

2026

Business PHD Research Conference

November 27, 2026

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Conference Program

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The 2026 Business Ph.D. Research Conference Committee would like to acknowledge that the University of Alberta, its buildings, labs, and research stations are primarily located on the traditional territory of Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, and Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe nations; lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 and homeland of the Métis. The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems, and cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit nations.

2026 BRC Committee Members:

Roham Bahri, Emma Fang, Yufei Ren, Yi Wei, Yulong Zhang

BDA Representative: Masoum Talebi

Master Schedule

2026 Business PhD Research Conference
November 27, 2026
Business Building Room 5-04

TIME	EVENT
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome and Opening Remarks
9:10 – 9:45	3MT Presentations Session 1
9:45 – 10:00	BREAK
10:00 – 10:50	Poster Session
10:50 – 11:00	BREAK
11:00 – 11:30	Presentation 1 – Bijit Ghosh, Marketing
11:30 – 12:00	Pick up lunch in Lobby and eat
12:00 – 1:30	Lunch Panel: AI for Research
1:30 – 1:45	BREAK
1:45 – 2:15	Presentation 2 – Conroy Smith, SEM
2:15 – 2:45	Presentation 3 – Chunzhen Huang, OIS
2:45 – 3:00	BREAK
3:00 – 3:35	3MT Presentations Session 2
3:35 – 3:45	Closing Remarks

Discussion & Feedback Guidelines

A key objective of the Business Ph.D. Research Conference is to allow students to learn about the broad range of business research topics being explored by their colleagues Students are encouraged to provide feedback and think critically about other presenter's research.

To encourage interdisciplinary engagement with business research, all students are encouraged to view all posters and provide constructive feedback. Students whose submissions are being discussed are expected to be in attendance to answer questions, receive feedback, and engage in active discussion of their work.

The **Presentations** will consist of a 15-minute talk followed by 15 minutes of discussion, with opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

The **Poster Sessions** will allow attendees to wander among posters and interact with authors and their research.

The **3MT presentations** have three minutes and one slide to engage the audience with their research. There is no time allocated after each presentation for a question from the audience, however the audience is encouraged to provide feedback via the QR code or talk with the presenters during breaks.

All attendees are reminded that while attending the conference all university guidelines and policies, such as those concerning respectful and inclusive conversations, should be followed.

Detailed Schedule

Welcome and Opening Remarks — 9:00 – 9:10

Yufei Ren (BRC Committee)
Sarah Moore (Associate Dean PhD and Research)
Trish Reay (Vice Dean)

3MT Session 1 — 9:10 – 9:45

Moderator Ria Boodram; Timekeeper Ali Sheibanishakib

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Do smart CEOs make good decisions?

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Managing Under Illiberalism

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The Real Cost of FX Hedging

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A Price Worth Following: Learning Pricing Recommendations When Sellers Have the Final Say

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One for All: Centralized Destination Decision-Making for Emergency Medical Services

Yulong Zhang (Accounting) — Page 11

Strategic Manipulation around Endogenous Benchmarks: Evidence from Russell Index Reconstitution

BREAK

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Inventory and Distribution Decisions in Manufacturing Supply Chains

Samira Jafari (SEM) Page 22

Women Entrepreneurs in Conservative versus Progressive Cultures: Coping Efforts and Outcomes

Jen Kotadia (SEM) Page 23

The Public Trajectory of Vibe Coding: How a Theory of Work Becomes a Regime of Knowing

Arjang Nikbakht (Marketing) Page 15

Pricing of Intellectual Properties in Duopolies with Asymmetrical Market Bases

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Emotional Rescue: How Fan Community Repair Celebrity Following Misconduct

Jessica Therrien (Marketing) Page 17

Appropriation of the Everyday: When brands intrude on meaningful but overlooked everyday cultural objects

Xin Yang (Accounting) Page 10

Naming Names After the Lawsuit: Securities Class Actions and the Disclosure of Customer Identities

Hanru Zhang (SEM) Page 25

Orchestrating for Alignment During Platformization: How Incumbent Firms Manage Role Hybridity

BREAK

Presentation 1 – Bijit Ghosh (Marketing) **11:00-11:30**

Unwrapping Expectations: How and Why Opening Multiple Gifts Impacts Receivers Page 14

Lunch pickup in lobby & eat on 5th floor in any room **11:30-12:00**

(5-13, 5-06, 5-40 or small lobby breakout rooms)

