



## GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Grad Student Achievements



Shiladitya Kumar

Shiladitya Kumar (POLS) received a travel scholarship from the Political Organizations and Parties Section to attend the 2024 APSA annual meeting, where he presented a paper based on his dissertation research.

Jeong Kyu Suh (POLS) and Grace Cho (POLS) have been awarded a scholarship from the Korean American Scholarship foundation, and Suh has also been awarded a Korean Honor Scholarship by the Korean Education Institution in Washington, DC.

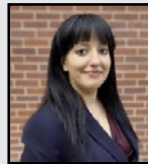


Jeong Kyu Suh



Grace Cho

Lucia Lopez has been awarded a \$14,941 grant from the Rapoport Family Foundation under their Doctoral Dissertation Survey Research Grant program. This prestigious grant supports innovative and impactful doctoral research projects that advance understanding in areas of social justice, equality, and public policy.



Lucia Lopez

### Grad Student Alumni

PhD alum Myriam Shiran has won the 2024 University of Houston Outstanding Dissertation Award in the Social Sciences category, which comes with a \$1000 prize. Shiran's dissertation is on electoral reform and gender representation. Congratulations to Myriam on this significant achievement!



Myriam Shiran

### Graduate Research Series

#### 9/11 PRESENTER:

Lucia Lopez Title: "How policy constraints alleviate ambivalence, increase support for welfare policy, and shift perceptions of beneficiaries."

#### 10/9 PRESENTER:

Shiladitya Kumar Title: "The Effect of Electoral Competition on Candidate Selection: Evidence from India"

#### 11/6 PRESENTER:

HM Kim Title: "We Are Not a Team: Intra-Party Competition and Particularism in Single-Non-Transferable Voting"



HM Kim



JEFFREY CHURCH  
Professor and Chair,  
Dept. of Political Science

### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

What an eventful semester this has been! It seems that every day brings new political intrigue into the world. I am delighted to have colleagues to discuss and learn from about the profound changes going on here and abroad. For example, our department hosted a webinar series on the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election. I had a wonderful time moderating the series, and you can find all the videos on our website. The webinars were very well-attended—nearly 450 participants were in our final webinar, the post-election analysis—and so I trust word got out that our department is an excellent source of knowledge about our changing political world. I hope we can match these events with similarly significant ones in the Spring. Stay tuned.  
-Jeffrey Church

### New Scholarship

The Department of Political Science announces the Donald S. Lutz Scholarship in Political Thought and Constitutionalism, honoring the late Professor Donald S. Lutz (1943–2024). A distinguished scholar and teacher, Professor Lutz's groundbreaking work on Political Thought and Constitutionalism profoundly impacted the field and the many graduate students he mentored. Funded by contributions from his students and friends, this scholarship will support outstanding graduate students in Political Thought—especially American Political Thought—and Constitutionalism. It will assist in recruiting promising scholars and rewarding current students excelling in research or teaching.



Donald S. Lutz

### Grad Student Publication



Dr. Susan Scarrow

Dr. Susan Scarrow, alongside graduate students Jeong Kyu Suh and Jamie Wright have published Political Studies: "Explaining the Narrowing Gender Gap in Partisan Participation: Women's Empowerment or Men's Disengagement?"

We are proud to announce that Professor Haimo Li (Ph.D., Political Science, UH) has been appointed Acting Director of the International Public Policy (IPP) Master's Program at Fudan University's School of International Relations and Public Affairs in Shanghai, China's most internationalized city.



Haimo Li

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

### Ramirez Gains Valuable Experience through Public Law



Ramirez Gains

Ramirez Gains Valuable Experience Through Public Law Internship Laisha Ramirez, an undergraduate Political Science student, participated in the department's Public Law internship program this semester at Baker Ripley. During her time there she provided translation services for clients during their USCIS citizenship interviews. She wrote that "the environment at Baker Ripley made this internship incredibly meaningful to me," adding that "the dedication and kindness that my supervisors showed in their work, has inspired me to also carry these qualities into my future career in law."

### Undergraduate Spotlight: Diego Servin



Diego presented his research at the 2024 APSA Annual Meeting with a poster titled "Incumbent Support and Perceived Corruption in Latin America and the Caribbean."

We are proud to recognize Diego Servin, a standout undergraduate student in the Department of Political Science. Last summer, Diego was accepted to both the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute and Vanderbilt University's Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Program in Political Science

### Undergraduate News: Model UN Success in D.C.



Students from the University of Houston's Model United Nations class recently returned from an inspiring three-day conference in Washington, D.C. The group, 35 students from the class, demonstrated exceptional skills and diplomacy.

The Delegation of Chad, represented by UH students, earned a prestigious **Distinguished Delegation Award**. Additionally, student Leah Pasache received an **Outstanding Delegate Award**, voted on by her committee peers. UH Lecturer Avery Spranger led the delegation.

## FACULTY NEWS

### Major Grant Awarded to Dr. Jeronimo Cortina

Dr. Jeronimo Cortina (POLS) has been awarded a \$524,983 grant for his project, "Unstable Housing and Mental Health: A Predictive Approach."

The project is part of the Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning Consortium to Advance Health Equity and Researcher Diversity (P4) Program, supported by the University of Houston. Funding will cover the project period from 10/01/2024 to 07/31/2025.



