

CHENXI TANG

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EDUCATION

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Ph.D. in Economics

Expected May 2025

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
M.S. in Economics

2020

Dalian University of Technology
B.S. in Mathematics
B.A. in Economics

2018

FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION

Development Economics, Environmental Economics, and Economic History

RESEARCH

Job Market Paper

[“The Long-run Impacts of Ancient Chinese Civil Exams on Contemporary Local Innovation”](#)

Abstract: China was historically heavily influenced by civil exams (*keju*), with the exams focused on recruiting the best academic individuals to serve in government. This paper explores the relationship between prefectures with historically more top scorers on the national exam (*jinshi*) between 1371 and 1905 and contemporary innovation, measured as the number of top scientists and engineers and the number of patents and their quality, finding a strong positive relationship. Results are robust to using an instrumental variable strategy that measures the minimum river distance from each prefecture to the nearest pine and bamboo forest. A doubling of the number of historically top scorers on the national exam leads to a 33% increase in the number of top scientists and engineers and a 92% increase in the number of patents. Investments in military equipment and telegraph construction play crucial roles sustaining the long-term effects of China’s civil exams.

Other Working Papers

[“The Causal Effects of Pollution on the Mortality of People at Different Ages. Evidence from Mexico City”](#)

Abstract: Previous literature examines the effects of pollution on the health of infants and the elderly in developed countries. However, little is known about the acute effects of pollution on the elderly in developing countries. This research fills this gap in the literature by using the meteorological phenomenon of thermal inversion as an instrumental variable to investigate the acute effects of both PM₁₀ and CO on elderly individuals in Mexico City. Results reveal that PM₁₀ and CO both significantly increase the mortality of elderly people, with the largest effect sizes seen for those over 70 and smaller but still statistically significant effects for those

ages 55 to 70. The mortality of infants under one year old was also shown to increase due to pollution exposure, but effect sizes are much smaller than for the elderly. These results suggest that policies reducing pollution may have broader mortality impacts than typically believed.

Work in Progress

- “Do Superior High Schools Boost Students’ Academic Performance? Evidence from China”
- “High Temperatures and Crime: Evidence from China”
- “The Effects of US-China Tariff War on China’s Innovation”

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (TEACHING ASSISTANT)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Department of Economics
Microeconomic Principles	Spring 2023 - Fall 2024
International trade	Fall 2022
Economics of the Workplace & Employee Compensation and Incentives	Spring 2022
Economics of Digital Economy	Fall 2021
Monetary Policy & Macroeconometric Policy Analysis	Spring 2021
Monetary Theory & International Finance	Fall 2020

AWARDS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	
List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Their Students	2023
Dalian University of Technology	
Spiritual Civilization Scholarship	2016
Second Prize in Dalian 26th Mathematics Competition for College Students	2016
Second Prize in Dalian 25th Mathematics Competition for College Students	2015
First Prize Excellent Team of Summer Social Practice at the University Level	2015
Third Prize Excellent Team of Social Practice at the University Level	2014

SKILLS AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Programming skills: Stata, Python, L^AT_EX, ArcGIS, Matlab(basic), C language

Languages: Chinese(Native), English(Fluent)

Country of Citizenship: the People’s Republic of China

REFERENCES

Professor Richard Akresh (Chair)	Professor Mark Borgschulte	Professor Russell Weinstein
Associate Professor of Economics	Associate Professor of Economics	Associate Professor of Economics
Department of Economics, UIUC	Department of Economics, UIUC	Department of Economics, UIUC
Email: akresh@illinois.edu	Email: markborg@illinois.edu	Email: weinst@illinois.edu