Lunch Panel – AI for Research **12:00 – 1:30**

Moderator Cindy Grappe

Vern Glaser (SEM)

Jay Hyun (BUEC)

Minjae Kim (Accounting)

Paul Messinger (Marketing)

Borzou Rostami (Operations Management)

Valeri Sokolovski (Finance)

BREAK

Presentation 2 – Conroy Smith (SEM) **1:45-2:15**

Seeing the Person, Seeing the System: Using Human-Centered and Systems-Thinking Design and Rich Picture to Study Marginalized Populations Page 24

Presentation 3 – Chunzhen Huang (OIS) **2:15-2:45**

Video Game Operation Page 18

BREAK

3MT Session 2 — 3:00-3:35

Moderator Esther Chau; Timekeeper Ali Sheibanishakib

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AI is NOT Artificial Intelligence: AI is a friendly 'computer;' Artificial Intelligence is a scary 'robot'

Irene Qin (Accounting) — Page 9

Competing for Accounting Capacity: Single Audit Exemptions and Municipal Borrowing Costs

Soroush Sadeghi (OIS) — Page 19

Optimal ambulance location incorporating multiple transport modes and weather-related unavailability

Hyeonju Shin (Marketing) — Page 16

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Alireza Tariverdi (Accounting) — Page 10

Fair value subjectivity, reporting flexibility and investment efficiency

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Same Brand, Same Voice? How Consistency in Brand Writing Drives Engagement with Social Media Content

Yi Wei (Marketing) — Page 17

The Same Correction, Two Audiences: Perspective Gaps in Managerial Responses to Online Reviews

Closing Remarks — 3:35-3:45

BDA President Masoum Talebi, Sarah Moore, Yufei Ren

Accounting Abstracts

Stephanie F. Cheng (Tulane University), Minjia Li,
Zhaoyang (Irene) Qin, Ke Wang

Competing for Accounting Capacity: Single Audit Exemptions and Municipal Borrowing Costs

3MT

We study how relief from one audit mandate affects information production under another reporting regime. In 2015, the Uniform Guidance raised the federal expenditure threshold for a Single Audit from $500,000 to $750,000, allowing some local governments to become exempt from the additional federal-program audit requirements while continuing to provide financial information to municipal bond investors. Using a difference-in-differences design, we find that newly exempt governments experience a decline in municipal bond spreads of approximately 27 basis points. The decline is accompanied by improvements in continuing disclosure and is larger when the pre-reform Single Audit is more demanding, or governments have more limited organizational capacity. In contrast, the effect is attenuated when prior internal-control weaknesses make audit monitoring more valuable. These findings reveal a trade-off in audit regulation. Single Audits provide monitoring benefits, but complying with them can also draw resources from other reporting activities. More broadly, our evidence documents a cross-mandate spillover in information production: the resource demands of one audit requirement can affect information produced under another regulatory regime and, ultimately, the cost of external finance.

Karim Jamal, **Alireza Tariverdi**

Fair value subjectivity, reporting flexibility and investment efficiency

3MT

Companies must report what some of their assets are worth, yet some of those values rest more on estimates and assumptions than on market prices. Research suggests that managers who care about the near-term share price may invest differently from what is best for the firm in the long run. Some theory predicts too little investment in long-term projects, because investors may not trust values they cannot verify. Other theory predicts too much, because managers can invest heavily to signal that their projects are good. Studies also disagree on whether giving managers more say over reported values helps or hurts. This research asks how the amount of judgment in a valuation, and managers' involvement in this judgment, shape the decisions of managers who rely on those numbers. Using an online experiment with working professionals in a business decision role, we examine how different amounts of estimation in a valuation, and different arrangements for producing it, relate to investment choices.

Xin Yang

Naming Names After the Lawsuit:
Securities Class Actions and the Disclosure of Customer Identities

Poster

When a firm's alleged misconduct becomes public, does it tell investors less about whom it sells to? We study the customer-identity disclosure of U.S. suppliers around the filing of a securities class action, the first identifiable public revelation of alleged misconduct. Contrary to the proprietary-cost intuition that scrutiny pushes firms toward secrecy, sued firms name more of their customers after the filing.

