

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS



Ph.D Student Samantha Chapa Wins Prestigious NSF Fellowship

Second year Ph.D. student Samantha Chapa was recently honored with a 2021 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. This is the most significant fellowship a Political Science student can win at this career stage, and is awarded to very few Ph.D. students nationwide in any STEM field. The NSF considers this award a “highly significant

national accomplishment” that places Chapa “amongst an elite group of fellows who have gone on to distinguished careers in STEM or STEM education.” NSF fellows receive a stipend, tuition support, and funding for international research and professional development.

In her application, Chapa proposes to study whether big data and artificial intelligence help facilitate human rights protections for immigrants, or whether these new technologies threaten their rights. On the one hand, Chapa hypothesizes that big data can help states better serve the needs of migrants. On the other hand, she hypothesizes that big data can allow states to militarize their border at precisely the places where immigration assistance is needed the most. Chapa’s research will be the first of its kind to empirically test claims made in the literature on the ethics of AI.



JEFFREY CHURCH
Professor and Chair,
Dept. of Political Science

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

I am delighted to announce that our department has broken into the top 50 Ph.D. programs in the country according to the U.S. News and World Report rankings. UH ranks #50, which I and my colleagues know is just the beginning of a steady trajectory upwards. This is an important achievement, one that has brought us a lot of attention already, including a personal letter from the

UH President Renu Khator. I attribute this achievement to the consistently excellent work that my colleagues have produced in recent years which has been gaining considerable recognition nationally. In addition, our graduates have helped make this achievement possible. Our graduates go out into the world and do great things, which reflects back on our department. So thank you to my colleagues and to all our alumni for your efforts. This ranking shows that your efforts have been noticed!

**2021
U.S. NEWS &
WORLD REPORT
RANKINGS**

**UH POLITICAL SCIENCE
#50**



UH Political Science Enters Top 50 Ph.D. Programs

U.S. News and World Report released its 2021 rankings for the best graduate programs in all disciplines, including political science. UH Political Science moved up to #50 this year. Among public universities, our department has moved into the top 30, tied for #28. The U.S. News rankings based on peer evaluation by other Ph.D. granting organizations. The rankings are very influential and a significant milestone for our department.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Ph.D Student Naomi Nuben Wins Best Paper of the Year Award



Fourth year Ph.D. student Naomi Nubin won the Sammy Younge Best Student Paper of the Year award for her paper, "The Poor, the Needy, and the Partisan: How State-Level Political Factors Influence Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program Benefits," which is awarded by the National Conference of Black Political Scientists.

Ms. Nubin's paper examines the role of state institutions and social diversity in shaping welfare benefits. She finds that social diversity reinforces the relationship between institutions and welfare policy. The paper also introduces a novel way to measure social diversity.



College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Dissertation Completion Fellowships for 2021-2022

Ph.D. Student Brian Sullivan Wins CLASS Dissertation Completion Fellowship

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at UH offers a Dissertation Completion Fellowship to support doctoral students with financial support in their final year. This fellowship is very competitive, and was only awarded to a handful of students in CLASS. This year our own Brian Sullivan won the award for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022.

Sullivan's dissertation argues that the psychological sense of lack of political agency leads to increasing support for populism and conspiracy theories. Feelings of powerlessness, Sullivan argues, lead individuals to turn to anti-democratic associations that give them a feeling a agency. Sullivan is testing his hypotheses with survey experiments and by studying media consumption habits. His dissertation is very timely and promises to make a significant contribution.

GRADUATE PLACEMENTS

Haimo Li (May 2021 PhD) appointed as Associate Researcher in the School of Political Science and Public Administration, Shangdong Universtiy

Ulkar Imamverdiyeva (May 2021 PhD) was hired as a Sr. Data Scientist at Carmax.

Kasia Hinkson (PhD expected Summer 2021) has been hired as a researcher at Harris County Health District.

Vivian Kalu (Ph.D. candidate) was offered the position of Adjunct Professor of Law to co-teach Introduction to American Law at University of Houston law school Fall 2021.

