

YINGDAN LU

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ACADEMIC POSITION

Northwestern University Evanston, IL
Assistant Professor (Tenure Track), Department of Communication Studies, School of Communication Sept 2023 –
Director, Computational Media and Politics Lab
Co-Director, Computational Multi-Modal Communication Lab
Core faculty, Media, Technology, and Society (MTS)
Core faculty, Technology and Social Behavior (TSB)
Core faculty, Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems (NICO)
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Communication & Public Policy (CCPP)
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Human-Computer Interaction + Design (HCI+D)
Faculty Affiliate, Cognitive Science Program

EDUCATION

Stanford University Stanford, CA
Ph.D. in Communication 2017–2023
Ph.D. Minor in Political Science
Committee: Jennifer Pan (Chair), Jeff Hancock, Angèle Christin, Yiqing Xu

Stanford University Stanford, CA
M.A. in East Asian Studies 2015–2017

Tsinghua University Beijing, China
B.A. in Journalism (graduated with honors) 2011–2015

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

*Note: * indicates student or postdoc coauthors at the time of the first draft, = denotes co-first authorship*

- [20] Lu, Y., Liu, X.*, & Zhou, C.* (2026). Recommending the State: How Social Media Algorithms Curate State-Created Content in China. *Journal of Communication*. jqag010
- [19] Divon, T.*, & Lu, Y. (In press). (In)Visible Politics: Influencers on TikTok and Douyin as State Brokers. *Convergence*.
- [18] Lu, Y. (2026). Performative Propaganda Engagement: How Celebrity Fans Engage with State Propaganda on Weibo. *Political Communication*, 43(1), 99-127.
- [17] Liu, X.*, Lu, Y., Peng, Q.*, Qian, S.*, Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026). Seeing the Surreal: Mapping Surrealism in Photorealistic AI-Generated Images Using Large Language Models. *Computational Communication Research*.
- [16] Dahlke, R.*, Tu, F.*, Wang, Y. C.*, Lu, Y., Engeda, B. W.*, & Hancock, J. (2025). Contextualizing Misinformation: A User-Centric Approach to Linguistic and Topical Patterns in News Consumption. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW)*, 9(7), 1-40.
- [15] Lu, Y.=, Pan, J., Xu, X., & Xu, Y. (2025). Decentralized Propaganda in the Era of Digital Media: The Massive Presence of the Chinese State on Douyin. *American Journal of Political Science*. Online First in May 2025.
- [14] Hanley, H.*, Lu, Y.=, & Pan, J. (2025). Across the Firewall: Foreign Media's Role in Shaping Chinese Social Media Narratives on the Russo-Ukrainian War. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 122(1), e2420607122.

- [13] Lu, Y., & Peng, Y. (2024). The Mobilizing Power of Visual Media Across Stages of Social-Mediated Protests. *Political Communication*, 41(4), 531-558.
- [12] Qian, S.*, Lu, Y., Peng, Y., Shen, C., & Xu, H.* (2024). Convergence or divergence? A cross-platform analysis of climate change visual categories, features, and user engagement on Twitter and Instagram. *Public Relations Review*, 50(2), 102454.
- [11] Chen, K., Lu, Y.=, & Wang, Y.* (2024). Unraveling China's digital traces: evaluating communication scholarship through a sociotechnical lens. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 17(2), 127-150.
- [10] Christin, A., & Lu, Y. (2024). The Influencer Pay Gap: Platform Labor Meets Racial Capitalism. *New Media & Society*, 26(12), 7212-7235.
- [9] Lu, Y., Schaefer, J.*, Park, K., Joo, J., & Pan, J. (2024). How Information Flows from the World to China. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 29(2), 305-327.
- [8] Chen, A.*, Lu, Y.=, Chen, K., & Ng, A.* (2024). Pandemic Nationalism: Use of Government Social Media for Political Information and Belief in COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories in China. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 29(3), 710-732.
- [7] Peng, Y., Lu, Y.=, & Shen, C. (2023). An Agenda for Studying Credibility Perceptions of Visual Misinformation. *Political Communication*, 40(2), 225-237.
- [6] Lu, Y., & Shen, C. (2023). Unpacking Multimodal Fact-checking: Features and Engagement of Fact-checking Videos on Chinese TikTok (Douyin). *Social Media + Society*, 9(1).
- [5] Lu, Y.=, & Pan, J. (2022). The Pervasive Presence of Chinese Government Content on Douyin Trending Videos. *Computational Communication Research*, 4(1), 68-97.
- [4] Muise, D.*, Lu, Y., Pan, J., & Reeves, B. (2022). Selectively localized: Temporal and visual structure of smartphone screen activity across media environments. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 10(3), 487-509.
- [3] Lu, Y.=, Pan, J., & Xu, Y. (2021). Public Sentiment on Chinese Social Media during the Emergence of COVID-19. *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, 1, 1-47.
- [2] Lu, Y.=, & Pan, J. (2021). Capturing Clicks: How the Chinese Government Uses Clickbait to Compete for Visibility. *Political Communication*, 38(1-2), 23-54.
- [1] Reeves, B., Ram, N., Robinson, T. N., Cummings, J. J., Giles, C. L., Pan, J., [...] Lu, Y., et al. (2021). *Screenomics: A Framework to Capture and Analyze Personal Life Experiences and the Ways that Technology Shapes Them*. *Human-Computer Interaction*, 36(2), 150-201.

