

Lesley Zhang
PhD Candidate, Pennsylvania State University

Contact Information

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Education

Pennsylvania State University, Department of Political Science, State College, PA
Dual Title Ph.D. in Political Science and Social Data Analytics, expected May 2029
Major: Comparative Politics; Minor: Methodology
Research Interests: Repression, Social Movements, Authoritarianism

George Washington University, Elliott School of International Affairs, Washington, D.C.
M.A. in Asian Studies, May 2023

Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA
B.A. in Mathematics & B.A. in Government (with honors), May 2021

Publications

1. Kobayashi, Tetsuro, **Zhifan Zhang**, and Ling Liu. 2024. "Is Partisan Selective Exposure an American Peculiarity? A Comparative Study of News Browsing Behavior in the United States, Japan, and Hong Kong." *Communication Research*.

Conference

3. Kobayashi, Tetsuro (Presenter), **Zhifan Zhang**, and Ling Liu. 2023. "Is Partisan Selective Exposure an American Peculiarity? A Comparative Study of News Browsing Behavior in the United States, Japan, and Hong Kong." Presented at *International Communication Association*, Toronto, Canada, May 2023.
2. Kobayashi, Tetsuro (Presenter), **Zhifan Zhang**, and Ling Liu. 2023. "Cognitive Dissonance Explains Selective Exposure in the US but Not in East Asia." Presented at *Preconference of International Communication Association*, Toronto, Canada, May 2023.
1. **Zhang, Zhifan**. 2021. "Protest in Newspapers: Discrepancies in Reporting the 2019-20 Hong Kong Movement between Mainland and Hong Kong." Presented at *Midwest Political Science Association*, Chicago, IL, April 2021.

Research Experiences

7. Research Assistant to Professor Roseanne McManus, Pennsylvania State University, Project on International Reputation, 2025 – Present
6. Research Assistant to Professor Cyanne Loyle, Pennsylvania State University, Project on Domestic Lawfare, 2025
5. Research Assistant to Professor Joseph Wright, Pennsylvania State University, Project on Remittance, 2025
4. Research Assistant to Professor Tesuro Kobayashi, Waseda University, Project on Selective Exposure, 2022 – 2024
3. Research Specialist at Coase-Sandor Institute for Law and Economics, University of Chicago, 2023 – 2024
2. Research Assistant to Dr. Fred Gui, Center for Effective Lawmaking, University of Virginia, Project on Lobbying Effect, 2023
1. Research Assistant to Professor Jonathan Abel, Asia Program, Wilson Center, Project on the #Metoo Movement in Japan, 2022 – 2023

Teaching Experience

2. Teaching Assistant to Professor Lee Ann Banaszak, Pennsylvania State University, Political Science 300H: Introduction to Independent Thesis Research, 2026
1. Teaching Assistant to Professor Boliang Zhu, Pennsylvania State University, Political Science 14: International Relations, 2024

Grants and Awards

4. Paterno Graduate Fellowship, Department of Political Science, Pennsylvania State University, 2025
3. First Year Summer Funding Award, Department of Political Science, Pennsylvania State University, 2025
2. Graduate Fellowship, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, 2021-2023
1. Comparative Politics Achievement Award, Department of Government, Franklin & Marshall College, 2021

Skills

Languages: Mandarin (native), Cantonese (proficient), French (intermediate), Japanese (intermediate)