

Research Apprenticeship Program

Winter 2020 & Spring 2020

How to Apply:

- [1] Read the project descriptions below
- [2] Download and complete the preference form.
- [3] Prepare a cover letter and resume. [Read the guidelines about how to write a cover letter.](#)
- [4] Print your academic record.
- [5] E-mail the completed form with a cover letter, resume, and copy of your academic record to the Mentor of each project to which you are applying.

Name of Graduate Student	Email of Graduate Student	Title of Research Project	Brief Description of Research Project
Zoe Nemerever	znemerev@ucsd.edu	Rural Representation in the American States	My project is the first to quantitatively identify meaningful political differences between non-rural and rural co-partisans at the state level, and then connect those preferences to legislator roll call votes to measure substantive political representation. The states are a prime laboratory for leveraging variation in representation and institutions to assess how informal and formal institutions affect representation of numerical minority voters, such as rural voters.
Duy Trinh	ddtrinh@ucsd.edu	Online News in Vietnam and China	We study how online news behave in an authoritarian regime setting by collecting and analyzing a massive dataset of news articles by official newspapers in Vietnam and/or China. Students will assist in data collection, data cleaning, and will also take part in generating research questions pertaining to the use of censorship, distraction, and propaganda. We will also tie the question of media with

			<p>current issues, including but not limited to the current Chinese and Vietnamese anti-corruption campaigns.</p> <p>Students with proficiency in Vietnamese, Chinese, or any programming language are especially welcomed apply.</p>
Daegyeong ("D.G.") Kim	dak110@ucsd.edu	The Psychology of Power Shifts: Public Opinion on the Rise of China	<p>My project examines the psychological sources of cross-national public opinion formation on the rise of China, using survey analyses and experimental methods. The project utilizes both existing public opinion survey data and original experimental evidence from the U.S., China, Japan and South Korea, with a particular focus on psychological factors such as racial attitudes, status anxiety, dispositions (e.g., authoritarianism, social dominance orientation) and various forms of inter-state perceptions.</p> <p>The project will be a good fit for students interested in the international relations of the Asia-Pacific, US-China relations with a focus on public opinion, experimental and psychological research.</p>
Todd Levinson	tslevins@ucsd.edu	Moral Values, Community, and Political Attitudes	<p>What do the people within a community owe to their members morally? This project will investigate how and why individuals vary in their answers to this question. The project will research how social divisions, such as race, ethnicity and the urban-rural divide, affect this sense of morality as well as how these moral beliefs and their related moral emotions impact political attitudes.</p>
Brian Engelsma	bengelsm@ucsd.edu	Farming for Votes: Producer Organizations and the Political	<p>How do rural Africans get benefits from the state? In this project, I offer an explanation of one mechanism through which rural Africans extract benefits from the state: using producer organizations to bargain for benefits. This project highlights how agricultural production creates distinct hardships and incentives in rural communities, and how</p>

		<p>Economy of Rural Africa</p>	<p>those communities use producer organizations to bargain with national politicians for benefits.</p> <p>Project elements include an analysis of how agricultural forces influence demand for state benefits, the creation and regulation of rural producer organizations, ties between producer organizations and political parties or politicians, and the distribution of targeted state benefits. This project combines quantitative and qualitative approaches and makes extensive use of geospatial data.</p>
<p>Gregoire Phillips</p>	<p>g1philli@ucsd.edu</p>	<p>Velvet Gloves on Iron Fists: Media, Governance, and Power in Modern Extremism</p>	<p>What strategies do extremist groups employ to gain and maintain local support? How do these strategies change over time and across places under their control? Focusing on governing extremists, or extremist groups with territorial or governance ambitions, I argue that extremists invest in extensive, multifaceted information campaigns to signal commitment to multiple, sometimes competing constituencies. I identify two mechanisms through which they do so - governance and deterrence media - that connect the political incentives that governing extremists have to expand their coalition of supporters and deter their detractors to the way they use media to communicate with these audiences. I then apply supervised machine learning methods to a corpus of over 4,000 propaganda releases by the Islamic State from 2014 to 2017 to test how responsive the use of these signals is to changes in the acquisition of territory, the group's primary source of revenue, and military contestation by civilians and competing militaries alike.</p> <p>Early results indicate that extremists are governors of opportunity even by their own account: while they are most likely to employ governance media when and where they rely on local taxation, IS shifts markedly to strategies of violent deterrence when faced with even marginal increases</p>

