

Chen ZHONG

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Education

PhD Candidate in Political Science

University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

2026 Expected

Majors: International Relations & Comparative Politics

Research Interests: Political Economy of Climate Change & International Institutions

Dissertation Title: *Inter-State Pseudo Clubs in Global Climate Governance -*

Understanding and Explaining High-Emitting Countries' Informal Climate Commitments

Between 2015 and 2025

Committee: Steven Bernstein (Chair), Jessica Green, Matthew Hoffmann

MSc in International Political Economy (Research Track) with High Merit

London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), the United Kingdom

2019

Awarded Distinction for dissertation: *Orchestrating Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Activities – World Bank in the Governance of Carbon Funds*

BSc in International Relations and Peace Studies

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), Oita, Japan

2018

GPA: 3.9/4.0

Received the Highest Academic Merit Award

Outstanding Thesis Award: *Bargaining between Local Governments of China and Multinational Corporations in the Automotive Industry*

Publications

Zhong, C. (2024, November 17). *Can the G20 Succeed Where the UNFCCC Falls Short in Climate Finance?* G20 Research Group. Available at: <https://g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/241117-zhong-cop-g20.html>

Bernstein, S., & Zhong, C. (Forthcoming). *The Meaning, Evolution, and Limits of the SDGs' Coherence Agenda*. In P. Chasek (Ed.), *The Elgar Companion to Global Governance and the Sustainable Development Goals*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Working Papers

Green, J., & Zhong, C. *International NGOs and the Future of Climate Governance*

Zhong, C. *The Politics of Natural Gas: Japan's Climate Diplomacy in the East Asia Summit*.

Creative Outputs

Zhong, C. (Forthcoming, Sept. 2025). *Environmental Conservation in Africa: Pasts, Presents, and Possible Futures in a World on Edge: An Interview with Professor Kariuki Kirigia*. The JCR: A Massey Podcast.

- Zhong, C. (Forthcoming). *The Ethicist Column: The Ethical Dilemma Facing AI Data Centers. We Did It!? A Future History of Net Zero: Vol. 2.*
- Zhong, C. (April 2023). "A Journey to the Unknown but You Are Not Alone": Stories and Lessons from Fellow Graduate Students. *OtherWise E-Magazine*, Issue 2. [Link](#).
- Shi, Y. J., & Zhong, C. (April 2022). "Ambiguities, Abrasion, and Action: A Group Discussion on Sexual Harassment and Proposed Solutions". *OtherWise E-Magazine*, Issue 1. [Link](#).

Academic Conference Presentations

American Political Science Association

Zhong, C. (2025, September, accepted abstract). *Informal Summits' Climate Policy Focuses and Trends in the Twenty-First Century*.

Green, J., & Zhong, C. (2024, September 5). *Models of Change: The Climate Establishment's Choices of Climate Policies*. [Presented by Zhong]

Japan Conference - Centre for the Study of Global Japan, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto

Zhong, C. (2025, May 22). *Japan's Climate Diplomacy in Inter-Governmental Summits: Commitments, Leadership, and Energy Politics*

Western Political Science Association

Zhong, C. (2025, April 19). *Navigating International Climate Commitments: The Role of Inter-State Pseudo Clubs in Shaping High-Emitters' Climate Policies*.

Midwest Political Science Association

Zhong, C. (2024, April 6). *Informal International Organizations in Global Climate Governance*. [Presented virtually]

International Studies Association – Global South Caucus

Zhong, C. (2023, December 10). *Understanding the Interactions between Global South and Global North Countries at Inter-state Clubs for Global Climate Governance*. [Presented virtually]

Radboud Conference on Earth System Governance

Zhong, C., & Terstiege, M. (2023, October 26). *A Typology of Oil and Gas Firms' Roles in Climate and Environmental Justice*. [Presented by Zhong]

Bernstein, S., Zhong, C., & Chavara, C. (2023, October 23). *Evolution of Macro-coherence in Sustainable Development*. [Presented by Bernstein]

Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference

Zhong, C. (2023, June 1). *(De)colonial Power through International Organizations*.

Barcelona Workshop on Global Governance

Zhong, C. (2022, May 21). *Orchestrating International Carbon Funds*. [Presented virtually]

Asia Pacific Conference, Oita, Japan

Zhong, C. (2017, November 12). *Interplay between the Central Government, Local Governments, and Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in the Automobile Industry*.

Zhong, C. (2016, November 6). *Poverty Alleviation in the Republic of Bangladesh: Enhancing Partnerships between the State Government and NGOs*.

College of Asia Pacific Studies Seminar Conference, Oita, Japan

Zhong, C. (2016, December 3). *Domestic Actors and Global Governance: The Role of Environmental NGOs in the People's Republic of China.*

Invited Talks & Workshops

London School of Economics

2025 Invited Panelist, Alumni Panel for Prospective PhD Students [joined virtually]

University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

2025 Selected Presenter, Student Pitch Competition, Climate Positive Energy Research Day

2024 POL2812: PhD Dissertation Proposal Seminar – Professor Linda White.

2023 The Roles of Intermediaries in Governing Carbon Funds. Paper presented at the Environmental Governance Lab Work in Progress Workshop.

