

Tong MENG (She/Her)

Research Interests: Sociology, Digital intimacy; Educational mobility; Gender studies; Cultural studies

Email: mengtongiam@163.com

Education

Durham University

Durham, UK

PhD, School of Education

10/2021-11/2025

Supervision: Dr Cora Lingling Xu & Dr Anna Llewellyn

Fields: Sociology of education, digital intimacy, international student mobility, media studies, China studies

Dissertation: Intimacy and Mobile Dating Applications Use: A Study of Chinese International Students in the UK

University College London (UCL)

London, UK

MA in TESOL, Faculty of Education and Society

09/2018-09/2019

Supervision: David Mallows

GPA: Distinction

Thesis: EFL Writing Anxiety among Chinese English-Major Undergraduate Students: A Mixed Methods Study

Taiyuan University of Technology

Shanxi, China

BA in English Language and Literature

09/2014-06/2018

Supervision: Wangbin Zhang

GPA: 87/100

Thesis: Lexical Features and Identity Reflections of China English in China Daily (2007-2017)

Publications

Meng, T. (2025). "Fair-skinned, young and slim" or "Kardashian-style": UK-based female Chinese international students' self-presentation on mobile dating applications. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2025.2514793>

Meng, T. (2025). Love in a Transient Sexual Field: Female Chinese International Students' Racialised Desire on Mobile Dating Applications. *Sociological Research Online*, o(o). <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804251320487>

Meng, T. Transnational Mobility and Digitally Mediated Desire: Changing Motivations of Chinese International Students Using Mobile Dating Applications in the UK. **(Under Review)**

Meng, T., Qin, Y. & Liu, X. "Hi, TikTok Refugees!": How Memes Talk in the TikTok-to-RedNote Migration. **(Under Review)**

Research Experience

Intercultural engagement and belonging: International doctoral students' academic and social experiences in a UK university

Durham, UK

Research Assistant; Project leader: Professor Prue Holmes

06/2024-present

- Contributed to project preparation and focus group planning;
- Conducted thematic analysis of interview data from four focus groups;
- Presented findings at the research seminar of School of Education at Durham University;
- Co-authoring a journal article with colleagues for publication.

Intimacy and Mobile Dating Applications Use: A Study of Chinese International Students in the UK

Researcher; Supervisors: Dr Cora Lingling Xu & Dr Anna Llewellyn

10/2021-present

- Conducted longitudinal research on Chinese international students' experiences of using dating applications and the establishment of intimate relationships in the UK

- Conducted in-depth, two-round semi-structured interviews and multiple informal interviews with 49 Chinese international students from 2021 to 2023;
- Adopting the scroll-back and the walk-through methods for data collection;
- Applied Bourdieu's theory of practice and conducted thematic analysis to analyse qualitative data;
- Authored and submitted three papers to SSCI journals based on the data from this research.

Teaching Experience

Durham University, School of Education

Durham, UK

Guest Lecturer & Teaching Assistant

09/2022-03/2024

- Course taught: Cultural Identity, Interculturality and Education; Contemporary Issues and Evidence in Education; Double Dissertation: Disciplinary Contexts of Education;
- Delivered two guest lectures on intercultural communication, cultural identity and intimate relationships;
- Led discussions and tutorials for 20-35 students, helping students understand theories and key concepts in the sociology of education and supporting their dissertation development;
- Planned activities for seminars and answered students' questions in workshops.

New Oriental Education & Technology Group Inc.

Shanghai, China

TOEFL Teacher

11/2019-09/2021

- Gave TOEFL reading tutorials to undergraduate and high school students;
- Designed and adapted reading materials for teaching students at different levels;
- Cooperated with other teachers to develop a comprehensive curriculum and reading materials for Chinese students in international schools.

Academic Service

Peer Review for Journals and Conferences

Online

- Journals: *Sociological Forum*; *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*; *Women's Studies in Communication*; *Region Science Policy & Practice*.
- Conferences: Cambridge China Educational Forum 2025, British Educational Research Association (BERA) conference 2024 and WERA focal meeting.

Cambridge Chinese Migration Studies Group (CCMSG)

Cambridge, UK & Online

Pro-convenor

04/2023-present

- Maintaining the CCMSG mailing list, writing newsletters and tweets for posting on social media;
- Organising monthly seminars and the annual workshop;
- Supporting major research fund applications with the funding team.

Network for Research into Chinese Education Mobilities (NRCEM)

Online

Assistant Editor

03/2022-present

- Responsible for contacting scholars in related fields, drafting, proofreading, and publishing research highlights, capacity building, and other academic content on the website;
- Responsible for publishing and proofreading monthly newsletters and conducting post-production editing and publishing to podcasts;
- Responsible for drafting interview guide and interviewing scholars, writing and posting tweets and maintaining the mailing list of NRCEM.

Research Output Roundtable at Chinese Sociology Society UK

Online

Chair

06/2025

- Chairing for the output roundtable June session 'Temporality, Migration and Mobility'.

Imagining Better Education Conference 2022

Durham, UK

Committee Member & Editor & Presenter

10/2022

- Responsible for organising the conference, reviewing paper submitted to the conference, designing the poster, and editing the paper for the conference proceedings;
- Presented ‘Intimacy and Mobile Dating Applications Use: A study of Chinese international students in the UK’.

Invited Talks & Main Conference Activity

Research Output Roundtable at Chinese Sociology Society UK	Online
<i>Presenter</i>	08/2025
Love in a Transient Sexual Field: Female Chinese International Students’ Racialised Desire on Mobile Dating Applications	
The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) Conference 13	Surabaya, Indonesia
<i>Presenter</i>	07/2024
The chaos of dating: perceptions and navigations of dating among Chinese young migrants in the UK	
China in Europe Research Network (CHERN) Conference	Amsterdam, Netherlands
<i>Presenter</i>	09/2023
Migration and mobile dating applications: Chinese young migrants’ digital dating experiences in the UK	
MA Conference in Durham University	Durham, UK
<i>Keynote Speaker</i>	05/2023
Love in a transient sexual field: UK-based female Chinese international students’ racial preference on dating apps	
Course Module: Culture and Society of Contemporary China	Online
<i>Guest Lecturer at University of Nottingham</i>	03/2023
Delivered an invited lecture to undergraduate students on female Chinese international students’ dating practices, exploring the intersection of Chinese cultural norms, digital intimacy, and gendered expectations in contemporary China.	
British Postgraduate Network for Chinese Studies Annual Conference	Oxford, UK
<i>Presenter</i>	06/2022
Intimacy and Mobile Dating Applications Use: A study of Chinese international students in the UK	
Cambridge Pembroke Chinese Migration Workshop	Cambridge, UK
<i>Presenter</i>	04/2022
Intimacy and Mobile Dating Applications Use: A study of Chinese international students in the UK	

Funding & Academic Awards

Finnish Youth Research Society Fund	2024
Van Mildert College Challenge and Opportunity Fund, Durham University	2024
Postgraduate Student Research Fund, Durham University	2023, 2024
Postgraduate Participation Fund, Durham University	2022

Skills

Languages: English (Fluent), Mandarin (Native)
Skills: Microsoft Office applications, Nvivo, Atlas.ti, SPSS, Podcaster
Qualifications: TEM-8, IELTS (overall 7.5), the Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test certificate