Leixing Jiang, Minjae Kim, **Yulong Zhang**

Strategic Manipulation around Endogenous Benchmarks: Evidence from Russell Index Reconstitution

3MT

The growing importance of passive investing has raised concerns about the governance of index providers, particularly their discretion in selecting index constituents. Transparent, rule-based index construction is often viewed as a way to address these concerns. However, we argue that such rules may create incentives for firms to strategically influence their index assignments. Using the Russell 1000 and Russell 2000 indices as our setting, we examine whether firms near the market capitalization cutoff engage in downward earnings management or strategically time voluntary disclosures to increase their likelihood of being assigned to the Russell 2000. Unlike traditional earnings management settings, where firms target a fixed benchmark, the cutoff in our setting is endogenously determined by the market capitalizations of competing firms. We further examine how the introduction of the Russell banding rule in 2007 affects firms' manipulation incentives. Although the rule makes it more difficult for incumbent Russell 1000 firms to move into the Russell 2000, it also reduces the incentives of incumbent Russell 2000 firms to manipulate, thereby weakening competition around the cutoff. We therefore predict that the banding rule reduces manipulation by incumbent Russell 2000 firms but increases manipulation by incumbent Russell 1000 firms. Our study extends the literature on earnings management and voluntary disclosure to a setting in which firms compete over an endogenous benchmark and examines how rule-based index construction affects firms' strategic behavior.

Finance Abstracts

Emma Fang

Do smart CEOs make good decisions?

3MT

We usually trust experienced people to make the best decisions. However, academic research shows that experts often fall into an experience trap. When market rules change, experienced leaders tend to rely on old habits and become overly confident, leading to hidden and costly mistakes. This raises a crucial question for shareholders: What is better for a company: an experienced CEO who makes a costly mistake, or a less experienced leader who makes safe decisions? To address this gap, this study proposes an empirical research by analyzing financial data across different industries.

Jay Hyun, **Golnoush Omidali,** Colin Ward

The Real Cost of FX Hedging

3MT

Exchange rates obey a factor structure. But do factor exposures enlighten economists beyond risk and return? We argue currency risk amplifies transient spikes in foreign uncertainty that restrict foreign inward investment. We call this effect carry-amplification, develop a novel theory of it, and test it empirically. We find supporting evidence in country-level aggregates and in firm-level supply chain micro data. The effects concentrate in emerging markets and we contend that, over a long period of time, greater currency factor exposure can dampen their economic growth.

Marketing Abstracts

Ardalan Eyni

AI is NOT Artificial Intelligence: AI is a friendly 'computer;' Artificial Intelligence is a scary 'robot'

3MT

In a discrete lexical association task (preregistered), 912 participants viewed either 'AI' or 'Artificial Intelligence' on screen. Their task was to type in the first word that comes to their mind then. I predicted that in the 'Artificial Intelligence' condition (compared to the 'AI'), due to the amplified state of uncertainty, the average lag to enter the first letter and the last letter, the average time elapsed in between, the number of unique responses, and the ratio of responses charged with negativity/suspicion are significantly larger. The mean character counts across conditions did not differ (p=.446). Results provided evidence for all the above predictions. In the condition where participants viewed 'Artificial Intelligence' (vs. 'AI') I observed: a longer average time until they entered the first letter (M=4.79", SD=4.55" vs. M=3.93", SD=4.17", F=7.62, p=.006, ηp2=.010), the last letter (M=6.47", SD=5.95" vs. M=8.64", SD=8.36", F=17.52, p=.000, ηp2=.022), time elapsed in between (M=3.85", SD=6.17" vs. M=2.54", SD=3.62", F=13.14, p=.000, ηp2=.017), a greater number of unique responses (149 vs. 124), and a greater ratio of concepts charged with negativity/suspicion (33.9% vs. 26.2%, $\chi 2(1, N=781)=5.46$, p=.020, φ=.084). Interestingly, conditions also varied in terms of the most frequent response. While the most frequent response in the 'AI' condition was 'computer' (rate= 12% vs. 7%), it was 'robot(s)' in the 'Artificial Intelligence' condition (rate= 15% vs. 9%) – providing additional evidence on negativity of 'Artificial Intelligence' relative to 'AI' if we agree that 'robot' is semantically tied with negative concepts more strongly than 'computer.'

