

Yue Yu

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Education

Ph.D. Economics, Department of Economics, Columbia University, Expected 2020

B.A., Economics, Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, 2014

Exchange Student, Department of Economics, University of California, Berkeley, Spring 2013

Fields of Specialization

Primary: International Trade, Urban Economics, Economic Geography

Secondary: Development Economics

Job Market Paper

“Land-Use Regulation and Economic Development: Evidence from the Farmland Red Line Policy in China.”

Awarded UEA Prize for Best Student Paper (Honorable Mention) and EMUEA Kraks Fond Prize (Runner-Up), 2019

Abstract: Many countries have land-use regulations to preserve farmland for food security reasons. In this paper, I show that such regulations can distort economic activity across sectors and locations at a substantial cost to aggregate welfare in developing countries during urbanization. I study a major policy restricting farm-to-urban land conversion in China - the Farmland Red Line Policy - to provide causal evidence on the impact of land-use regulation on local development measured by GDP and population growth. The policy imposes a barrier to urban land development, the strength of which depends on exogenous local geographical features. I show that a greater barrier significantly reduces urban land supply, lowers GDP, and decreases population. To understand the aggregate impact of the policy, I develop a quantitative spatial equilibrium model that features endogenous land-use decisions. According to the model, the policy causes an excess supply of farmland and an under-supply of urban land, and the extent of such land misallocation varies across locations due to their local geographical features. In the constrained equilibrium, the spatial and sectoral mobility of workers implies that land misallocation leads to labor misallocation. The calibrated model reveals that the welfare of workers would have been 6% higher in 2010 if the policy had not been implemented. Moreover, a cap-and-trade system that achieved the same aggregate level of farmland would have been far less costly in terms of welfare. The results suggest that fast-growing economies in developing countries need to design land-use policies carefully, as the welfare costs of poorly designed policies can be substantial.

Work in Progress

“Agglomeration within Knowledge Hubs: Evidence from Economic Research Institutions.”

Abstract: In the post-Internet era, does being surrounded by more active researchers in the workplace increase one’s innovative activity? In this paper, I test the impact of team size on one’s publication output among US university economists from 1996 to 2016. I construct a database of affiliation and publication history for all US university economists using the publication information from the Scopus database. University funding revenue from private gifts and government appropriation is used as an instrument for the total number of economists at a university. I find that a 10% increase in team size raises one’s annual output, measured by citation weighted number of publications, by 5%. Increasing chances to coauthor with colleagues when being part of a larger team helps explain the team size effect. The team size effect disappears once crossing the affiliation border: having more economists in a nearby affiliation does not affect one’s output.

“Expansion of High-Speed Railways and Firm Export: Evidence from China,” with Lin Tian.

Abstract: This paper uses a rapid expansion of the High-Speed Railways (HSR) in China since 2007 as a natural experiment to study the impact of the transportation infrastructure on firms’ export activities. Estimates show that after connecting to the HSR, firms increase their export values by 16%, which is driven by an increase in the quantity but not the price of exports. Furthermore, firms that specialize in non-codifiable products have the most significant growth in exports. The results highlight the role of infrastructure in reducing the search costs of buyer-seller matching.

Honors and Awards

2019	UEA Prize for Best Student Paper (Honorable Mention)
2019	EMUEA Kraks Fond Prize (Runner-Up)
2019-2020	Dissertation Fellowship, Department of Economics, Columbia University
Spring 2019	ASGC, GSAS, and Department of Economics Travel Grants, Columbia University
Spring 2019	Wueller Travel Scholarship, Columbia University
2014-2019	Dean’s Fellowship, Department of Economics, Columbia University
2014	Excellent Graduate Award, Peking University
2010	First-Class Scholarship for Freshmen, Peking University (Ranked 1st among 200k in the College Entrance Exam, Heilongjiang Province, China)

Conference Presentations

2019	<i>The North American Meeting of the Urban Economics Association</i> (Philadelphia), <i>the European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association</i> (Amsterdam), <i>the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association International Meeting</i> (Milan), <i>the Econometric Society Summer Meetings</i> (Xiamen), <i>Young Economists Symposium</i> (Columbia), <i>IPWSD 2019</i> (Columbia)
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Research Experiences

2017-2018	Research Assistant of Réka Juhász, Columbia University
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Teaching Assistantships

Spring 2019 The Global Economy, Ronald Miller
Fall 2018 International Trade, Waseem Noor
Spring 2017 Economics of New York City, Donald R. Davis
Fall 2016 Intermediate Macroeconomics, Xavier Sala-i-Martin
Spring 2016 Economics of Money and Banking, Tri Vi Dang
Fall 2015 Economics of Money and Banking, Perry Mehrling

Skills and Personal

Programming: Stata, ArcGIS, Matlab, Python
Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native), English (fluent)
Citizenship: China

References

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