



Seminar

“Curriculum and Ideology”

(in English)



Professor Y. Jane ZHANG

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Hong Kong University of Science and Technology**

Date: 29 October 2015 (Thursday)

Time: 11:00am – 12:30pm

Venue: WYL314, Dorothy Y. L. Wong Building

Biography:

Assistant Professor at the Division of Social Science at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Ph.D., U.C. Berkeley (Economics), B.A., Stanford University (Economics). I use lab-in-the-field and natural experiments to study preferences that relate to economic or political outcomes, particularly in China. Research I have worked on or am working on include examining the impact of textbook content on beliefs, values, and preferences, and estimating the causal impact of a regular high school education for the marginal student. I have several research projects related to gender differences in competitive preferences, including the effect of institutions, the effect of child-benefitting incentives, and the external validity of the competition game.

Abstract:

We study the causal effect of school curricula on students' political attitudes, exploiting a major textbook reform in China between 2004 and 2010. The sharp, staggered introduction of the new curriculum across provinces allows us to identify its causal effects. We examine government documents articulating desired consequences of the reform, and identify changes in textbooks reflecting these aims. A survey we conducted reveals that the reform was often successful in shaping attitudes, while evidence on behavior is mixed. Studying the new curriculum led to more positive views of China's governance, changed views on democracy, and increased skepticism toward free markets.