

# RUO-FAN LIU

Curriculum Vitae  
May 2025

Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center  
Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies  
Stanford University

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## ACADEMIC POSITION

2026 Aug      Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, National Chengchi University.  
2024-2026      Postdoctoral Fellow, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Freeman Spogli  
Institute for International Studies, Stanford University.

## EDUCATION

Ph.D.      Department of Sociology (Minor in Education Policy Studies), University of  
Wisconsin-Madison, 2024  
Dissertation: When Ladders Move: How Social Classes Navigate Uncertainty to Gain an Edge  
in Taiwan's Post-Admissions Era  
M.A.      Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2017  
B.A.      Department of Sociology, National Taiwan University, 2008

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sociology of Education, Social Stratification, Culture and Inequality, Organization, Ethnography and Mixed  
Methods, Transnational and Comparative Sociology, East Asia

## PUBLICATIONS

### JOURNAL ARTICLES

Forthcoming      Out with the Old, In with the New: The Meaning of Merit in Taiwan's Holistic Admissions  
Reforms, *The Journal of Asian Studies*.  
2022      [Hybrid Ethnography: Access, Positioning, and Data Assembly](#). *Ethnography*, (Online First, top  
download among the monthly issue).  
2020      [Pathways to College Admissions: Student Strategies and Class Variations in Activating  
Cultural Knowledge in Taiwan](#), *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 31:3, 284-304

### BOOK

2015 *Let the Timber Creek: An Alternative School's Utopia for Coming Generations*. New Taipei City, Taiwan: Acropolis. (See [Book Content](#) in English Translation)

- Best non-fiction book, *China Times Open Book Award*.
- Best Ethnographic Master Thesis: Taiwanese Sociology Association, Taiwanese Alternative Education Association, Taiwanese Critical Social Studies Association

#### UNDER REVIEW WITH ANONYMIZED TITLE

A Paper on Digitalization of Credentials (*Revise & Resubmit*)

A Paper on College Information and Students' College Plans.

A Paper on Status Competition and Organizational Strategies with Hsing-Cheng Chen and Hsuan-Wei Wayne Lee.

A Paper on Temporal Exclusion and First-Generation Students' Pathways with Elizabeth Lee and Janel Benson.

A Paper on Transnational Pipeline and How Migrants Institutionalize Cross-Border Exchanges with Minyoung An, and Gi-Wook Shin

#### WORK IN PROGRESS

"Managing Contingency of Privilege Transfer." (In Prep to *American Sociological Review*)

- Best Graduate Student Paper, East Asia SIG, Comparative Educational and International Society.
- Third-place Graduate Student Paper Award, Midwest Sociological Society.

Study Up Transnationally: Code-Switching and Positionalities across Borders with Gi-Wook Shin (In Prep to *Sociological Research & Methods*)

#### BOOK MANUSCRIPT

*When Ladders Move: How Social Classes Navigate Uncertainty to Gain an Edge in Taiwan's Post-Admissions Era* (In Prep)

#### RESEARCH LAB

2024-2026 Project Investigator, Stanford Next Asia Policy Lab, Project Title: *Invisible Role of Nations in the US Academic Field*, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Freeman Spogli Institution, Stanford University.

2022-2024 Student Project Investigator, College Admissions Lab, Project Title: *Revisiting the Shape of Sieves: How Universities Screen and Why Variation Matters*, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin at Madison.