Olya Bryksina (University of Winnipeg), **Bijit Ghosh,** Katie Lafreniere

Unwrapping Expectations:
How and Why Opening Multiple Gifts Impacts Receivers

15-minute presentation

Conventional wisdom suggests that it is better to receive multiple gifts than a single gift from a loved one because it provides more opportunities for positive receiver outcomes. However, this research finds that gifts in general may result in less positive outcomes because receivers who are about to open a gift are motivated to imagine many really desirable possibilities and develop high expectations. It proposes that receivers may feel even less positive after opening multiple gifts because the impact of each gift falling short of expectations is compounded. First, an experiment shows that consumers feel progressively less positive after opening each gift compared with before opening their gifts. Second, four experiments test the impact of multiple gifts. Compared with a single gift of equal value, multiple gifts negatively impact receivers' feelings, gift evaluations, and the number of receivers who would return the gift(s). These effects emerge with different types of gifts, including physical gifts and gift cards. Multiple gifts worsen receiver outcomes because of perceptions that the gifts are worse than expected. However, givers may improve outcomes by wrapping the gifts together in one package, disclosing the contents of the gifts in advance, or saving high value gifts for last.

Bora Kolfal, Paul Messinger, **Arjang Nikbakht**

Pricing of Intellectual Properties in Duopolies with Asymmetrical Market Bases

Poster

There are multiple benefits a patent can have for firms, such as cost advantage or quality enhancement. The main question addressed in the second essay is which player in a market-base asymmetrical duopoly, where firms offer imperfectly substitutable products, will buy the patent made available by a third-party firm and what price is ultimately paid for the patent under both simultaneous-move and sequential-move game structures. I assume this patent is of two types: cost-reducing or market-base increasing. The decision process is based on comparing firms' willingness to pay for the patent. The main findings are (1) the firm with a higher market base is the patent buyer, and (2) the buyers' willingness to pay is increasing with respect to the initial market-base asymmetry between firms, but the patent price is decreasing with respect to this asymmetry. I also find the patent price is increasing with respect to the substitutability between firms' products except when the weaker firm becomes the leader if it buys the patent (as this firm becomes too strong to remain the follower) and has an incentive to use the patent instead of hiding it. In such cases, patent price is first increasing and then decreasing with respect to the substitutability between firms' products. When firms have identical initial market bases, either firm buys the patent except in two cases: (1) a sequential-move game with the cost reducing patent when one specific firm is the leader regardless of who the patent buyer is, and (2) a sequential- move game with either patent types when the patent buyer becomes the leader, but the follower firm is unwilling to implement the patent and sacrifice second-mover advantage. The firm initially assigned leadership buys the patent in both (1) and (2).

Noah Castelo, Katie Lafreniere, **Hyeonju Shin**

Crowded by an AI Friend

3MT

AI companion apps are a growing part of the "loneliness economy," marketed as a remedy for social isolation. Yet human interaction remains more effective than AI at reducing loneliness. While prior research has focused on how AI companions affect users' own well-being, we ask how other people respond to those users. Across experiments, we find that learning someone uses an AI companion reduces others' willingness to socialize with them. For example, when choosing a partner for a real-time chat, only 24% of participants chose a profile indicating AI companion use. We propose that this penalty arises because AI companions change who fills the companion role: many people believe companionship requires a person, so choosing an AI companion is seen as violating beliefs about relationships. These findings reveal a paradox: a product marketed as a remedy for loneliness may leave its users further removed from human connection. We extend AI companion research to the observer's perspective and discuss ways to reduce the social cost of AI companion use.

Paul Messinger, Sarah Moore**, Roghi Teimourfamian**

Same Brand, Same Voice? How Consistency in Brand Writing Drives Engagement with Social Media Content

3MT

Brands communicate with consumers primarily through writing on online platforms. This research focuses on an overlooked aspect of brand communication: brand voice, or how a brand writes. Brand voice is captured by the writing choices a brand makes, such as using emojis or passive sentences, to express and arrange its messages. First, building on the linguistics literature, we organize these writing choices into a typology with two categories, expressive and structural, and show that our categorization holds empirically using brand posts on X and Instagram. Second, we examine whether brands benefit from maintaining a consistent voice in their writing over time. We propose that consistency has an inverted U-shaped effect on engagement: medium consistency elicits the strongest consumer response by enhancing perceived authenticity.

