

Benjamin Leffel, Ph.D.
Curriculum Vitae

Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise
University of Michigan
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APPOINTMENTS

- Postdoctoral Fellow Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise, University of Michigan
September 2021
- Lecturer Department of Sociology, University of California, Merced
August 2020-July 2021.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Department of Sociology, University of California, Irvine, 2020

Dissertation: *Urban political ecology of global urban climate change mitigation*

Committee: David A. Smith (Chair), David John Frank, Wang Feng (Sociology), Michael Prather (Earth System Science), Scott Bollens (Urban Planning)

M.A. Department of Sociology, University of California, Irvine, 2017

M.A. School of International Service, The American University, Washington, DC, 2013

B.A. Department of History and Political Science, Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio,
2010

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed

- 2021 **Benjamin Leffel** (*Forthcoming*), “Toward global urban climate mitigation: Linking national and polycentric systems of environmental change,” *Sociology of Development*, vol. 8, no. 1.
- 2021 **Benjamin Leffel** (*Forthcoming*), “Principles of modern city diplomacy & the expanding role of cities in foreign policy,” *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 1.
- 2021 **Benjamin Leffel**, Nikki Tavasoli, Brantley Liddle, Kent Henderson and Sabrina Kiernan, “[Metropolitan air pollution abatement & industrial growth: Global urban panel analysis of PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, SO₂ and NO₂](#)” *Environmental Sociology*.
- 2021 Sarah Bracking and **Benjamin Leffel**, “[Climate finance governance: fit for purpose?](#)” *WIREs Climate Change*, vol. 12, no. 4, e709.
- 2021 Yu Hongyuan, **Benjamin Leffel**, Li Qianyuan and Craig Simon, “Bridging Theory on Global Corporate Hierarchy and City Diplomacy: The Case of China,” *Chinese Journal of Urban and Environmental Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2150011.
- 2020 Michele Acuto and **Benjamin Leffel** “[Understanding the global geography of city networks](#),” *Urban Studies*, vol. 58, no. 9, 1758-1774.
- 2020 **Benjamin Leffel**, “[Marine protection as polycentric governance: The PEMSEA Network of Local Governments](#),” Chapter 4 in Efe Sevin and Sohaela Amiri, eds., *City Diplomacy: Current Trends and Future Prospects*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 59-79.
- 2018 **Benjamin Leffel** and Michele Acuto, “[Economic Power Foundations of Cities in Global Governance](#),” *Global Society*, vol. 32, no. 1, 281-301.
- 2018 **Benjamin Leffel**, “[Animus of the Underling: Theorizing City Diplomacy in a World Society](#),” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 13, no. 4, 502-522.
- 2018 **Benjamin Leffel**, “[Urban Sustainability and Industrial Migration: The Green Transition of Hefei, China](#)”, Chapter 16, in Woodrow Clark II, ed., *Sustainable Cities and Communities Design Handbook, 2nd Edition*, Oxford: Elsevier, 307-324.
- Op-Eds**
- 2021 **Benjamin Leffel**, Reta Jo Lewis, Corey Jacobson, Luis Renta and Kevin Cottrell, “[It Is Time for the United States to Institutionalize Subnational Diplomacy](#),” *German Marshall Fund of the United States*, January 26.

- 2019 Chrystie Swiney, Reta Jo Lewis and Sheila Foster (authors), **Benjamin Leffel** (contributor), "[Paralysis of nations is empowering cities](#)," *The Hill*, December 27.
- 2019 John L. Graham and **Benjamin Leffel**. "[Is China Actually Stealing American Jobs and Wealth?](#)" *Harvard Business Review*, November 8.
- 2019 Kevork Abazajian, Gianna Lum and **Benjamin Leffel**, "[Irvine can lead fight on climate change, by transitioning to solar](#)," *Orange County Register*, Opinion Section, September 8
- 2017 Charis E. Kubrin and **Benjamin Leffel**, "California sanctuary cities bill is humane and effective," *The Hill*, December 15.

Under Review

Benjamin Leffel and Kangkang Tong. "CO₂ emissions reduction in Chinese cities: Effects of carbon market participation and foreign direct investment amid urban economic growth".

Benjamin Leffel, Michele Acuto, Ben Derudder and Jeroen van der Heijden, "Climate change mitigation and transnational municipal networks: Analysis of 47,000 cities"

In Progress

Benjamin Leffel, Eric Shrago and Kendall Wilson, "Cost efficiency of Connecticut Green Bank solar energy investments: Lessons for climate economics at the project-level"

Benjamin Leffel and David A. Smith. "A Tale of Two Cities, Hong Kong, Shanghai and the Global City Hypothesis"

Benjamin Leffel, Helge Marahrens and Arthur S. Alderson, "Reprise of Alderson and Beckfield: Modern world city hierarchy and structural effects on the global economy"

Projects

"Climate Finance Database" <https://www.researchgate.net/project/Climate-Finance-Database>

