Pengju Zhang

School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)
Rutgers University, Newark
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Newark, New Jersey 07102

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Public Administration and International Affairs 2016
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University
Fields: Public Finance & Development Policy | Advisor: John Yinger[1]

Graduate Scholar Exchange Program 2012
Department of Policy Analysis and Management, Cornell University

Master of Public Affairs 2011
O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University, Bloomington

B.A., Political Science 2008
School of Government, Sun Yat-sen University

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENTS

Rutgers University, Newark

Associate Professor (tenured), SPAA 2023-Present

Assistant Professor, SPAA 2016-2023

Director of International Programs, SPAA 2021-2026

Syracuse University, Graduate Associate 2011-2016

Indiana University, Teaching Assistant 2010

Peking University-Lincoln Institute Center for Urban Development and Land Policy 2010

HONORS & AWARDS

Samuels Public Affairs Fellowship, Howard J. Samuels State and City Policy Center 2025

Faculty Service Award, SPAA of Rutgers University 2025

Academic Excellence Award, New Jersey Chapter of ASPA 2024

Best Paper Award, Midwest Public Affairs Conference 2022

China Program International Fellowship, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy 2021-2022

All-University Doctoral Prize, Syracuse University 2017

Doctoral Prize for Best Dissertation, The Maxwell School of Syracuse University 2017

Best Student Paper Award, China-America Association for Public Affairs 2016

C. Lowell Harriss Dissertation Fellowship, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy 2015

Dissertation Fellowship, The Maxwell School of Syracuse University 2015

Graduate Associate Award, The Maxwell School of Syracuse University 2011-2014

[1] Bill Duncombe was one of my two co-mentors before he passed away in May 2013.

Starr Fellowship, Indiana University, Bloomington 2010

National Scholarship, Ministry of Education of China 2008

First Prize Scholarship, Sun Yat-sen University, China 2006, 2007

EDITORIAL POSITIONS

- Editor, *Local Government Studies* (2026 - present)
- Associate editor, *Public Performance & Management Review* (2022 - present)
- Guest co-editor, *Municipal Finance Journal* (2022)

  Special Issue: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Municipal Taxes

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Public Finance and Budgeting Local Government Studies Education Finance and Policy

WORKING PAPERS (†Student at the time of submission)

1. **Pengju Zhang,** Jinah Yoo† and Carolyn Abott. The Bankruptcy of Special Districts in the United States. (R&R)
2. Ying Liu† and **Pengju Zhang**. Do Female Leaders Make More Compassionate Public Policies? (R&R)
3. Carolyn Abott and **Pengju Zhang**. Local Electoral Rules and Government Size (R&R).
4. **Pengju Zhang,** Sharon Kioko, and Claire McMorris. Is Capital Funding Fair to Disadvantageous Public Schools? Evidence from Washington. (R&R)
5. Qiang Ren, Lei Shao, Yinghao Sun†, and **Pengju Zhang.** Tax Shift, Land Lift: VAT Reform and the Transformation of Local Land Finance in China. (Under Review).
6. Tomas Soto Jara† and **Pengju Zhang**. Electoral Cycles and Municipal Fines: Evidence from Chili. (Draft available)
7. Stephanie Newbold, David Guo, and **Pengju Zhang**. Democracy in Crisis: Running The U.S. Federal Government Without a Federal Budget. (Draft available)

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES (†Student at the time of submission)

1. Zimeng Ye† and **Pengju Zhang**. 2026. Unveiling Sanctions on Local Government Officials: Evidence from China. *American Review of Public Administration, 56(3):232-253.*
2. Nguyen-Hoang, Phuong, **Pengju Zhang** and Bart Hildreth. 2024. Which Survey Report to Use? A Revisit to the 1934 Survey of Public Finance Scholars. *National Tax Journal*, 77 (3): 533-564.
3. **Zhang, Pengju** and David Guo. 2024. Navigating Local Fiscal Sustainability: Topics and Challenges. *Local Government Studies*, 50 (6), 1094-1104.

