Yujuan Gao

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Professional Summary

Ph.D. researcher in Applied Economics specializing in **causal inference, experimental design, and machine learning applications.** Experienced leading international research projects integrating econometric methods to evaluate education, health, and technology programs.

Education

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL   **August 2021 - May 2026**
Ph.D., Applied Economics, Food and Resource Economics Department
Graduate School Fellowship (2021-2025)

Shaanxi Normal University, China   **August 2016 - December 2019**
M.A., Economics

Shanxi University of Finance and Economics, China   **September 2012 - July 2016**
B.S., Statistics

Technical Skills

Programming: Python, R, Stata, SQL, LaTeX, Github
Methods: Randomized Controlled Trials, Instrumental Variables, Difference-in-Differences, Machine Learning, NLP, Social Network & Geospatial Analysis
Software: TensorFlow, PyTorch, ArcGIS, Survey Solutions, Qualtrics, scikit-learn, EconML, CausalML

Research & Project Experience

Stanford University, Stanford, CA
Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies   **July 2025 – Present**
Research Assistant

- Merged 500M job-posting records with housing-price data to analyze AI exposure effects on regional employment demand
- Applied NLP techniques to classify job skills and estimate causal effects of AI adoption on local housing markets

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
Food and Resource Economics Department   **August 2021 – Present**
Research Assistant

- Conducted A/B experiment on color-coded nutrition labels; reduced decision time by 18% and increased healthy food choices by 10pp
- Processed audio data to study home language environment using LENA technology
- Applied PSM and BART to maternal-migration data; migration improved migrant children's development by 0.8 SD
- Designed and trained CNN in TensorFlow for traffic-sign classification; improved test accuracy from 82% to 94%
- Implemented cluster-randomized controlled trial across 11,000 students in China; applied social network analysis identifying peer spillover effects improving mathematics achievement by 0.11 SD
- Combined geospatial 3G coverage with 80,000 household (240,000 observations) DHS records; found broadband expansion reduced fertility by 11-16% and increased women's employment by 7.6pp

Save the Children, China
Yunnan Province Early Childhood Development Project   **July 2020 – January 2021**
Evaluation Consultant
- Designed and implemented impact evaluation for 2,000+ families across three provinces
- Introduced digital data-collection tools (Survey Solutions) reducing data collection time by 50%
- Authored policy report synthesizing evaluation evidence

Stanford University, Stanford, CA
Stanford Center on China's Economy and Institutions   **August 2018 – August 2019**
Visiting Graduate Research Fellow
- Applied friendship formation analysis using seat distribution as instrument for peer group selection; demonstrated causal peer effects in classroom microenvironments
- Led Tips-by-Text RCT with 1,096 mothers; managed and processed message data from social platform, information messages increased parenting knowledge by 0.22 SD
- Collaborated with economists, psychologists, and education specialists on field implementation

Teaching Experience

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
Food and Resource Economics Department   **August 2021 – Present**
Teaching Assistant
Courses: Agricultural & Food Policy Analysis, Applied Econometrics, Principles of Agribusiness Management
Led recitations, mentored research projects, and developed course materials; average evaluation 4.6/5.0

Selected Publications

Chen, Xuqi, Lisa House, Zhifeng Gao, **Yujuan Gao** (2024). "Do Color-Coded Nutrition Facts Panels Nudge the Use of Nutrition Information on Food Packaging?" *Food Policy.* [Link]

Ma, Yue, et al., **Yujuan Gao** (2023). "Associations between Urbanization and the Home Language Environment: Evidence from a LENA Study in Rural and Peri-urban China." *Child Development.* [Link]

Gao, Yujuan, Derek Hu, Even Peng, et al. (2020). "Depressive Symptoms and the Link with Academic Performance among Rural Taiwanese Children." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.* [Link]

Ma, Yue, **Yujuan Gao**, et al. (2020). "Maternal Health Behaviors during Pregnancy in Rural Northwestern China." *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth.* [Link]

Conference Presentations

Allied Social Science Associations Annual Meeting (2026, 2025), Advances in Field Experiments Annual Meeting (2025), International Association for Applied Econometrics Conference (Italy 2025), Pacific Development Conference (Stanford 2024), Northeast Universities Development Consortium (Harvard 2023), Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Fall Conference (2024)

Awards & Service

University of Florida Graduate School Fellowship (2021–2025) | J.R. Greenman Scholarship (2022, 2024) | Best Paper Award, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (2021)
Reviewer: *BMC Public Health, PLOS ONE*