Peng Peng

Assistant Professor of Political Science & Global Studies
Washington University in St. Louis
pengp@wustl.edu • www.peng-peng.org

Academic Appointments

Washington University in St. Louis
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science & Global Studies Program — Feb. 2025–present
Postdoctoral Associate, Political Science — Aug. 2024–Jan. 2025

Yale University
Postdoctoral Associate, Council on East Asian Studies — July 2022–June 2024

IE University
Visiting Scholar, School of Global and Public Affairs — July 2025

Education

Ph.D., Political Science, Duke University — Dec. 2022
Fields: Political Economy; Political Institutions
Committee: Melanie Manion and Pablo Beramendi (co-chairs), Edmund Malesky, and Yuhua Wang (Harvard)

M.A., International Affairs, Sciences Po Paris and Peking University — 2016
B.A., English Literature and International Relations, Beijing Foreign Studies University — 2014
Exchange Student, Political Science, University of Edinburgh — 2013

Research

Books and Book Projects

Governing Empire: Bureaucracy and State Power in Imperial China
Winner of Duke University's 2023 Best Dissertation in Political Science. Under contract with Cambridge University Press. Final manuscript submitted; publication scheduled for 2027.

From Empire to Nation-State: Aspirational Nationalism in China
With Haohan Chen and Yingtian He. Book conference scheduled for Sept. 25, 2026.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Peng Peng. "From Conquest to Rule: Elite Appointment after Rebellion in Imperial China." Accepted, *International Organization.*

Peng Peng. "Meritocracy Re-imagined: Ideational Foundations of State-Building in China." *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 4(4): 439–469, 2025.
Lee Alston Award for Best Paper, 2025.

Working Papers

"Meaning as Might: The Ideational Foundations of State Power." (with Charles Chang). Revise and resubmit.

"Meritocracy or Democracy? Civil Service and State-Building in Great Britain." (with Didac Queralt).

"From Empire to Nation-State: Aspirational Nation-Building in China." (with Haohan Chen and Yingtian He).

"Ruling after Revolution: Security Challenges and Civilian Control over the Military in China, 1949–1976." (with Junyan Jiang).

Work in Progress

"National Narratives." (with Eddy Yeung).

"Rise of China." (with Xiaonan Wang). Survey experiment in progress.

"State Making as Class Making: Evidence from Nineteenth-Century England." (with Pablo Beramendi and Adriane Fresh).

Book Reviews and Public Writing

"Review of Yuhua Wang, *The Rise and Fall of Imperial China: The Social Origins of State Development*." *The Developing Economies* 61(3): 261–264, 2023.

"The Myth of Meritocracy: How Exams Helped Build an Empire." *Broadstreet Blog*, Mar. 31, 2025.

Awards, Grants, and Fellowships

Awards

Roland Grimm Travel Award, Washington University in St. Louis ($10,000)	2025
Roland Grimm Travel Award, Washington University in St. Louis ($7,000)	2024
Best Dissertation in Political Science, Duke University	2023
Best Preliminary Paper in Political Science, Duke University	2018
Ministry of Education National Scholarship (Top 1%), BFSU	2013
Beijing English Public Speaking Champion	2011

Grants

Weidenbaum Center Small Grant, with Eddy Yeung, Washington University ($15,000)	2026
Weidenbaum Center Small Grant, Washington University ($10,800)	2025
Weidenbaum Center Small Grant, with Xiaonan Wang, Washington University ($15,000)	2024
Postdoctoral Travel Grant, Yale University	2023
MacMillan Faculty Research Grant, with Didac Queralt, Yale University ($10,000)	2023
APSA Travel Grant	2022
Walter T. Molano Research Grant, Duke University	2021
Asian-Pacific Institute Research Grant, Duke University	2020
Political Science Department Research Grants, Duke University	2018–2022
Alona Evans Research Grant, Duke University	2018
Interdisciplinary Graduate Networks Grant, Duke University	2018
International & Global Studies Grant, Duke University	2018

Fellowships

Graduate School Summer Fellowship, Duke University	2018–2022
Oskar Morgenstern Fellowship, Institute of Humanities Studies	2021

Invited Talks

2026–27

London School of Economics, Department of Government	Spring 2027 (scheduled)