GRADUATE PUBLICATIONS

Jeremy D. Bailey and **Haimo Li** (2021) " ' Decision, Activity, Secrecy, and Dispatch': The Intellectual Origins of Hamilton's Rhetoric in *Federalist* No. 70," *History of Political Thought*, Volume 42, Number 2, pp. 318-341.

GRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS

Lee W. Payne (Ph.D. December 2008) has been approved for promotion to Full Professor of Political Science at Stephen F. Austin State University, where he also serves as Political Science Program Coordinator.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS



UH POLS BA and MA Admitted to 10 Ph.D. Programs

Isaiah Johnson, a former Political Science undergraduate major and current MA student, applied widely to Ph.D. programs in Political Science this year. He found himself admitted to ten of them, including elite schools such as Vanderbilt, Northwestern, UCLA, Michigan State, USC, UCSD. He has selected Princeton University, and will attend in the Fall.

Mr. Johnson is interested in studying Race and Ethnic Politics, as well as American Political Behavior and Political Psychology. As an undergraduate, he worked with Professor Jennifer Clark on a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship and his senior thesis. As a Master's student, he has worked with Professor Jeronimo Cortina on a project on representation and academic achievement. Mr. Johnson is among our best students in recent years, and justly deserves his bounty of choices in graduate schools this year.

Mr. Johnson credits our department with, among other things, offering "a multitude of substantive and methodological coursework throughout my time at UH [that] truly paved the way to my success in this application cycle and prepared me to be a scholar within the discipline." He writes, "thank you to the graduate students and faculty in the Department of Political Science; I honestly could not have done this without you all!"

2 UH Students to Attend the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute



RALPH BUNCHE SUMMER INSTITUTE

The Ralph Bunche Summer Institute is an elite program in Political Science that gives undergraduate students a summer "boot camp" in writing, research, and statistical skills that can help students aspiring to graduate school. The institute is targeted in particular at underrepresented and historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups. Our department has had a good track record in placing students at this institute. This year is no exception—two of our students will attend.



Monica Gebrehiwot is interested in affective polarization in American politics. She has been working on the question of whether priming patriotism can overcome polarization, and, in particular whether African-Americans are less likely to be patriotically primed than other races.

Ataiya Smith is interested in Political Theory, especially the theory and practice of human rights. She has been working on the question of how we can change behavior, in particular how we can treat people more justly who do not fit within mainstream ideas of gender and sexuality.



Safa Ansari-Bayegan (BA, 2013) Awarded Fellowship at Georgetown

The E. Barrett Prettyman Fellowship is a prestigious post-graduate fellowship provided by the Criminal Justice Clinic at Georgetown University. A UH Political Science graduate, Safa Ansari-Bayegan, won this fellowship, which provides her two years of clinical training in advocacy and criminal justice. In recent months, Ms. Ansari-Bayegan has been representing clients and attempting to secure “compassionate release” for them from prison due to potential Covid exposure.

Prior to winning this fellowship, Ms. Ansari-Bayegan received her J.D. from Berkeley Law, where she worked at the Death Penalty Clinic and East Bay Community Law Center. She received a Master’s Degree in Human Rights from the LSE in 2014. Ms. Ansari-Bayegan has a long-standing commitment to criminal justice reform and is deeply committed to helping her clients, who are among the most vulnerable in society.



Professor Patrick Shea Wins \$180,000 NSF Grant

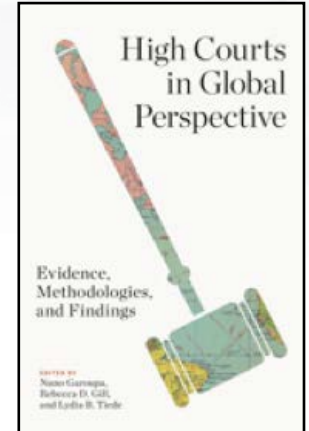
Congratulations to Associate Professor Patrick Shea for being awarded an NSF grant for his project “International Coercion, Debt Relief, and Land Transactions.” The grant is a 2 year, \$180,000 grant, which will fund RAships for graduate and undergraduate students. This grant is among the most prestigious grants awarded to Political Scientists.



