

# Tengyuan Liang

*curriculum vitae*

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📄 [tyliang.github.io/Tengyuan.Liang/](https://tyliang.github.io/Tengyuan.Liang/)

## Employment

07/2017– **University of Chicago, Booth School of Business**, United States.  
Assistant Professor of Econometrics and Statistics

## Education

2012–2017 **University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School**, United States.  
Ph.D. in Statistics

2008–2012 **Peking University**, China.  
B.S. in Mathematics and Applied Mathematics

## Research

### Research Interests

Fields: Statistical Learning, Statistical Inference, Stochastic Optimization.

Goals:

- bridge the empirical and theoretical gap in modern statistical learning;
- understand the computational and algorithmic aspects of statistical inference;
- explore the role of stochasticity in solving non-convex optimization.

### Working Papers

21. M. H. Farrell, T. Liang and S. Misra (2020). [arXiv](#)  
"Deep Learning for Individual Heterogeneity."  
[arXiv:2010.14694 \[v1\]](#)
20. T. Liang and P. Sur (2020). [arXiv](#)  
"A Precise High-Dimensional Asymptotic Theory for Boosting and Minimum- $\ell_1$ -Norm Interpolated Classifiers."  
[arXiv:2002.01586 \[v2\]](#)
19. T. Liang (2019). [arXiv](#)  
"Estimating Certain Integral Probability Metrics (IPMs) Is as Hard as Estimating under the IPMs."  
[arXiv:1911.00730 \[v1\]](#)
18. T. Liang (2018). [arXiv](#)  
"How Well Generative Adversarial Networks Learn Distributions."  
[arXiv:1811.03179 \[v4\]](#)

## Publications

17. T. Liang and H. Tran-Bach (2020). JASA  
"Mehler's Formula, Branching Process, and Compositional Kernels of Deep Neural Networks."  
*Journal of the American Statistical Association (Theory and Methods)*, forthcoming, 2020.
16. M. H. Farrell, T. Liang and S. Misra (2018+). ECMA  
"Deep Neural Networks for Estimation and Inference."  
*Econometrica*, forthcoming, 2020.
15. T. Liang, A. Rakhlin and X. Zhai (2020). COLT  
"On the Multiple Descent of Minimum-Norm Interpolants and Restricted Lower Isometry of Kernels."  
*Conference on Learning Theory*, pmlr 125:2683-2711, 2020.
14. X. Dou and T. Liang (2019+). JASA  
"Training Neural Networks as Learning Data-adaptive Kernels: Provable Representation and Approximation Benefits."  
*Journal of the American Statistical Association (Theory and Methods)*, 1-14, 2020.
13. T. Liang and A. Rakhlin (2020). AOS  
"Just Interpolate: Kernel "Ridgeless" Regression Can Generalize."  
*The Annals of Statistics*, 48(3):1329-1347, 2020.
12. T. Liang and W. J. Su (2019). JRSS-B  
"Statistical Inference for the Population Landscape via Moment Adjusted Stochastic Gradients."  
*Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series B (Statistical Methodology)*, 81(2):431-456, 2019.
11. T. T. Cai, T. Liang and A. Rakhlin (2020). JMLR  
"Weighted Message Passing and Minimum Energy Flow for Heterogeneous Stochastic Block Models with Side Information."  
*Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 21(11):1-34, 2020.
10. T. Liang and J. Stokes (2019). AISTATS  
"Interaction Matters: A Note on Non-asymptotic Local Convergence of Generative Adversarial Networks."  
*International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics*, pmlr 89:907-915, 2019.
9. T. Liang, T. Poggio, A. Rakhlin and J. Stokes (2019). AISTATS  
"Fisher-Rao Metric, Geometry, and Complexity of Neural Networks."  
*International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics*, pmlr 89:888-896, 2019.