Jennifer Argo, Katie Lafreniere, **Jessica Therrien**

Appropriation of the Everyday: When brands intrude on meaningful but overlooked everyday cultural objects

Poster

As brands engage in ethnic marketing, they need to understand how the use of different types of ethnic objects may be interpreted by their target market. The present research specifically examines the use of everyday ethnic objects in marketing communications and how different ethnic groups may respond to that use. Two lab studies and two field studies examine how the use of everyday ethnic objects in marketing may be interpreted by ethnic groups. Field Study 1 establishes the importance of these objects to ethnic groups. Study 2 demonstrates that the use of these objects in marketing communications by outsider brands may elicit perceptions of cultural appropriation, which can lead to negative downstream effects. Study 3 demonstrates that this effect may be driven by perceptions of intrusiveness. Field Study 4 demonstrates the use of everyday ethnic objects in a real world marketing context may lead to negative effects when used by outsider brands, but positive effects when used by insider brands.

Katie Lafreniere, Sarah Moore, **Yi Wei**

The Same Correction, Two Audiences:
Perspective Gaps in Managerial Responses to Online Reviews

3MT

When businesses respond to negative online reviews, these public replies are read by two audiences: the writer who wrote the complaint, and prospective consumers (readers) who are browsing reviews. This research examines corrections, or managerial responses that address a complaint by clarifying the relevant facts (e.g., “this promotion ended yesterday”). Three experiments show that the difference in business evaluation following a correction versus other managerial responses (e.g., apology) is more positive for readers than writers. The correction lowers perceived empathy for both, but raises confidence in the disputed attribute only for readers, who lack the firsthand experience writers already have.

Operations & Information Systems Abstracts

Roham Bahri, Borzou Rostami

Inventory and Distribution Decisions in Manufacturing Supply Chains

Poster

This study investigates how coordinating decisions across a manufacturing and distribution network can improve operational efficiency while maintaining high customer service levels. Using real operational data from Lifting Solutions, an industrial equipment manufacturer and supplier, we examine interconnected decisions involving inventory placement, replenishment, lateral transfers between locations, and emergency shipments. We explore alternative network configurations and inventory policies, considering transportation lead times, transfer capacities, and service requirements. The goal is to develop an integrated decision-making framework that balances inventory costs, operational flexibility, and responsiveness to customer demand.

Ji Chen (Dongbei U of Finance & Economics), Likang Ding (Dongbei U of Finance & Economics), **Chunzhen Huang,** Bora Kolfal

Video Game Operation

15-minute presentation

The rapid evolution of the digital entertainment industry has shifted the paradigm of video games from one-off products to Games-as-a-Service (GaaS) models (Dubois and Weststar (2022)), which are also known as “live-service games.” The longevity and profitability of a live-service game depend not only on its initial design but also on the efficiency of its live- service operations, particularly through periodical “in-game events.” These in-game events with special items and limited-time access, serve as the primary levers for game operators to regulate player engagement and facilitate monetization. However, operators can only observe granular player behavioral data—such as playtime and transaction amounts—which are merely noisy manifestations of the underlying player psychological states. Though previous analytical frameworks (Huang et al. (2019), Guo et al. (2025)) provide insights regarding player engagement and purchase intention, the interaction between in-game events and player behavior remains unexplored. To address this gap, we develop a dual-layer Hidden Markov Model (HMM) that connects the latent behavioral dynamics of players with operational event design decisions. We then construct a heuristic that provides a computationally efficient approach to assign items to an event and provide an optimality lower bound guarantee for our heuristic under certain assumptions.

Erfan Rafieikia, Borzou Rostami

A Price Worth Following: Learning Pricing Recommendations When Sellers Have the Final Say

3MT

What makes a pricing recommendation effective? Is it the price that maximizes predicted revenue, or the price a seller is willing to follow? Online marketplaces increasingly use algorithms to recommend prices, but sellers often retain the final decision. A mathematically optimal recommendation may fail if sellers ignore it or follow it only partially. This research develops a data-driven pricing framework that accounts for seller behavior, contextual demand, and limited inventory. Using real marketplace data and synthetic experiments, we investigate how to learn pricing policies that anticipate seller responses rather than assume full compliance. Our goal is to design recommendations that are not only profitable in theory but also credible and practical for sellers.

