

# Vicky Chuqiao Yang

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## EDUCATION

- 2018      **Ph.D. Engineering Sciences and Applied Mathematics**  
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL  
Advised by Daniel M. Abrams
- 2014      **M.S. Engineering Sciences and Applied Mathematics**  
Northwestern University
- 2013      **B.S. Mathematical Sciences; B.S. Physics** (with high distinction)  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Worcester, MA

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2022–  
present      **MIT Sloan School of Management**, Cambridge, MA  
Richard S. Leghorn (1939) Career Development Assistant Professor  
in Management of Technological Innovation  
Assistant Professor, System Dynamics
- 2023–  
present      Affiliated faculty, MIT Institute for Data, Systems, and Society
- 2018–2022      **Santa Fe Institute** (SFI), Santa Fe, NM  
Omidyar Fellow and Peters Hurst Scholar

## PUBLICATIONS

### Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

- 2025      M. Lu, T. Marghetis, **V.C. Yang**, “A first-principles mathematical model integrates the disparate timescales of human learning,” *NPJ Complexity* 2 (1), 15
- 2024      **V.C. Yang**, J.J. Jackson<sup>\*</sup>, C.P. Kempes, “Inter-city firm connections and the scaling of urban economic indicators,” *PNAS Nexus*, 3:11.
- 2023      **V.C. Yang**, A. Sandberg “Collective intelligence as infrastructure for reducing broad global catastrophic risks,” *Proceedings of the Stanford Existential Risks Conference 2023*, 194-206.
- 2021      **V.C. Yang**, M. Galesic, H. McGuinness<sup>\*</sup>, A. Harutyunyan “Dynamical-system model predicts when social learners impair collective performance,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118(35). [[Video summary](#)]

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\* Undergraduate Mentee

- 2021 E.H. Mora<sup>\*</sup>, C. Heine<sup>\*</sup>, J.J. Jackson<sup>\*</sup>, G.B. West, **V.C. Yang**, C.P. Kempes “Scaling of urban income inequality in the USA,” *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* 18:20210223.
- 2021 **V.C. Yang**, T. van der Does, H. Olsson, “Falling through the cracks: A dynamical model for the formation of social category boundaries,” *PLoS ONE* 16(3): e0247562.
- 2020 **V.C. Yang**, D.M. Abrams, G. Kernell, A.E. Motter, “Why are US parties so polarize? A ‘satisficing’ dynamical model,” *SIAM Review*, 62(3), 646–65.
- 2020 L.M.A. Bettencourt, **V.C. Yang**, J. Lobo, C. Kempes, D. Rybski, M. Hamilton, “The interpretation of urban scaling analysis in time,” *Journal of the Royal Society Interface*, 17, 163.
- 2019 **V.C. Yang**, A.V. Papachristos, D.M. Abrams, “The origin of urban-productivity scaling laws,” *Physical Review E*, 100, 032306.
- 2019 L. Lee<sup>\*</sup>, S. Zhang<sup>\*</sup>, **V.C. Yang**, “Do two parties represent the US? Clustering analysis of US public ideology survey,” *SIAM Undergraduate Research Online*, vol. 12. DOI: 10.1137/17S016518.
- 2017 B.S. Tilley, **V.C. Yang**, J.C. Baiense, S. Evans, “Frequency-dependent thermal resistance of vertical U-tube geothermal heat exchangers,” *Journal of Engineering Mathematics*, 102 131-150.
- 2015 E.M. Moon, **C. Yang**, V.V. Yakovlev, “Microwave-induced temperature fields in cylindrical samples of graphite powder—Experimental and modeling studies,” *International Journal of Heat and Mass Transfer*, vol. 87, No 8, pp. 359–368.
- 2013 **C. Yang**, V.V. Yakovlev, “An efficient empirical model for microwave-induced average temperature of liquid cylindrical reactants,” *Journal of Microwave Power and Electromagnetic Energy*, 47 (3), pp. 177–185.

### Book Chapters

- 2024 **V. C. Yang**, “Mathematical model explaining variations in urban scaling exponents,” in L.S. D'Acci (Eds.), *Urban Scaling: Allometry in Urban Studies and Spatial Science*. Routledge.
- 2024 E.H. Mora, **V.C. Yang**, C.P. Kempes, “Scaling of urban income inequality in the USA,” in L.S. D'Acci (Eds.), *Urban Scaling: Allometry in Urban Studies and Spatial Science*. Routledge.

