Yufei Xie

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Fields of Interests

Public Economics, Health Economics

Education

University of California San Diego, Department of Economics, La Jolla, CA

Ph.D. Student in Economics (GPA: 3.9) 2024 –

Completed PhD Courses:

ECON 200A, 200B, 200C, Microeconomics (A+, A+, A)
ECON 210A, 210B, 210C, Macroeconomics (A+, A+, A)
ECON 220A, 220B, 220C, 220D, 220E, 220F, Econometrics (A+, A+, A+, A, B+, Ongoing)
ECON 232 Prof. Itzik Fadlon, Public Economics: Redistribution and Social Insurance (A+)
ECON 233 Prof. Jeffrey Clemens, Public Economics: Healthcare (Ongoing)
ECON 242, Macroeconomics of Development (A)
ECON 246, International Macroeconomics (A)
ECON 281, Special Topics in Macroeconomics (A+)

University of Virginia, Department of Economics, Charlottesville, VA

Exchange Graduate Student (GPA: 4.0) 2023

Completed PhD Courses:

ECON 8150 Prof. Emma Harrington, Economics of Labor Markets (A)
ECON 8310 Prof. Lee Lockwood, Public Economics I (A)
ECON 8510 Prof. Jonathan Colmer, Topics in Development Economics (A)

Fudan University, School of Economics, Shanghai, China

Graduate Student in Economics 2022 – 2024
Bachelor of Economics, with Distinction 2018 – 2022

Publications

[1] Xie, Yufei, Yiheng Liu, and Jin Feng, 2025, Healthcare Spillovers of Spousal Health Shocks in China: Evidence from Administrative Data. *Journal of Population Economics*, 38(21).

[2] Ai, Jingyi, Xi Chen, Jin Feng, and Yufei Xie, 2025, Early Effects of Cognitive Impairment-Friendly Community on Healthcare Utilization in Shanghai: Evidence from Administrative Data. *Social Science & Medicine*, 118570.

Working Papers

[3] Feng, Jin, Hong Song, Yanfang Su, Yuwei E Wang, Siyuan Wei, and Yufei Xie, 2025, Academic Stress Increases Student Psychiatric Visits, but Education Policy Successfully Improves Mental Health.

Research Assistance

- to Prof. Itzik Fadlon and Ming Tai-Seale, UC San Diego 2026
- to Prof. Titan Alon, UC San Diego 2025 – 2026
- to Prof. Kelvin Yuen, HKUST (GZ) 2024

Awards and Honors

- Regent Fellowship, UC San Diego 2024
- Outstanding Undergraduates/Graduates Fellowship, Fudan University 2019 – 2024
- Top Student Award, Ministry of Education of China 2022
- Excellent Graduates of the Municipality, Ministry of Education of Shanghai 2022

Skills

- Programming: Stata, MATLAB, Julia, C++, R, Python
- Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native), English (fluent), Cantonese (fluent)

Statement of Research Interests and Motivation

Yufei Xie

PhD Student in Economics, University of California San Diego

I am a second-year PhD student (Cohort 2024) in economics at UC San Diego, working in public and health economics. I am interested in how social insurance systems function as populations age, and in how their financing and design affect both the workers they cover and the firms that fund them.

My main project concerns the optimal design of social insurance when coverage itself responds to policy. As populations age, governments must raise contributions to finance benefits, but a higher rate also pushes employers out of a system where enrollment is mandated yet compliance is incomplete, so financing and coverage are in tension. I develop a directed search model of the labor market, in which firms choose whether to enroll, into the planner's problem, so that the optimal benefit condition nests the familiar Baily-Chetty insurance and moral hazard terms and adds a coverage correction that comes from the firm participation margin. Estimating this new participation elasticity with firm-level data in China, I find that it is quantitatively first-order, which means that a planner who ignores it sets the contribution rate too high and shrinks coverage.

In related work, I examine why entry into Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) rises sharply during recessions. Because exit rates are very low, a temporary downturn can turn into a permanent labor force exit. I capture this with a structural labor search model that separates cyclical entry into a health margin and an incentive margin, which lets me quantify its welfare cost and evaluate counterfactual policies such as unemployment insurance extensions and tighter screening.

I am also studying how a large in-kind transfer affects household finances. California's universal transitional kindergarten program assigns a free year of public pre-kindergarten by a moving birthday cutoff. I use this cutoff, linked to parents' credit records and children's birth records, to ask whether the financial relief is largest for low-income families, who tend to spend a larger share of their income on childcare.

My interest in these questions began with earlier empirical work in health economics. Using administrative data from China, I have published studies on the healthcare spillovers of spousal health shocks within households and on the effect of a cognitive-impairment-friendly community program on the healthcare use of older residents.

I currently work as a research assistant to Professors Itzik Fadlon and Ming Tai-Seale, evaluating a digital health management program for hypertension that was deployed in a real-world clinical setting at UC San Diego Health. This experience has strengthened my motivation to do empirical research grounded in real-world health care delivery, where the adoption of an intervention is itself a central economic outcome.

I am applying to the mentoring program because aging and health economics is the field where I hope to build my research career. At this early stage, the guidance of senior researchers and the connection with peers working on similar questions would be tremendously beneficial to me. Two forms of support would be especially valuable. First, as an international student, I find it difficult to navigate the process of accessing US administrative data, including restricted Social Security Administration files such as the Disability Research File and Medicare data. I would appreciate any practical guidance on how to obtain data access, and on what data is feasible within a realistic timeline. Second, I would value the chance to connect with faculty mentors and fellow graduate students who work on aging, disability, health, and social insurance for honest feedback on my current projects and for building longer-term research relationships. I hope to contribute to the workshop as much as I gain from it.