

Nara Chung

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CV last updated: July 2026

Current Position

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, Colorado State University. Expected graduation: [*Month Year, e.g., May 2027*].

Graduate Teaching Instructor, Colorado State University, 2024–present (Graduate Teaching Assistant, 2021–2024).

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 via 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 all mediate these effects, consistent with an institutional-buffering mechanism. These findings highlight the health risks of labor market deregulation and the need for policies that strengthen social safety nets to mitigate deaths of despair.

Dissertation

Title: [*Dissertation Title, e.g., “Essays on Labor Market Institutions, Health, and Macroeconomic Dynamics”*]

Chapter 1 (Job Market Paper): “Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair”

Chapter 2: “The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics” (with Marwil J. Dávila-Fernández)

Chapter 3: “Local Financialization, Financial Distress, and Deaths of Despair” (*work in progress*)

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

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Colorado State University 2021–present (*expected [2027]*)

M.A. in Economics, Colorado State University [20XX]

M.A. in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea 2015

B.A. in Economics, Sogang University, South Korea 2013

Research Interests

Primary Fields: Macroeconomics, Labor Economics, Health Economics

Topics: Deaths of Despair; Employment Protection Legislation; Growth Cycles; Financialization

Working Papers and Work in Progress

Working Paper

1. “The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics” (with Marwil J. Dávila-Fernández, Colorado State University). Working paper, March 2026.

Work in Progress

1. “Local Financialization, Financial Distress, and Deaths of Despair” (Dissertation Chapter 3). Early-stage draft, April 2026.

Research Experience

Research Assistant, CSU Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI), Fort Collins, CO *Summer 2022*

Summer Intern, CSU Extension Office — “Economic and Community Contribution Analysis of the Forest Product Industry in Colorado” *Summer 2024*

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Pre-Ph.D. Publication (Applied Linguistics)

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

Conference Presentations

1. “The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics.” ASSA 2027 Annual Meeting, Washington, DC. (*forthcoming, January 2027*)
2. “The Addicted Predator–Prey Model: How Substance Abuse Shapes Productivity and Growth-Cycle Dynamics.” Keynes Year Conference, Mexico City, Mexico (2026).
3. “Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” The 101st Annual Conference of the Western Economic Association International, Denver, CO (2026).
4. “Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” The 68th Annual WSSA Conference, Albuquerque, NM (2026).
5. “Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” John Jay College – New School Conference on Contemporary Political Economy, New York, NY (2026).
6. “Employment Protection Deregulation and Deaths of Despair.” CSU GradShow Program, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO (2025).
7. “Adopting Conceptual Metaphors as a Persuasive Device in Learners’ Argument.” The 13th Asia TEFL International Conference, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China (2015). (*pre-Ph.D., applied linguistics*)

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

June 2016 – May 2019

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

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” – Highest Achievement in Scholarly/Research-Based Presentation, CSU GradShow, 2025
- L.S. and Chuen-mei Fan Graduate Scholarship, CSU Economics Department, 2022 – 2023

Languages and Technical Skills

Languages: Korean (native), English (fluent)

Software: Stata, R, Python, LaTeX

Service and Extracurricular Activities

- Vice President and President, Korean Student Association (KSA), Colorado State University — organized events to build community and fellowship among Korean students
- Community Coordinator, CSU Housing, University Village 1700 — supported residents and organized events to build an inclusive community

References

1. Daniele Tavani (Dissertation Chair), *[Title]*, Department of Economics, Colorado State University — *[email]* — *[phone]*
2. Ray Miller, *[Title]*, *[Department]*, Colorado State University — *[email]* — *[phone]*
3. Marwil J. Dávila-Fernández, *[Title]*, *[Department/Institution]* — *[email]* — *[phone]*
4. Brad Conner (Outside Member), *[Title]*, *[Department]*, Colorado State University — *[email]* — *[phone]*