

Kuan-Wu Chen

陳冠吾

Postdoctoral Research Fellow · Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica

rod0520w@as.edu.tw · rod0520w@gmail.com · chenkuanwu.com · Taipei, Taiwan

EDUCATION

2018–2024

Ph.D., Political Science — University of South Carolina

Dissertation: Popular Justice or Populist Justice? Penal Populism and Its Impact on Democracy

Committee: Matthew Wilson (chair), Douglas Thompson, Jessica Schoenherr, Rollin Tusalem, Nico Ravanilla

2015

M.A., Political Science — National Taiwan University

Thesis: The Impact of Political Succession in the CCP on Cross-Strait Relations, 1989–2012 (in Chinese)

Advisor: Yu-Shan Wu

2011

B.A., Political Science — National Chengchi University

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Penal populism and democratic erosion · populist mobilization · clientelism and local politics · electoral competition in East and Southeast Asia, with a regional focus on the Philippines, Japan, and Taiwan

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2025–

Postdoctoral Research Fellow — Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica

Spring 2026

Adjunct Assistant Professor — National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

Southeast Asian Politics and Society

Jan–May 2024

Instructor — Department of Political Science, University of South Carolina

2019–2023

Teaching Assistant — Department of Political Science, University of South Carolina

2012–2014

Teaching Assistant — Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Heinrich, Tobias, Spencer Baily, Kuan-Wu Chen, Jack DeOliveira, Sanghoon Park, and Navida Chun-han Wang. 2025. “AI-Assisted Grading and Personalized Feedback in Large Political Science Classes: Results from Randomized Controlled Trials.” *PLOS One* 20(8): e0328041.

Lu, Kelan, and Kuan-Wu Chen. 2020. “Caught in the Middle: An Empirical Assessment of the Impact of the Trade War and Beijing’s Taishang Incentive Policies on the Taishang’s Movement in and out of Mainland China.” *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*.

Wu, Yu-Shan, and Kuan-Wu Chen. 2020. “Domestic Politics and Cross-Strait Relations: A Synthetic Perspective.” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 55(2): 168–186.

Chen, Kuan-Wu, and Yu-Shan Wu. 2017. “Power Position and Taiwan Policy: How Beijing Responds to Taipei’s Stimuli during the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao Periods.” *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies*.

Tang, Ching-Ping, and Kuan-Wu Chen. 2013. “Democratization, Faction Politics, and Civil Society: The Case of

Community-Building and the ‘Termination of Faction’ in Chiayi County.” Taiwan Democracy Quarterly 10(2): 105–138. (in Chinese)

BOOK CHAPTER

Chen, Kuan-Wu. “The Populism Matrix.” Palgrave Macmillan. Forthcoming, 2026.

TRANSLATION

Bernardo Zacka, When the State Meets the Street: Public Service and Moral Agency. Translated by Chih-An Lin, Hsuan Tang, and Kuan-Wu Chen. Taipei: Faces Publications, 2024. (in Chinese)

BOOK REVIEWS

Chen, Kuan-Wu. 2021. Review of State Capture by Alexander Hertel-Fernandez. Taiwan Democracy Quarterly 18(1): 151–158.

Chen, Kuan-Wu. 2021. Review of Authoritarianism and the Elite Origins of Democracy. Taiwan Democracy Quarterly 18(3): 157–163.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS

“Trapped Between Boundaries: Territorial Identity and Ideological Competition in Regional Party Expansion.” Academia Sinica–Kobe University Joint Workshop on Political Science Research, 2026.

“Performing Without Power: Proposal Networks as Influence Capital Scoreboards in Taiwan’s City Council.” IPSA World Congress, Seoul, 2025.

“Duterte’s Death Note: Narco-List in the War on Drugs.” Southern Political Science Association Annual Conference, New Orleans, 2024.

“Penal Populism and War on Drugs in the Philippines.” Conference on Judicial Politics and Human Rights: Taiwan in Comparative Perspective, Columbia, South Carolina, 2023.

“Political Entrepreneurship and Party Realignment: An Interpretation of Taiwan’s Local Election in 2018.” Korean Political Science Association World Congress, Seoul, 2019.

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND HONORS

2025 Japan–Taiwan Exchange Association Research Fellowship

2024 Fellow, Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG); SEAREG–Henry Luce Foundation Summer Conference Travel Grant; Li-Ching Graduate Fellowship; Wandering and Wondering Writing Retreat Grant

2023–24 Taiwan Overseas Pioneer Scholarship, National Science and Technology Council; Research Grant, Institute for Humane Studies

2022–23 Sun Yat-Sen Fellowship, National Policy Foundation

2021 Taiwan Study Conference Research Grant

2008–11 Academic Excellence Award and Outstanding Graduate Award, National Chengchi University

INVITED TALKS

“Penal Populism and Democracy.” National Cheng Kung University, June 2023.

SKILLS

Languages: Chinese (native), English (fluent), Japanese (beginner), Vietnamese (beginner)

Programming and tools: R, LaTeX, Python