   ***50th Anniversary Special Issue: "Past, Present and Future of Local Government Studies"
4. Hayes, Michael, Julia Sass Rubin and **Pengju Zhang**. (2023) The State Takeover of the Camden City District Schools and Students' Academic Performance: A Descriptive Analysis. *Journal of Urban Affairs.*

   ***Coverage in Insider NJ, Chalkbeat, NJ Spotlight News

5. **Zhang, Pengju** and Phuong Nguyen-Hoang. 2023. Home Rule and Municipal Revenue Stability: New Evidence from Texas. *Public Budgeting and Finance* 43(1):38-60.
6. Li, Huiping, David Guo, and **Pengju Zhang**. 2023. The Fiscal Impact of County-Urban District Conversion in China. *Urban Affairs Review* 59(3): 892–917.
7. **Zhang, Pengju.** 2023. The Fiscal and Economic Impacts of Municipal Dissolution: Evidence from New York. *International Tax and Public Finance* 30(4): 948–1001.
8. **Zhang**, **Pengju,** Phuong Nguyen-Hoang and Na Chen. 2022. The Impact of Home Rule on Municipal Boundary and Fiscal Expansion: Evidence from Texas. *Journal of Regional Science*.

   ***Best Paper Award, Midwest Public Affairs Conference, 2022

   ***Top Downloaded Article, 2022
9. Nguyen-Hoang, Phuong and **Pengju Zhang**. 2022. Cap and Gap: The Fiscal Effects of Property Tax Levy Limits in New York. *Education Finance and Policy* 17(1): 1–26.

   ***Lead Article
10. **Zhang, Pengju** and Ling Zhu. 2021. Does the ACA Medicaid Expansion Affect Hospitals' Financial Performance? *Public Finance Review* 49(6): 779–814.
11. **Zhang, Pengju** and Yilin Hou. 2020. The Impact of Tax and Expenditure Limitations on User Fees and Charges in Local Government Finance: Evidence from New England. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 50(1): 81-108.
12. Lu, Jiahuan, Jongmin Shon and **Pengju Zhang**. 2020. Understanding the Dissolution of Nonprofit Organizations: A Financial Management Perspective. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 49(1): 29-52.
13. **Zhang, Pengju** and Marc Holzer. 2020. Do Small Local Governments Fare Well? A Survey of Villages in New York. *American Review of Public Administration* 50(1): 77-91.
14. Toossi, Saied[†] and **Pengju Zhang**. 2019. Video Gambling Adoption and Tax Revenues: Evidence from Illinois. *Public Budgeting and Finance* 39(1): 67-88.

    ***Top Downloaded Paper, 2018-2019
15. **Zhang, Pengju**. 2019. The Non-Randomness of Municipal Government Reorganization: Evidence from Village Dissolution in New York. *American Review of Public Administration* 49(8): 914-930.
16. Kioko, Sharon and **Pengju Zhang**. 2019. Impacts of Tax and Expenditure Limits on Local Government Use of Tax-supported Debt. *Public Finance Review* 47 (2): 409-432.
17. **Zhang, Pengju**. (2018). The Unintended Impact of Tax and Expenditure Limitations on the Use of Special Districts: Politics of Circumvention. *Economics of Governance* 19(1): 21-50.
18. Duncombe, William D., John Yinger, and **Pengju Zhang**. 2016. How Does School District Consolidation Affect Property Values: A Case Study of New York. *Public Finance Review* 44 (1): 52-79.
19. He, Yanling, Xiaofeng Zhou[†], and **Pengju Zhang**. 2009. Non-Cooperation: A Case Study of Chinese Grass-Root Organizations' Survival Strategies. *Journal of Public Management* (in Chinese) 6(1): 48-54.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS (PUBLISHED REPORTS, POLICY BRIEFS, ETC.)

1. **Pengju Zhang** and Michael Hayes. June 2025. Analyzing the Use and Equity of ARPA Funds in NJ Local Governments and Beyond. *New Jersey State Policy Lab.*
2. Nguyen-Hoang, Phuong and **Pengju Zhang**. 2023. Introduction to the Special Issue on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Municipal Taxes, Part Two. *Municipal Finance Journal*, 44(2):1-2.
3. Nguyen-Hoang, Phuong and **Pengju Zhang**. 2023. Introduction to the Special Issue on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Municipal Taxes, Part One. *Municipal Finance Journal*, 44(1):1-2.
4. Hayes, Michael and **Pengju Zhang**. February 2022. Vacant Commercial Property in New Jersey: Causes and Solutions. *New Jersey State Policy Lab.*
5. Hayes, Michael, **Pengju Zhang**, and Julia Sass Rubin. May 2021. State Takeover of Camden School Did Not Improve Students' Academic Performance. *New Jersey Policy Perspective*.