BOOK CHAPTER

- [5] Lu, Y., & DeButts, M.* (2026). How to Use Computational Methods and Online Experiments to Study Chinese Digital Media. In Xu, J., Guo, S., and Zhang, W. (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook on Chinese Digital Media and Communication*.
- [4] Chen, K., & Lu, Y.= (2026). Video as data in computational analysis. In Shen, L. (Ed.), *The Handbook of Quantitative Research Methods in Communication Science*.
- [3] Chen, K., Lu, Y.=, & Gaw, F. (Forthcoming). Evaluating Computational Methods in Communication Research: A Comparative Framework for the LLM Era. In Domahidi, E., & Haim, M. (Eds.), *ICA Handbook of Computational Communication Research*.
- [2] Kim, S., Lu, Y., & Peng, Y. (2025). Unmasking Deception: How Computer Vision Could Empower Visual Journalism in Unveiling Visual Misinformation. In Thompson, T. J., and Dahmen, N. S. (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Visual Journalism*. 39: 471-482. Routledge.
- [1] Peng, Y., & Lu, Y. (2023). Computational Visual Analysis in Political Communication. In D. Lilleker & A. Veneti (eds.), *Research Handbook on Visual Politics*, 4: 42-54. Edward Elgar Publishing.

CONFERENCE LATE-BREAKING WORK & PANELS (NON-ARCHIVAL)

- [2] Hwang, A. H.-C., Bernstein, M. S., Sundar, S. S., Zhang, R., Horta Ribeiro, M., **Lu, Y.**, Chang, S., Wu, S. Yang, A., Williams, D., Park, J. S., Ognyanova, K., Xiao, Z., Shamma, D. A. (2025). Human Subjects Research in the Age of Generative AI: Opportunities and Challenges of Applying LLM-Simulated Data to HCI Studies. Panel for *CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2025)*
- [1] Peng, Q.* , **Lu, Y.**, & Peng, Y., Qian, S.* , Liu X.* , & Shen, C. (2025). Crafting Synthetic Realities: Examining Visual Realism and Misinformation Potential of Photorealistic AI-Generated Images. In *Proceedings of the Extended Abstracts of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-12).

UNDER REVIEW

- [7] DeButts, M.* & **Lu, Y.** = Intimacy with Limits: How Short-form Video Propaganda Embraces Platform Norms, but Not for Leaders (Minor Revision, *Journal of Communication*)
- [6] Gaw, F.* , **Lu, Y.**, & Nisbet, E. Visual Logic: An Integrated Framework for Understanding Visual Content on Social Media (Revise and Resubmit)
- [5] Chen, K., **Lu, Y.** = , & Zou, S. TikToking Vaccine Nationalism: A Multimodal Understanding of COVID-19 Vaccine Videos on Douyin. (Revise and Resubmit)
- [4] Liu, X.* , Peng, Y., & **Lu, Y.** Mitigating Confounding Bias in Observational Research of Visual Media Effects: An LLM-Informed, Machine Learning-Based Inference Framework (Revise and Resubmit)
- [3] Khawar, S.* , **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Y., & Yeon, J.* , & Shen, C. Visual Matters: Connecting Aesthetic Appeal and Production Quality of Photos, Infographics and Data Visualizations to Credibility of Social Media Posts (Under review, [Preprint](#)).
- [2] Lin, C.* , Chen, Y.* , Chen, J.* , **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Y., & Shen, C. From Verification to Amplification: Auditing Reverse Image Search as Algorithmic Gatekeeping in Visual Misinformation Fact-checking (Under review, [Preprint](#))
- [1] Muise, D., Cornelius, J., Lee, J., **Lu, Y.**, & Shapiro, J. An Open-Source Smartphone Screen-Recording Tool with Application to Political Science Research (Under review)

SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

- [6] **Lu, Y.** How Fans Engage with State Propaganda through Celebrity Mobilization (Manuscript in preparation)
- [5] **Lu, Y.**, Xin, H.* , Chu, A.* , Peng, Y., & Shen, C. Audio as Data: Understanding Sound Events in Political Communication (Manuscript in preparation)
- [4] Peng, Y., Lin, C.* , & **Lu, Y.** Limited Gains in Visibility, Persistent Stereotypes: Gender Representation in U.S. Films (2000–2023) (Manuscript in preparation)
- [3] Peng, Y., Qian, S.* , **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. From Model Reasoning to Interpretable Features: Predicting Visual Credibility with Multimodal Large Language Models (Manuscript in preparation, [Preprint](#))
- [2] Han, R., Liu, L., **Lu, Y.** = , & Shao, L. How Digital Regulation in Democracies Can Unintentionally Benefit Autocratic Regimes. (Manuscript in preparation)
- [1] Yeon, J.* , Peng, Y., **Lu, Y.**, Khawar, S.* , & Shen, C. From “Just Jokes” To “Biased Truth”: How Politician-featured Memes Shape Perceptions Of Political (Mis)information (Manuscript in preparation)