8. B. Tzen, T. Liang and M. Raginsky (2018). COLT  
 "Local Optimality and Generalization Guarantees for the Langevin Algorithm via Empirical Metastability."  
*Conference on Learning Theory*, pmlr 75:857-875, 2018.
7. S. Kale, Z. Karnin, T. Liang and D. Pál (2017). ICML  
 "Adaptive Feature Selection: Computationally Efficient Online Sparse Linear Regression under RIP."  
*International Conference on Machine Learning*, pmlr 70:1780-1788, 2017.
6. T. T. Cai, T. Liang and A. Rakhlin (2017). AOS  
 "Computational and Statistical Boundaries for Submatrix Localization in a Large Noisy Matrix."  
*The Annals of Statistics*, 45(4):1403-1430, 2017.
5. T. T. Cai, T. Liang and A. Rakhlin (2017). IEEE-TNSE  
 "On Detection and Structural Reconstruction of Small-World Random Networks."  
*IEEE Transactions on Network Science and Engineering*, 4(3):165-176, 2017.
4. T. T. Cai, T. Liang and A. Rakhlin (2016). AOS  
 "Geometric Inference for General High-Dimensional Linear Inverse Problems."  
*The Annals of Statistics*, 44(4):1536-1563, 2016.
3. T. Liang, A. Rakhlin and K. Sridharan (2015). COLT  
 "Learning with Square Loss: Localization through Offset Rademacher Complexity."  
*Conference on Learning Theory*, pmlr 40:1260-1285, 2015.  
[nominated for the best paper award](#)
2. A. Belloni, T. Liang, H. Narayanan and A. Rakhlin (2015). COLT  
 "Escaping the Local Minima via Simulated Annealing: Optimization of Approximately Convex Functions."  
*Conference on Learning Theory*, pmlr 40:240-265, 2015.
1. T. T. Cai, T. Liang and H. H. Zhou (2015). JMVA  
 "Law of Log Determinant of Sample Covariance Matrix and Optimal Estimation of Differential Entropy for High-Dimensional Gaussian Distributions."  
*Journal of Multivariate Analysis*, 137:161-172, 2015.

## Visiting Positions

- 2019 **Yale University**, Cowles Foundation for Research in Economics.  
 Visiting Assistant Professor in Econometrics
- 2016 **Yahoo Research New York**, Online Learning and Optimization Group.  
 Summer Research Scientist

## Honors & Awards

- 2021–2026 NSF Career Award  
[recommended for a five-year award of \\$400,000](#)

- 2017– George C. Tiao Faculty Fellow  
research fellowship for computational and data science awarded by the Booth School
- 2014–2017 Winkelman Fellowship  
highest honorific fellowship awarded by the Wharton School
- 2016 J. Parker Memorial Bursk Award  
awarded by the Statistics Department at the Wharton School for excellence in research
- 2014 US Junior Oberwolfach Fellow

## Professional Activities

- 2020– **Editorial Board**, *Journal of Machine Learning Research*.
- 2020– **Senior Program Committee**, *Conference on Learning Theory (COLT)*.
- 2014– **Journal and Conference Referee**.
- **Statistics**: *Annals of Statistics*, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series B (Statistical Methodology)*, *Journal of the American Statistical Association (Theory and Methods)*, *Biometrika*, *Bernoulli Journal*, *Statistica Sinica*, *Latin American Journal of Probability and Mathematical Statistics*, *Statistical Science*.
  - **Learning Theory**: *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, *Conference on Learning Theory (COLT)*, *Symposium on the Theory of Computing (STOC)*, *International Conference for Learning Representations (ICLR)*.
  - **Econometrics**: *Econometrica*, *Journal of Econometrics*.
  - **Information Theory**: *IEEE Transactions on Information Theory*, *IEEE International Symposium on Information Theory (ISIT)*.
  - **Operations Research**: *Mathematics of Operations Research*.
  - **Applied Mathematics**: *SIAM Journal on Mathematics of Data Science*.

