

THAO PHAM

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EDUCATION

The University of Wisconsin - Madison

Madison, WI, USA

PhD in Education Policy Studies (Minor: Economics of Education)

Expected: 2028

- Dissertation Topic: Institutional Legacies Across Borders: Vietnamese and Southeast Asian Refugees Between Homeland and Diaspora
- Committee: Ran Liu (primary advisor); Stacy Lee; Nam Kim; Sameer K. Deshpande

The University of Wisconsin - Madison

Madison, WI, USA

Master in Applied Statistics

2026

- Thesis Topic: The Missing Link: Tracing Confucian Heritage to Understand Spatial Educational Inequality in Vietnam
- Committee: Sameer K. Deshpande, Ran Liu, Chris Geoga

Indiana University

Bloomington, IN, USA

Master of Public Administration, Concentrated in Public Finance

2017

University of Manchester

Manchester, UK

Bachelor of Economic Sciences

2011

AFFILIATIONS

Affiliation	Institution	Year
Interdisciplinary Training Program in Education Sciences	University of Wisconsin–Madison	2023–Present
The Institute for Diversity Science	University of Wisconsin–Madison	2023–Present
Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE)	University of Wisconsin–Madison	2024–Present
Southeast Asia Research Group (SEARG)	University of Wisconsin–Madison	2025–Present
Center for Demography and Ecology	University of Wisconsin–Madison	2025–Present

PUBLICATIONS

Published papers

Articles marked with an asterisk are co-authored with my students.

- **Pham, T.P.** and Le, T.T.H. (2025), “Unveiling key determinants of higher education expenditure in Vietnam: an adaptive LASSO approach in Tobit regression analysis”, *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 833–851. DOI
 - Best Student Paper Award by Vietnam-America Association for Public Affairs and Policy
- **Pham, T.P.**, Nguyen Thi Khanh Chi, Tuan Anh Truong & Nam Hoang Vu (2023), “Inquiries into Farmers’ Perception of Biodiversity in Vietnam: A Systematic Analysis”, *Forum for Social Economics*. DOI
- Tran, T.-V., **Pham, T.P.**, Nguyen, M.-H., Do, L.-T. and Pham, H.-H. (2022), “Economic efficiency of higher education institutions in Vietnam between 2012 and 2016: a DEA analysis”, *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 199–212. DOI
- *Dang, T.H., Nguyen, N.L., Nguyen T.K., and **Pham, T.P.** (2022), “Determinants of Willingness to pay for Education: A Content Review”, *Vietnam Journal of Education*, ISSN: 2354-0753

- * **Pham, T.P.**, Tran, H., Hoang, T. (2022), “Financial policy for university students in Vietnam: Some observations and recommendations”, Review of Finance, ISSN: 2615-8973
- * **Pham, T.P.**, Ha, T., Chau, M. (2022), “Paving the Road to Education Export: How governments prepare for Internationalization of Higher Education in Asia”, Journal of Education Management, ISSN: 1859-2910

Works in Progress

- **Pham, T.P.**, “Confucianism and Gender Disparities in Educational Investment in Vietnam: A Spatial Analysis”
- **Pham, T.P.**, “Natural Language Processing of Vietnamese American Community Discourse in Irvine, California”
- **Pham, T.P.**, “The Missing Link: Tracing Confucian Heritage to Understand Spatial Educational Inequality in Vietnam”
- **Pham, T.P.**, “Tracing Confucian Legacies: Causal Mechanisms Shaping Educational Achievement Gaps in Vietnam”
- **Pham, T.P.**, “Educational Achievement Among Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States, England, and France: Associations with Confucian and Indochinese Legacies”
- Liu, R. & **Pham, T.P.**, “Gender and Racial Inequalities in School-to-Work Linkages: The Interplay Between Horizontal Mismatch and Educational Field Specificity”

Policy briefs and reports

- Development Master plan for Tu Nghia District in Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam for People’s Committee of Quang Ngai Province, vision to 2030 (2022)
- Tax policies for Vietnam, Vietnam Initiative’s Policy Memo for Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc (2016)
- Assessment of the financing framework for municipal infrastructure in Vietnam for World Bank and Minister of Finance (2013)

Legal and Regulatory Drafting (Government of Vietnam)

- Circular No. 99/2015/TT-CP on the issuance of government-guaranteed bonds, Ministry of Finance (2015)
- Decree No. 15/2015/ND-CP on public–private partnership (PPP) investment (2015)
- Decree No. 16/2014/ND-CP on the management of Vietnam’s international balance of payments (2014)

Conferences

- **2026:** Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), American Educational Research Association (AERA), Social Science History Association (SSHA)
- **2025:** Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), American Sociological Association (ASA), and ISA Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification and Mobility (RC28)
- **2024:** UW-Madison Research Bazaar, Education Policy Studies Annual Conference, Diversity Institutes Annual Conference, ASA Wisconsin Chapter.
- **2022:** Vietnam Economist Annual Meeting (VEAM)