### Working Papers, Manuscripts Under Review, and Other Non-peer-reviewed Articles

- 2025 E.D. Lee et al., “Synthesis of innovation and obsolescence,” [arXiv:2505.05182](https://arxiv.org/abs/2505.05182)
- 2024 **V.C. Yang**, L. Grenier, “How social influence shapes collective intelligence in binary choices: Reconciling disparate findings with a mathematical model,” [SSRN: 5040323](https://ssrn.com/abstract=5040323)
- 2024 **V.C. Yang**, L. Grenier, “What leads to administrative bloat? Modeling the dynamics of administrative cost and waste,” [SSRN: 4840789](https://ssrn.com/abstract=4840789)

- 2024 **V.C. Yang**, C.P. Kempes, S. Redner, G.B. West, H. Youn, “Regulatory functions from cells to society,” [\*arXiv: 2409.02884\*](#)
- 2023 J. Yoon, C. Kempes, **V.C. Yang**, G. West, H. Youn, “What makes Individual I's a collective we; Coordination mechanisms & costs,” [\*arXiv:2306.02113\*](#)
- 2022 **V.C. Yang**, C.P. Kempes, H. Youn, S. Redner, G.B. West, “Scaling and the universality of function diversity across human organizations,” [\*arXiv:2208.06487\*](#)
- 2020 Lobo et. al., Urban science: Integrated theory from the first cities to sustainable metropolises. Report submitted to the NSF on the Present State and Future of Urban Science. [\*SSRN: 3526940\*](#).
- 2020 L. Hebert-Dufresne, **V.C. Yang**, “Misinformation about an outbreak like COVID-19 is important public health data,” [\*STAT News\*](#).

## GRANTS

- 2021–2025 **National Science Foundation: Rule of Life: Emergent Networks**  
 “Towards a unified theory of regulatory functions and networks across biological and social systems.” \$2,199,383. H. Youn (PI, Northwestern Kellogg), **V.C. Yang** (co-PI), C.P. Kempes, S. Redner, G.B. West (co-PIs, SFI)
- 2021–2025 **National Science Foundation: Decision, Risk, and Management Sciences**  
 “Understanding the effect of individual decision-making strategies on collective decision outcomes.” \$476,231. **V.C. Yang** (PI), J.L. Skorinko (co-PI, WPI), A. Harutyunyan (co-PI, Sunwater Institute).

## SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

- 2025 **Bloomberg** article, “We used to disagree. Now we don’t talk to each other” [[link](#)]
- 2022 **Nautilus** article “What makes group decisions go wrong. And right” [[link](#)]
- 2021 **PNAS News Feature** article “Modeling the power of polarization” [[link](#)]
- 2021 **SIAM News** article, “Social learners impact outcome of group decision-making” [[link](#)]
- 2021 **BigThink** article, “Math explains polarization, and it’s not just about politics” [[link](#)]
- 2020 **Forbes** article, “This is the reason American politics are so polarized” [[link](#)]
- 2020 **Wall Street Journal** article, “Social media is so good at polarizing us” [[link](#)]
- 2020 **Complexity Podcast** [[audio link](#)]
- 2020 **KTRC Talk Radio**, The Richard Eeds Show

## SELECTED INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- Oct 2024 Graduate School of Business, Stanford University

Oct 2024 Santa Fe Institute Annual Risk Meeting on Political Risk, Morgan Stanley, NY

April 2024 Department of Mathematics, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Jan 2024 Special Session on Complex Social Systems, Joint Mathematics Meetings, San Francisco, CA

Nov 2023 Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems, Northwestern University, Evanston IL

Oct 2023 Workshop on Complexity Theory, Social Ontology, and Social Change, MIT, Cambridge MA

Feb 2023 Department of Mathematical Sciences, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester MA

Dec 2022 Workshop: Innovation, Obsolescence, and the Space of the Possible, Complexity Science Hub Vienna, Vienna, Austria

Oct 2022 INFORMS Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN

Oct 2022 Technological Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Strategic Management group, MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge MA

March 2022 Political Decision-Making Research Cluster, Southern Methodist University

Oct 2021 Center for the Study of Complex Systems, University of Michigan

Sept 2021 Dept. of Computer Science, University of New Mexico

May 2021 SIAM Conference on the Application Dynamical Systems

Nov 2019 University of Chicago, Dept. of Sociology, Chicago, IL

June 2019 SFI Complex Systems Summer School, Santa Fe, NM

April 2019 Santa Fe Institute Applied Complexity meeting on search and decisions, Google Ventures, Mountain View, CA

March 2019 Transforming Cities mini-course, Carnegie Mellon University and University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Feb 2019 American Marketing Association Meeting, Austin, TX

