

# Yiwen Zhang

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Inequality; Comparative Political Economy; Computational Social Science; AI Governance

## EDUCATION

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**London School of Economics and Political Science**

*September 2025 - September 2029*

**Department of Government** (Affiliated with the Data Science Institute)

**MRes/PhD in Political Science**

Supervisor: Professor Valentino Larcinese

Enlighten Scholarship (£50,000 per academic year)

**Peking University**

**M.Phil. in Comparative Politics, GPA: 3.87/4.0 (Ranked 1st; Thesis with Distinction)**

*September 2022 - June 2024*

Supervisor: Dr Yanjun Liu

Overseas Study: **Stanford University** (China Study in Beijing Program; Prof. Scott Rozelle, Prof. Michael McFaul), **University of Oxford** (International Politics Seminar, Prof. Paul Chaisty), **Sciences Po** (Global Governance Program)

**Peking University**

**B.A. in Politics and Administration, GPA: 3.7/4.0 (Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>; Highest Honours)**

*September 2018 - June 2022*

Joint Honours Program in Politics, Law, and Sociology

## SELECTED WORKING PAPERS

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**The Politics of Perceived Protection: Means-Testing, Misperception, and Support for Universal Social Care**

*In Progress*

- Examines whether correcting citizens' misperceptions about England's means-tested adult social care system increases support for universal or more generous public social-care insurance.
- Develops a survey-experimental design testing how institutional opacity shapes welfare preferences through perceived exposure to uncovered care costs, reciprocity concerns, and political trust.

**Multi-dimensional Bias in Modelling Multi-dimensional Preferences: Evaluating the Ability of Synthetic Agents to Replace Human Participants in Conjoint Experiments**

with Ho Ting Hung, Nachiket Midha, and Victor Yuhang Wu

*In Progress*

- Evaluates whether LLM-generated synthetic agents can substitute for human respondents in conjoint experiments by replicating seven published political science conjoint studies and benchmarking synthetic responses against original human data.
- Develops a multi-model validation framework comparing synthetic and human preferences across AMCEs, marginal means, distributional similarity, and stability diagnostics.

**Chinese Worldviews and International Policy Attitudes: An Online Experiment**

with Yanjun Liu, Cheng Tan

*In Progress*

- Uses a randomised survey experiment embedded in the Beijing Area Study to examine how exposure to "historical national humiliation" and "bravo, my country" narratives shape Chinese citizens' foreign policy attitudes.
- Shows that emotionally charged national narratives affect views on global engagement, cultural openness, U.S.-China relations, and international cooperation, with humiliation narratives producing especially strong effects on defensive and culturally protective attitudes.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH OUTPUTS

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Burland, Patrick, and Yiwen Zhang. 2025. **Seeing beyond the negative: An examination of key variables in the different reasons for the decisions not to formally recognise people as survivors of modern slavery.** Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, University of Oxford. Policy report. <https://www.modernslaverypec.org/resources/iom-uk-briefing>.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Teaching Assistant, An Introduction to Comparative Politics**

Peking University, School of Government

*September 2023- June 2024*

- Supported undergraduate teaching in comparative politics, helping students engage with core concepts including political regimes, institutions, development, political economy, and state-society relations.
- Assisted with class preparation, student discussion, coursework feedback, and course administration, developing experience in explaining comparative politics concepts to undergraduate students.

## TEACHING AREAS

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Comparative Politics; Research Design in Social Science; Political Economy; Public Opinion; Chinese Politics; Survey Experiments; Quantitative Methods; Causal Inference; Introduction to Political Science.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2022, 2025  
International Conference on Political Sociology, 2024  
Chinese Community of Political Science and International Studies Annual Conference, 2023  
Midwest Political Science Association Conference, 2022, 2025

## SELECTED RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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**Early Childhood Development Tracking Survey Project** *June 2024 - September 2024*

