**Seminar in the Economics of Science & Engineering | joint with | China Economy Seminar**

DATE:  Friday, October 6, 2023  
  
SPEAKER:  Pierre Azoulay (MIT and NBER)  
  
PRESENTATION: “Who Stands on the Shoulders of Chinese (Scientific) Giants? Evidence from Chemistry.  
(paper joint with Shumin Qiu and Claudia Steinwender)

ABSTRACT:   
In recent decades, Chinese researchers have become preeminent contributors to the scientific enterprise, as reflected by the number of publications originating from Chinese research institutions. China’s rise in science has the potential to push forward the global frontier, but mere production of knowledge does not guarantee that others are able to build on it. We ask whether chemistry research originating from China offers broad shoulders for follow-on scientists to stand on. In the raw publication and citation data, Chinese-authored articles receive only half the citations from the US compared to articles from other countries. We show that even after carefully controlling for the quality of Chinese research, Chinese PIs’ articles receive on average 28% fewer citations from US researchers. Our results point to the existence of frictions in the dissemination of Chinese research across borders, even in a domain where Chinese scientists have long excelled. These frictions do not reflect lower actual (or even perceived) quality of Chinese research, and do not appear to be motivated by animus against Chinese researchers. Only Chinese researchers with unusually deep networks in the US can overcome, at least in part, the citation discount.

BIO:   
[Pierre Azoulay](https://mitsloan.mit.edu/faculty/directory/pierre-azoulay) is the *International Programs Professor of Management*at the MIT Sloan School of Management, and a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

His current research focuses on empirical studies of the supply of biomedical innovators, particularly at the interface of academia and the biopharmaceutical industry. He also is interested in the topic of academic entrepreneurship, having recently concluded a major study of the antecedents and consequences of academic patenting. In the past, he has investigated the impact of superstar researchers on the research productivity of their colleagues, and the outsourcing strategies of pharmaceutical firms, in particular the role played by contract research organizations in the clinical trials process.

At MIT Sloan, he teaches courses on competitive strategy and innovation strategy to the EMBA students and Sloan Fellows, as well as a PhD class on the economics of ideas, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

He holds a Diplôme d’Études Supérieures de Gestion from the Institut National des Télécommunications, an MA from Michigan State University, and a PhD in management from MIT.