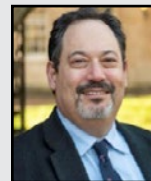
Jeronimo Cortina



Lydia Tiede

### Dr. Tiede Presents on Judicial Backsliding for USAID

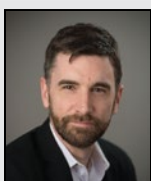
On November 14, 2024, Dr. Lydia Brashear Tiede presented a talk titled "Judicial Backsliding... and Resurgence" for the U.S. Agency for International Development's



Professor Casellas

### Prof. Casellas Joins Leadership Initiative

Professor Casellas was invited to join the Future Leaders of Schools of Public Service Initiative, supported by the Volker Alliance, which aims to foster more racially and ethnically diverse leadership in schools of public service.



Jeffrey Church

### Professor Church Launches New Association

Professor Jeffrey Church has launched the Association for the History of Political Thought with colleague Alexander Duff (University of Texas at Austin). The Association will host a biennial conference of the top scholars in the field, as well as a book prize. As part

of the association, he will co-edit two book series with Oxford University Press and SUNY Press that will publish significant scholarship related to Political Theory.

## Faculty and Students Awarded a Houston Endowment Grant

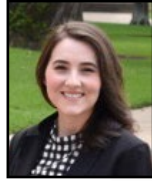
Professors Brandon Rottinghaus (Principal Investigator) and Jerónimo Cortina (Co-Principal Investigator), along with Graduate Research Assistants Samantha Chapa and Shana Hardin, have received \$98,000 from the Houston Endowment. This funding supports their initiative to evaluate and improve strategies for community engagement and civic involvement. Recognizing the importance of civic participation for a healthy democracy, the research team will synthesize their findings to provide practical recommendations for addressing civic participation challenges in the Houston area. This project underscores the Houston Endowment's commitment to fostering a more engaged and active community.



Brandon Rottinghaus



Jerónimo Cortina



Sam Chapa



Shana Hardin



## ABC's Decision Desk – 2024 Election

Professor Jason Casellas contributed his expertise in political analysis as part of ABC's Decision Desk during the 2024 Election coverage in New York City.

## NEW FACULTY



Dr. Tobias Heinrich

**Dr. Tobias Heinrich** has joined our department as an associate professor. Dr. Heinrich's research focuses on the domestic politics of international relations, emphasizing topics such as international migration, development aid, borders, and economic sanctions. Dr. Heinrich completed his Ph.D. and M.A. from Rice University.



Dr. Trent Ollerenshaw

**Dr. Trent Ollerenshaw** has joined our department as an assistant professor. Dr. Trent Ollerenshaw specializes in political behavior and political methodology, with research focusing on American public opinion and the psychology of political polarization. His methodological work advances survey design and analysis. Dr. Ollerenshaw earned his Ph.D. and M.A. in Political Science from Duke University.

## VISITING SCHOLARS



Amanda Weiss

**Amanda Weiss**, a PhD candidate in Political Science at Yale University and MA candidate in Statistics, joins UH as a visiting scholar. Her research focuses on causal inference in policy studies, policy attitudes, and trauma-informed approaches to political science.



Eric Cheng

**Eric Cheng** joins UH as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Theory. Previously at Waseda University and the University of Toronto, he earned his PhD from Duke University in 2019.

## EVENTS

### Mobilizing Low-Propensity Voters mini-conference

Our department recently hosted the "Mobilizing Low-Propensity Voters" mini-conference on August 22-23, bringing together scholars and students to explore strategies for increasing political participation among disengaged voter groups. Invited visitors included Michael Jones-Correa (U of Pennsylvania), Bernard Fraga (Emory), and Melissa Marshall (Rice). It was organized by Professor Jeronimo Cortina, as well as PhD students Samantha Chapa and Shana Hardin.



## EVENTS (CONT.)



Shana Gadarian

### Research Series: Shana Gadarian

On September 23, Shana Gadarian presented her book *Pandemic Politics* in a Brown Bag talk, discussing the role of partisan elite messaging and emotion in public health crises. Her research explores how partisanship shaped public responses to COVID-19 and other health threats. Gadarian examined whether certain health threats can avoid becoming politicized and proposed future research on the limits of public health polarization.

### Virtual Forum with former U.S. Representatives Henry Bonilla (R-TX) and Nick Lampson (D-TX).



Henry Bonilla (R-TX)



Nick Lampson (D-TX)

On September 26, 2024, the Department of Political Science hosted a Virtual Forum with former U.S. Representatives Henry Bonilla (R-TX) and Nick Lampson (D-TX). With 350 students in attendance, the event provided an invaluable opportunity for participants to ask questions and gain insights into the political landscape and careers in government.



### Presidential Election Webinar

The Department of Political Science hosted a highly successful webinar series on the 2024 Presidential Election, attracting nearly 400 attendees per session. The series featured insightful discussions from UH faculty on topics ranging from presidential debates to key races and historical precedents

### Winter Departmental Party

The Political Science Department held its end-of-year party on December 12th in PGH. The department provided lunch and hosted a white elephant gift exchange. Faculty, Graduate Students and Staff attended.



### Presidential Election Events

The Department of Political Science hosted several well-attended events for undergraduates, including a Debate Watch Party, Voter Registration Drive, and Election Watch Party, all held in the Kiva Room of Farish Hall

### Norwegian Lunches

This semester, we hosted well-attended Norwegian Lunches, where faculty and grad students enjoyed lunch and conversation. We're excited to continue the tradition with upcoming lunches for staff, faculty, and students! Join us every other week in the Werlin Room (PGH 448) from 12:00 to 12:45 PM—bring your lunch and relax with colleagues.

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



Political Science  
College of Liberal Arts  
and Social Sciences

### SUPPORT US

PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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