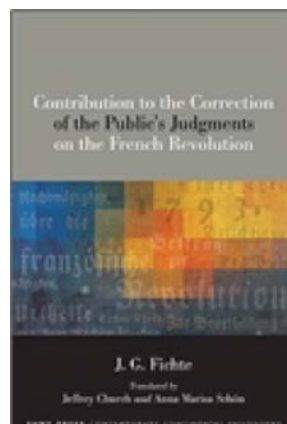
Professor Scott Clifford's Article Accepted at the APSR

Associate Professor Scott Clifford received word that his co-authored article, “Increasing Precision Without Altering Treatment Effects: Repeated Measures Designs in Survey Experiments” has been accepted at the *American Political Science Review*. The APSR is the #1 journal in the discipline of Political Science.

Associate Professor Lydia Tiede publishes a co-edited book, *High Courts in Global Perspective: Evidence, Methodologies and Findings*. University of Virginia Press, July 2021.



Professor Jeffrey Church and UH PhD Student Anna Marisa Schön publish a translation of J.G. Fichte's *Contribution to the Correction of the Public's Judgments on the French Revolution*, SUNY Press, March 2021



DEPARTMENT EVENTS



Coogs in Public Office

This Spring, the department interviewed several public officials who are alumni of our program. The interviews aimed to give our students a sense of what it takes to go from UH to public office. Officials discussed what they did and didn't learn in their Political Science classes, what skills you need to win election, what books you absolutely should read, and much more. All interviews are available on the main page of our website. Here are the Coogs we interviewed:

Bridgette Smith-Lawson (pictured), Fort Bend County Attorney, UH Political Science BA, 2000

Alfred Bennett, U.S. District Judge, Southern District of Texas, UH Political Science BS, 1988

Carol Alvarado, TX State Senator, District 6, UH Political Science BA

James White, State Representative, TX House District 19, UH Political Science PhD 2012

Sean Skipworth, Mayor, City of Dickinson, TX, UH Political Science MA, 2008

Dylan Osborne, Harris County Treasurer, UH Political Science BA, UH MPA



Virtual Congressional Forum with Representatives Lizzie Fletcher and Randy Weber

On April 8 at 3pm, U.S. Representatives Lizzie Fletcher and Randy Weber joined Political Science faculty and students for a Virtual Town Hall. The event was a great opportunity for students to have their voices heard by asking any question for the congresspeople. The event was co-sponsored by the Institute for Civility, so we had one rule: all participants must maintain CIVILITY and RESPECT toward one another. The event was well-attended, drawing over 180 students for the Zoom session.

US FOREIGN POLICY IN THE POST-TRUMP ERA: "Opportunities and Limitations"

April 23, 2021 at 1:30-3pm
Zoom Webinar

What will U.S. foreign policy look like in the post-Trump era? This webinar will discuss the extent to which the Biden administration will challenge choices made under Trump. In particular, panelists will engage this question on issues such as alliances, military competition, trade, human rights, and the environment.

Moderators:

- Zachary Zwald, Director, Center for International and Comparative Studies, CLASS, UH
- Pablo M. Pinto, Director, Center for Public Policy, Hobby School of Public Affairs, UH

Panelists:

- Tyson Chatagnier, Assistant Professor of Political Science, UH
- Ryan Kennedy, Associate Professor of Political Science, UH
- Ashley Leeds, Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science, Rice University
- Niki Marinov, Associate Professor of Political Science, UH
- Patrick Shea, Associate Professor of Political Science, UH

Registration is required. <https://bit.ly/3w5Fnui>
For more information: <https://uh.edu/hobby/cpp/events/>

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Zachary Zwald, the Director of the Center for Comparative and International Studies, teamed up with the Hobby School for Public Policy to run a successful webinar on U.S. Foreign Policy.

100 DAYS IN

Thursday, May 13 | 6:30 p.m.

HOUSTON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

HOUSTON COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Associate Professors Jeronimo Cortina and Jason Casellas discussed President Joe Biden's first 100 Days in this well-attended webinar, co-sponsored with the UH Alumni Association.

ALUMNI: Please send us updates about notable things in your career and life! We will include them in the newsletter.

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Department of Political Science

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3551 Cullen Blvd, Room 447 • Philip G. Hoffman Hall • Houston, TX 77204
713.743.3890 • jchurch@uh.edu