2025–26

Zhejiang University, Workshop on Historical Political Economy	July 2026
Renmin University, Department of Political Science	May 2026
Princeton University, Center on Contemporary China	Mar. 2026
University of Virginia, Department of Politics, IR/CP Speaker Series	Feb. 2026
Stanford University, Center on China's Economy and Institutions	Feb. 2026
New York University, Frontier Empirical Research on East Asia	Jan. 2026
Vanderbilt University, Political Economy of Conflict Workshop	Nov. 2025
University of Pennsylvania, Comparative Politics Seminar	Oct. 2025
Washington University in St. Louis, Comparative Politics Workshop	Sept. 2025

2024–25

Yale–UB Historical Political Economy Workshop, Barcelona	July 2025
MIT, Origins of State Strength Workshop	May 2025
University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Contemporary China	Feb. 2025
Washington University in St. Louis, CP/IR Seminar	Oct. 2024

2023–24

Peking University, Graduate Students Seminar	June 2024
Beijing Foreign Studies University, Alumni Speaker Series	June 2024
Tsinghua University, Department of International Relations	June 2024
Yale University, China and International Politics Conference	May 2024
East China University of Political Science and Law, School of Government	May 2024
Yale Law School, Conference on Comparative State Capacities	Jan. 2024
Emory University, Department of Political Science	Dec. 2023
Dartmouth College, Department of Government	Nov. 2023
University of Utah, Department of Political Science	Nov. 2023
Washington University in St. Louis, Department of Political Science	Oct. 2023
Peking University, Political Science Online Seminar	Sept. 2023
Yale University, Comparative Politics Seminar	2023

2022–23

New York University, Frontier East Asia Conference	May 2023
Harvard University, Historical Political Economy Working Group	Dec. 2022
Columbia University, Political Elites Conference	Nov. 2022
Yale University, State Capacity Workshop	Oct. 2022

Before 2022

Duke University, Research Frontier Conference	Apr. 2022
Duke University, New Faces in China Studies	Aug. 2021
New York University, Quantitative China Conference (online)	Apr. 2021
Yale University, Politics and History Conference	June 2019
Duke University, State Capacity Conference	Apr. 2019
Duke University, Causal Inference Workshop	Aug. 2018
China Quantitative Economic History Workshop, Yantai	July 2018

Conferences

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2021–2026
European Political Science Association Annual Conference	2025
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference	2022, 2024, 2026
Economic History Association Annual Meeting	2026

Conference Organization

Mini-Conference on Historical Political Economy, APSA Annual Meeting; co-organized with Christopher Carter — Sept. 2022

Teaching

Washington University in St. Louis

Introduction to Chinese Politics (undergraduate)	Fall 2025, 2026
Comparative Politics Workshop (Ph.D.)	Fall 2025; Spring/Fall 2026
Chinese Politics (Ph.D.)	Fall 2024
State Building in China and Beyond (undergraduate)	Fall 2024, 2025, 2026

Yale University

State Building in China and Beyond (undergraduate/M.A.)	Spring 2023

Service

Washington University in St. Louis

IRB Liaison, Political Science	2026, 27
Ph.D. Selection Committee, Political Science	2024
Madeleine Albright Award Committee, Global Studies	2025, 2026
Thesis Evaluation, Global Studies	2026

Advising

Xiao Xiongfu, M.A. thesis committee member, Duke University
Frank Xu, Ph.D. dissertation committee member, Washington University in St. Louis

Journal Refereeing

American Political Science Review; American Journal of Political Science; Comparative Political Studies; Journal of Politics; Journal of Historical Political Economy; Political Science Research and Methods; Governance; Nationalities Papers; Social Forces; Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis; PLOS ONE; Security Studies; Explorations in Economic History; Research and Politics

Other Professional Experience

European Council on Foreign Relations, Research Assistant, Paris	Sept. 2014–July 2015
Paulson Institute, Research Assistant, Beijing	Sept.–Dec. 2013
China Institute of International Studies (MFA), Intern, Beijing	May–Aug. 2013

Languages

Chinese (native); French (intermediate)

References

Melanie Manion
Vor Broker Family Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Duke University
melanie.manion@duke.edu
Edmund Malesky
Oscar L. Tang Family Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Duke University
eddy.malesky@duke.edu
Pablo Beramendi
Newman Ivey White Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Duke University
pablo.beramendi@duke.edu
Yuhua Wang
Ford Foundation Professor of Modern China Studies, Department of Government, Harvard University
yuhuawang@fas.harvard.edu