Other publications

- 2019 Kirell Benzi and **Benjamin Leffel**. "[World Economy Data Visualization](#)". *Kirelion*, September 4.
- 2019 John L. Graham and **Benjamin Leffel**. "[U.S.-China Barometer 2019](#)," UC Irvine Long U.S.-China Institute

- 2018 [“Subnational Diplomacy, Climate Governance and Californian Global Leadership.”](#) *Center on Public Diplomacy Policy Report*, March, 1-11.
- 2018 **Benjamin Leffel** and Sohaela Amiri, [“Sino-U.S. Sister City Relations: Subnational Networks and Paradiplomacy.”](#) *Rising Powers Quarterly* 3, no. 3, 111-123.
- 2017 **Benjamin Leffel** and Michele Acuto, [“City Diplomacy in the Age of Brexit and Trump.”](#) *Public Diplomacy Magazine*, no. 18, Summer/Fall, 2017, 9-14.
- 2017 John L. Graham and **Benjamin Leffel**. [“U.S.-China Barometer 2017.”](#) UC Irvine Long U.S.-China Institute
- 2017 **Benjamin Leffel** and Wenshan Jia, [“From MAD to MAG: Remaking U.S.-China Relations through the Subnational Level.”](#) *China-U.S. Focus*
- 2017 [“Rebirth of the Municipal Foreign Policy Movement”](#), Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California
- 2017 [“Citizen Diplomacy from the Ground Up: The Potential of Grassroots Diplomacy in U.S.-China Relations.”](#) *New Global Citizen*
- 2016 Michele Acuto, Mika Morissette, Dan Chan and **Benjamin Leffel**, [“‘City Diplomacy’ and Twinning: Lessons from the UK, China and Globally.”](#) *City Leadership Initiative, University College London*: Commissioned by Government Office for Science, United Kingdom
- 2014 [“China, Jobs and the U.S. Solar Industry.”](#) *The Manzella Report*
- 2013 [“U.S. State-Level China Representative Offices: Assessing American Subnational Export Assistance in the China Market.”](#) Master’s Thesis, The American University
- 2013 [“Chinese EB-5 Investment Creates Both Opportunities and Problems.”](#) *The Manzella Report*

FELLOWSHIPS and AWARDS

- 2020 Public Impact Distinguished Fellowship, UC Irvine
- 2020, 2017 Long U.S.-China Institute research grant, UC Irvine
- 2019 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant
- 2019 Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies Research Grant, UC Irvine

- 2018, 2017 Kugelman Citizen Peacebuilding Research Fellowship, UC Irvine
- 2018, 2016 Innovative Learning Technology Initiative Grant, UC Irvine
- 2018 GOLD Alumni Accomplishment Award, Otterbein University
- 2017 Honorary membership, Association of Public Diplomacy Scholars, University of Southern California
- 2016, 2015 Center for Asian Studies Research Grant, UC Irvine
- 2015 American Geophysical Union Scholarship, UC Irvine
- 2012 School of International Service Graduate Research Grant, The American University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, Merced, Sole Instructor

Environmental Sociology (fall 2020)
 Globalization (fall 2020)
 Urban Inequality (fall 2020)

University of California Irvine, Sole Instructor

China and The Global Order (fall 2016, spring 2018, spring 2019)

University of California Irvine, Teaching Assistant

Research Computing in the Social Sciences (fall 2014)
 Introduction to Sociology (winter 2015)
 Sociocultural Anthropology (spring 2016)
 Global Negotiation (summer 2017, summer 2018)
 Microeconomics for managers (winter 2017, winter 2018)
 Macroeconomics for managers (fall 2017, fall 2018)
 International management (winter 2019)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2020 *Leading Arctic Convergence Research with Social and Behavioral Science*. NSF Award #SES-1935653; PI, Holly M. Hapke, PhD.

- 2019 Data-Driven Yale Environmental Policy Lab, Yale-NUS
On-site research with Dr. Angel Hsu and the Data-Driven Lab to analyze global city-level climate finance flows, urban emissions reductions and predict various environmental governance outcomes
- 2019 Connecticut Green Bank
Joint research with Connecticut Green Bank on cost efficiency of public investments into state-wide residential solar fleet.
- 2018-2019 Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance, United Nations
Joint research collaboration agreement to gather data on climate finance flows data directly from allocating sources
- 2017- 2019 U.S.-China Barometer, with John Graham
Compiled statistical review of U.S.-China relations across, political-economic, environmental and security subject matter areas
- 2018-2019 World city hierarchy analysis, with Xiulian Ma, Chinese Academy of Governance
Coded multinational corporate headquarter-branch locations among 22,311 cities to extract network structure of world economy
- 2018 Transnational municipal network database, with Michele Acuto, University of Melbourne
Compiled and coded city government membership in environmental and climate governance-focused transnational municipal network worldwide
- 2016 Center for Innovative Diplomacy digital archive, California Digital Library
Co-created digital archive of *Bulletin of Municipal Foreign Policy* from late Cold War, later featured in *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Papers

