

Tong Li

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EDUCATION

Purdue University, Mitch Daniels School of Business

West Lafayette, IN

- Ph.D. in Economics (GPA: 3.86/4.0)

2021-2026 (exp.)

- Master of Science in Economics

2021-2024

Committees: Jillian B. Carr (Chair), Victoria Prowse, Ben Zou, Timothy N. Bond

Duke University

Durham, NC

- Master of Arts in Economics

2018-2019

Peking University

Beijing, China

- Bachelor of Arts in Economics

2016-2018

Beijing Forestry University

Beijing, China

- Bachelor of Science in Statistics

2013-2017

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Labor Economics, Public Economics, Health Economics, Crime, and Applied Microeconomics

WORKING PAPERS

[1] **Does Easier Access to Alcohol Affect Road Safety? Insights from Texas Municipalities**

(Job Market Paper, *with Somdeepa Das*) [pdf]

Abstract: We examine the impact of local alcohol availability on traffic accidents, leveraging plausibly exogenous variation in local alcohol policies in Texas. More than 300 cities in Texas voted to legalize alcohol sales between 2003 and 2019, and the passage of these so-called “wet laws” leads to a sizable increase in liquor establishments and sales. Despite this increase, we do not observe a corresponding increase in overall crashes, alcohol-related crashes, or fatalities associated with these crashes. We explore the mechanism and find that the growth in liquor establishments is primarily driven by off-premise retailers, while evidence suggests that off-premise alcohol consumption is largely unrelated to alcohol-impaired traffic incidents. Our study contributes to a broader understanding of how policies regulating “sin goods” like alcohol influence public outcomes.

[2] **The Effect of SNAP Disbursement Schedules on Alcohol Expenditures and Drunk Driving** [pdf]

Abstract: This paper estimates the effect of spreading out SNAP disbursement dates within a month on alcohol purchase patterns and alcohol-related fatal accidents. I find that distributing SNAP disbursement days more evenly helps households reduce their consumption of various types of alcohol and the associated alcohol-related fatal accidents, particularly during the newly added disbursement days in the middle of the month. Building on prior research on the relationship between government benefits and household consumption, my results show that shifts in the SNAP disbursement schedule meaningfully affect household purchasing behavior, including purchases of ineligible products, with broader consequences for public health and safety.

WORK IN PROGRESS

[1] **Hunting, Drinking, and Driving: Seasonal Variation in Road Safety**

(with Jillian B. Carr, Ran Fang)

Abstract: This project investigates whether hunting season contributes to increased traffic accidents in the United States. Hunting season is a period of heightened outdoor recreation, often accompanied by social drinking traditions in rural communities. Using geographic fatal crash records and state-defined hunting calendars, we examine whether motor vehicle accidents rise during hunting season relative to non-hunting periods. By linking wildlife management boundaries with roadway crash data, this study sheds light on the unintended public safety externalities of hunting season. The results inform discussions on driving, community safety, and the role of seasonal activities in traffic accidents.

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

- Bilsland Dissertation Fellowship 2025-2026, Purdue University 2025
- Daniels School of Business Certificate for Outstanding Teaching, Purdue University 2023
- M.A. Merit Scholar Award from the Department of Economics, Duke University 2019
- Outstanding Student Scholarship, Beijing Forestry University 2016
- Outstanding Research Paper Awards, Beijing Forestry University 2014-2016

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Purdue University 2021-Present

- Analyzed changes in occupational task measures during China's trade shock using historical occupation data
- Compiled and summarized a comprehensive collection of 500+ macroeconomics studies
- Use high-dimensional conditionally Gaussian state space models with missing data to estimate monthly GDP, and compare the impulse responses of monthly GDP and industrial production to a financial shock
- Organized three decades of U.S. airline merger and acquisition data to support industry analysis

Research Assistant, Duke University 2019

- Conducted literature review on auction theory and related topics in Industrial Organization
- Supported the development and formal proof of theoretical models
- Proofread and edited research manuscripts for publication

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

- Microeconomics (ECON 251, Undergraduate) 2023

Teaching Assistant

- Econometrics (ECON 360, Undergraduate) 2025
- Real Estate Fundamentals (MGMT 370, Undergraduate) 2024
- Economics of Public (ECON 322, Undergraduate) 2024
- Intermediate Macroeconomics (ECON 352, Undergraduate) 2024
- Intermediate Economics I - Microeconomics (ECON 511, Graduate) 2023

- Industrial Organization (ECON 461, Undergraduate) 2023
- Microeconomics (ECON 251, Undergraduate) 2021-2022
- Personnel Economics (ECON 550, Graduate) 2021

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

- Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting, Florida 2025 (*exp.*)
- Midwest Economics Association Annual Meeting, Missouri 2025
- Midwest Health Economics Conference, Indiana University 2024
- Labor Lunch Workshops, Purdue University 2024-2025

SKILLS & CERTIFICATION

- Stata, Python, MATLAB, R, SQL, L^AT_EX, Mathematica
- Passed All Three Levels of the CFA Program

INTERNSHIP

Intern - Economics, Amazon

2025

- Developed statistical forecasting models for *One Medical*, reducing forecast error (MAPE) from 40% to 15% at the clinic level and 10% at the regional level over horizons of up to 18 months
- Designed optimization frameworks to align customer acquisition investments with service capacity
- Enhanced predictive accuracy by incorporating geographic retail data (70M+ records) via machine learning methods, further reducing MAPE from 15% to 10%