Co-PI, “The Effects of Employment Incentives and Cash Transfers on Parent and Child Outcomes: Long-Term Evidence from the Welfare Reform Experiments,” *Russell Sage Foundation Research Award*, with Hilary Hoynes (PI) and Jordan Matsudaira (co-PI), \$129,677, 2017-2019

Co-PI, “Experimental Evidence on the Long-Run and Intergenerational Impacts of Welfare Reform,” *Cornell University Center for the Study of Inequality Faculty Research Grant*, with Jordan Matsudaira (PI) and Pauline Leung (co-PI), \$60,777, 2017-2018

[Albert Rees Dissertation Prize](#), Princeton University, 2017

PI, “Further Education during Unemployment,” *Cornell University Institute of Social Sciences Small Grant*, with Pauline Leung (PI), \$7,500, 2017-2019

Theodore and Jane Norman Award, Brandeis University, 2013-2014

Richard A. Lester Fellowship for Industrial Relations, Princeton University, 2009-2010

Frank E. Stinchfield Prize, Carleton College, 2006

Patricia V. Damon Merit Scholarship, Carleton College, 2005-2006

Dean’s List, Carleton College, 2002-2006

Reeve Prize, Carleton College, 2005

Phi Beta Kappa, Carleton College, 2005

Seminar/Conference Presentations

2026: ASSA (discussant; scheduled)

2025: Binghamton University, Frontiers in the Studies of Anti-Poverty Programs Symposium (discussant)

2024: Stata Economics Virtual Symposium

2023: ASSA, Brown University, Princeton University Industrial Relations Section Centennial Symposium

2022: Syracuse University

2021: SWUFE, SOLE, IAAE, Cornell-Penn State Econometrics/IO Conference, AASLE

2020: Jinan IESR, [Online Causal Inference Seminar](#) (discussant; seminar video recording [here](#), and discussion starts [here](#)), APPAM

2019: Cornell University, UC Irvine, Econometric Society Asia/China/European Meetings, IZA/SOLE Transatlantic Conference, NBER Summer Institute, Princeton QSS Colloquium, APPAM, Princeton Labor-Econometrics Seminar, AASLE

2018: CIRANO-CIREQ Applied Economics Conference, UC Davis, IZA Education Workshop, APPAM, NTA, Central European University, Northwestern University

2017: Jinan University IESR Labor Conference, EALE meeting, University of Zurich, Duke University, CUFE CHLR International Symposium, CMStatistics Conference

2016: University at Buffalo, Cornell University, *Advances in Econometrics* Conference (U Michigan), Central University of Finance and Economics, Tsinghua University, Hanyang University, Econometric Society China Meeting, Sichuan University, Cornell-Penn State Econometrics/IO Conference

2015: Cornell University, SOLE/EALE meeting, Econometric Society World Congress

2014: University of Michigan, Brandeis University, George Washington University

2013: SOLE Meeting, Econometric Society North American Summer Meeting

2012: APPAM Research Conference, Brandeis University, Brigham Young University, Brown University, Mathematica Policy Research, Queen's University School of Policy Studies (Canada), Swarthmore College, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Western Michigan University

2011: Princeton University, Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Teaching

Cornell University

Economic and Policy Implications of Artificial Intelligence (undergraduate), 2024-25
Empirical Strategies for Policy Research II (Ph.D.), 2015, 2017-19, 2021-22, 2024-25
Labor Markets and Public Policy (undergraduate), 2016-19, 2021-22
Honors Thesis Adviser (undergraduate), 2017-19

Princeton University

Instructor, *Junior Independent Work*, 2019-20
Teaching assistant, *Junior Independent Work*, 2011-12, 2008-09
Teaching assistant, *Econometrics: A Mathematical Approach*, 2010
Teaching assistant, *Law and Economics*, 2008

Brandeis University

Advanced Econometrics I (Ph.D.), 2015
Honors Thesis Adviser (undergraduate), 2013-2015
Econometrics (undergraduate), 2013-2014

Ph.D. Students (Committee Member and/or Letter Writer)

Cassandra Benson (Cornell Economics; Placement: USAFA)
Christina Korting (Cornell AEM; Placement: University of Delaware)
Amanda Eng (Cornell Economics; Placement: U.S. Census Bureau)
Carl Lieberman (Princeton Economics; Placement: U.S. Census Bureau)
Kevin Ng (Cornell Economics; Placement: CNA)
David Wasser (Cornell Economics; Placement: U.S. Census Bureau)
Jiayin (Joy) Li (Cornell Statistics; in progress)
Lexin Cai (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Senan Hogan-Hennessy (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Hyewon Kim (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Jackie Blair (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Drew White (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Sammy Gold (Cornell Brooks; in progress)
Kathryn McGinnis (Cornell Economics; in progress)
Luis Basurto (Cornell Brooks; in progress)

Peer Review

Advances in Econometrics, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Review: Insights*, *American Political Science Review*, *Econometrica*, *Econometrics Journal*,

Economic Inquiry, Economic Journal, Empirical Economics, Journal of Applied Econometrics, Journal of Business and Economic Statistics, Journal of Causal Inference, Journal of Cultural Economics, Journal of Econometrics, Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, Journal of Economic Surveys, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Labor Economics, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Political Economy: Micro, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of the American Statistical Association, Labour Economics, National Science Foundation, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Review of Economic Studies, Review of Economics and Statistics, Southern Economic Journal

Service

[Conference organizer and program chair](#) of [FSRDC 2025 Annual Conference](#), 2024-25
Symposium organizer of “[Frontiers in the studies of U.S. anti-poverty programs](#)”, 2025
Member of Program Committee, SOLE/EALE/AASLE World Labor Conference, 2024-25
Member of Economics Ph.D. admissions committee, Cornell University, 2017-19, 21-22, 25
Member of Brooks School MSDSPP small working group, Cornell University, 2025
Member of Brooks School Ph.D. student award committee, Cornell University, 2025
Member of Economics recruiting committee, Cornell University, 2022-23, 24-25
Member of executive committee, NYRDC, 2022-present
Member of Brooks School research review committee, Cornell University, 2024
Member of Economics Ph.D. placement committee, Cornell University, 2020, 2022
Member of Dyson MS/PhD curriculum review committee, Cornell University, 2022-23
Member of PAM Ph.D. admissions committee, Cornell University, 2022
Co-organizer of method mini-course, Cornell University, 2016-20
Co-organizer of PAM seminar series, Cornell University, 2017-19
Member of PAM recruiting committee, Cornell University, 2015
Co-organizer of economics seminar series, Brandeis University, 2014-15
Graduate Economics Club, Princeton University
Social co-chair, 2007-2008; Treasurer, 2008-2009

Languages

English, Mandarin Chinese

Citizenship

United States