GRANTS

External

- Google Cloud Research Credits Program, \$5,000, *PI* 2025-2026
- OpenAI Researcher Access Program, \$5,000 worth API credits, *PI* 2024–2025
(with Cuihua (Cindy) Shen and Yilang Peng)

- National Science Foundation (CNS-2150716), \$500,000, *Research Fellow* 2022–2025
Project title: *Collaborative Research: SaTC: CORE: Small: Understanding How Visual Features of Misinformation Influence Credibility Perceptions* (PI: Cuihua (Cindy) Shen and Yilang Peng)
- Princeton Data-Driven Social Science (DDSS) Initiative, \$10,000, *co-PI* 2022–2023
Project title: *Propagating the Repressive Apparatus on Social Media: The Case of TikTok*
- Summer Institutes in Computational Social Science (SICSS) Research Grant, \$2,500, *PI* 2021
Project title: *Invisible Spammers: Detecting Bots on Chinese Social Media*
- Magic Grant from Brown Institute for Media Innovation, \$100,000, *co-PI* 2019–2020
Project title: *Screenomics Interactive Dashboard*
- Google Cloud COVID-19 Credit Grant, \$250, *PI* 2020
Project title: *Echo or Divergence: COVID-19 Discourse on Twitter and Weibo*

Internal

- Northwestern Buffett Global Working Group Grant, \$200,000, *Core Team Member* 2025–2028
Project title: *Global Large Language Models Values Benchmarking Project*
- HAI-Google Cloud Credits Grant Program, \$2,171, *PI* 2023
Project title: *Fandom, Propaganda and State Mobilization on Chinese Social Media*
- Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) Research Data Grant, \$1,500, *PI* 2022
Project title: *Fauci Memes Matter: Public Figure Memes and COVID-19 Misinformation*
- Stanford Program on Democracy and the Internet (PDI) Research Funding, \$10,000, *PI* 2020–2021
Project title: *Multimodal beyond Text: Investigating Visual Misinformation on Social Media*
- Stanford Global Studies (SGS) Global Perspectives Grant, \$3,500, *PI* 2016
Project title: *Environmental Policy Implementation in China*
- Stanford Center For East Asian Studies Summer Grant, \$3,900 2016
- Tsinghua Undergraduate Overseas Research & Training Grant, \$1,500 2014

Under Review

- Thinking Machines Lab, Interactivity Research Grants, \$100,000, *co-PI*
Project title: *Measuring Verbosity and Its Human Cost in Multimodal AI*

Proposals Not Funded

- Spencer Foundation Research Grants on Education, \$50,000, *PI*
Project title: *Advancing Media Literacy Programs to Empower Youth to Understand Authoritarian Foreign Propaganda on Video-Sharing Platforms* (Finalist among 54 / 1000)
- Google Academic Research Award program, \$100,000, 2024, *PI*
Project title: *Empowering the Elderly: Understanding the Impact of AI-Generated Images on Older Adults*
- Data Empowerment Fund, \$100,000, 2024, *PI*
Project title: *Synthetic Realities: A Dataset of AI-Generated Photorealistic Visuals for Decoding Categories, Elements, and Human Perceptions*
- Sony Research Award Program, \$200,000, *Co-PI*
Project title: *KAIROS: Knowledge-guided Accurate Video Retrieval from Long-form Storytelling Events*

AWARDS & HONORS

- Top Paper Award, Political Communication Division, International Communication Association 2026
- Best Lightning Talk Award, 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2) 2025
- Top Paper Award, Computational Methods Division, International Communication Association 2025
- Top Student Paper Award, Political Communication Division, International Communication Association 2023

- Stanford Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI) Graduate Fellowship 2022–2023
- Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) Dissertation Fellowship 2022–2023
- Stanford Computational Social Science Fellowship 2020–2021
- Stanford Graduate Fellowship in Science & Engineering 2017–2021
- Stanford Asia Pacific Scholar Fellowship 2016
- Stanford Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies (FSI) Global Policy Fellowship 2016
- Stanford Silas Palmer Research Fellowship 2015
- Beijing Distinguished Graduate Student Award 2015
- People.cn Best Paper Award (First Prize) 2015
- TECO Green Tech Contest (Bronze Medalist) 2014
- Evergrande Comprehensive Scholarship 2014
- Hang Seng Bank Mainland Scholarship 2013
- Rural Investigation and Studies Award by China Institute for Rural Studies 2013