WORK IN PROGRESS

1. Understanding Land-Sales Revenue in China's Local Public Finance: A Quarter-Century Analysis (with Qiang Ren)
2. Mapping Responses to Local Government Fiscal Stress (with Carolyn Abott & Akheil Singla,)
3. County Fiscal Adjustment in the United States: A Half-Century Analysis (with Timothy Little and Alisha Sukhram)
4. Cap, Gap, and Adapt: A Decade of School District Spending Under New York's Property Tax Cap, 2003–2024 (with Timothy Little)
5. The Impact of Electric Vehicles on State Gasoline Tax Revenue in the United States (with Jingni Zhang)
6. Does New Jersey's Property Tax Cap Make Fiscal "Cents" and Educational Sense? (with Julia Sass Rubin and Bruce Baker)
7. Medicaid Expansion and an Escalation of Hospitals' Arms Race. (with Ling Zhu and Yusun Kim)
8. Medicaid Expansion, Networking Strategies, and Hospital Closures. (with Ling Zhu and Yusun Kim)
9. Local Fiscal Pressure, Traffic Fines and Policing Behaviors (with Kelsey Shoub and Miyeon Song)

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Future Leaders of Schools of Public Service, Volker Alliance, 2024-2025

GRANTS

New Jersey Policy Lab

- Principal Investigator with Michael Hayes, $22,177 2024
  Project: "The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and
  Local Governments in New Jersey: An Equity Perspective"
- Co-principal Investigator with Michael Hayes, $15,000 2021-2022
  Project: "Vacant Commercial Property in New Jersey: Causes and Solutions"

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

- China Program International Fellowship (PI), $35,000 2021-2022
  - Co-PIs: David Guo and Huiping Li
  - Project: "Is It a Win-win Situation for Local Governments and Citizens?
    -The Impact of County-Urban District Conversion in China"
- C. Lowell Harriss Dissertation Fellowship, $10,000 2015

Rutgers University-Newark

- Junior Faculty COVID Grant, $3,000 2021-2022
- SPAA Faculty Research Grant
  - $4,920 (2018)
  - $4,000 (2017)
  - $3,534 (2016)

The Maxwell School of Syracuse University

- Dissertation Fellowship, $22,000 2015
- Summer Research Grant
  - $1,750 (2015)
  - $1,200 (2014)
  - $1,535 (2013)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Rutgers University, Newark Fall 2016-Present

1. Public Budgeting and Finance - PhD Core Course (Instructor)
2. Quantitative Methods II - Ph.D. Seminar (Guest Speaker)
3. Economic for Public Administration - MPA Core Course (Instructor)
4. Public Budgeting Systems - MPA Core Course (Instructor)
5. Public Finance and Public Policy - MPA Elective Course (Instructor)
6. Public Policy Process - MPA Elective Course (Instructor)
7. Government Revenue Systems - MPA Elective Course (Instructor)
8. Research in Public Administration - MPA Elective Course (Instructor)

Syracuse University

1. Quantitative Analysis: Program Evaluation - MPA Core Course Spring 2016
   Teaching Assistant

2. Introduction to Statistics - MPA Core Course — Fall 2015
   Teaching Assistant
3. Financial Management in State and Local Government - MPA Course — Fall 2014
   Guest Lecturer and Teaching Assistant
4. Public Budgeting - MPA Core Course — Summer 2012/2014
   Teaching Assistant
5. Managerial Economics - MPA Core Course — Fall 2013
   Teaching Assistant

Indiana University, Bloomington

1. Revenue Theory and Administration - MPA Course — Fall 2010
   Teaching Assistant
2. Statistical Techniques- Undergraduate Course — Spring 2010
   Teaching Assistant

INVITED LECTURES & SEMINARS

Syracuse University
- Budgeting Mechanisms Workshop Series, 03/03/2026
  Discussant on "The Political Timing of Tax Policy: Evidence from U.S. States"

Florida International University
- Ph.D. Seminar: Electoral Cycles and Municipal Fines. 02/18/2026

Rutgers University, Newark - Department of Economics
- Keith Banks Seminar Series: Tax Shift, Land Lift: VAT Reform and the Transformation of Local Land Finance in China.10/29/2025

Rutgers University (School of Business - Newark - New Brunswick)
- Research Conference: Governmental Accounting Research Conference. 09/26/2025

China Agriculture University
- Research Seminar: Navigating Local Fiscal Sustainability: Topics and Challenges. 06/20/2025

Syracuse University
- Ph.D. Seminar: Local Electoral Rules and Government Size, 10/05/2023

Zhejiang University - China-American Association for Public Affairs (CAAPA)
- Summer Methods Workshop: Quasi-Experimental Methods, 07/2022; 07/2023

