Jialu (Gloria) Dou

Department of Economics, University of Pittsburgh
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Research Interest

Policy Analysis, Health Economics, Chronic Disease

Education

University of Pittsburgh — September 2023 – May 2028
Ph.D. in Economics — *Expected*

University of Pittsburgh — May 2025
M.A. in Economics

University of Pittsburgh — September 2019 - May 2023
B.S. in Mathematics-Economics

Completed PhD courses

Health and Labor Economics, Experimental and Behavioral Economics, Micro and Macro Theory, Econometrics, Statistical Machine Learning

Primary Advisor

Dr. Osea Giuntella
Department of Economics
University of Pittsburgh
IZA and NBER Research Associate
Email: osea.giuntella@pitt.edu

Working Papers

Breaking the Early Bell: Lessons from the First Statewide Mandate on School Start Times *(with Rania Gihleb, Osea Giuntella, and Jakub Lonsky)*, NBER Working Paper 35184; *Reject and Resubmit at American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*

Sweet Sips, Bitter Consequences: Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes in the U.S.; *Scheduled Presentation at ASHEcon 2026*

Work in Progress

Menopause and Health: Behavioral Responses to a Midlife Transition *(with Rania Gihleb and Osea Giuntella)*

Out of Sync: Sunset Time and Pain *(with Laura Sirucek, Samantha Kathleen Millard, Fabrizio Mazzonna, Thomas Graven-Nielsen, and Osea Giuntella)*

Conference Presentations & Attendance

15th Annual Conference of the American Society of Health Economists *(Oral Presentation)* — June 2026 (Scheduled)
National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute 2025 *(Attended)* — July 2025
Sixth World Labor Conference *(Oral Presentation)* — June 2025
14th Annual Conference of the American Society of Health Economists *(Oral Presentation)* — June 2025

Awards and Fellowships

Andrew Mellon Fellowships, University of Pittsburgh	2026-2027
Arts and Sciences Summer Fellowships, University of Pittsburgh	May 2025
Arts and Sciences Graduate Fellowships, University of Pittsburgh	2023 - 2024
Jerome C. Wells Award, University of Pittsburgh	2023

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Undergraduate Level, University of Pittsburgh
Applied Econometrics 1 — Fall 2025
Intro to Microeconomics [4.68/5, 81%] — Fall 2024

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Master Level, University of Pittsburgh
Big Data and Forecasting in Economics & Applications of Economic Analysis Techniques — Spring 2024

Working Paper Abstracts

Breaking the Early Bell: Lessons from the First Statewide Mandate on School Start Times *(with Rania Gihleb, Osea Giuntella, and Jakub Lonsky)*

We examine the impact of California's Senate Bill 328 (SB 328), the first statewide mandate requiring later school start times for middle and high schools, on adolescent sleep, mental health, and academic outcomes. Using difference-in-differences and eventstudy designs across five data sources, we find that SB 328 increased the share of students sleeping at least 8 hours per night by 13%, meeting the CDC-recommended minimum for this age group. Average mental health effects are imprecisely estimated, but boys show significant reductions in sadness, hopelessness, and suicidal ideation, and Hispanic students, who experienced the largest sleep-timing shifts, show parallel reductions in difficulty concentrating; together these patterns are consistent with a dose-response relationship between sleep improvement and mental well-being. Math and English scores in grade 8 improved by approximately 0.08–0.10 standard deviations, with the largest gains among Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. A within-state analysis using teachers' commute arrival times as a proxy for pre-policy school start times corroborates these findings, and shows academic gains accumulating over 2023–2025 alongside a suggestive decline in high school dropout rates. The absence of effects on chronic absenteeism rules out an attendance-driven mechanism, pointing instead to the direct cognitive benefits of aligning school schedules with adolescents' biological rhythms.

The Long-Term Impact of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes on Purchases and Health Outcomes in the United States

The sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) tax has been implemented in seven cities in the United States as a public health measure to reduce sugar consumption and related chronic diseases. While substantial literature has examined the short-run effects of the tax on SSB purchases from both household and retail perspectives, much less is known about its long-term impacts on purchasing behavior and health outcomes. This study combines data from the NielsenIQ Consumer Panel and the Annual Ailments, Health, and Wellness Survey to study the long-term effects of SSB taxation at the household level across seven cities. Using event-study and matched difference-in-differences approaches, I find that SSB quantity purchased declined by 17% following the tax implementation; however, this reduction diminished within three years, resulting in an overall statistically insignificant effect. Additionally, I find a 29% increase in purchases of non-SSB beverages and an 11% increase in sugary food substitutes. When accounting for sugar from beverages and foods, there is no significant change in total sugar from purchased products. Consistent with these purchasing behaviors, there is no significant effect on the diagnosis rates of obesity, prediabetes, or type II diabetes, but with a reduced severity. These findings suggest that while the SSB tax temporarily reduced SSB purchases, it did not achieve sustained reductions in sugar purchases or improvements in health outcomes.

Dear Mentoring Program Committee,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Mentoring Program on Aging and Health Economics Research by the NBER. My name is Gloria, and I am a third-year PhD student in economics at the University of Pittsburgh. My research interests focus on health policy analysis and chronic disease, and I look forward to extending my work to aging-related policy questions and their implications for older adult populations.

I am interested in the NBER mentoring program as I aim to expand my research on aging. My research experience has primarily focused on general populations, but I would like to extend my focus to older adults and aging-related policy questions. The NBER Mentoring Program would guide me on the path to aging research. I have several motivations for participating. First, I want to learn about current and future research directions in aging economics and to understand what the field considers important questions. Second, the program would give me access to crucial information on datasets available for aging research and the aging population. Third, I am currently building my dissertation package and need guidance from experienced researchers to support my future aging research. Building mentorship with NBER research fellows could even potentially extend to my external dissertation committee.

My research interests center on public policy analysis and chronic disease. While my previous work has examined the impacts of health policy on consumer behavior in general populations, I am committed to extending this research to address aging-related policy questions and their implications for older adults. My previous research experience includes examining the impacts of health conditions on individuals in the labor market and the effects of public health policies on consumer behavior and health outcomes. I have an ongoing project with Dr. Osea Giuntella and Dr. Rania Gihleb on the effect of menopause on women's health outcomes, labor market participation, and purchasing behaviors. I also have my second-year paper examining the long-term effects of the sugar-sweetened beverage tax on purchasing behaviors and health outcomes, with a focus on chronic diseases, including obesity and diabetes. From that project, the heterogeneity in the older population shows a smaller substitution effect and healthier outcomes.

I would like to extend my research to the aging population, focusing on Medicare and Medicaid for older adults, as well as public policy regarding chronic disease. My previous experience studying purchasing behavior using NielsenIQ data has strengthened my ability to work with complex administrative data sources. My projects that emphasize policy evaluation across populations provide relevant experience for studying aging-related interventions.

I look forward to participating in the mentoring program and the following conference on aging to learn about the latest topics and research directions that will support my study of policy interventions for older adults. I would also look forward to gaining information on data uses and methodologies that could advance my research. I am most excited to build connections with mentors and peers to communicate our research and gain guidance and support.

Thank you for considering my application. I wish you a wonderful day!

Sincerely,

Gloria Dou

University of Pittsburgh