## **FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND HONORS**

|           |                                                                                                |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2023      | Taiwanese Oversea Pioneers Grants, National Science Council (\$30,000)                         |
| 2021-2022 | Dissertation Fellowship, Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation (\$20,000)                                |
| 2021-2022 | Dissertation Completion Fellowship, China Times Cultural Foundation (\$6,000)                  |
| 2019      | Social Science Research Council Fellow, Publication Writing Workshop for International Studies |
| 2017-2019 | Fellowship, Education Bureau of Taiwan (\$32,000)                                              |
| 2016-2018 | Fulbright Fellowship (\$34,000)                                                                |
| 2023      | Travel Award, American Sociological Society.                                                   |
| 2022      | Research Grant Award, Midwest Sociological Society (\$3,000)                                   |
| 2022      | East and Inner Asian Council Research Grant, Association for Asian Studies (\$2,500)           |
| 2022      | Vilas Travel Award, Graduate School, UW-Madison                                                |
| 2021      | Publication Award, European Research Center on Contemporary Taiwan                             |
| 2019      | Liao Shutsung Research Award, National America Taiwanese Professor Association (\$5,000)       |
| 2019      | Fieldwork Award, Institute for Regional and International Studies, UW-Madison (\$3,000)        |
| 2019      | Research Grant, Graduate School, UW-Madison (\$1,500)                                          |
| 2018      | Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee Grant, UW-Madison                                 |

## **CONFERENCE & INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

### **Invited Talks**

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2025 | “When the Rules of the Game Shift: How Taiwanese Teachers Turn Student Traits into Favorable Signals in Uncertain Admissions,” Stanford University, USA, April 22.                          |
| 2024 | “Taiwan in the World: Uncertainty, Social Changes, and Class Landscape,” Stanford University, USA. May 2.                                                                                   |
| 2023 | “Negotiating Potential: How the Privileged Get Ahead in Uncertain Admissions,” Singapore Management University, Singapore. October 26.                                                      |
| 2023 | “Uncertainty at Play: How Do Universities Respond to Whole-Person Evaluation in an Exam Society?” East Asia Demography and Inequality Workshop (READI), Princeton University, USA. July 25. |
| 2021 | “What Do Numbers Tell? Real and Imagined Opportunities to College Entry,” East Asia Demography and Inequality Workshop (READI), Princeton University, USA. March 24.                        |
| 2021 | “Farsighted Habitus: Theorizing Temporality in Cultural Reproduction,” Grad Seminar, Cultural Workshop, University of California Santa Barbara, USA. February 18.                           |
| 2021 | “Do Admission Reforms Level the Playing Field?” National Cheng-Ching University, Undergrad Course, Comparative Education in East Asia, Taiwan. December 12.                                 |

- 2021 “Four Scripts to Turn Thesis into a Book: Event, Interpretation, Role, and Scene,”  
Ethnography Summer Training Program, Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.  
January 21.
- 2020 “Hybrid Ethnography: Studying Teens in Digital and Physical Sites,” Colgate University,  
Sociological Research and Methods, USA. December 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2020 “Conducting Ethnography in Uncertain Times,” National Taiwan University, Sociological  
Research and Methods, Graduate Seminar, Taiwan. May 25.

### **Conferences & Panels Organized**

- 2025 “Taiwan Forward, Driving Modernization Amid Shifting Global Dynamics,” Stanford & NTU  
Joint Conference, National Taiwan University, March 23<sup>rd</sup>
- 2022 “Reconceptualizing Educational Opportunities: Challenging Inequality, Creating Equity,”  
Society for the Study of Social Problems, August 5-7.
- 2022 Planning Committee; Chicago Ethnography Annual Conference, April 15.
- 2020 Roundtable Organizer and Diversity Committee Member; ASA Culture Section; American  
Sociological Association, August 8-11.
- 2018 Program Committee, North American Taiwan Studies Association, Sociology and Education  
Discipline, University of Texas at Austin, May 24-26.

