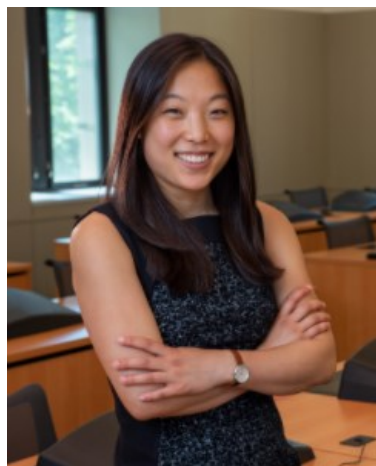


## *The Graduate Students in Policy Analysis & Management present the Presentations in Emerging Research Seminar Series, with Amanda Eng*



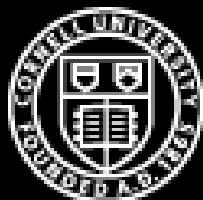
Wednesday, October 21st  
12:00 - 1:00pm, Zoom

*Open to the Cornell Community*

### **Income and the Take-Up of Means-Tested Programs (with Kevin Rinz)**

**Abstract:** Pro-work policies usually decrease household participation in traditional safety-net programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. This negative relationship could be driven by newly working households becoming more self-sufficient or by decreased benefit sizes and higher costs to participate in SNAP and TANF. However, the design of SNAP and TANF makes it difficult to distinguish these factors. In this paper, we estimate how demand for SNAP and TANF changes with income, holding eligibility and take-up costs constant. We use a regression discontinuity design and administrative data on program participation to estimate how additional cash on hand affects program participation. Our variation in income comes from discontinuities in eligibility for tax credits based on whether children are born on or before the end of a calendar year. Tax refunds generally do not affect how much SNAP or TANF benefits households can receive, and we show evidence that take-up costs are the same for households on either side of the cutoff. We find that although eligibility for tax credits decreases households' tax liability by \$2,219 on average, the additional income results in no measurable difference in program participation. These findings suggest that there could be significant benefits to expanding eligibility for these programs.

*If you require special accommodations to attend this event, please contact [ks2373@cornell.edu](mailto:ks2373@cornell.edu).*



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