- 2021 “Cities in polycentric governance: Multi-level analysis of transnational municipal network participation,” International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) Polycentricity Virtual Conference, May 17, video recording of presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NER1E5W0M9g>
- 2019 “Environmental governance landscape of 47,000 world cities: Interaction of environmental policy networks and environmental services industries,” International Studies Association West, Pasadena, Sept 28

- 2019 “Global corporate hierarchy in 22,000 cities: China vs. the world” American Sociological Association, New York, August 12
- 2019 “A Tale of Two Cities: Hong Kong, Shanghai and the Global City Hypothesis” American Sociological Association, New York, August 10
- 2019 “Effects of Direct Urban Climate Lending on Emissions Reduction in World Cities: New Insights on Global Climate Finance” Community and Urban Sociology Pre-Conference, New York, August 9
- 2019 “The carbon market in Chinese cities: Testing effects of carbon market and activity and knowledge capital access factors on urban emissions change,” International Studies Association, Toronto, Canada, March 26
- 2018 “Chinese Subnational Carbon Emissions and Global Climate Finance: Effects of Finance Versus Policy,” Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, CA, October 20
- 2018 Panel paper, “A Political Economy of Subnational and Non-State Climate Action,” International Studies Association Annual Conference, April 5
- 2018 Panel paper, “Transnationalism, Globalization, and Development: Contextualizing Development,” Pacific Sociological Association Conference, March 31
- 2017 Panel paper, “Directionality of Learning in Transnational City Environmental Networks: The Case of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment,” International Studies Association West Conference, Pasadena, CA, September 22
- 2017 “Green Transition of Hefei, China – Factors Underlying Environmental Reform,” Los Angeles Environmental Forum, Pasadena, CA, February 13
- 2017 “Enmity of the Underling: The Municipal Foreign Policy Movement, World Society and Universal Values,” CPD-Oxford Doctoral Conference on Digital and Public Diplomacy, University of Oxford, UK, June 2
- 2017 “City Diplomacy and Central Tendencies of International Environmental Cooperation,” University of Southern California City Diplomacy Conference, March 3
- 2016 Panel paper, “Chinese cities and climate change networking: Linking global city hierarchy to the environmental context,” California Sociological Association Conference, May 1

Chair and Moderator

- 2020 Private Meeting of the Minds on Subnational Diplomacy, German Marshall Fund of the United States, October 14

- 2018 Los Angeles Summit on City Diplomacy, University of Southern California, April 12
- 2018 Global Perspectives on Cultural Diplomacy Forum, International Studies Program, University of California Irvine, September 19
- 2015 International Seminar on Public Libraries Development, Hangzhou Public Library, Hangzhou, China, November 15

INVITED TALKS

- 2021 “Corporate climate disclosure, data analytics & policy engagement,” Ernst & Young Corporate Carbon Forum, June 10.
- 2021 [“US 2nd NDC and Multilevel Action Towards Glasgow COP26,”](#) ICLEI Global, April 21, 2021.
- 2020 “Filling the Green Gap: How Subnational Leaders are Confronting the Green Recovery,” German Marshall Fund of the United States, October 14
- 2020 “Leading with Local Action: U.S. Local Governments Contribute to Global Processes Past, Present, Future,” ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, September 23
- 2019 “Corporate sustainability,” School of Business, California State University Long Beach, September 27
- 2018 “Organizational communication and international non-profits,” School of Communication, Chapman University, November 14
- 2018 “Non-traditional and subnational diplomacy,” School of Communication, Chapman University, November 14

CAMPUS TALKS

University of California Irvine

- 2019 “Big Data Statistical Analysis,” Paul Merage School of Business, March 11
- 2019 “Climate finance analytics,” Paul Merage School of Business, January 15
- 2018 Co-creator and lecturer, “Executive education program for immigrant investors,” Paul Merage School of Business, University of California Irvine
- 2018 “Culture and Negotiations,” Paul Merage School of Business, December 5
- 2018 “Theorizing municipal foreign policy,” School of Social Sciences, September 12

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Alliance for Research on Corporate Sustainability, 2021-present
American Sociological Association, 2016-present
Association of Public Diplomacy Scholars (honorary), 2017-present
International Studies Association, 2016-present

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Geographic Information Systems
Social network analysis
Gephi network visualization software
Linear and generalized regression modeling

LANGUAGES

English (native)
Mandarin Chinese (proficient)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2015-2017 Research Associate, China Partnership of Greater Philadelphia

2013-2016 Director of Research, The Tai Initiative

2013 Research advisor to Special Representative of Global Intergovernmental Affairs,
Reta Jo Lewis, U.S. Department of State

2010-2011 Research Consultant, International City/County Management Association, China
Center. Hunan, China

2010-2011 Consultant, Global Placement Specialists, Inc., Hunan, China

2009-2010 Student Recruitment Coordinator, Center for International Education and Global
Engagement, Otterbein University

2009 Research consultant, Columbus Sister Cities International economic impact
analysis and budget justification, Columbus City Council, Ohio

REFERENCES

David A. Smith
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John Graham
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