### **Selected Conference Presentations**

- 2026 “Revisiting The Shape of Sieves: Which Pool is Likely to Change after Rising Competition in  
an Admission Field,” with Hsuan-Wei Lee and Hsing-Cheng Chen, The Future of World  
Society Theory Conference, Stanford University.
- 2025 “Cultural Guides and Bridgework in Uncertain Admissions,” American Sociological  
Association, Chicago, IL, August 8-12.
- 2023 “Inside the Black Box of College Admissions: How Universities Screen and Why Variation  
Matters,” American Sociological Association, PA, August 17-21.
- 2023 “Facing the Unknown Together: How Efforts to Manage Uncertainty Lead to Stratified  
Outcomes” American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 17-21.
- 2023 “Well, You Never Know!: Strategic Cultural Coaching and Uncertain Transmission to  
Educational Attainment.” Sociology of Education, Monterey, CA. February 23-26.
- 2022 “Retrospective Cultural Matching: How Cultural Fit is (Re)negotiated in College  
Admissions,” Social Science and History Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 16-19.
- 2022 “Hybrid Ethnography: Positioning, Access, and Data Assembly,” American Sociological  
Association, Virtual, August 5-9.

- 2022 “Envisioning Opportunities to College Admissions: Social Capital in the Development of Students’ College Plans,” RC28 on Social Stratification and Social Mobility, London, England, April 21-23.
- 2022 “The Road (Not) Taken: How Teens Choose Parallel Paths and How Future Involves,” Midwest Sociological Society, Chicago, IL, March 13-16.
- 2021 “Farsighted Habitus: Theorizing Temporality in Cultural Reproduction,” American Sociological Association Virtual. August 6-10.
- 2019 “Status Competitions in the Digital Era: Degree-Seeking, Public Credentialism, and Informal Counseling in Taiwanese Social Media,” Association of Asian Studies Conference, Virtual, January 6-10.
- 2019 “Pathways to College Admissions: Student Strategies and Class Variations in Activating Cultural Knowledge in Taiwan,” Annual Meeting of the Comparative International Education Society, San Francisco, CA, April 14-18.
- 2018 “Bounded Dreams: Social Stratification in Higher Education in Taiwan,” North American Taiwan Studies, Austin, TX, May 24-26.
- 2017 “Revisiting Adolescent Society in East Asia: Student Autonomy, Peer Strategy, and Teacher Control,” American Sociological Association, Montreal, Canada, August 12-15.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCES**

### **Instructor**

Sociology of Education (2026 Fall, Graduate & Undergrad Seminar), National Chengchi University.  
The Sociological Enterprise (2023 Fall), University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

### **To the Discipline**

Student Paper Award Committee; Youth, Aging, and Life Course Division; Association of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, 2022.  
Diversity and Inclusion Committee; ASA Culture Section (with Ann Mische & Jean Beaman), 2021-2022  
Roundtable Organizer; ASA Culture Section, 2020-2021.

### **Advising, Mentoring, and Policy Consulting**

Mentor; American Sociological Association, Sociology of Education, 2024-Present  
Student Chair; Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee, UW-Madison, 2018-2019  
Policy Consultant; Taiwan Educational Bureau, Taiwan Congress, Taiwan Thinktank, and Taichung City Government, 2014-2016

### **Occasional Reviewer**

American Sociological Review; Sociology of Education; Media, Culture & Society; Symbolic Interaction;  
Ethnography; Teachers and Teaching; Ethnic and Racial Studies; Journal of Marriage and Family

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

American Sociological Association (ASA); Sections: Education; Culture; Children & Young; Social Psychology; Organization; Sociological Theory; Life Course.  
Taiwanese Sociological Association (TSA)

## **LANGUAGES AND SKILLS**

Languages: Mandarin; Hakka; English  
Software: MAXQDA, Stata, Qualtrics, R

## **REFERENCES**

Prof. Mustafa Emirbayer  
Conway-Bascom Professor of Sociology  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
1180 Observatory Drive, WI 53706  
[emirbaye@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:emirbaye@ssc.wisc.edu)

Prof. Eric Grodsky  
Professor of Sociology  
Department Chair, Sociology  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
1180 Observatory Drive, WI 53706  
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Prof. Gi-Wook Shin  
Professor of Sociology  
Director of Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center  
Founding Director of the Taiwan Program and the Korea Program  
Senior Fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies  
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