INVITED TALKS & SEMINARS

External Talks and Seminars

- University of California, Riverside, Department of Political Science Speaker Series Nov 2026 (scheduled)
- Linköping University, IAS International Roundtable on Computational Social Science Oct 2026 (scheduled)
- Stanford University, Summer Institute in Computational Social Science Aug 2026 (scheduled)
- Stanford University, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Jul 2026 (scheduled)
- University of Florida, Summer Institute in Computational Social Science June 2026
- Hoover Institution, Domestic and International Manifestations of Chinese Authoritarianism Conference May 2026
- Washington University in St. Louis, 13th Comparative Politics Annual Conference Apr 2026
- Hong Kong Baptist University, Department of Accountancy, Economics and Finance Speaker Series Mar 2026
- Peking University HSBC Business School, Seminar Series Dec 2025
- University of Zurich, Symposium on Computational Visual Media Research Aug 2025
- NYU-Shanghai, *Summer Institute in Computational Social Science* June 2025
- NYU Abu Dhabi, Politics and Technology in Non-Democratic Contexts Workshop May 2025
- New York University, Equity and the Societal Implications of Global Technologies Symposium Apr 2025
- Hong Kong Baptist University, Political Economy Seminars Mar 2025
- University of Michigan, Political Communication Working Group Feb 2025
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The C-Centre Communication Seminar Series Dec 2024
- University of California San Francisco, PRISM Health Symposium Dec 2024
- University of Washington, Department of Communication Nov 2024
- Political Science Speaker Series for Chinese Scholars Nov 2024
- University of Wisconsin–Madison, Local News and the Future of Democracy Conference Oct 2024
- New York University, Frontiers in Empirical Research on East Asia May 2024
- Ohio State University, School of Communication Apr 2024
- Duke Kunshan University, Center for the Study of Contemporary China Mar 2024
- University of Iowa, School of Journalism & Mass Communication Feb 2024
- University of Chicago, Computational Social Science Workshop Feb 2024
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Computational Methods Research Group Nov 2023

- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mass Communication Research Center Symposium Oct 2023
- Renmin University of China, Symposium on Multimodal Research Oct 2023
- UCLA, Department of Communication Jan 2023
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong, School of Journalism and Communication Dec 2022
- City University of Hong Kong, Department of Media and Communication Dec 2022
- Dartmouth College, Program in Quantitative Social Science Dec 2022
- UCSD, China Research Workshop Dec 2022
- University of Maryland, College of Information Studies Nov 2022
- University of San Francisco, Department of Economics Nov 2022
- National University of Singapore, Department of Communications and New Media Oct 2022
- Chinese Politics Research in Progress Workshop Apr 2022
- China Computational Social Science Forum Jan 2021
- United Nations University Institute on Computing and Society, Conversation Series July 2019

External Guest Lectures

- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Computational Social Science* Sep 2025
- University of Minnesota, *Summer Workshop on Computational Social Science* June 2025
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Social Media Analytics* Apr 2025, Apr 2024, Mar 2023, Mar 2022, Nov 2020
- Montana State University, *Chinese Politics & Policy* Apr 2025
- National University of Singapore, *Summer Institute in Computational Social Science* June 2024
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong, *Digital Research* April 2024
- North Dakota State University, *Advanced Issues in Communication* Oct 2023
- University of California, Davis, *Persuasive Technologies* Nov 2022
- NYU-Shanghai, *2022 Summer School in Applied Social Science Research Methods* Jul 2022
- University of San Francisco, *Natural Language Processing* Nov 2020
- Tsinghua University, *Comparative Journalism Studies* Nov 2020

Internal Talks and Presentations

- Northwestern University, 2026 Lambert ANN SONIC NICO Workshop May 2026
- Northwestern University, Phonatics Group Apr 2026
- Northwestern University, Statistical Computing Workshop Feb 2026
- Northwestern University, Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems Wednesday Seminar Nov 2024
- Northwestern University, Culture and Society Workshop Oct 2024
- Northwestern University, Chinese Political Economy Conference May 2024
- Northwestern University, Human-Computer Interaction + Design Center Apr 2024
- Northwestern University, Data Science Nights Oct 2023
- Stanford University, Stanford Center on China's Economy and Institutions May 2023
- Stanford University, Center for Work, Technology, & Organization Dec 2021
- Stanford University, Data Science Lab Feb 2020, Feb 2021

Internal Guest Lectures and Talks

- Department of Communication Studies, *CMN 110 Research Fundamentals* Mar 2026
- Department of Political Science, *Politics of China* Feb 2026
- Department of Computer Science, *Misinformation and Disinformation in the Age of AI* May 2024
- Kellogg School of Management, *Emerging Topics in Computational Social Science* Feb 2024