Armann Ingolfsson, Borzou Rostami, **Soroush Sadeghi**

Optimal ambulance location incorporating multiple transport modes and weather-related unavailability

3MT

In this talk, we study the problem of locating emergency medical service resources in sparse, extreme-weather regions where multi-modal transport is required for effective emergency response. We model the system as a bi-level optimization problem to locate ground ambulance, helicopter, and fixed-wing bases, alongside rendezvous points, to maximize coverage and minimize pre-hospital time. The main contribution of this work is the integrated optimization of six transport modes under weather-dependent availability. In regions where severe weather can ground aircraft or block roads for extended periods, explicitly modeling these disruptions is essential for designing a network that remains reliable when it is needed most. In addition to weather, the model accounts for operational unavailability due to maintenance and concurrent calls, and it supports helicopter–ambulance coordination through rendezvous points. We reformulate the bi-level model as a single-level mixed-integer linear program using strong duality, which allows strategic infrastructure placement and tactical dispatch decisions to be optimized simultaneously across multiple scenarios. The model has been validated using real-world data from Iceland, and we will next apply it to data from Ontario, Canada.

Mohamad Soltani, **Masoum Talebi**

One for All: Centralized Destination Decision-Making for Emergency Medical Services

3MT

Ambulance offload delays are a persistent bottleneck in emergency medical services (EMS), delaying patient care and reducing ambulance availability. Current destination decisions often prioritize the nearest clinically appropriate emergency department (ED), without fully accounting for congestion at receiving EDs. This research develops a centralized, data-driven framework to support ambulance destination decisions by considering both transport time and expected offload delays. Using data from four major EDs in Calgary, we integrate information from EMS, EDs, and inpatient units to capture patient characteristics, ED congestion, and downstream inpatient occupancy. We employ quantile regression forests to estimate the distribution of ambulance offload times for each patient at each feasible ED. These probabilistic forecasts account for uncertainty and enable the assessment of the likelihood of meeting specified offload-time targets. The proposed framework aims to support more informed ambulance routing decisions, with potential benefits for timely patient care and ambulance availability.

Strategy, Entrepreneurship & Management Abstracts

Marton Gera (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University), Pursey Heugens (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University), Wenjie Liu (City University of Hong Kong)

Managing Under Illiberalism

3MT

What is it like to manage under illiberalism? An increasing fraction of firms globally are either 'born under illiberalism' or 'enveloped by illiberalism' as liberal democracy is under attack and illiberal factions gain power even in states once regarded exemplary democracies. This political shift has significant consequences for firms, managers, and management theories developed under liberal democratic conditions. We review studies from eight countries where firms are 'born under illiberalism' (like China and Russia) and 16 countries in which firms were later 'enveloped by illiberalism' (like Turkey and the United States), uncovering the unique challenges illiberalism creates for firms as well as the strategic responses they adopt. Our constitutive review reveals that illiberalism undermines the rational-legal basis of business, attacks cultural pluralism, and undercuts economic competitiveness. We develop a theoretical account of firms' strategic adaptations to illiberalism by juxtaposing the directionality and visibility of their actions (comprising strategic alignment, silent accommodation, concealed resistance, and public contestation). Our work shows that firms in 'born-illiberal' countries either signal overt regime alignment or covertly comply through silent accommodation. Meanwhile, in 'enveloped-illiberal' countries, some firms publicly resist illiberal pressure through contestation or adopt more covert ways of resistance, while others nevertheless choose to pursue compliant strategies. These findings engender a compelling agenda for future research: they invite further scrutiny of how the strategies of 'born under illiberalism' firms differ from those that were 'enveloped by illiberalism' and encourage management scholars to reflect on the 'silent assumptions' upholding theories developed in liberal settings.

Samira Jafari

Women Entrepreneurs in Conservative versus Progressive Cultures: Coping Efforts and Outcomes

Poster

Women entrepreneurs encounter gender-based challenges that vary across institutional and cultural contexts. Drawing on institutional theory, lack-of-fit theory, and stress-appraisal-coping theory, this research examines how women entrepreneurs cope with gender-related constraints, how their coping strategies differ across conservative and progressive cultural environments, and how these strategies influence their business success and personal well-being. The research adopts a comparative, mixed-methods approach involving three groups of women entrepreneurs: Iranian women operating businesses in Iran, Canadian women operating businesses in Canada, and Iranian immigrant women operating businesses in Canada. The qualitative study explores the coping strategies women employ, including self-focused responses and externally oriented approaches, while examining how institutional environments shape their strategic choices. A subsequent quantitative study will investigate the relationships between coping strategies, entrepreneurial outcomes, and well-being across the three groups. By comparing women entrepreneurs across these distinct contexts, the dissertation aims to advance understanding of gendered institutional constraints, entrepreneurial agency, and the persistence of institutional influences following migration.