			in contestation. These results provide the first study of how extremists use media as a tool of governance - and not just radicalization - in an increasingly online age
Kathryn Baragwanath Vogel	kbaragwa@ucsd.edu	Research Project #1: The Effect of Oil Shocks on Corruption in Brazil	<p>Literature on the resource curse suggests that oil wealth might lead to negative economic and political outcomes. However, the direct link between oil windfalls and corruption has been understudied. I use data from a natural experiment in Brazil where most oil is offshore to identify how receiving oil windfalls and variation in the international price of oil leads to corruption and reelection cycles. Given the importance of corruption investigations in today's Brazilian politics, this research can shed important light on the sources of corruption and possible policy implications to ameliorate the negative effects of commodity dependence.</p>
		Research Project #2: Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon	<p>Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon has reached record highs during the past few years. The Amazon rainforest accounts for half of the remaining tropical forest on our planet, produces 20% of our planet's oxygen and holds a major influence on the world's climate and hydrological cycles. Understanding how politics is affecting its conservation is key to future sustainability. Using satellite data, I identify how different political level variables affect deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon.</p> <p>This project seeks to identify (i) the effects of property rights on deforestation, (ii) the effects of agricultural and mining interests, campaign financing and lobbying on deforestation and (iii) the interaction between deforestation and rural violence, especially violence against indigenous peoples. This project might thus result in three separate papers, and I am open to co-author with successful, hardworking students (I have done so in the past). R knowledge is preferred. Some knowledge of ArcGIS and/or other spatial software is encouraged but not necessary.</p>

Mariana Carvalho	macarval@ucsd.edu	Political Economy of Violence	<p>In recent years, hundreds of mayors, city councilors, and candidates for these positions have been executed in countries as diverse as Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, and others. This project investigates the causes and consequences of assassinations of local politicians. What conditions make violence against politicians more likely? What types of politicians are most likely to kill their competitors? What consequences do such murders have for democratic accountability?</p> <p>Research assistants will help collect data and locate missing information on cases of violence against politicians in several democracies. They will also learn and assist with data processing and analysis.</p>
Christina Cottiero	ccottier@ucsd.edu	Regional Security Cooperation and Peacekeeping in Africa	<p>I am looking for undergraduates who are interested in helping to gather, read and summarize information about the fates of former African leaders, as well as conflict mediation processes that resulted in leader exile.</p> <p>Any students with attention to detail and accuracy are welcome, but students who can read French or Portuguese are particularly encouraged to apply. Depending on interest, students can also help to collect documents and data on US military assistance (training and arms sales) to African states.</p>
Huchen Liu	hul045@ucsd.edu	Research Project #1: Change and Continuity in the Policy Preferences	<p>Recent Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner surprised many by becoming a high-profile lobbyist for the marijuana industry. To what extent do politicians retain or change their position positions when they leave government and become lobbyists? Does it depend on their ideology and partisanship, institutional stature, and the reason they left office? These questions</p>

		<p>of Politicians-Turned-Lobbyists</p>	<p>matter for which special interests are advantaged in the policy process and whether elections can effectively include some politicians and exclude others from participating in it.</p> <p>Research apprentices will assist in the gathering and handling of data surrounding this investigation and receive training in widely transferable technical skills in the research process.</p>
		<p>Research Project #2: Presidential Influence on Government Spending and the Two Presidencies</p>	<p>Although the U.S. Constitution does not confer substantial formal legislative authority on presidents, they are nonetheless powerful players in congressional legislation.</p> <p>My colleague and I study presidents’ influence on lawmaking by detecting how much their preferences affect government spending. By examining spending in both domestic and foreign policy, we evaluate the well-accepted theory of the “two presidencies” that presidents are more powerful in foreign policy than in domestic policy.</p> <p>Research apprentices will assist in the gathering and handling of data surrounding this investigation and receive training in widely transferable technical skills in the research process.</p>
<p>Rachel Schoner</p>	<p>rschoner@ucsd.edu</p>	<p>Repressive Regimes and Individual Petitions in the Human Rights Committee</p>	<p>After the massive atrocities in the interwar period and during the Second World War, countries began to develop the modern international human rights regime, an extensive collection of institutions aimed to prevent such atrocities and protect individuals from the state. Nearly all states participate in the international human rights regime by ratifying United Nations treaties, but many take an additional step and legally empower individuals to bring complaints about their own behavior.</p> <p>This project addresses this understudied institutional mechanism--individual petition. Moreover, the dissertation explores repressive regimes - those governments that routinely violate human rights. Why do repressive regimes</p>

			<p>allow individual petitions in the Human Rights Committee? Why do individuals file petitions, confronting their repressive regime in international law? Finally, what, if any, effect does individual participating in international law have on state behavior?</p>
Michael Seese	mseese@ucsd.edu	<p>Mapping Territorial Control in Africa</p>	<p>States seldom exercise full control over the territory defined by their de jure borders. Indeed, the actual “reach” of a state is often significantly smaller than its official purview. My research examines the process by which African states are able to extend their control across geographic space in order to systematically eliminate ungoverned spaces and reduce threats to the central government (e.g., insurgent groups).</p> <p>This project is part of a descriptive dissertation chapter that looks at historical patterns of state building and state consolidation in Africa. In particular, I ask why states choose to exercise control over certain territories, but not others. The project involves the collection of country-level quantitative data from publicly available sources. The project also involves the collection of GIS data (historical maps).</p> <p>Ideal candidates should have some familiarity with MS Excel. Knowledge of other statistical packages such as Stata and ArcGIS is helpful, but not required (I am happy to help students develop statistical programming skills if they’re interested). Basic French is also a plus, but also not required.</p>
Charles McClean	cmcclean@ucsd.edu	<p>Young People in Government</p>	<p>Why don't more young people run for political office, and does the election of younger politicians matter for policy outcomes? In this project, we will study these questions in comparative perspective, with a particular focus on local government in Japan and the United States. Students will</p>

