

Tamar Zeilberger

CONTACT INFORMATION

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
Postdoctoral Fellow in Political Science and Public Policy, 2023–

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Political Economy, Autocracies, Quantitative Methods, Inference from Observational
Data, Mathematical Modeling, Formal Theory, Contemporary China

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles

Ph.D., Political Science, 2023

Committee: Barbara Geddes (Chair), Michael Chwe, Jeffrey B. Lewis, Victor Shih, &
James Tong (In Memoriam)

University of Chicago

M.A., Social Sciences, 2014

The New School

B.A., Politics & Sociology, 2010

BOOK PROJECT

Title: *Investing with “Known Unknowns” in Low-Information Environments: How
Firms, Political Uncertainty, and Autocracy Interact and Influence Contemporary China*

Abstract: Political uncertainty, defined as the lack of confidence with which govern-
ment and policy outcomes can be predicted, has substantial adverse economic effects in
democracies. Recently, political uncertainty has surged to unprecedented levels across
the globe. At the same time, so too have autocracies in number and influence. Billions
of people are subject to autocrats, who preside over resources that rival those in democ-
racies. Nonetheless, there is comparatively little research on the economic effects of
political uncertainty in autocracies. My book project contributes to that understudied
area, with a focus on investment. I develop a theory that posits that political uncer-
tainty in autocracies produces heterogeneous effects on investment, and identifies how
institutions and other government interventions that transmit information moderate
those effects. I model the theory to derive predictions for their signs and magnitudes.
To test the predictions, I use evidence from China. To that end, I develop a mea-
sure of political uncertainty. I first locate an exogenous source of variation in political
uncertainty, namely China’s institutionalized and routinized leadership transitions. I
then exploit the Communist Party’s tight control over the news media to reveal the
internal dynamics of their leadership transitions. This entails identifying informative
patterns with statistical and machine learning-based analyses of Chinese archival news.
With that measure, I leverage variation across China in investment and interventions
by the Communist Party, as well as detailed accounting data on domestic firms coupled
with convenient restrictions on foreign investment, to estimate the effects of political
uncertainty on investment, and identify how they are moderated by institutions and
other government interventions.

WORKING PAPERS	<p>“Destabilizing to Stabilize: Interstate Dispute Escalation & Leadership Transitions in China.” <i>Under review.</i></p> <p>“Logic of Political Survival Revisited: Consequences of Elite Uncertainty Under Authoritarian Rule.” <i>Under review.</i></p> <p>“Measuring Political Uncertainty with Evidence from Contemporary China.” <i>Working paper.</i></p> <p>“Garbage In, Garbage Out? Systematic Error and Data-Driven Policy Making in China.” <i>Work in progress.</i></p> <p>“The ‘Benefits’ of Clientelism: Electoral Support as an Insurance Premium with Evidence from Brazilian Municipalities.” <i>Resting paper.</i></p>	
CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS	<p>-American Political Science Association Annual Meeting 2017, 2019, 2020, 2022–2025</p> <p>-Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology, 2022, 2024[†]</p> <p>-Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023</p> <p>-Western Political Science Association Conference on Authoritarian Politics, 2020[‡], 2023</p> <p>-New Faces in Chinese Politics at University of Wisconsin–Madison, May 2022</p> <p>-Experimental Mathematics Speaker Series at Rutgers University, May 2022</p> <p>-Comparative Politics Association Meeting at UCLA, November 2015</p> <p>-Program on International Politics, Economics, and Security at the University of Chicago, January 2015</p> <p>† poster presentation ‡ canceled due to COVID-19</p>	
GRANTS & AWARDS	<p>Political Methodology Society Travel and Participation Award</p> <p>Visiting Dissertation Fellowship, Mercatus Center</p> <p>Humane Studies Fellowship, Institute for Humane Studies</p> <p>Oskar Morgenstern Fellowship (Research Track), Mercatus Center</p> <p>Humane Studies Fellowship, Institute for Humane Studies</p> <p>Adam Smith Fellowship, Mercatus Center</p> <p>EITM Summer Institute, National Science Foundation</p> <p>Oskar Morgenstern Fellowship, Mercatus Center</p> <p>Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship, UCLA</p> <p>Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship, UCLA</p> <p>Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship, UCLA</p> <p>University Fellowship, UCLA</p> <p>Department of Political Science Graduate Fellowship, UCLA</p> <p>University Unendowed Scholarship, University of Chicago</p> <p>Dean’s Scholarship, The New School</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>2021–2022</p> <p>2021–2022</p> <p>2020–2021</p> <p>2019–2020</p> <p>2019–2020</p> <p>2019</p> <p>2018–2019</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2017–2018</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2015–2016</p> <p>2015–2016</p> <p>2013–2014</p> <p>2007–2010</p>
TEACHING	<p><i>LSE (Graduate Instruction)</i></p> <p>-Seminar Instructor for Political Science for Public Policy, Academic Year 2023–2024 with Lloyd Gruber, 2024–2025 with Lloyd Gruber and Alexandra Cirone</p> <p>-Dissertation and Policy Paper Supervisor (Supervised five MPA dissertations and three</p>	

MPA policy papers), Academic Year 2023–2024, 2024–2025
 -Academic Advisor (Advised 14 MPA and MPA–Data Science students), Academic Year 2024–2025

UCLA (Graduate Instruction)

-Instructor for Math Camp (Introduction to Mathematics in the Social Sciences for incoming Ph.D. students in Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Geography, Anthropology, Urban Planning, & Environmental Studies), Summer 2020
 -TA for Game Theory in Politics I; Winter 2021 with Barry O’Neill, Winter 2020 with Michael Chwe
 -Math Maven (Quantitative Methods & Formal Theory Consultant for Ph.D. students in Political Science), Academic Year 2018–2019, 2019–2020

UCLA (Undergraduate Instruction)

-Instructor for Introduction to Data Analysis, Summer 2021
 -TA for Politics & Strategy (Introduction to Formal Theory); Fall 2016, 2018, Winter 2022 with Michael Chwe, Winter 2019 with Barry O’Neill, Spring 2017, 2019 with Kathleen Bawn
 -TA for Government & Politics in Latin America; Winter 2017 with Barbara Geddes

FIELDWORK	China (Shanghai, Beijing, & Tianjin), August–September 2018
ADDITIONAL TRAINING	EITM (Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models) Summer Institute, Emory University, July 2019
RELEVANT NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	SXL Group (Shanghai, China) -Research on China market entry and compliance for Shanghai-based consulting firm, 2012.
SERVICE	-Referee for <i>American Political Science Review</i> -Organizer, Comparative Politics Dissertation Biweekly Workshop, UCLA, 2021–2022 -Grants & Fellowships Workshop for Incoming PhD Students, UCLA, 2019 -Discussant, Annual Graduate Student Conference in Comparative Politics (COMPASS), UCLA, 2018 -Organizer, Graduate Student Meeting for the Comparative Politics Speaker Series, UCLA, 2016
LANGUAGES	English, Mandarin Chinese Computer: R, Python, Selenium, Stata, Maple, Mathematica, L ^A T _E X
REFERENCES	<i>Available upon request</i>