

THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Department of Information Systems, Business Statistics and Operations Management

IS SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT



From Signal to Noise: How Widespread LLM Use Reshapes Credit Screening

by

Dr. Yingjie ZHANG
Peking University

DATE	26 October 2026 (Monday)
TIME	10:30 am - 12:00 noon
VENUE	Room 4047, Lee Shau Kee Business Building

ABSTRACT

Large language models can help applicants present themselves more effectively, but widespread use may also homogenize the signals evaluators rely on. In a randomized field experiment in micro-lending, we vary LLM usage rates while holding the applicant pool fixed. We find a non-monotonic effect: moderate LLM use improves screening outcomes, whereas widespread use dilutes the diagnostic value of applicant narratives. Evaluators respond by exerting less effort and adopting more conservative approval thresholds, increasing errors and disproportionately restricting credit for qualified borrowers. These effects spill over even to applicants who do not use LLMs. An analytical model further characterizes when widespread LLM adoption undermines screening. Together, the findings show how crowd-level AI adoption can reshape both information quality and evaluator behavior.

BIOGRAPHY

Yingjie Zhang is an Associate Professor of Marketing at Peking University's Guanghua School of Management. She graduated from Tsinghua University in 2013 with dual degrees in Computer Science and Economics and received her Ph.D. in Information Systems and Management from Carnegie Mellon University in 2018. She is the recipient of the 2025 INFORMS ISS Sandra A. Slaughter Early Career Award and the 2019 INFORMS ISS Nunamaker-Chen Dissertation Award. Her research focuses on AI-native social science research, human-AI collaboration, social media, and user behavior. She employs interdisciplinary methods, including econometric modeling, machine learning, and experiments, to investigate how digital technologies affect firms and consumers. Her work has been published in leading academic journals. She serves as an Associate Editor at MIS Quarterly and Decision Sciences.