Michael Thompson-Brusstar

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Trinity College
Hartford, CT

✉ michael.thompsonbrusstar@trincoll.edu ⊕ mthompsonbrusstar.com | *Updated:* June 5, 2025

Academic Appointments

Trinity College, Assistant Professor of Political Science   2025-Present

University of California - San Diego, Postdoctoral Fellow   2023-2025

    School of Global Policy and Strategy, 21st Century China Center

Education

University of Michigan, Political Science Ph.D.   2016-2023

    Dissertation: *Building a Supervision Science: Bureaucratic Control in China from Mao to Xi*
    Fields: Comparative Politics (with honors), Political Methodology

Santa Fe Institute, Graduate Workshop in Computational Social Science   2018

University of Michigan, M.A. Asian Studies: China   2015

Juniata College, B.A. International Politics   2012

    Northeast University of Finance and Economics, Dalian, China   Fall 2010 - Summer 2011

Interests

politics of China and Taiwan; computational social science; political economy of development; global policy learning and diffusion

Fieldwork

People's University of China, Beijing, China	Summer 2024
Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Workshop on Authoritarianism	Summer 2023
Fulbright - Taiwan, Fulbright Research Fellowship, Tunghai University	Winter-Summer 2021
Universities Service Centre, Chinese University of Hong Kong	Summer 2019

Peer-Reviewed Publications

M. Thompson-Brusstar, 2022. "Supreme supervisor? The historical development of the People's Procuracy in the People's Republic of China," *China Law and Society Review* 6(1), 1–35.

Ding, I. and **M. Thompson-Brusstar**, 2021. "The Anti-Bureaucratic Ghost in the Bureaucratic Machine." *The China Quarterly* 248(S1), 116-140.

Hanson, M. and **M. Thompson-Brusstar**, 2021. "Building Socialist Legality: Political Order and Institutional Development in the Soviet and Chinese Procuracies", *Europe-Asia Studies* 73:1, 157-177.

Working Papers and Projects

"Information and Autonomy in Xi's China: The Case of Central Inspection Teams."

"The Rise and Fall of Bureaucratic Rationality in Mao's China."

"Learning by Going Out: Sub-national Diplomacy and Bureaucratic Learning in Reform China," with James Gethyn Evans.

"Validating Automatic Text Digitization: How to Ensure Quality of Automatically Digitized Text Data from OCR and Large Language Models," with Blake Miller.

"Hoover's Long Arm: Bureaucratic Control and Balancing in Martial Law Taiwan."

Conference and Invited Presentations

1. "The Rise and Fall of Bureaucratic Rationality in Mao's China," *APSA 2024 Asian Political History Miniconference.*

2. "Building Bureaucratic Control in the PRC's First Decade," *UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy, China Research Workshop, May 10, 2024.*

3. "Library and Archives Summer Workshop: Authoritarianism and Democratic Breakdown," *Hoover Institution, 2023.*

4. "Learning by Going Out: Sub-national Diplomacy and Bureaucratic Learning in Reform China," with James Gethyn Evans, *Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Annual Conference, 2023; Association for Asian Studies 2024.*

5. "Building Bureaucratic Control in Mao's China," *Western Political Science Association- Undemocratic Politics Mini Conference, 2023.*

6. "Information and Autonomy in Xi's China: The Case of Central Inspection Teams," *UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy China Research Workshop, April 29, 2022.*

7. "Building Socialist Legality: Political Order and Institutional Development in the Soviet and Chinese Procuracies",*Ash Fellows Seminar Series, Harvard University. May 14, 2021.*

8. "Discipline and Punishment in the Chinese Communist Party," *presented at "The CCP at 100", hosted by CSIS and COSi (CIRA), November 15-16, 2021.*

9. "Validating Automatic Text Digitization: Ensuring Quality of Text Analysis with Automatically Digitized Text Data," with Blake Miller, *Michigan Institute for Data Science 2020 Symposium; Text as Data Conference 2022; MPSA 2024; APSA 2024.*

10. "Designing Anti-corruption: Evidence from China," *MPSA 2020 (canceled due to COVID19).*

11. "Anti-Corruption and Prosecutor Transparency in China," *presented at APSA 2018.*

12. "Anticipating Inspections and Anti-Corruption Outcomes in China," *presented at APSA 2018.*

13. "Authoritarian Courts and Urban Bias: Dispute Resolution Organs in the PRC," *presented at MPSA 2017.*

Non-peer Reviewed Writing

Book Review, 'Manipulating Globalization: The Influence of Bureaucrats on Business in China' *H-Diplo*, February 2019.

Contributor, "Xi Won't Go," *ChinaFile*, February 2018.

Teaching Experience

UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy, as Instructor of Record

Sources and Methods for the Study of Chinese Politics	Fall 2024
Bureaucratic Politics in China	Winter 2024 (Scheduled)
Chinese Foreign Policy	Spring 2024
Chinese Politics	Fall 2023

University of Michigan Department of Political Science

As Instructor of Record:

The Use of Social Science Computer Programs (graduate)	Winter 2022

As Graduate Student Instructor:

Research Design *(with Prof. Nancy Burns)*	Fall 2022
Senior Honors Thesis Seminar *(with Prof. Brian Min)*	Fall 2020
Introduction to Comparative Politics *(with Prof. Mary Gallagher)*	Fall 2016, 2018

As Module Instructor:

University of Michigan Big Data Camp, *(canceled due to COVID19)*	Summer 2020

Additional Research Experience

As Graduate Student Research Assistant:

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for Political Research: Historical Institutions Lab (Prof. Noah Nathan, Prof. Edgar Franco Vivanco):

Religious Regulation in Central Asia (Prof. Pauline Jones);

China's Gilded Age (Prof. Yuen Yuen Ang)

Authoritarian Legality in China: Law, Workers, and the State (Prof. Mary Gallagher)

Awards and Grants

Hoover Institution Library and Archives Summer Workshop	2023
Fulbright Student Fellowship, Taiwan	2021
Fulbright Student Fellowship, China (canceled by Executive Order 13936 3(i))	2020-2021
Institute for Humane Studies *Graduate Student Fellowship*	Fall 2019, 2020
Graduate Student Research Grant *Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, University of Michigan*	Fall 2019
Precandidacy Research Grant *Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan*	Summer 2018

Zimmerman Award
Political Science Department, University of Michigan   Winter 2018

Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship
University of Michigan   2013-2014, Summer 2014

Service

U-M Community of Queer Political Scientists, *coordinator*   2018-2022

U-M China Interdisciplinary Workshop, *student coordinator*   2016-2018

Reviewer:
The China Quarterly; Governance; Journal of Law, Economics, and Organizations; British Journal of Political Science; Political Science Research and Methods

Languages and Computing

Mandarin Chinese (professional fluency), R , python , LaTeX