

# Christina Sun

Department of Economics  
University of California, Davis  
One Shields Avenue  
Davis, CA 95616

Phone: (518) 354-7453  
Email: [ucsun@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucsun@ucdavis.edu)  
Homepage: [christinasun.net](http://christinasun.net)

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## Education

### University of California, Davis

Ph.D. in Economics, Expected 2025

### Binghamton University, State University of New York (SUNY)

B.S. in Economic Analysis and B.A. in Mathematical Sciences, 2018

## Research

### Fields of Interest

Behavioral Economics, Experimental Economics, Economics of Education, Applied Microeconomics

### Work in Progress

#### *Self Justification and Belief Distortion*

In this project, I experimentally study whether people engage in belief distortion in order to justify their prior choices. Since our choices are a function of our beliefs and preferences, existing experimental paradigms cannot separate between the effect of choices vs. prior beliefs on posterior beliefs. I design a lab experiment that cleanly separates the influence of choices on posterior beliefs from that of priors, with additional treatments to disentangle underlying mechanisms of ownership effect and ego-relevant bias.

#### *Behavioral Incentive Compatibility of BDM Belief Elicitation*

Recent evidence has shown that revealing incentives during belief elicitation might negatively impact truth telling, even if the elicitation mechanism is theoretically incentive compatible. In this project, I study the effect of quantitative incentive information on truth telling in the Becker-DeGroot-Marschak (BDM) belief elicitation mechanism. Subjects guess the probability of selecting a red urn out of 10 urns of colors red and blue, where the number of urns of each color is known. Results show that in the treatment where subjects are shown full quantitative incentives, the rate of false reports is around 10 percentage points higher than in the treatment where no quantitative incentives are shown. This higher rate of false reports is driven by subjects who misunderstood the incentives. Given that BDM belief elicitation is particularly difficult to explain and implement, this result shows a potentially simpler and more practical way of eliciting beliefs while maintaining quality of data.

#### *Diversity in Schools: Immigrants and the Long-Run Outcomes of US-Born Students*, with Briana Ballis and Derek Rury

The peer composition of a school is an important feature of a child's learning environment. Recent work has shown that exposure to students who are immigrants or the children of immigrants has positive effects on the educational outcomes of their classmates (Figlio, et al., 2021). We plan to expand on this research by studying how the presence of immigrant children in Texas schools has influenced the success of their peers in school and into adulthood. Specifically, we will look at how immigrant students influence the academic performance, labor market earnings and the political participation of their US-born born peers.

*Challenges and Disparities Faced by LGBTQ+ Students in the Transition to College: Survey Evidence from California*, with Michal Kurlaender, Alexandria Hurtt, and Baiyu Zhou

### Working Papers

*Do Schools Matter? Measuring the Impact of California High Schools on Test Scores and Postsecondary Enrollment*, with Scott Carrell, Michal Kurlaendar, Paco Martorell, and Matthew Naven

This paper explores high school quality in California after the transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Using a longitudinal panel of students' standardized test scores, we estimate high school test score value added in English and mathematics for the 2015-2018 cohorts of 11th grade students. We then link these student-level data to college enrollment records to estimate college enrollment value added. We decompose the college enrollment value added into two components: the persistence of test score value added and non-test score factors (e.g., college counseling services) that influence college enrollment. Results show that there is substantial variation in school quality as measured by both test scores and college enrollment. A one-standard deviation increase in school quality is associated with a 0.15 standard deviation increase in standardized test scores and an 8-percentage point increase college enrollment. Importantly, our results show that both the persistence in test score value added and other non-test score factors within a school are important determinants of college-going value added.

### Policy Reports

*Transition to College: Voices from the Class of 2023*, with Michal Kurlaender, Alexandria Hurtt, and Baiyu Zhou.

## Experience

### Instructor of Record

ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics Summer 2023  
ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics Summer 2022

### Teaching Assistant

ECN 190A: Behavioral Economics Spring 2023  
ECN 151A: Economics of Labor Markets Summer 2020  
ECN 1A: Principles of Microeconomics Spring 2020  
ECN 135: Money and Banking Winter 2020  
ECN 117: Economics of International Immigration Fall 2019

### Graduate Student Researcher

California Education Lab Summer 2020 - Present

## Professional Activity

### Presentations

FAIR NHH & Rady School of Management Spring School in Behavioural Economics March 2024  
Economic Science Association North American Conference October 2023  
American Economic Association CSQIEP Mentoring Conference June 2023  
Bay Area Behavioral and Experimental Economics Workshop May 2023  
Economic Science Association North American Conference November 2022  
UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar March & November 2022  
UC Davis Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar February & November 2021

### Referee

Journal of Human Resources 2020

**Seminars and Workshops**

Seminar on College Teaching, University of California, Davis 2023  
 Discrimination & Diversity Workshop, University of East Anglia 2022

**Service**

Graduate Program Student Mentor, Economics Department 2019 - 2023  
 Organizer of Theory & Behavioral Lunchtime Seminar Series 2020  
 Executive Vice President of Economics Graduate Student Association 2020 - 2021

**Awards and Fellowships**

Russell Sage Foundation Research Grant: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Program 2023  
 UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award 2024  
 UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award 2023  
 UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award 2022  
 UC Davis Economics Department Graduate Student Research Award 2021  
 UC Davis Economics Departmental Fellowship 2018-2019  
 State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence 2018  
 Binghamton University President's Award for Student Excellence 2018  
 Binghamton University Economics Faculty Award for Excellence in Economics 2018  
 Binghamton University Award for Excellence in Mathematics 2018  
 Binghamton University Senior Class of 1986 Award for Student Excellence 2018

**Technical Skills**

Stata, Python, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, QualtricsXM,  $\LaTeX$ , Markdown

**References****Anujit Chakraborty**

Assistant Professor  
 Department of Economics  
 University of California, Davis  
 Email: chakraborty@ucdavis.edu

**Andrés Carvajal**

Professor  
 Department of Economics  
 University of California, Davis  
 Email: acarvajal@ucdavis.edu

**Scott Carrell**

Professor  
 Department of Economics  
 University of Texas at Austin  
 Email: scott.carrell@austin.utexas.edu

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