# Zhang Chen

zhangc@princeton.edu ∘ www.zhangchenecon.com ∘ 609-356-3831

**Placement Director**     Gianluca Violante     violante@princeton.edu     609-258-4003

**Graduate Administrator**     Laura Hedden     lhedden@princeton.edu     609-258-4006

## Office Contact Information

Julis Romo Rabinowitz Building

Department of Economics

Princeton University

Princeton, NJ 08544

## Graduate Studies

**Princeton University**     *2017-present*

PhD Candidate in Economics

Expected Completion Date: June 2023

### REFERENCES

| Professor Ezra Oberfield | Professor Gene Grossman |
|---|---|
| Department of Economics | Department of Economics |
| Princeton University | Princeton University |
| 609-258-3846 | 609-258-4823 |
| edo@princeton.edu | grossman@princeton.edu |
| | |
| Professor Stephen Redding | Professor Richard Rogerson |
| Department of Economics | Department of Economics |
| Princeton University | Princeton University |
| 609-258-4016 | 609-258-4839 |
| reddings@princeton.edu | rdr@princeton.edu |

## Prior Education

**Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore**     *2013-2017*

B.Sc. in Mathematics and Economics, *First Honor*

## Research Interests

PRIMARY     Macroeconomics, International Trade

SECONDARY     Knowledge Diffusion, Development

**Job Market Paper**

---

"Economic Growth and the Rise of Large Firms"

*Why does the prevalence of large firms vary significantly across countries? This paper investigates the relationship between economic development and the right tail of firm size distribution. First, I document a positive empirical relationship between GDP per capita and the thickness of the right tail of firm size distribution. Then, I develop a simple idea diffusion model with endogenous growth and firm size distribution. The right tail becomes thicker on the transition path to balanced growth in the model equilibrium. Gibrat's law holds at all times, and the firm size distribution converges to Zipf's distribution in the limit. Despite being parsimonious, the model provides a good quantitative fit to the US GDP per capita growth. In addition, idea diffusion helps to understand the tight connection between firm growth and economic growth. In a general class of idea diffusion models, there is equivalence between Gibrat's law and thicker tails and between Zipf's law and long-run growth. Lastly, I show that policies favoring large firms can improve welfare by utilizing the diffusion externality.*

**Other Research Papers**

---

1. "Export by Cohort" With Qing Huang.
2. "Knowledge Diffusion Through Networks" With Treb Allen, Kamran Bilir and Christopher Tonetti

**Research Experience**

---

2020    Research Assistant for Professor Ezra Oberfield

2019    Research Assistant for Professor Kamran Bilir

2018    Research Assistant for Professor Markus Brunnermeier

**Teaching**

---

*Princeton*    ECO518 Graduate Econometrics II
TA for Prof. Plagborg-Møller, Spring 2021

ECO353 UG International Macroeconomics
TA for Prof. Gourinchas, Spring 2020

ECO503: Graduate Macroeconomics
TA for Prof. Rogerson and Prof. Rossi-Hansberg, Fall 2019

ECO981: Junior Independent Work
TA for Prof. Zaidi, AY 2021

**Presentations**

---

2022    Princeton, ASSA 2022 Annual Meeting (Poster)

2021    Princeton, CCER SI (Peking University)

## Honors and Awards

| | |
|---|---:|
| International Economics Section Summer Fellowship, Princeton | *2019 - 2021* |
| Princeton University Graduate Fellowship | *2017 - Present* |
| Best Graduation Thesis in Mathematics and Economics, NTU | *2017* |

## Languages

Chinese (native), English

<div align="right"><em>Last updated: November 2022</em></div>