

**CHANG (RITA) YU**

Department of Sociology and Criminology, University at Buffalo, SUNY

197 Founders Prom, Buffalo, NY 14228

[Homepage](#) | [Google Scholar](#) | [Rate My Professor](#) | E-mail: [cyu33@buffalo.edu](mailto:cyu33@buffalo.edu)**EDUCATION**

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- 2026 (expected)      Ph.D., Sociology  
University at Buffalo, State University of New York
- Dissertation:* Understanding Cognitive Aging in China: Cognitive Measures, Life Course Factors, and Historical Contexts  
*Committee members:* Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk (Chair), Ashley B. Barr, Kristen Schultz Lee, Alden Gross (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health)
- 2022 May              M.A., Sociology  
University at Buffalo, State University of New York
- 2019 June              Bachelor of Management, Public Administration and Policy  
Hunan Normal University, China
- 2017 July              Exchange Student, Sociology  
University of California, Berkeley

**RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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Quantitative and computational methods, large language models (LLMs), evidence synthesis method, aging and life course, cognitive aging and dementia, chronic pain, global studies

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS**

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**Chang Yu, Ashley B. Barr, Yulin Yang, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** 2025. "Beyond Pain Presence: The Impact of Multisite Pain and Pain Interference on Cognitive Functioning Among Middle-Aged and Older Adults." *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B (Psychological Sciences)*. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbaf220

- **Featured in the** [University at Buffalo News Center](#)

**Chang Yu, Ashley B. Barr.** 2025. "Social Activities and Dimensions of Cognitive Functioning Across Mid- and Late-Life: Evidence from China." *The Gerontologist*. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnaf014

Yuanyuan Wu, **Chang Yu**, Kristen S. Lee. 2025. "Voluntary Participation and Life Satisfaction among Chinese Older Adults: A Propensity Score Analysis." *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B (Social Sciences)*. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbaf127

Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk, Rui Huang, **Chang Yu**, Yu-An Chen, Sirat Kaur, Merita Limani, Ting-Hui Lin, Anna Zajacova, Zachary Zimmer, Penney Cowan, Roger B. Fillingim, Jennifer S Gewandter, Ian Gilron, Adam T. Hirsh, Gary Macfarlane, Salimah H. Meghani, Kushang V Patel, Ellen L. Poleshuck, Eric C. Strain, Frank J. Symons, Ursula Wesselmann, Robert H Dworkin, Dennis C Turk. 2025. "Over Fifty Years of Research on Social Disparities in Pain and Pain Treatment: A Scoping Review of Reviews." *PAIN*. doi: 10.1097/j.pain.0000000000003676

- **"Editor's Choice" article**

Yuanyuan Wu, Meng Cai, **Chang Yu**. 2025. "Depression and Internet Use Before and After the COVID-19 Outbreak among Chinese Middle-Aged and Older Adults: A Network Analysis." *BMC Psychology*. doi: 10.1186/s40359-025-03119-8

Qian Liu, Yuanyuan Wu, **Chang Yu**, Yaolin Pei. 2024. "Social Activities and Depressive Symptoms Among Migrant Middle-Aged and Older Adults in China: A Network Analysis." *Frontiers in Psychology*. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1376180

## BOOK CHAPTERS

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**Chang Yu**, Ziyi Zhou, et al. 2016. "A Study of Targeted Poverty Alleviation of Poverty-Stricken Areas in Luoxiao Mountain—Taking Yizhang County and Yanling County as Examples." Zhigang Zheng (Ed.), *Research Report Collection of Youth China Tour* (pp. 51-73). Beijing: Guangming Daily Press. (In Chinese)

## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

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**Chang Yu**, Mo Han, Gongda Yu, Rui Huang, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk. "Human vs. AI in Conducting Scoping Reviews of Reviews: Evaluating Large Language Model Accuracy Across Article and Task Types"

**Chang Yu**, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk. "The Divergent Roles of Childhood Literacy and Food Availability in Cognitive Aging: Evidence from Two Chinese Longitudinal Datasets"

**Chang Yu**, Jiaowei Gong, Emma Zang. "The Worst Tie Hurts the Most: Intergenerational Relationship Trajectories in Multi-Child Families and Depressive Symptoms of Older Parents in China"

## ARTICLES IN PROGRESS

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**Chang Yu**. "Measurement Invariance of Cognitive Function Across Literacy Status, Gender, and Time in the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study" (Full draft available)

**Chang Yu**. "Age at Exposure to China's Great Famine and Later-Life Cognitive Trajectories: Patterns and Mechanisms" (Extended abstract available)

Yiran Han, **Chang Yu**, Kai Zhang. "Neighborhood Determinants of Vision Health among Older Adults" (In preparation)

## **POLICY REPORTS**

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Da Huo, **Chang Yu**. 2020. "Foundation Development: Independent Research Report."  
Produced for the China Foundation Center, Beijing, China

**Chang Yu**, Da Huo. 2020. "China Foundation Transparency Index System Report."  
Produced for the China Foundation Center, Beijing, China

**Chang Yu**, Da Huo. 2019. "Spatial Disparities in the Development of Pediatric Liver Transplantation in China." Produced for National People's Congress (NPC) of China, Beijing, China

**Chang Yu**, Ziyi Zhou, et al. 2016. "Research on the Commissioned Poverty Alleviation Model in Yanling County." Produced for the Poverty Alleviation Office, Hunan Province, China