**Research Assistant | Advisor: Professor Scott Rozelle (Stanford University)**

- Assisted in designing rigorous randomized intervention experiments to identify the impact of parenting practices on cognitive development among children in Zhejiang, China, and utilized socioeconomic scales to assess parenting environments and behaviors, providing policy recommendations for improving social welfare policies
- Led the baseline field survey team, conducting on-site interviews and measurements with children and parents, successfully collecting 500 data samples in the first phase. The following steps involve randomly offering scientifically informed family caregiving resources and evaluating the impact of the social intervention

**Annual “Beijing Area Study” under the Research Centre for Contemporary China**

*January 2021 - Present*

**Research Assistant | Advisor: Dr Xiao Ma (Peking University)**

- Led the research design and conducted comprehensive literature reviews for two modules on Chinese international attitudes and grassroots democratic preferences within the Beijing Area Study. Demonstrated expertise in online experiment design, focusing on creating experiments for choice-based conjoint analysis
- Contributed to developing a research article based on original survey data, leading data cleaning, statistical analysis in R and Python, and drafting key manuscript sections. This experience fostered advanced academic writing skills, a comprehensive understanding of quantitative methods from design to presentation, and the practical application of classic political psychology and communication theories in empirical research

**COVID-19 Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT), University of Oxford**

*January 2021-March 2023*

**Data Processing Associate | Advisor: Dr Yuxi Zhang, Professor Thomas Hale (University of Oxford)**

- Spearheaded policy coding efforts for numerous provincial-level governments, notably including Shanxi and Guangdong provinces, instrumental in shaping the creation of a pioneering pandemic policy database recognized on a global scale
- Developed my undergraduate thesis using a global multilevel dataset by recoding the OxCGRT dataset into a longitudinal format and integrating multiple waves of individual surveys. Employed a two-way fixed effects model in STATA to demonstrate that stricter containment policies and more economically supportive government actions significantly lead to a leftward shift in public ideology and increased support for government surveillance during crises

## SELECTED HONOURS & AWARDS

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Enlighten Scholarship, £ 200,000, London School of Economics and Political Science	<i>July 2025</i>
The China Scholarship Council Scholarship \$ 26,400	<i>July 2024</i>
Compass Research Scholarship \$ 31,000, University of Chicago	<i>March 2024</i>
Graduate Scholarship for Academic Excellence, ¥44,000, Peking University	<i>September 2022 - July 2024</i>
Global Governance Program Scholarship €3,000, Sciences Po & Peking University	<i>October 2023</i>
Forbes China 30 Under 30	<i>December 2023</i>
Leo KoGuan Scholarship \$2,850, Peking University (Top 0.05%)	<i>September 2023</i>
International Alliance of Research Universities Summer School Scholarship £289, University of Oxford	<i>June 2023</i>
Student of the Year Nominee, Peking University (Top 0.1%)	<i>December 2022</i>
May Fourth Scholarship ¥12,000, Peking University (Highest Honours scholarship for undergraduate)	<i>September 2021</i>
Academic Innovation Award, Peking University (The only undergraduate in the department)	<i>September 2021</i>
Peking University “Challenge Cup” Academic Competition First Prize	<i>April 2021</i>

## RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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International Organisation for Migration (UN Migration) in the UK, On-site Full-time Data Intern	<i>August 2024 – July 2025</i>
World Economic Forum Global Shapers Community, Curator of Beijing Hub (Part-time)	<i>January 2024 - Present</i>
“Future Youth” Educational Equality Public Welfare Project, Co-Founder (Part-time)	<i>May 2022 - Present</i>
Development and Reform Commission of Beijing, Intern	<i>March 2021 - May 2021</i>
Institution of New Economy Development, Consultant	<i>July 2020 - September 2020</i>

## METHODS AND SKILLS

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**Research Method:** Survey Experiment, Causal Inference, Multilevel Modelling, Panel Data Analysis

**Programming and Software:** Python, R, Stata, LaTeX, SPSS, Git

**Languages:** English and Chinese - Advanced proficiency for research and teaching, French - Basic, Spanish - Basic