RESEARCH GRANTS

Research Project (Funding Body)	Role	Year	Value
UW-Madison Institute for Diversity Science (UW-Madison, USA)	-	2025	\$3,000
Institute for Regional and International Studies (UW-Madison, USA)	-	2025	\$3,000

United States Institute of Peace (USA)	-	2025	\$2,000
UW-Madison Institute for Diversity Science (UW-Madison, USA)	PA	2024	\$35,000
Global Engagement Office Summer Research (UW-Madison, USA)	-	2024	\$2,283
Perception of Wealth and the Rich (FNF, VN)	RA	2021	\$4,000
Household Higher Education Spending in Vietnam (FTU, VN)	PI	2020	\$1,000
Improving Career Guidance and Lifelong Learning in Vietnam (MoEt, VN)	Member	2019	\$32,000

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

Award Name	Institution	Year	Value
Amy Ling Yellow Light Award	University of Wisconsin, Madison	2026	\$250
John R. Palmer Award	University of Wisconsin, Madison	2026	\$3,350
Travel Award	University of Wisconsin, Madison	2026	\$1,500
International Peace Scholarship	P.E.O. International	2024	\$10,000
Runner-up Essay Contest	The Waging Peace in Vietnam	2024	\$100
Alumni Fellowship	University of Wisconsin, Madison	2023	\$24,500
Best Student Paper Award	Vietnam-America Association for Public Affairs	2023	\$100
Best Paper Award	Vietnam Science Summer School	2020	\$50
Full Tuition & Scholarship	Vietnam Young Leader Award	2015	\$37,500
Merit Scholarship	The Northern Consortium of UK Universities	2009	£6,000

WORKING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer in Microeconomics	Hanoi, Vietnam
<i>International Economics Department, Foreign Trade University</i>	<i>Apr. 2018 – Aug. 2023</i>
Research Assistant	UW–Madison, WI
<i>Under the supervision of Professor Ran Liu</i>	<i>Spring 2025</i>
Teaching Assistant	UW–Madison, WI
<i>Introduction to Education</i>	<i>Fall 2024</i>
<i>Introduction to Quantitative Methods in Education Policy</i>	<i>Fall 2025, Spring 2026</i>
Project Assistant	UW–Madison, WI
<i>Project ACRES – Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER)</i>	<i>Dec. 2023 – Aug. 2024</i>
Senior Specialist	Hanoi, Vietnam
<i>Ministry of Finance</i>	<i>Jun. 2012 – Apr. 2018</i>

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Organizer: Causal Inference and Statistical Learning Reading group (2021, 2022), Education Policy Studies Annual Conference (2023), Spatial Analysis Reading Group (2024).

Additional Training: Geospatial Data Carpentry Workshop (2025), Deep Learning with Keras Workshop (2025), ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods (2026), The Summer Institutes in Computational Social Science, University of Pennsylvania (2026), The Summer Institutes in Computational Social Science, UCLA (2026).

Referee: *Journals* — Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education, Humanities & Social Sciences Communications, Journal of Asian Business and Economic Studies, The Journal of Economic Asymmetries, Evaluation Review, International Journal of Social Economics; *Conferences* — Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Annual Conference, American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Media Engagements

- **2022:** Podcast guest on *How Much Learning Is Enough?* [Spotify link] (in Vietnamese)
- **2022:** Podcast guest on *Educational Psychology and the Unknowns* [Spotify link] (in Vietnamese)
- **2020:** TEDxDAV talk — *The Misfit of an Economic Agent* (in Vietnamese)
- **2020–present:** Author of *Pandora Noise*, a blog on education, personal development, and womanhood (in both Vietnamese and English)

Book Translations (English to Vietnamese)

- **2022:** *Gender Trouble* by Judith Butler
- **2022:** *Trust, Inc.* by Nan Russell
- **2021:** *Breathe Through This* by Eline Snel
- **2019:** *Teaching Meditation to Children* by David Fontana and Ingrid Slack
- **2019:** *Mindfulness for Parents* by Amber Hatch
- **2018:** *Mind Management, Not Time Management* by David Kadavy
- **2018:** *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies* by Steven J. Stein
- **2017:** *Lead with Humanity* by André van Heerden

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Datasets: Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS), Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS), Vietnam Population and Housing Census, U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey (ACS), Vietnam War Theater History of Operations (THOR) Data

Data Contributions:

- Imperial Exam Awardees of Vietnam Dataset* — Original dataset documenting provincial-level awardees of the Vietnamese imperial examinations (1075–1919).
- Anonymous Individual Examination Scores in Vietnam, 2017–2024* — Original dataset compiled via web scraping, containing individual-level scores from national high school graduation exams across all subjects and provinces.

Languages: Vietnamese (Native), English (Advanced), Mandarin Chinese (Intermediate, on going study), Classical Chinese (Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary and character recognition), French (Beginner, Reading knowledge; word recognition for archival and historical documents).

Archival Visits: Vietnam Centre I, Vietnam Centre II, Vietnam Centre III (Vietnam National Archives); Wisconsin Historical Society