

## **Political Science Research Apprenticeship Program** **2017 Project Descriptions**

### **Dissent, Social Mobility, and Authoritarian Regime Stability**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Shane Xinyang Xuan** [xxuan@ucsd.edu](mailto:xxuan@ucsd.edu)

When citizens are dissatisfied with domestic politics, they can revolt, or leave the country if such an option exists. Given the option to exit, when and why do people overcome collective action problem and participate in protests? To what extent does social mobility mitigate the potentials of collective action in authoritarian regimes? Employing collective action event data in China from 2000 to 2015, this project studies how dissents lead to collective action in authoritarian regimes, when people are in fact given the option to leave. The study also sheds light on the advantages and limits of authoritarian ruling, through the lens of grassroots collective action.

### **Who Wins? The Political Economy of Sovereign Debt Restructuring**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Lauren Lee** [llee@ucsd.edu](mailto:llee@ucsd.edu)

Political scientists have begun to understand traditional sovereign "defaults" less as a refusal to pay and more as an attempt to restructure the terms of the initial loan agreement to account for changes in the state of the world. If most defaults end in restructuring, who wins and who loses when debt is renegotiated between sovereign debtors and private creditors? I argue that settlement outcomes are the interplay of strategic interactions between three actors: debtor states, creditor committees, and creditor nations, each of whom has its own set of incentives and constraints. To better understand these dynamics, I seek to build a new data set of individual creditor claims by coding articles in the financial press.

### **The Moral Partisan – How Our Political Identification Shapes Our Views of Others**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Lucas de Abreu Maia** [ldeabreu@ucsd.edu](mailto:ldeabreu@ucsd.edu)

Through experimental and Google search data, this project aims to measure how individuals who identify with a political party view people who identify with the opposite party. The hypothesis is that the more strongly one identifies with a party, the more likely she will be to describe people who identify with the opposite party in moral terms. Ideology and other forms of social identity will be used as controls.

### **Is China an Exception to the Commercial Peace? Economic Interdependence and Chinese Statecraft**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Jack Zhang** [jjz007@ucsd.edu](mailto:jjz007@ucsd.edu)

Contrary to the predictions of international relations theory, tensions between China and its neighbors seem to be rising despite record levels of regional economic integration. This project investigates how economic interdependencies constrain China's use of economic and military coercion towards its trade partners. Research assistants will help construct a dataset on Chinese economic coercion from primary and secondary sources; proficiency in Chinese or Japanese will be an advantage.

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## **Why Women "Don't Know" More Than Men: Psychological Causes and Political Implications of Decreased Opinion Reporting**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Kristy Pathakis** [kpathakis@ucsd.edu](mailto:kpathakis@ucsd.edu)

This paper focuses on the higher propensity of women to respond don't know to political opinion survey questions. This paper will show that these responses are explained more by psychological factors that are independent of education, level of information about a given topic, or partisanship. Using data from a wide array of questions and surveys, including the ANES, I show that in simple regressions education is typically not a significant predictor of don't knows, yet gender almost always is. With women answering fewer questions, policymakers get a skewed view of the public and they may be unintentionally more responsive to the desires of men. Relatedly, this may be another way that the historical dominance of men in the political process is being perpetuated.

## **Exploring the Consequences of the Social Transmission of Political (Mis)Information**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Taylor Feenstra** [tfeenstr@ucsd.edu](mailto:tfeenstr@ucsd.edu)

This project explores the consequences of individuals receiving their information about politics from other people instead of directly from the news media. We will use a variety of experiments and observational social media data to examine how information about politics, candidates, and elections gets distorted as it flows from the media through individuals, as well as how this distortion affects political learning, voting decisions, and mobilization. Students involved in this project will help design the experiments and help analyze the data to identify distorted information.

## **Plural Governance: Race and Representation in the US**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Liesel Spangler** [lspangle@ucsd.edu](mailto:lspangle@ucsd.edu)

I examine how the racial and ethnic diversity of a state and federal electoral district impacts the legislator's strategic representation decisions. The project examines how legislators target multiple racial and ethnic groups in district communications, constituency services, and district funding in order to improve their electoral prospects.

## **The Role of Race and Ethnicity in Congressional Elections**

**Graduate Student Mentor: David Searle** [dsearle@ucsd.edu](mailto:dsearle@ucsd.edu)

Race continues to be salient in United States elections, especially as minority groups continue to be under-represented in Congress. In order to address if minority candidates lose or are not running often enough, research assistants will identify and collect the race and ethnicity of all House and Senate candidates in the 2016 election, including both primary and general elections.

## **Globalization and "De-Facto" Political Decentralization**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Aditya Ranganath** [aranganath@ucsd.edu](mailto:aranganath@ucsd.edu)

How does economic globalization affect the vertical organization of the state? Much of the previous work on the relationship between economic openness and federalism or political centralization/decentralization focuses on formal institutional measures of political centralization. However, in much of the post-1945 world, federalism was de jure only; de facto, centralization was reinforced through single-party regimes (i.e. Malaysia, Mexico, India) and other informal mechanisms. Our goal in this project is to operationalize and measure "de facto"

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decentralization, and examine whether it is systematically linked to economic liberalization. Research assistants will primarily assist with case study research (by compiling literature reviews) of several countries, designed to elucidate the mechanisms that link economic liberalization to "de-facto" decentralization, but may (depending on their interest and background) be asked to help with other data collection and analysis tasks as well.

### **Foreign Aid and Fragmentation**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Shannon Carcelli** [scarcell@ucsd.edu](mailto:scarcell@ucsd.edu)

Foreign aid scholars and practitioners often complain about the fragmentation and chaos of US foreign aid delivery. This project attempts to explain the domestic political causes of US foreign aid fragmentation. Research Apprentices will assist with collection and analysis of data on US foreign policy legislation, earmarks, political conflict, and foreign aid projects.

### **Air Pollution and Major Emitters in China**

**Graduate Student Mentor: Deborah Seligsohn** [dseligso@ucsd.edu](mailto:dseligso@ucsd.edu)

I'm seeking a research assistant to work with me on assembling and analyzing a dataset looking at air pollution from major energy sources in China. Air pollution in China is among the highest in the world, but in recent years has actually been improving. This research project looks at how regulation of major sources of air pollution emissions has changed over time. If there are students who speak Chinese, that would be helpful, but it is not a requirement.