Vern Glaser, **Jennifer Kotadia**

The Public Trajectory of Vibe Coding: How a Theory of Work Becomes a Regime of Knowing

Poster

Professions, entrepreneurs, and organizations act on theories of how work should be done, yet we know little about how such theories form. We follow vibe coding, the term Andrej Karpathy coined in February 2025 for building software by handing the code to AI agents, through its first year of public debate. Practitioners named the practice, argued over it, tested it, and built livelihoods around it until the field settled on a new name, agentic engineering. The field came to agree on how to do and value the work but left open who answers for what AI agents produce. The case shows how a field builds a theory of work in public before organizations adopt it, and why a theory that no single actor owns can leave accountability unresolved.

Yufei Ren, Milo Wang (Arizona State University)

Emotional Rescue: How Fan Community Repair Celebrity Following Misconduct

Poster

As a distinctive form of emotional social evaluation, celebrity is an important social approval asset, yet its fragility creates an ongoing need for repair. The contemporary social media environment enhances the significance and durability of celebrity, making celebrity repair increasingly important and audience participation increasingly central to this process. Yet existing literature has paid insufficient attention to audience agency in celebrity repair. In this research, we examine the role of supportive audiences through a case study of a fan community surrounding a celebrity singer following a scandal. Our emerging findings suggest a dynamic process of emotional repair in which the fan community first engages in self-repair and then seeks to influence the wider public audience. By examining how supportive audiences participate in this process, this study aims to contribute to the celebrity literature and the broader literature on social evaluation, while also advancing the growing conversation on emotions and organizations.

Conroy Smith

Seeing the Person, Seeing the System:
Using Human-Centered and Systems-Thinking Design
and Rich Picture to Study Marginalized Populations

15-minute presentation

Organizational research on marginalization often struggles to capture how interlocking systems shape the lived experiences of those at the margins. Reductionist methods isolate individuals or variables from the systems in which they are embedded, while participatory approaches that center marginalized voices rarely engage with those systems. This paper proposes an approach that attends simultaneously to the person and the system by integrating the rich picture, a collective sense-making method from soft systems methodology, into Both's (2018) human-centered and systems thinking design (HCSTD) framework. Moving the framework from a practical tool used in organizations to a method for organizational research, the paper describes eight steps across two phases. In the human-centered phase, researchers gather accounts through interviews or workshops and create prompts. In the systems thinking phase, participants complete and interpret the picture, and researchers translate the results into theoretical propositions or models. The paper offers three reasons the method suits marginalized populations: it repositions participants as co-interpreters, its visual and relational format surfaces feedback loops and structural interdependencies, and it adapts across designs. It addresses rigor, ethics, and boundary conditions. It contributes a guide for using rich pictures in organizational research and moves inquiry from understanding a phenomenon toward theory.

Song Wang (Zhejiang University), Jiaming Yang (Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics), **Hanru Zhang (Zhejiang University)**

Orchestrating for Alignment During Platformization: How Incumbent Firms Manage Role Hybridity

Poster

Platformization requires incumbent firms to open organizational boundaries without abandoning their internal organizational commitments. This dual mandate exposes them to increasingly heterogeneous participant expectations and makes alignment a central challenge. Yet we know little about how incumbent firms achieve such alignment during platformization. We examine this challenge through a nine-year longitudinal study of Haier's platformization, tracing the evolution of the Haier Advanced R&D Center into the Haier Open Partnership Ecosystem (HOPE). We find that platformization generated role hybridity as new platform roles were layered onto existing organizational roles. To manage the resulting alignment challenge, Haier shifted from problem-oriented matching, to module-governed community orchestration, and ultimately to infrastructure-mediated spanning orchestration. These shifts progressively reconfigured who participated, how actors connected, and how interactions were organized, enabling alignment to expand from bilateral problem solving to community coordination and ecosystem-wide interaction. We contribute to platformization research by showing how role hybridity emerges and is managed during incumbent transformation, and to orchestration research by showing how orchestration enables alignment as focal firms take on increasingly heterogeneous platform roles.

Poster and Presenter Index

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Chau, Esther	SEM	3MT Afternoon	Moderator
Dufresne, Chelsea	SEM		Reviewer
E Baloochi, Mehri	SEM		Reviewer
El Kailani, Omima	SEM		Reviewer
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