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- [67] **Lu, Y.**, Xin, H., Chu, A., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, September). *Audio as Data: Measuring Audio Categories and Objects in Political Communication*. Scheduled at 2026 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Boston, USA.
- [66] Gaw, F., **Lu, Y.**, & Nisbet, E. (2026, September). *Visual Logic: An Integrated Framework for Understanding Visual Content on Social Media*. Scheduled at 2026 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Boston, USA.
- [65] Han, R., Liu, L., **Lu, Y.**, & Shao, L. (2026, September). *How Digital Regulation in Democracies Can Unintentionally Benefit Autocracies*. Scheduled at 2026 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Boston, USA.
- [64] **Lu, Y.**, Xin, H., Chu, A., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, July). *Audio as Data: Measuring Audio Categories and Objects in Political Communication*. Scheduled at 12th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Burlington, Vermont.
- [63] Peng, Y., Lin, C., & **Lu, Y.** (2026, July). *Limited Gains in Visibility, Persistent Stereotypes: Gender Representation in U.S. Films (2000–2023)*. Scheduled at 12th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Burlington, Vermont.
- [62] Liu, X., **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Q., Qian S., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, July). *Seeing the Surreal: Mapping Surrealism in Photorealistic AI-Generated Images Using Large Language Models*. Scheduled at 12th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Burlington, Vermont.
- [61] Liu, X., Peng, Y., **Lu, Y.** (2026, July). *Mitigating Confounder Bias in Observational Studies of Visual Media Effects*. Poster Presentation Scheduled at 12th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Burlington, Vermont.
- [60] **Lu, Y.**, Xin, H., Chu, A., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, July). *Audio as Data: Computational Audio Analysis in Communication Research*. Scheduled at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology (PolMeth XLIII), East Lansing, MI.
- [59] Liu, X., Peng, Y., **Lu, Y.** (2026, July). *Mitigating Confounder Bias in Observational Studies of Visual Media Effects*. Poster Presentation Scheduled at the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology (PolMeth XLIII), East Lansing, MI.
- [58] **Lu, Y.**, Xin, H., Chu, A., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, June). *Audio as Data: Computational Audio Analysis in Communication Research*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- [57] **Lu, Y.**, Liu, X., & Zhou, C. (2026, June). *Recommending the State: How Social Media Algorithms Curate State Content in China*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- [56] Liu, X., **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Q., Qian S., Peng, Y., & Shen, C. (2026, June). *Seeing the Surreal: Mapping Surrealism in Photorealistic AI-Generated Images Using Large Language Models*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- [55] Khawar, S., **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Y., & Yeon, J., & Shen, C. (2026, June). *Visual Matters: Connecting Aesthetic Appeal and Production Quality of Photos, Infographics and Data Visualizations to Credibility of Social Media Posts*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- [54] Yeon, J., Peng, Y., **Lu, Y.**, Khawar, S., & Shen, C. (2026, June). *From “Just Jokes” To “Biased Truth”: How Politician-featured Memes Shape Perceptions Of Political (Mis)information*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.
[Top Paper Award, Political Communication Division]
- [53] Lin, C., Chen, Y., Chen, J., Shen, C., Peng, Y., & **Lu, Y.** (2026, June). *From Verification to Amplification: Auditing Reverse Image Search as Algorithmic Gatekeeping in Visual Misinformation Fact-checking*. Presented at 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.

- [52] Han, R., Liu, L., **Lu, Y.**, & Shao, L. (2026, April). *How Digital Regulation in Democracies Can Unintentionally Benefit Autocracies*. Presented at 83rd Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago, IL.
- [51] **Lu, Y.**, Liu, X., & Zhou, C. (2025, September). *Recommending the State: How Social Media Algorithms Curate State Content in China*. Presented at 2025 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Vancouver, Canada.
- [50] **Lu, Y.**, Liu, X., & Zhou, C. (2025, July). *Recommending the State: How Social Media Algorithms Curate State Content in China*. Presented at 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Norrköping, Sweden.
[**Best Lightning Talk Award**]
- [49] **Lu, Y.** (2025, July). *How Fans Engage with State Propaganda through Celebrity Mobilization*. Presented at 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Norrköping, Sweden.
- [48] DeButts, M., & **Lu, Y.** (2025, July). *Intimacy with limits: How short-form video propaganda embraces platform norms, but not for leaders*. Presented at 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Norrköping, Sweden.
- [47] Peng, Y., Qian, S., **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. (2025, July). *Large Language Model-Informed Feature Discovery Improves Prediction and Interpretation of Credibility Perceptions of Visual Content*. Presented at 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Norrköping, Sweden.
- [46] Lin, C., Chen, Y., Chen, J., Shen, C., Peng, Y., & **Lu, Y.** (2025, July). *Reinforcing, or Debunking? Auditing Google's Reverse Image Search in Visual Misinformation Fact-Checking*. Presented at 11th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Norrköping, Sweden.
- [45] **Lu, Y.** (2025, July). *How Fans Engage with State Propaganda through Celebrity Mobilization*. Presented at 28th International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress of Political Science, Seoul, South Korea.
- [44] **Lu, Y.** (2025, June). *How Fans Engage with State Propaganda through Celebrity Mobilization*. Presented at 75th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Denver, CO.
- [43] DeButts, M., & **Lu, Y.** (2025, June). *Intimacy with limits: How short-form video propaganda embraces platform norms, but not for leaders*. Presented at 75th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Denver, CO.
- [42] Peng, Y., Qian, S., **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. (2025, June). *Large Language Model-Informed Feature Discovery Improves Prediction and Interpretation of Credibility Perceptions of Visual Content*. Presented at 75th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Denver, CO.
[**Top Paper Award, Computational Methods Division**]
- [41] Dahlke, R., Tu, F., Wang, Y.C., **Lu, Y.**, Engeda, B.W. & Hancock, J. (2025, June). *Contextualizing Misinformation: A User-Centric Approach to Linguistic and Topical Patterns in News Consumption*. Presented at 75th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Denver, CO.
- [40] **Lu, Y.** (2024, September). *How Fans Engage with State Propaganda through Celebrity Mobilization*. Presented at 2024 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Philadelphia, PA.
- [39] Hanley, H., **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2024, July). *Across the Firewall: Foreign Media's Role in Shaping Chinese Social Media Narratives on the Russo-Ukrainian War*. Presented at 10th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Philadelphia, PA.
- [38] **Lu, Y.** (2024, June). *Performative Propaganda Engagement: How Celebrity Fandom Engages with State Propaganda in China*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.
- [37] Hanley, H., **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2024, June). *Narratives of Foreign Media Ecosystems in Chinese Social Media Discussions of the Russo-Ukrainian War*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.
- [36] Peng, Q., **Lu, Y.**, Qian, S., Peng, Y., Liu, X., & Shen, C. (2024, June). *Crafting Synthetic Realities: Examining Visual Realism and Misinformation Potential of Photorealistic AI-Generated Images*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.