			<p>help with the collection, processing, and analysis of data on local elections and candidates in both countries.</p> <p>Experience with programming in R or Japan/Japanese is a bonus, but not required.</p>
Luke Sanford	lcsanford@ucsd.edu	<p>Using Satellite Imagery To Measure The Environmental Impacts Of Political Institutions</p>	<p>A variety of satellites launched by NASA, the European Space Agency and others are constantly taking high-resolution photographs of the surface of the earth, creating a long-term catalogue of the changes humans are inflicting on the earth. This includes the spread of cities, the use of natural resources, changes in agriculture, and many others. I seek to understand how political and economic incentives, guided by political institutions, affect how people and governments make use of land. The first project applies machine learning methods to understand how farmers' behavior changes when they receive formal property rights in Benin.</p> <p>As a participant in this project you will help conduct background research on environmental politics, help develop theories about how different institutions and incentives change people's use of their land, and help train machine learning models to measure those changes.</p>
Kristy Pathakis	kpathakis@ucsd.edu	<p>Research Project #1: Who Belongs? How Political Belonging Uncertainty silences the</p>	<p>People interested in learning more about research in race politics, inequalities in participation, political psychology, experiments, or who are open-minded and interested in learning more about the research process will get a lot out of working on this project. Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. RAs will help me code data, find and organize relevant literature, and run experimental manipulations aimed at furthering this project: The history of exclusion and discrimination in American politics makes it difficult for African Americans to realize of a sense of</p>

		<p>political voices of African Americans</p>	<p>political belonging. This creates a barrier to political expression that exacerbates resource-based barriers, like education and income. I draw from theories of stereotype threat and belonging uncertainty in social psychology to introduce a theory of political belonging uncertainty.</p> <p>One important way that political belonging uncertainty manifests is in a preference among black Americans to know more about a topic before reporting opinions. As a result, opinion surveys underrepresent the opinions of African Americans. First, using data from representative surveys, I show that, even holding constant education and political knowledge, African Americans offer fewer opinions than white Americans. Then, I present results from a survey showing that, when given the option, black Americans ask for more information before offering opinions - even when starting from the same level of political knowledge and education as white Americans.</p>
		<p>Research Project #2: If only they knew now what they knew then: Race gap in opinion responses jumps after 2016 election</p>	<p>This project will likely be interesting to students wanting to learn about using survey data, learning about inequalities in political expression, and students interested in learning how to use existing literature to support arguments and the research process in general. This broad goal of this project is to show the immediacy of the effects of signals of inclusion or exclusion on political behavior. We'll dig deeper into some survey results showing that African Americans were less likely to give responses to opinion questions in the post-election wave of the 2016 ANES than in the pre-election wave.</p> <p>If you don't know what any of that means, but would like to, then apply! If you do know and you want to learn more, also apply! Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Feel free to email me with questions.</p>

Lee Dionne	ldionne@ucsd.edu	Electoral College Incentives and Executive Orders	This project features a text analysis of executive orders. Apprentices will be asked to track and code the subject matter of executive orders.
Yin Yuan	yy055@ucsd.edu	Talking in Slogans: How Public Discourses Reveal Elite Contention in China	<p>The effectiveness of propaganda in influencing public opinion often depends on its ability to hide itself. However, while scholars have been fascinated by the inventiveness of the Chinese propaganda apparatus in making propaganda more covert and amenable to public consumption, they are equally puzzled by the persistent usage of preposterous rhetorics and sloganeering (prevalent in official media like People's Daily) that seem counterproductive. Why does the official language of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) remain so formulaic, vague and dull even when facing increasing challenges from commercial and social media? This paper explores the role of official language in intra-elite communication and argues that the major audience for the official language is political elites (i.e. Chinese officials at or above prefectural level) rather than general public. Specifically, I argue that political slogans (e.g. 两学一做, 顶层设计) that seem boring and gibberish to the general public convey important political messages to the political elites.</p> <p>Moreover, as most general public do not possess the necessary skills to decipher political messages from these slogans, they provide a way for political elites in China to express their differences in public without looking divided.</p> <p>In this project, RAs will assist me in extracting and validating a comprehensive list of political slogans from General Secretaries' (in particular Hu Jintao's and Xi Jinping's) speeches using a semi-automated method I developed. We will track their usages in central and local newspapers and explore what kinds of political signals they send. This project deals with large amount of text as data and may be of</p>

			interest to students wishing to gain text analytical skills or are interested in analyzing Chinese media contents. The applicants must be highly skilled in reading Mandarin.
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