

# Tamar Zeilberger

---

## CONTACT INFORMATION

School of Public Policy | London School  
of Economics and Political Science (LSE)  
Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, UK

+1 (908) 883-0564  
[t.zeilberger@lse.ac.uk](mailto:t.zeilberger@lse.ac.uk)  
<http://tamarzeilberger.org>

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Postdoctoral Fellow in Political Science and Public Policy, London School of Economics  
and Political Science (LSE), 2023-2025

## AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Comparative Authoritarian Politics, Political Economy, Political Uncertainty, Math-  
ematical Modeling, Game Theory, Inference from Observational Data with Statistics  
and Machine Learning, Contemporary China.

## EDUCATION

Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Expected 2023  
*Political Science*

Dissertation: Essays on Political Uncertainty and Instability in Autocracies: Theory  
and Evidence from Contemporary China

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

M.A., University of Chicago, 2014  
*Social Sciences*

B.A., The New School, 2010  
*Politics & Sociology*

## 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 dissertation contributes to that understudied  
area, with a focus on investment. I develop a theory that posits that political uncer-  
tainty in autocracies produces heterogenous 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 &amp; Leadership Transitions in China.” <i>Under review.</i></p> <p>“Logic of Political Survival Revisited: Consequences of Elite Uncertainty Under Authoritarian Rule.” <i>Working paper.</i></p> <p>“The ‘Benefits’ of Clientelism: Electoral Support as an Insurance Premium with Evidence from Brazilian Municipalities.” <i>Work in progress.</i></p>	
CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS	<p>-American Political Science Association Annual Meeting 2017, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023</p> <p>-Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023</p> <p>-Western Political Science Association Conference on Authoritarian Politics, 2020<sup>‡</sup>, 2023</p> <p>-Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology, 2022<sup>†</sup></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 ‡ cancelled 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>Graduate Courses at LSE</i></p> <p>-Instructor for Political Science for Public Policy (Survey Course on Political Science with an Emphasis on Political Economy for MPP students), Fall 2023</p> <p><i>Graduate Courses at UCLA</i></p> <p>-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, &amp; Environmental Studies), Summer 2020</p> <p>-TA for Game Theory in Politics I (First of two course sequence in Game Theory for Ph.D. students); Winter 2021 with Barry O’Neill, Winter 2020 with Michael Chwe</p>	

-Math Maven (Quantitative Methods & Formal Theory Consultant for Ph.D. Students in Political Science), Academic Year 2018-2019, 2019-2020

*Undergraduate Courses at UCLA*

-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                      EITM (Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models) Summer Institute, Emory Uni-  
TRAINING                          versity, July 2019

RELEVANT                      SXL Group (Shanghai, China)  
NON-ACADEMIC                      -Research on China market entry and compliance for Shanghai-based consulting  
EXPERIENCE                          firm, 2012.

SERVICE                          -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 (COM-  
PASS), 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<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

REFERENCES                      *Available upon request*