- [35] Peng, Y., **Lu, Y.**, Liang, H., & Shen, C. (2024, June). *How Visual Media Mobilize Social Movements: Comparative Evidence from the Global South*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.
- [34] Divon, T., & **Lu, Y.** (2024, June). *Invisible States and Visible Strategies: Navigating Political Influence on TikTok and Douyin in Israel and China*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.
- [33] Jia, C., Kim, S., & **Lu, Y.** (2024, June). *Nudging Emotions via AI: Examining the Effect of Emotion-Interventions on Reducing Susceptibility to Text and Image Misinformation*. Presented at 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Gold Coast, Australia.
- [32] Hanley, H., **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2023, November). *Narratives of Foreign Media Ecosystems in Chinese Social Media Discussions of the Russo-Ukrainian War*. Presented at The New Directions in Analyzing Text as Data (TADA) 2023 meeting, Amherst, MA.
- [31] **Lu, Y.** (2023, September). *Performative Propaganda Engagement: How Celebrity Fandom Engages with State Propaganda in China*. Presented at 2023 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Los Angeles, CA.
- [30] **Lu, Y.**, & Peng, Y. (2023, September). *The Mobilizing Power of Visual Media Across Stages of Social Movements*. Presented at 2023 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Los Angeles, CA.
- [29] Pan, J., **Lu, Y.**, & Chen, A. (2023, September). *Narratives of the Ukraine War on Chinese Social Media*. Presented at 2023 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Los Angeles, CA.
- [28] Hanley, H., **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2023, September). *Narratives of Foreign Media Ecosystems in Chinese Social Media Discussions of the Russo-Ukrainian War*. Presented at 2023 Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS) conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- [27] **Lu, Y.**, & Peng, Y. (2023, July). *The Mobilizing Power of Visual Media Across Stages of Social Movements*. Presented at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology (PolMeth XL), Stanford, CA.
- [26] Hanley, H., **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2023, July). *Influence of foreign and domestic media ecosystems on Chinese social media*. Presented at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology (PolMeth XL), Stanford, CA.
- [25] **Lu, Y.**, & Peng, Y. (2023, May). *The Mobilizing Power of Visual Media Across Stages of Social Movements*. Presented at 73rd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Toronto, Canada. **[Top Student Paper Award, Political Communication Division]**
- [24] Chen, K., **Lu, Y.**, & Zou, S. (2023, May). *TikToking Vaccine Nationalism: Examining COVID-Vaccine-Themed Videos on Douyin through a Mixed-Method Analysis*. Presented at 73rd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Toronto, Canada.
- [23] Qian, S., **Lu, Y.**, Peng, Y., Shen, C., & Xu, H. (2023, May). *Convergence or Divergence? A Systematic Comparison of Visual Posts between Twitter and Instagram*. Presented at 73rd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Toronto, Canada.
- [22] **Lu, Y.**, Schaefer, J., Park, K., Joo, J., & Pan, J. (2023, March). *How Information Flows from the World to China*. Presented at International Studies Association (ISA) 64th Annual Convention, Montréal, Québec, Canada.
- [21] Chen, K., **Lu, Y.**, & Wang, Y. (2022, November). *Toward an Evidence-Driven Understanding of Digital Trace Research on China*. Presented at National Communication Association (NCA) 108th Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA.
- [20] **Lu, Y.**, Pan, J., Xu, X., & Xu, Y. (2022, September). *The Evolution of Propaganda in the Digital Age: Chinese Government Mobilization on Douyin*. Presented at 2022 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Montréal, Québec, Canada.
- [19] **Lu, Y.**, Schaefer, J., Park, K., Joo, J., & Pan, J. (2022, September). *How Information Flows from the World to China*. Presented at 2022 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