## **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

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- 2025 Nathalie Devine Howe Award for Outstanding Teaching, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$1,000)**
- 2025 Travel Grant, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$1,000)
- 2024 Adeline Gordon Levine Excellence in Teaching Award nomination, University at Buffalo, SUNY
- 2024 Travel Grant, Graduate Student Association, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$750)
- 2023 NY State Supply Chain & Operation Management Case Competition, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$1,000)
- 2023 Travel Grant, Department of Sociology and Criminology, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$1000)
- 2018 Academic Progress Award, Hunan Normal University (\$150)
- 2018 Third Prize Scholarship, Hunan Normal University (\$150)
- 2018 Scholarship from Publication Administration School, Hunan Normal University (\$150)
- 2016 Research Award, China Young Leaders Foundation (\$1,500)

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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- 2026 **Chang Yu**. "The Divergent Roles of Childhood Literacy and Food Availability in Cognitive Aging: Evidence from Two Chinese National Longitudinal Datasets." Population Association of America Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO

- 2025 **Chang Yu.** "Harmonization of Later-Life Cognitive Function in Longitudinal Integrative Data Analysis: Results from Two Chinese National Datasets." Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA

**Chang Yu, Mo Han, Gongda Yu, Rui Huang, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** "Human vs. AI in Conducting Scoping Reviews: Evaluating Large Language Model Accuracy Across Article and Question Types." Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA

**Chang Yu, Jiaowei Gong, Emma Zang.** "The Worst Tie Hurts the Most: Intergenerational Relationship Trajectories in Multi-Child Families and Depressive Symptoms of Older Parents in China." Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA

**Chang Yu, Yuanyuan Wu, Kristen S. Lee.** "Voluntary Participation and Life Satisfaction among Chinese Older Adults: A Propensity Score Analysis." Population Association of America Annual Conference, Washington DC

- 2024 **Chang Yu, Ashley B. Barr, Yulin Yang, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** "Chronic Pain, Pain Interference, and Cognition Among Middle-Aged and Older Americans: A Fixed-Effects Analysis." Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Seattle, WA

**Chang Yu, Ashley B. Barr, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** "Functional Limitations, Depressive Symptoms, and Cognition Across Mid- and Late-Life: Evidence from China." Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Seattle, WA

**Chang Yu, Ashley B. Barr.** "Social Activities and Dimensions of Cognitive Functioning Across Mid- and Late-Life: Evidence from China." American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada

- 2023 **Chang Yu.** "Cognition Changes Among Chinese Middle Aged and Older Adults, 2013-2018: Disparities and Correlations." Center for Social Research, Peking University, Beijing, China

**Chang Yu, Yulin Yang, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** "Gender, Stress and Cognition Among Middle-Aged and Older Adults in the United States." American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA

**Chang Yu, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk.** "The Relationship between Social Participation and Cognitive Function Among Middle-Aged and Older

Chinese: A Network Analysis." Population Association of America Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA

**Chang Yu**, Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk. "The Relationship between Social Participation and Cognitive Function Among Middle-Aged and Older Chinese: A Network Analysis." 19th Annual Celebration of Student Academic Excellence Student Showcase, State University of New York at Buffalo

2022 **Chang Yu**, Qian Liu, Yuanyuan Wu, Yaolin Pei. "Social Activities and Depressive Symptoms Among Migrant Middle-Aged and Older Adults in China: A Network Analysis." Center for Social Research, Peking University, virtual

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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Department of Sociology and Criminology, University at Buffalo, SUNY

### Instructor:

*Basic Statistics for Social Science*, Fall 2023, Spring 2025

*Social Research Methods*, Summer 2022, Spring 2024 (hybrid class)

### Teaching Assistant

*Multiple Linear Regression (Graduate level)*, Spring 2026

*Crime and the Life Course (Graduate level)*, Spring 2026

*Sociology of City Life*, Spring 2023

*Global Criminology*, Fall 2022

## WORK & INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

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2021-2025 Research Assistant for Dr. Hanna Grol-Prokopczyk, "The Demography of Chronic Pain: A Population Approach to Pain Trends, Pain Disparities, and Pain-Related Disability and Death" Grant from National Institute on Aging (R01 AG065351)

2020 Research Data Scientist, The China Foundation Center, Beijing, China

2018-2019 Research Assistant, Charity Research Center, China Philanthropy Research Institute of Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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### Department Service

- **Recruitment support**, Department of Sociology PhD program, University at Buffalo
- **Panelist**, Proseminar Panels, Department of Sociology, University at Buffalo

### College Service

- **Member**, Grievance Committee, College of Arts and Sciences, University at Buffalo

### Disciplinary Service

- **Referee**: *The Gerontologist*, *Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences and Psychological Sciences*, *Journals of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*

- **Abstract peer reviewer:** *The Gerontological Society of America's Annual Scientific Meeting*

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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- Statistical Programming: Stata, M-plus, R
- Statistical and Modeling Expertise: Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM); Structural Equation Modeling (SEM); Propensity Score Analysis (matching, inverse probability weighting, stratification); Sobel-Goodman Mediation Tests; Network Analysis
- Languages: English (fluent), Mandarin (native), Cantonese (conversational)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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Gerontological Society of America (GSA)

Population Association of American (PAA)

American Sociological Association (ASA)