2021 Global Governance and Climate Change. Undergraduate Course POL208 Guest Lecture Series – Professor Seva Gunitsky.

Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

2017 Global Education and Multiculturalism Public Lecture Series for Global Engagement Program – Professor Xu Xueying.

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Oita, Japan

2017 What is Global Competency? Opening Ceremony of 2017 Academic Year.

Selected Awards, Fellowships & Grants

University of Toronto

2024-2026 – Massey College Non-Resident Junior Fellow, Massey College (Total: 4000 CAD)

2024 – School of Graduate Studies Research Travel Grant (6,720 CAD)

2024 – Morimitsu Inaba Doctoral Fellowship in the Political Economy of Development (6000 CAD)

2024 – Chris Matthews International Graduate Student Scholarship (1270 CAD)

2024 – Noah Blackstein Graduate Fellowship in Political Economy (5600 CAD)

2024 – Summer Methods Training Scholarship for The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) (Tuition fee plus 400 CAD)

2023-2025 – Department of Political Science Conference Travel Grants (Total: 3170 CAD)

2022-2023 – Asian Institute Richard Charles Lee Student Leadership Award, Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (500 CAD)

2020 – Faculty of Arts and Science Doctoral Recruitment Award (2,500 CAD)

2020-2025 – PhD Full-Funding Package, Department of Political Science

Other Institutions

2019-2020 – International Organizations Internship Scholarship, China Scholarship Council (24,000 USD)

2016-2017 – The ANDO Momofuku Honor Award, Nissin Foods Holdings Co. Ltd (Approx. 4,700 CAD)

2015-2018 – Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship, Ministry of Education, Japan (Approx. 24,000 CAD)

2014-2018 – 100% Tuition Reduction Scholarship, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Research Assistantships

Project Title: *Coherence and (In)coherence in Sustainable Development Governance*

June 2021 – Sept. 2021 & Oct. 2023 – present

Supervisor: Prof. Steven Bernstein

Conducted thematic analysis of over 100 reports from the UNGA, UNCTAD, UNDP, and World Bank.

Project Title: *Climate Establishment*

Aug. 2022 – present

Supervisor: Prof. Jessica Green

Implemented structural topic modeling in R to identify NGOs' climate policy choices.

Project Title: *Political Economy of Private Auditors in Transnational Sustainability Governance*

Dec. 2023 – Apr. 2024

Supervisors: Prof. Stefan Renckens (main supervisor) and Prof. Graeme Auld

Conducted an analysis of China's national regulations on private auditors in the carbon emissions trading market.

Research Methods Training & Field Research

The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, Syracuse University.

Completed training in social network analysis, qualitative comparative analysis, and ethnographic methods. June 16–18, 2024

Field Research:

Conducted participant observation at the Think Tank 20 Summit and the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Nov 10–20, 2024

Conducted elite interviews with former Chinese diplomats in Hangzhou, China. Jan–Feb 2024

Teaching Training & Certificates

Teaching Fundamentals Certificate

Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, University of Toronto

In progress; 6 workshops completed.

Embedded Writing Training Program for POLA02 TAs (2022–2023)

Centre for Teaching and Learning, University of Toronto Scarborough

Gained pedagogical strategies and techniques for teaching undergraduate academic writing.

Teaching Assistantships

University of Toronto

[Duties: Led tutorials, graded assignments, and advised students]

POL208: Introduction to International Relations — Winter 2020 & Fall 2021

POLA02H3: Critical Issues in Politics II: Politics, Markets, and the Environment — Spring 2023

[Duties: Graded assignments and advised students]

POLC88: The New International Agenda — Spring 2024 & Fall 2024

POLC40: Defence & Security Policy in Comparative Perspective — Spring 2024

JPA331: Rise of China as a Global Power — Spring 2025

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

History of International Politics — Spring 2017

Study Skills and Academic Writing — Spring 2017

Multicultural Cooperative Workshop — Fall 2015

Work Experience

2019–2020: Climate Policy Intern, Climate Change Unit, Global Policy Network, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York, USA

- Led the development of a Quality Assurance Checklist for revising Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- Supported the implementation of UNDP’s “Climate Promise (CP) Initiative”
- Developed methodologies to evaluate climate ambition across CP countries
- Drafted monthly progress reports for UNDP’s administrator
- Managed CP progress tracking databases and conducted thematic analyses of CP workplans

2019: Trainee, Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, London, UK

2017: Editorial Intern, Zhejiang Economic Life News, Zhejiang Radio and TV Group, Hangzhou, China

Service & Extracurricular Activities

2021–2023: Editorial Committee Member, *OtherWise* BIPOC Women E-Magazine, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

2021–2022: International Students Representative, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

2018–2019: Editorial Committee Meeting Attendee, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (SAGE Journals)

2018–2019: Executive Member, Environment Panel, LSE East Asia Forum 2019 Committee

2017–2018: APU X Table For Two, non-profit organization aiming at providing students in Tanzania and the Philippines with affordable school meals

2017: Global Youth Leadership Summit, Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University

Languages & Technical Skills

Languages

Mandarin Chinese: Native Proficiency

English: Professional Proficiency (IELTS 8/9; TOEFL 113/120)

Japanese: Professional Proficiency (JLPT N1)

IT Knowledge

Data analysis software: NVivo, R, Python, L^AT_EX