- [18] **Lu, Y.**, Pan, J., Xu, X., & Xu, Y. (2022, July). *The Evolution of Propaganda in the Digital Age: Chinese Government Mobilization on Douyin*. Presented at 8th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Chicago, IL.
- [17] **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. (2022, July). *Unpacking Multimodal Fact-Checking: Features and Engagement of Fact-Checking Videos on Chinese TikTok (Douyin)*. Presented at 8th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Chicago, IL.
- [16] Christin, A., & **Lu, Y.** (2022, July). *The Influencer Pay Gap: Platform Labor Meets Racial Capitalism*. Presented at Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (SASE) 34th Annual Meeting, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- [15] **Lu, Y.**, Pan, J., Xu, X., & Xu, Y. (2022, May). *The Evolution of Propaganda in the Digital Age: Chinese Government Mobilization on Douyin*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [14] **Lu, Y.**, Schaefer, J., Park, K., Joo, J., & Pan, J. (2022, May). *How Information Flows from the World to China*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [13] **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. (2022, May). *Unpacking Multimodal Fact-Checking: Features and Engagement of Fact-Checking Videos on Chinese TikTok (Douyin)*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [12] **Lu, Y.**, Liu, S., & Hancock, J. (2022, May). *Computational Approaches to Understanding Credibility in Video-Based Misinformation: An Analysis of COVID-19 Content on TikTok*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [11] Chen, A., **Lu, Y.**, Chen, K., & Ng, A. (2022, May). *Pandemic Nationalism: Use of Government Social Media for Political Information and Belief in COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories in China*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [10] Chen, K., Zou, S., & **Lu, Y.** (2022, May). *Thanks to My Country's Love!: Examining Nationalist Narratives in COVID Vaccine-Related Videos on Douyin Through Large-Scale Visual and Textual Analysis*. Presented at 72nd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Paris, France.
- [9] **Lu, Y.**, Pan, J., Xu, X., & Xu, Y. (2022, April). *The Evolution of Propaganda in the Digital Age*. Presented at 80th Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference (MPSA), Chicago, IL.
- [8] **Lu, Y.**, & Shen, C. (2021, September). *Unpacking Multimodal Fact-Checking: Features and Engagement of Fact-Checking Videos on Chinese TikTok*. Presented at The 3rd Multidisciplinary International Symposium on Disinformation in Open Online Media (MISDOOM), virtual.
- [7] **Lu, Y.**, Pan, J., & Xu, Y. (2021, September). *Public Sentiment on Chinese Social Media During the Emergence of COVID-19*. Presented at 2021 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting & Exhibition, virtual.
- [6] **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2021, August). *The Pervasive Presence of Chinese Government Content on Douyin Trending Videos*. Presented at 104th Annual Conference of Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), virtual.
- [5] **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2021, July). *The Pervasive Presence of Chinese Government Content on Douyin Trending Videos*. Presented at 7th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), virtual.
- [4] **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2020, September). *Capturing Clicks: How the Chinese Government Uses Clickbait to Compete for Visibility*. Presented at 2020 American Political Science Association (APSA) Meeting & Exhibition, virtual.
- [3] **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2020, August). *Capturing Clicks: How the Chinese Government Uses Clickbait to Compete for Visibility*. Presented at 6th International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), virtual.
- [2] **Lu, Y.**, & Pan, J. (2020, May). *Capturing Clicks: How the Chinese Government Uses Clickbait to Compete for Visibility*. Presented at 70th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), virtual.
- [1] **Lu, Y.**, Muise D., Pan, J., & Reeves, B. (2018, May). *Micro-Level Natural Interaction with Information Systems: An International Screenshot Comparison*. Presented at 68th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Prague, Czech Republic.

TEACHING

COMM_ST 101-1: Communication in Context: Introduction Undergraduate lecture (required course)	2026
COMM_ST 379 / POLI_SCI 390: Digital Propaganda and Repression Undergraduate lecture	2024, 2025
MTS 501: Introduction to Graduate Research Ph.D. seminar (required course)	2025
MTS 525: Computational Communication Research Ph.D. seminar	2024, 2025

Workshops

- Northwestern University, *MSC Professional Development Practicum: AI-Powered Social Media Analytics* Mar 2025
- Organizational Communication Mini Conference 2024, *OCMC Workshop: Unpacking Organizational Communication through Computational Multimodal Analysis* Sep 2024
- Northwestern University, *Summer Institute in Computational Social Science* August 2024

ADVISING

Ph.D. Advisor

- Xinyi Liu, Media, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (current)
- Haohang (Otto) Xin, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (current)

Dissertation Committee Member

- Fatima Gaw, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (current)
- Chloe Mortenson, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (current)
- Artur Baranov, Department of Political Science, Northwestern (current)
- Xi Cheng, Department of Sociology, Northwestern (current)
- Qiyao Peng, Department of Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara (current)
- Yuting He, Moody College of Communication, The University of Texas at Austin (current)
- Mowafak Allaham, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (defended)
- Rod Abhari, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern (Postdoc, University of Wisconsin-Madison)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Association-related Service:

International Communication Association (ICA):

- Panel Chair, “Addressing Methodological Challenges in LLM-enhanced Computational Communication” (2026)
- Panel Chair, “Innovations in Multimodal Data Analysis” (2026)
- Invited Panel Speaker, ICA@75 ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL SESSION: Generative AI: Transforming/Disrupting Communication Scholarship (2025)
- Panel Chair, “Political Propaganda” (2025)
- Panel Chair, “AI’s Role in Political Campaigns and Public Discourse” (2025)
- Organizer, “The Future of Computational Message Science: Theoretical Advances, Computational Frontiers, and Grand Societal Challenges” Pre-conference (2024)