Chongqing University, Chongqing, China
- Seminar: The Impacts of Home Rule on Municipal Boundary and Fiscal Expansion：Evidence from Texas, 03/29/2022

Wichita State University
- Workshop: "Building Academic-Practice Partnerships in Public Finance", 03/31/2023

New Jersey Governor's Office
- Research Presentation to Deputy Chief Policy Advisor and other staff members at the N.J. Governor's Office: "Vacant Commercial Property in New Jersey: Causes and Solutions", 01/02/2022

Peking University, Beijing, China
- Seminar Discussant: The Impact of State intervention on School District Fiscal Performance, 11/13/2021

Nanjing University, Nanjing, China
- Method Workshop: Difference-in-Differences: Nuts and Bolts, 7/8/2021

Fudan University, Shanghai, China
- Public Finance Seminar: "Cap and Gap: The Fiscal Effects of Property Tax Levy Limits in New York", 7/28/2020

Shandong University, Qingdao, China
- Seminar: Writing Empirical Articles: Challenges and Strategies, 07/07/2023
- Seminar: Difference-in-Differences & Synthetic Control Model, 6/12/2020
- Lecture: Taxes and User Fees in Local Government Finance, 7/1/2019

Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China
- Dicui Lecture Series: Understanding the Bankruptcy of Local Governments.6/20/2023
- Seminar: Fiscal Federalism, 10/29/2020
- Seminar: Property Tax in the U.S., 5/8/2019
- Seminar: Difference-in-Differences & Synthetic Control Model. 12/11/2017

Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China
- Seminar: Understanding Local Government Restructure: Theories and Practices, 7/2023
- Seminar: Regression Discontinuity Design, 6/8/2022
- Seminar: Difference-in-Differences & Synthetic Control Model, 6/9/2020
- Lecture: The Rapid Growth of Special Districts in the U.S., 7/4/2018

Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing, China
- Ph.D. Seminar: Public Finance and Policy Analysis, 6/4/2018 – 6/14/2018

Georgia State University
- Public Finance and the New Economy Conference, April 26, 2018

Rutgers University - New Brunswick, New Jersey
- Yunnan Provincial Department of Finance Official - Fall Program
  10/16/2017 - 10/19/2017
  Topic 1: "Government Budget: Federal, State and Local"
  Topic 2: "Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations in the U.S."
  Topic 3: "Public Revenue and Property Tax in the U.S."

New York University
- Wagner School, Summer Workshop for Northeastern ABFM Scholars, 05/26/2017

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Are Women More Compassionate Policy Makers? Evidence from New York"
- Association for Public Policy and Management, Maryland, Nov. 2024
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Denver, CO, Oct. 2023

"Unveiling Sanctions on Local Government Officials: Evidence from China"
- Association for Public Policy and Management, Maryland, Nov. 2024 (expected)

"The Bankruptcy of Special Districts: An Exploratory Study"
- Public Finance and Budgeting Northeastern Workshop, Rutgers University, May 2024
- American Society for Public Administration, Twin Cities, MN, April 2024

- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Denver, CO, Oct. 2023
- Public Management Research Conference, Utrecht, Netherlands, June, 2023

"The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Municipal Finances: A National Perspective"
- New Jersey League of Municipalities Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, Nov. 2023

"How Does Policy Framing Affect Voters' Fiscal Behaviors? An Experimental Study"
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Miami, FL, Sep. 2022

"Local Electoral Rules and Government Size: Evidence from California"
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Miami, FL, Sep. 2022

"Does the ACA Medicaid Expansion Affect Hospitals' Financial Performance?"
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Washington, D.C. Oct. 2021

"Home Rule and Municipal Fiscal Performance: New Evidence for A Perennial Question"
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Washington, D.C. Oct. 2021

"Cap and Gap: The Fiscal Effects of Property Tax Levy Limits in New York"
- Association for Public Policy and Management, Denver, CO, Nov. 2019
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Washington, D.C. Oct. 2019

"The Effects of Property Tax Caps on Educational Inputs: The Case of New York."
- Association for Education Finance and Policy, Kansas City, Missouri. March 2019.

