

Nara Chung

Department of Economics, Colorado State University
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Website | LinkedIn | CV last updated: July 2026

Current Position

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, Colorado State University

2021–Present

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Colorado State University

Expected May 2027

Dissertation: “Essays on Labor Market Institutions, Financial Structure, and Deaths of Despair”

Committee: Daniele Tavani (Chair), Ray Miller, Marwil J. Dávila-Fernández, Brad Conner

M.A. in Economics, Colorado State University

2023

M.A. in TESOL, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea

2015

B.A. in Economics, Sogang University, South Korea

2013

Research Area

Fields: Macroeconomics, Labor Economics, Health Economics

Interests: Deaths of Despair, Employment Protection Legislation, Growth Cycles, Financialization

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Instructor, Colorado State University

Spring 2025–Present

- ECON 204: Principles of Macroeconomics
- ECON 212: Racial Inequality and Discrimination
- ECON 315: Money and Banking

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Colorado State University

Fall 2021–Spring 2024

- ECON 202: Principles of Microeconomics
- ECON 204: Principles of Macroeconomics

Assistant Professor, Republic of Korea Naval Academy

2016–2019

- English Reading
- English Composition
- Military Practical English
- Communication

Job Market Paper

“Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair”

Income and wealth inequality have risen sharply within advanced economies, raising concerns about their social and health consequences. This paper examines whether labor market deregulation—specifically employment protection legislation (EPL) reforms that weaken workers’ bargaining power—contributes

to deaths of despair (drug overdoses, alcohol-related disease, and suicide). Using OECD employment protection indicators and WHO mortality data for 26 advanced economies from 1998–2019, I estimate the dynamic effects of major EPL reforms on age-standardized death rates using Jordà’s (2005) local projection method. Results show a significant rise in deaths from drug use disorders and suicide within five years of major EPL reforms. Government social transfers, unemployment benefit replacement rates, public health coverage, avoidable mortality, and poverty levels mediate these effects, consistent with an institutional-buffering mechanism.

Additional Research

“The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics.” with Marwil J. Dávila-Fernández.

“Local Financialization, Financial Distress, and Deaths of Despair.”

Publications

Chung, Nara. 2018. “Adopting Conceptual Metaphors as a Persuasive Device in Learners’ Argument.” *The Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics* 34(4): 25–51. [Pre-Ph.D., *Applied Linguistics*]

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI) *Summer 2022*

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO

Summer Intern, CSU Extension *Summer 2024*

Economic and Community Contribution Analysis of the Forest Product Industry in Colorado

Conference Presentations

“The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics.” ASSA Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, January 2027. *Forthcoming*.

“The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics.” Keynes Year Conference, Mexico City, Mexico, 2026. *Forthcoming*.

“Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” Western Economic Association International Annual Conference, Denver, CO, 2026.

“Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” Western Social Science Association Annual Conference, Albuquerque, NM, 2026.

“Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” John Jay College–New School Conference on Contemporary Political Economy, New York, NY, 2026.

“Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” CSU GradShow, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 2025.

“Adopting Conceptual Metaphors as a Persuasive Device in Learners’ Argument.” 13th Asia TEFL International Conference, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China, 2015. [Pre-Ph.D., *Applied Linguistics*]

Scholarships and Awards

Outstanding Graduate Teacher Award, CSU Economics Department *2025–2026*

Graduate Research Assistantship Award, CSU Economics Department *2025–2026*

College of Liberal Arts Top Scholar Award, CSU GradShow 2025

L.S. and Chuen-mei Fan Graduate Scholarship, CSU Economics Department 2022–2023

Service

President and Vice President, Korean Student Association, Colorado State University 2023–2024

Community Coordinator, University Village 1700, CSU Housing 2023–2025

Languages and Technical Skills

Languages: Korean (native), English (fluent)

Software: Stata, R, Python, L^AT_EX

References

Daniele Tavani

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Ray Miller

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