

# Wenni Yang

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## FIELD OF INTERESTS

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Public Economics, Economics of Education, Economic History, Development Economics

## EDUCATION

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**Ph.D. Student in Economics**, University of California, Davis

2021 – Present

**M.A. in Economics**, Fudan University

2018 – 2021

**B.A. in Economics**, East China Normal University

2014 – 2018

## WORKING PAPERS

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- “The Effect of Marriage Bar Policy” *with Rebecca Brough*  
*with Rebecca Brough*

**Abstract:** Women’s increased involvement in the economy was the most significant change in US labor markets during the past century (Goldin, 2006). An often cited -- but understudied -- reason for women's increased participation in the labor force was the elimination of an explicitly discriminatory policy -- marriage bar. In this project, we digitized new data from 1900-1950 to document the prevalence of marriage bars in the teaching profession-- which prohibited married women from serving as full-time teachers -- across US localities. Using Census full-count data from 1880 to 1940 with a generalized difference-in-differences empirical strategy, we find that the marriage bar decreased the proportion of married women teachers by 1.3 percentage points (13% of pre-treatment mean), substituted by single female teachers. By linking teachers across censuses, we also provide supportive evidence for lower retention rates - current teachers are less likely to still be teachers in 10 years.

- Evaluating Incentives for Full-Time Enrollment at California Community Colleges  
*with Paco Martorell, Scott E. Carrell and Elizabeth Friedman*

**Abstract:** Rising college tuition costs in conjunction with low college completion rates have given rise to financial aid programs tied to academic requirements meant to encourage student success. The largest financial aid program in California, the Cal Grant, underwent multiple structural changes from 2015-2018, offering increased aid tied to academic requirements for community college students, such as being a full-time student. Using administrative data from all community colleges in California, we study the effects of these changes on the academic success of community college students, an understudied population in this context. We find that, despite large financial incentives, there are no effects of being Cal Grant B eligible on students' course-taking behavior. Survey results suggest these null results might stem from a lack of awareness from students regarding the details of their financial aid package.

- Income Inequality and Life Satisfaction of Single Men: Evidence from Rural China

**Abstract:** An unintended consequence of the One-Child Policy in China is the large cohorts of “surplus” men remain unmarried when they reach adulthood. This study examines the impact of income inequality on the life satisfaction of single men in rural China. Using data from China Family Panel Studies (2010-2016), I found that compared to married men, income inequality is negatively correlated with the life satisfaction of unmarried men, while there is no such effect on women. One possible explanation for why income inequality particularly dissatisfies single men is the direct financial pressure on men to spend more on weddings to “catch up with joneses” in the local marriage market.

## WORKING IN PROGRESS

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➤ Gender, Improvement, and Persistence in STEM

Do female students leave STEM majors in response to negative academic trajectories? This question provides policy implications on how to address the leaky pipeline in STEM for females. Using administrative data from a four-year institution in the US, I leverage a Regression-Discontinuity Design to examine students' responses to a positive or negative GPA change in changing their major choices.

## PUBLICATIONS

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➤ Congestion on the Information Superhighway: Does Economics Have a Working Papers Problem?

with Lester R. Lusher and Scott E. Carrell

Sep 2023, *Journal of Public Economics* [[pdf copy](#)][NBER [WP29153](#)]

**Abstract:** Using data on the NBER working paper series, we show that the dissemination of economics research suffers from a congestion problem: An increase in the number of weekly released working papers on average reduces downloads, abstract views, and media attention for each paper. Subsequent publishing and citation outcomes are harmed as well. Papers written by prominent authors are not immune to this congestion effect. Finally, suggestive evidence on viewership and downloads implies that working papers substitute for the dissemination function of publication. Our results highlight how readers face time and cognitive constraints, with increased congestion in working papers leading to real impacts on how research is produced and consumed.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

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Research Assistant for Professor Scott Carrell and Paco Martorell, UC Davis	2022 – Present
Research Assistant for Professor Sharon Xuejing Zuo, Fudan University	2019 – 2021
Research Assistant for Professor Laura Hering, Erasmus University of Rotterdam	2019 – 2020

## PRESENTATIONS

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UC Davis Applied Economics Student Talk	2021, 2023
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## TEACHING EXPERIENCES

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Teaching Assistant for Econ 001A: Introductory Microeconomics, UC Davis	Fall 2021, Winter, Spring 2022
Teaching Assistant for International Winter Program: Industrial Organization	Fall 2020

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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Department Research Awards (\$600), UC Davis	2023
Department of Economics Fellowship, UC Davis	Spring 2022

## **SERVICE**

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UC Davis Gender Economics Reading Group, Organizer

2021 – 2022

## **OTHERS**

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Computer skills: Stata, MATLAB, R, Python, LaTeX

Language: Chinese (Native), English (Fluent)