"The Non-Randomness of Municipal Government Reorganization: Evidence from Village Dissolution in New York."
- American Society for Public Administration, Washington D.C. March 2019

"Does State Takeover of School District Make a Difference?"
- Association for Education Finance and Policy, Kansas City, Missouri. March 2019.
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Denver, CO, Oct. 2018 (panel organizer and chair)

"From Fiscal Stress to Organizational Decline: What's Happening to Village Governments in New York State?"
- American Society for Public Administration, Denver, CO, March 2018

"Tax and Expenditure Limitations and User Charges – Explaining Paradigm Shifts in Local Public Finance"
- European Public Choice Society Conference, Rome, Italy. April 2018.
- Public Choice Society Conference. Charleston, SC, March 2018
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Seattle, Washington, Oct. 2016

"Determinants of Video Gaming Terminal Revenue in Illinois"
- Association for Public Policy and Management, Chicago, Illinois, Fall 2017
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Washington, D.C. Oct. 2017 (poster)

"Access Gap in New York State"
- Association of Education Finance and Policy, Denver, CO, March 2016 (poster)

"The Unintended Impact of Tax and Expenditure Limitations on The Use of Special Districts: Politics of Circumvention"

- National Tax Association, Boston, MA, Nov. 2015

"How Does the Change of Local Government Structure Affect Property Values? A Case Study of Village Dissolution in Upstate New York"

- Public Finance and the New Economy Conference, Georgia State University, April 26, 2018
- Association for Public Policy and Management, Miami, Florida, Nov. 2015 (panel organizer and chair)
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Washington, D.C. Oct. 2015 (discussant)

"Impacts of Tax and Expenditure Limits (TELs) on Local Government Debt Burdens"

- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, Grand Rapids, MI, Oct. 2014

"How Does School District Consolidation Affect Property Values?"

- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management, New York City, NY Oct. 2012

"Local Government Innovations in China."

- Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2010

SERVICE

Rutgers University-Newark

- Search Committee for Director of Athletics and Recreation. 2026
- Institute for Data, Research and Innovation Science (IDRIS)

  Internal Advisory Board Member, 2024 -

School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark

- Director of International Programs, 2021 -
- MPA Program Committee, 2022 -
- Winter Training Program Coordinator, January 2026
- Faculty Search Committee, 2025
- Faculty Search Committee Chair, 2024
- Co-Director of International Programs, 2018-2020
- NTT reappointment committee, 2020 -
- Research Committee, 2021 - 2022
- International Program Committee, 2017-
- Undergraduate Program Committee 2016 - 2018
- Teaching Evaluation Committee, 2018 -

Member of Ph.D. Dissertation Committee

- Prakash Kandel (2026)
  Chair: Michael Hayes
  Department of Public Policy & Administration, Rutgers University-Camden
- Ying Liu (2026)
  Chair: Norma Riccucci
  School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark
- Jinah Yoo (2026)
  Chair: Gregg G. Van Ryzin
  School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark
- Ajay Srikanth (2022)
  Chair: Bruce Baker
  Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University-New Brunswick
- Olugbenga Sonola (2018)
  Chair: Cleopatra Charles
  School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark

Other Editorial Services

- Editorial board member, *Local Government Studies* (2022-2026)
- Manuscript Reviewer:
  - *Applied Economic Letters*
  - *American Review of Public Administration*
  - *Economics of Governance*
  - *IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems*
  - *International Public Management Journal*
  - *Journal of Chinese Governance*
  - *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*
  - *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*
  - *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management,*
  - *Local Government Studies*
  - *Public Administration Review*
  - *Public Budgeting and Finance*
  - *Public Finance Review*
  - *Public Finance Management*
  - *Public Performance & Management Review*
  - *Public Personnel Management*
  - *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*
  - *Urban Affairs Review*
  - *Urban Governance*

China-America Association for Public Affairs

- President (elected), 2026 – present
- Treasurer, 2022 - 2023
- Board Member (elected), 2021 - 2023
- Best Article Award Selection Committee member, 2021, 2024

- Board Member Election Committee member, 2022

American Society for Public Administration

- Section on Chinese Public Administration (SCPA)
  - Section Secretary (appointed), 2018 – 2020
  - SCPA Board Election Committee member, 2022
- Chinese Public Administration Review
  - Best Article Award Selection Committee member, 2019

Public Finance and Budgeting Northeastern Workshop

- Workshop co-organizer, Howard J. Samuels State and City Policy Center, Baruch College, 2025
- Workshop co-organizer, SPAA of Rutgers University, 2024
- Workshop organizer, SPAA of Rutgers University, 2020

Research Tour by Local Government Officials from South Africa (co-hosted with **ICMA)**

- Organizer and instructor, 2024

Education Reform, Communities, and Social Justice: Exploring the Intersections

- Conference Organizing Committee, 2022

Memberships & Affiliations

- American Society for Public Administration
- Association for Budgeting and Financial Management
- National Tax Association
- Association for Public Policy and Management
- Association for Education Finance and Policy