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Fields of Concentration:
International Trade
Political Economy

Desired Teaching:
International Trade
Microeconomics

Comprehensive Examinations Completed:
2021 (Oral): International Trade, Industrial Organization
2020 (Written): Microeconomics, Macroeconomics

Dissertation Title: *Essays on Informational Lobbying and Trade Policies*

Committee:
Professor Giovanni Maggi (Chair)
Lecturer Ana Cecilia Fieler
Senior Lecturer Guillermo Noguera

Education:
Ph.D., Economics, Yale University, 2026 (expected)
M.Phil., Economics, Yale University, 2022
M.A., Economics, Yale University, 2022
B.Soc.Sci., Economics (First Class Honors), National University of Singapore, 2016
B.Eng., Civil Engineering (First Class Honors), National University of Singapore, 2016

Fellowships, Honors and Awards:
Cowles Foundation Fellowship, Yale University, 2019-2025
Yale University Graduate Fellowship, 2019-2025
The Sylff Fellowship, Yale University, 2022-2023
University Dissertation Fellowship, Yale University, 2022-2023

Nathan Hale Associates Scholar, Yale University, 2021-2022
Fan Family Fellowship, Yale University, 2019-2020
Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal (Best Graduate), National University of Singapore, 2016
IES Gold Medal (Top Graduate in Engineering), National University of Singapore, 2016
SM2 PRC Full Scholarship, 2010-2016
Dean's Lists, National University of Singapore, 2011-2016

Teaching Experience:

Yale College
Spring 2025, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Daniel Hauser, Intermediate Microeconomics
Fall 2024, Teaching Assistant to Dr. Guillermo Noguera, Data Analytics and Econometrics
Spring 2023, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Mira Frick, Intermediate Microeconomics
Fall 2022, Teaching Assistant to Prof. John Eric Humphries, Data Analytics and Econometrics
Spring 2022, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Roland Strausz, Intermediate Microeconomics
Fall 2021, Teaching Assistant to Dr. Evangelia Chalioti, Intermediate Microeconomics

National University of Singapore
Fall 2014 – Spring 2015, Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Economics

Research Experience:

Research Assistant to Prof. Giovanni Maggi, Yale University, 2021-2022
Research Assistant to Prof. Yi-Chun Chen, National University of Singapore, 2018-2019

Work Experience:

Competition Analyst, Allen & Gledhill LLP, Singapore, 2016-2018

Working Papers:

"The Informational Value of Lobbying in the Tariff Exclusion Process", (November 2025), *Job Market Paper*

Work In Progress:

"Lobbying Competition on EXIM Bank Decisions in the United States"

Invited Presentations:

Trade, Regulation, and Academic Insights for the Next-Generation (TRAIN) Workshop, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shenzhen, scheduled December 2025 (invited).

Languages:

Chinese (native), English (fluent), Spanish (beginner)

References:

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Dissertation Abstract

I develop and quantify structural models of informational lobbying to study how firms' strategic communication transmits private information (e.g., about costs or market conditions) to policymakers and to assess the resulting welfare consequences. My dissertation focuses on two key areas of U.S. trade policy: import tariff relief and export financing.

The Informational Value of Lobbying in the Tariff Exclusion Process [Job Market Paper]

An extensive literature, beginning with the "Protection for Sale" framework, models lobbying as a quid-pro-quo exchange for favorable trade policy. However, the informational role of lobbying—where firms convey private data to guide administrative policy decisions—is less understood, particularly in the context of trade policy. This paper quantifies this informational channel in the U.S. Section 301 tariff exclusion process and assesses its net welfare consequences. The process, involving over 50,000 product-specific requests during the U.S.–China trade war, provides a prime setting to analyze how private information shapes policy when a government's own information is limited.

Using the universe of exclusion requests, I document several key empirical facts. Lobbying is a strong predictor of approval, and firms with higher exposure to Chinese imports were more likely both to lobby and to have their requests approved. Furthermore, a lower elasticity of substitution between foreign suppliers is associated with a higher likelihood of approval. These patterns suggest that the government considers the economic harm caused by the tariffs as mandated, and values lobbying input.

Motivated by these facts, I develop and quantify a structural model of informational lobbying. The model's foundation is a microfounded government objective function that captures the trade-off between benefits to domestic producers, costs to domestic consumers, and tariff revenue. Building on this foundation, I introduce a signaling game with two features crucial for matching the data. First, lobbying provides a noisy signal of a firm's type, i.e., the magnitude of the economic harm the firm would suffer from the tariff. This feature allows the model to flexibly match the probabilistic nature of approvals, including the low success rate for lobbyists. Second, the government's decision is subject to an idiosyncratic political shock, such as discretionary judgments or unobserved administrative preferences, making the outcome probabilistic and explaining why non-lobbying firms are sometimes approved and lobbyists are rejected for non-

economic reasons. In this environment, firms with private information on tariff-induced harm pay a fixed cost to signal their case to the government.

I identify the model's parameters using a nested calibration strategy, targeting cross-sectoral variation in lobbying rates, approval patterns, and tariff levels. The results indicate that the main friction in the Section 301 process was the cost of participation rather than noise or political discretion. Lobbying transmitted highly precise information about firms' economic harm, and the estimated political shocks were modest. Quantitatively, the equilibrium with lobbying yields a total welfare cost of about $2.1 billion compared with $2.6 billion in a counterfactual without lobbying, an 18 percent reduction in welfare loss relative to the cooperative MFN benchmark. The welfare gain arises primarily because the government anticipates receiving information when setting tariffs, improving policy targeting even before lobbying occurs. These findings suggest that informational lobbying modestly improved policy targeting despite the presence of political weighting. The estimated model thus provides a quantitative measure of the informational value of lobbying, and offers clear lessons for the design of future trade-remedy systems.

Lobbying Competition on EXIM Bank Decisions in the United States

I investigate how lobbying by competing domestic interests influences the financing decisions of the U.S. Export-Import (EXIM) Bank. While EXIM directs billions in export financing annually, the role of private sector influence on its project-level decisions is not well understood. The issue creates a conflict driven by production linkages: U.S. upstream exporters (e.g., Boeing) lobby for financing, while domestic downstream firms (e.g., Delta Air Lines) lobby against it, as they are harmed by subsidized competition from the foreign buyers who receive the financing. I construct a novel application-level dataset covering all EXIM Bank authorizations from 2006 to 2020, merged with detailed, issue-specific lobbying expenditure data. My empirical analysis shows that lobbying by exporters is positively correlated with approval probability, while opposition lobbying is negatively correlated. Motivated by these facts, I develop a structural model of informational lobbying in which competing firms signal their productivity to a welfare-maximizing agency to influence its decision.