MENGWEI LIN

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EDUCATION

Cornell University   *2018-2024(expected)*
Applied Economics & Management, Ph.D. Candidate

Harvard University   *2022-2023*
Department of Economics, Visiting Student

University of Wisconsin-Madison   *2016-2018*
Department of Economics, Master of Science

Beijing Jiaotong University   *2012-2016*
School of Traffic and Transportation, Bachelor of Engineering

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Research Interests: Public Economics, Political Economy, Firm Behavior
Teaching Interests: Applied Econometrics, Applied Microeconomics, Empirical Industrial Organization

JOB MARKET PAPER

"Local Policies and Firm Location: The Role of Leaders' Promotion Motives in China" [PDF]

Abstract: This paper investigates how local governments in China compete to attract businesses and examines the role of local leaders' promotion motives in intensifying such competition. Local governments compete by offering city-wide policies, such as lowering tax rates, giving subsidies, providing financial support, or loosening environmental regulations. The difference between what is practiced and what is legally mandated is non-negligible, and many of these policies remain unobservable due to limited data accessibility. To address this issue, I introduce a novel method to quantify the net effect of various policies proposed by local governments. This net effect, referred to as the policy index, is identified using data from all manufacturing plant locations along with a spatial border design. When applying this method to Jiangsu, a province in China with 13 competitive cities, all ranked in the top 100 by GDP over the past decade, I find that geographically proximate cities tend to adopt similar industrial policies. I then incorporate the estimated policy index into a promotion competition framework to understand how policies are determined in equilibrium and how competition, in turn, affects the business landscape. Counterfactual simulations demonstrate that firms are distributed more evenly across space, with only 23% of them choosing a different location if leaders' incentives were the same across all cities.

WORKING PAPERS

"Peace and Petty Corruption: Evidence from Trucking in Côte d'Ivoire," with Jeremy Foltz and Souleymane Soumahoro. [PDF]

"A Tax-Shaped Retail Landscape," with Feng Chi, Limin Fang, Nathan Yang. [PDF]

"Money, Influence (and Death) in U.S. Politics," with Marco Battaglini, Valerio Leone Sciabolazza, Eleonora Patacchini. [PDF]

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

"Local Governance and Environmental Regulation in China," with Deyu Rao. [PDF]

"Count on a Leader? Evidence from Government-Business Contracts and Firm Performance," with Jaya Wen.

GRANTS

Collaborator, Local Governance and Environmental Regulation in China	*2023-2025*
Research Grants Council, Early Career Scheme	*HK$ 535,443*

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Adam Smith Fellowship	*2023-2024, Mercatus Center*
EAP C.V. Starr Fellowship	*2024, Cornell*
Adlerbert Graduate Fellowship	*2023, Cornell*
Graduate School Fellowship	*2022-2023, Cornell*
Cornell Laidlaw Scholars Graduate Mentor Fellowship	*2022, Cornell*
Cornell Center for Teaching Innovation (CTI) Graduate Fellowship	*2021, Cornell*
Dyson "Graduate Teaching Assistant - Outstanding Service" Award	*2020, Cornell*
First Prize, 13th "Jinshixuan Cup" Innovation Contest	*2015, BJTU*
Outstanding Student Leader Award	*2015, BJTU*
First-class Scholarship for Academic Excellence	*2014, BJTU*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant for Prof. Adam Dearing NCC5020/NCCY5020 Microeconomics for Management (MBA)	*2022 Summer* *Cornell*
Instructor CICER Winter Camp Public Economics Research Group	*2022 Winter* *Cornell*
Teaching Assistant for Prof. Carla Gomes AEM4120 Computational Methods for Management and Economics	*2021 Fall* *Cornell*
Teaching Assistant (Head TA) for Prof. Suzanne Shu AEM2420 Marketing for Dyson Majors	*2021, 2022 Spring* *Cornell*
Teaching Assistant (Head TA) for Prof. Nathan Yang AEM2400 Marketing for Non-majors	*2020 Fall* *Cornell*
Teaching Assistant for Prof. Michael Waldman AEM7020/ECON6115 Game Theory (PhD)	*2020 Spring* *Cornell*
Teaching Assistant for Prof. Loren Tauer AEM4110 Introduction to Econometrics	*2019 Fall* *Cornell*
Volunteer Tutor for Great University Tutoring Service (GUTS) MATH217 Calculus with Algebra and Trigonometry II	*2017 Fall* *UW-Madison*

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

2023: Harvard University (Graduate Student Workshop in Political Economy and Rational Choice), Harvard University (Political Economy Tea)

2022: AEA, University of Oxford (Center for the Study of African Economics), CEGA (Working Group in African Political Economy), Harvard University (Econ and Social Policy Grad Workshop), Harvard University (Graduate Student Workshop in Environmental Economics)

2021: International Growth Centre (the BREAD Conference on the Economics of Africa), SEA, Cornell University (Emerging Markets Research Day)

2020: Boston University (Mentoring Workshop), Cornell University (Labor Work in Progress Seminar), Cornell University (Development Microeconomics Graduate Research Seminar)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Referee: Regional Science and Urban Economics, Journal of Economic Geography
Ad-hoc Reviewer: STAARS Fellowship

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

President, Community-Based Project Evaluation Group	*2022-2023, Cornell*
Director of Outreach, Community-Based Project Evaluation Group	*2020-2022, Cornell*
Treasurer, AEM Graduate Student Association	*2021-2022, Cornell*
Internship, Tesla Inc., Department of APAC Indirect Purchasing	*2016, Beijing*

OTHERS

Skills	Stata, R, Matlab, Python, QGIS, C Programming, Latex, 3DS Max, AutoCAD
Interests	Photography, Dancing(Jazz, Latino), Painting, Swimming

REFERENCES

– Prof. Adam Dearing
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– Prof. Jeremy Foltz
UW-Madison
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– Prof. Ravi Kanbur (Chair)
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– Prof. Shanjun Li
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– Prof. Eleonora Patacchini
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– Prof. Nathan Yang
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