- Panel Chair, “Image-as-Data Methods” (2024)
- Panel Discussant, “Leveraging Generative AI in Communication Research: Opportunities, Challenges, and Best Practices” (2024)
- Award Committee, Best Paper Award for the ICA Computational Methods Division (2024)
- Mentor, Communication and Technology Division Research Escalator (2024)
- Panel Chair, “Video-as-data in Computational Communication: Toward a Mixed-Method Pathway” (2023)
- Panel Chair, “Video-as-data in Computational Communication” (2022)
- Panel Chair, “Propaganda in the Computational Age: Disinformation and Beyond” (2020)

American Political Science Association (APSA):

- Co-organizer, APSA Pre-Conference in Political Communication (2026)
- Panel Chair, “Preprocessing, Annotation, and Interpretation in Computational Social Science” (2023)

ACM Web Science Conference:

- Workshop and Tutorial Co-Chair, ACM Web Science Conference 2027

International Political Science Association (IPSA) conference:

- Discussant, “Political Communication Across the Globe” (2025)

Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS) conference: Panel Chair, “Chinese Politics” (2023)

Text-as-Data (TADA) conference: Doctoral Consortium Mentor (2023)

Authoritarian Political Systems Group: Discussant (2025)

University and Departmental Service:

Department of Communication Studies:

- Master of Science in Communication Advisory Committee, Department of Communication Studies (2025-2026)
- Department Advisory Committee, Department of Communication Studies (2024-2025)
- Department Finance Committee, Department of Communication Studies (2024-2025)
- Co-Organizer, MTS Colloquium (2024-2025)
- Graduate Admissions Committee, Technology & Social Behavior PhD Program (2023-2024)

Northwestern University:

- Organizer, [2026 Lambert ANN SONIC NICO Workshop: Reimagining Human-Centered Computing Research in the Age of AI](#)
- Co-Organizer, [Center for Human-Computer Interaction + Design Symposium “Validating Generative AI-Based Social Sciences”](#)
- Co-Organizer, [2024 Summer Institute in Computational Social Science \(SICSS\)-Chicago](#)
- Faculty Advisor, [2024 Organizational Communication Mini Conference \(OCMC\)](#)

Stanford University:

- Department Liaison, Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (2019–2023)
- International Student Chair, Department of Communication (2020–2022)
- Alumni Mentor, Center for East Asian Studies (2022, 2021, 2019)
- Group Coordinator, Professor Jennifer Pan’s Research Group (2018–2020)
- Student Assistant, State of the Field in Chinese Politics Conference (2018)
- Conference Assistant, Digital Humanities Asia 2018 Summit (2017)

Founder, *COMputation Island*

- An online platform established from 2021 for computational communication research (CCR) on WeChat (12,000+ followers)
- Organized this platform to share cutting-edge research in computational social sciences, facilitate academic discussions, and promote resource exchanges to students and scholars in Asia and other regions.

- Wrote and edited articles to introduce computational social science studies, methods, and resources to students and scholars in communication, political science, and other disciplines.
- Led and managed the platform maintenance, editor recruitment, editorial work, and platform outreach.

Reviewer:

Peer-reviewed Journals:

- *Nature*
- *Journal of Communication*
- *American Political Science Review*
- *American Journal of Political Science*
- *Science Advances*
- *The Journal of Politics*
- *Political Communication*
- *Communication Research*
- *Human Communication Research*
- *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*
- *Communication Methods and Measures*
- *New Media & Society*
- *Political Analysis*
- *Comparative Political Studies*
- *Sociological Methods and Research*
- *Information, Communication & Society*
- *Computational Communication Research*
- *Social Media and Society*
- *International Journal of Communication*
- *PLoS ONE*
- *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*
- *Political Psychology*
- *China Quarterly*
- *Chinese Journal of Communication*
- *Political Research Quarterly*
- *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*
- *Visual Communication Quarterly*
- *Qualitative Sociology*
- *Asian Studies Review*
- *Communication & Society*

Conference Proceedings:

- *ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*

Grant Proposals: National Science Foundation

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

Social Media Lab, Stanford University Student Affiliate	Stanford, CA 2022–2023
Human Screenome Project, Stanford University Student Affiliate	Stanford, CA 2017–2023
Stanford Data Science Collaboratory, Stanford University Student Member	Stanford, CA 2019–2021
School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University Visiting Scholar	Beijing, China 2020–2021
Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute (JICA-RI) Global Policy Intern	Tokyo, Japan Jun–Sep, 2016
USC Annenberg Center for the Digital Future Research Intern	Los Angeles, CA Jun–Aug, 2014

SKILLS

- **Statistical Programming/Markup Languages:** R, Python, Stata, SPSS, L^AT_EX, SQL
- **Languages:** Mandarin (Native), English (Proficient), Korean (Intermediate), Japanese (Elementary)
- **Applications:** Tableau, Adobe Creative Suite, Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro
- **Music:** Guzheng (Level 8 Certificate), Band Performing