Nov 2016 Northwestern University Undergraduate Math Society

**SELECTED OTHER CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

Aug 2024 Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL

Aug 2024 The International System Dynamics Conference, Bergen, Norway

July 2024 International Conference for Computational Social Science, Philadelphia, PA

June 2024 ACM Collective Intelligence Conference, Boston MA

July 2021 International Conference on Computational Social Science

June 2020 ACM Collective Intelligence Conference

Jan 2020 Dynamics Days US, Hartford CT

May 2017 SIAM Conference on Applications of Dynamical Systems, Snowbird UT  
(The Red Sock Award for Best Poster Presentation)

April 2017 Seven Minutes of Science Symposium (science outreach), Evanston IL

June 2013 International Microwave Power Institute Symposium, Providence RI  
(First Place, Student Paper Competition)

April 2013 IEEE Student Conference, Cambridge MA  
(Second Place, IEEE Student Paper Competition)

Oct 2012 New England Psychological Association Annual Conference, Worcester MA

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

2022 Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society

2018 Grand Prize in Interactive Data Visualization,  
Northwestern University Computational Research Day

2017 The Red Sock Award for Best Poster Presentation,  
SIAM Conference on Applications of Dynamical Systems

2017 SIAM Student Chapter Certificate of Recognition

2017 Terminal Year Fellowship, Northwestern University

2013 Provost's Major Qualifying Project Award, WPI

2009 WPI Presidential Scholarship

### **TEACHING**

2023--2025 Instructor, 15.871/15.873 Introduction to System Dynamics; System Dynamics for  
Business and Policy, MIT Sloan School of Management

2024 Instructor, 15.879 Research Seminar in System Dynamics: A guided tour of complex  
social systems, MIT Sloan School of Management

2023 Instructor, 15.879 Research Seminar in System Dynamics: Differential Equation and  
Agent-Based Modeling Methods, MIT Sloan School of Management

2021 Lead instructor, Undergraduate Complexity Researcher Program, SFI

2019 Lecturer, Complex Systems Summer School, SFI

2019 Guest Lecturer, Transforming Cities Mini-course, Carnegie Mellon University and  
University of Pittsburgh

- 2016–2017 Teaching Certificate Program (teaching training), Northwestern University
- 2014–2015, Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Mathematics, Northwestern University  
2017 Courses taught: Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus, Vector Calculus, Integral Calculus of One Variable
- 2011–2013 Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Mathematics, WPI  
Courses taught: Differential Equations, Multivariable Calculus, Calculus of One Variable

### **LEADERSHIP & SERVICE**

- 2024 Program Committee, Collective Intelligence Conference, Boston MA
- 2024 Organizer, “Possibilities for Developing an Ontology of Collective Intelligence” workshop, Collective Intelligence Conference, Boston MA
- 2023 Program Committee, “Collective Intelligence: Foundations and Radical Ideas,” Santa Fe Institute symposium and short course
- 2023 Co-organizer, “From Cells to Societies: Regulatory Mechanisms at Work,” working group at the Santa Fe Institute
- 2021 Co-organizer of minisymposium “Modeling Collective Behavior in Human Social Systems,” SIAM Conference on Dynamical Systems
- 2017 Chair of Organizing Committee, Chicago Area SIAM Student Conference
- 2016–2017 Chapter President, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
- 2016–2017 Executive Board, Graduate Leadership and Advocacy Council, Northwestern University
- 2015–2017 Co-founder and President, Argentine Tango Club, Northwestern University
- 2012–2013 Chapter President, Pi Mu Epsilon US Honorary National Math Society

### **SCIENCE OUTREACH**

- 2020 Activity leader, Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival, Santa Fe, NM
- 2019 Volunteer, InterPlanetary Festival, Santa Fe, NM
- 2018 Volunteer, Brave Initiatives, Chicago IL
- 2017–2018 Judge, Northwestern University High School Project Showcase, Evanston IL
- 2017 Speaker, Seven Minutes of Science Symposium, Evanston IL
- 2016 Volunteer, Grand Prix Challenges, Evanston 5th Ward Middle School, Evanston IL

### **REFEREE AND JUDGE SERVICE**

#### **For Journals**

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Nature Human Behaviour, Nature Cities, Science Advances, Management Science, Crime Science, Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, Chaos: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Nonlinear Science, PLOS ONE.

**For Funding Agencies**

NSF: Rule of Life: Emergent Networks

NSF: Human Networks and Data Science

NSF: Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics

**For Conferences**

SIAM Conference on Dynamical Systems, Red Sock Award for Best Poster Presentation

The International System Dynamics Conference