## Invited Presentations

- 2020–2021 ○ Rutgers [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Statistics]  
[scheduled] ○ UMass Amherst [Statistics and Probability Seminar, Dept. of Mathematics and Statistics]  
○ Durham [Seminar at Business School]  
○ LSE [Econometrics Seminar, Dept. of Economics]  
○ Shanghai Jiao Tong University [Data Science Seminar, Institute of Natural Sciences]  
○ UChicago [Center for the Economics of Human Development, Lifecycle Working Group Lecture Series]
- 2019–2020 ○ MIT [Statistics and Stochastics Seminar Series, IDSS]  
○ Yale [Econometrics Seminar, Dept. of Economics]  
○ Harvard [Statistics Colloquium, Dept. of Statistics]  
○ MIT [MIFODS Workshop “Learning with a complex structure,” 45 mins talk]  
○ Duke [TRIPODS Workshop “Theory and modeling of deep learning,” 50 mins talk]  
○ Google Research NYC [Learning Theory Seminar]

- 2018–2019
- Duke [Decision Sciences Seminar, Fuqua School of Business]
  - ENSAE-CREST [Center for Research in Economics and Statistics Seminar]
  - UChicago [Joint U Chicago and TTIC Machine Learning Seminar]
- 2017–2018
- UIUC [Machine Learning Seminar, ECE Dept.]
  - UChicago [Statistics Colloquium, Dept. of Statistics]
  - HKUST [Joint Statistics Seminar, Business School and Dept. of Mathematics]
- 2016–2017
- Stanford [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Statistics]
  - Princeton [Colloquia, Operation Research and Financial Engineering]
  - MIT [Operations Research and Statistics Seminar, Sloan School of Management]
  - UChicago [Econometrics and Statistics Seminar, Booth School of Business]
  - Cambridge [Statistical Laboratory Seminar, Dept. of Mathematics]
  - Georgia Tech [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Mathematics]
  - UCSD [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Mathematics]
  - UVA [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Statistics]
  - UIUC [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Statistics]
  - Rutgers [Statistics Seminar, Dept. of Statistics, cancelled]
  - Imperial College London [Operations Management Seminar, Business School]
  - Yahoo Labs [Machine Learning Seminar]

Conferences JSM 2020 [IMS Invited Session, “Theory of Deep Learning”], ICCOPT 2019 [Generalization and Optimization Invited Session], JSM 2019 [Invited Session on “Modern Non-parametrics”], AISTATS 2019 [Present Two Papers], DALI 2019 [Machine Learning Theory Invited Session, George, South Africa], Econometric Conference on Big Data [Invited Talk at “Factor Models” Session, Tsinghua Univ.], COLT 2018 [Stochastic Optimization Session, KTH], Issac Newton Institute [Workshop on Future Challenges in Statistical Scalability, Cambridge], EcoSta 2018 [Frontiers in Financial Statistics Invited Session, CityU Hong Kong], CISS 2018 [Statistical Learning Invited Session, Princeton], ICML 2017 [Online Learning Session, Sydney], COLT 2015 [University Pierre and Marie Curie, Two Long Talks], Yale [NSF Workshop for Empirical Process and Modern Statistical Decision Theory], CIRM [Meeting in Mathematical Statistics: New Procedures for New Data, Luminy, France], CRM [Workshop on the Mathematical Foundations of Learning Theory, Barcelona, Spain], MFO [Workshop on Adaptive Statistical Inference, Oberwolfach, Germany].

## Teaching Experience

- 2017– **University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Instructor.**
- Fall 20: Business Statistics [BUSN41000, MBA]
  - Fall 19: Business Statistics [BUSN41000, MBA]
  - Fall 18: Business Statistics [BUSN41000, MBA]
  - Spring 18: Business Statistics [BUSN41000, MBA]

2012–2017 **Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania**, *Teaching Assistant*.

- Spring 17: Stochastic Processes [[STAT931](#), PhD]
- Spring 15: Concentration Inequalities [[STAT991](#), PhD]
- Spring 14, Spring 15: Advanced Quantitative Modeling [[STAT622](#), MBA]
- Fall 13: Introductory Statistics [[STAT111](#)]
- Spring 13: Statistical Inference [[STAT431](#)]
- Fall 12, Fall 15, Fall 16: Probability [[STAT430](#)]

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## University Service

2020 **Organizer**, *Econometrics and Statistics Colloquium*, Chicago Booth.

### Mentoring & Advising

2018– **Dissertations**.

Hai Tran-Bach [[2023](#), PhD UChicago Stat], Xialiang Dou [[2021](#), PhD UChicago Stat]

2018– **Organizer**, *Data Science Reading Group*, UChicago.

mentoring PhD students from Statistics and Computational and Applied Mathematics  
[\[list of papers\]](#)