



GRADUATE STUDENTS

GRAD STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Graduate students Samantha Chapa, Shana Hardin, Naomi Nubin-Sellers, Robert Alvarez, Eugenia Artabe, and Lucas Lothamer have graduated this semester, earning their Ph.D's in political science as of May 2025.



(Left to right) Shana Hardin, Robert Alvarez, Jeronimo Cortina, Jason Casellas, Eduardo Aleman, Eugenia Artabe, Samantha Chapa, Ling Zhu, Lydia Tiede, and Naomi Nubin-Sellers

GRADUATE STUDENT PLACEMENTS

This has been a great year for UH political science graduate students in terms of placement. Here are the accepted offers:

- Robert Alvarez**, Assistant Professor, Sam Houston State University
- Eugenia Artabe**, Assistant Professor, University of Houston-Downtown
- Samantha Chapa**, Postdoc Fellow, University of Notre Dame (2026), Assistant Professor, University of Texas at Arlington
- Shana Hardin**, Director of Research and Data, New American Leaders & The New American Leaders Action Fund
- Lucas Lothamer**, Assistant Professor, University of Texas at Tyler
- Naomi Nubin-Sellers**, Postdoc Fellow, Dartmouth College

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



JEFFREY CHURCH
Professor and Chair,
Dept. of Political Science

All good things do come to an end. I'm writing my final Note from the Chair, as I have stepped down as Chair of the department. I have learned so much in this role, have met so many students and alumni, and remain endlessly impressed and proud of the achievements of our department. I pass the torch along to the next administration, and believe that the future will continue to be bright for our department.

Jeffrey Church

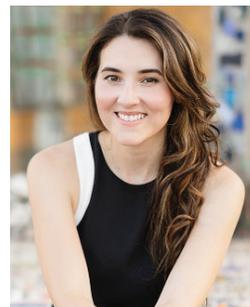
GRADUATE STUDENT LUCIA LOPEZ RECEIVES CLASS SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP



Lucia Lopez

PhD student Lucia Lopez was awarded the CLASS Summer Dissertation Fellowship, which will support her research on welfare policy. Her work will include a national factorial experiment and a multi-state misperception correction experiment to observe the misperceptions on programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

GRADUATE STUDENT SAMANTHA CHAPA FEATURED IN APSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Samantha Chapa

This semester, Chapa was chosen by the APSA Member Spotlight Program to be featured in the magazine Political Science Today to recognize her achievements and contributions to the discipline.

GRADUATE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Former Graduate Student Haimo Li has been part of two published papers this semester:

Jed Kroncke and Haimo Li, "Carsun Chang's Jefferson: A Lost Era of Transnational Sino-American Constitutional Imagination," *Law and History Review* (SSCI, A&HCI Q1)

Jed Kroncke and Haimo Li, "The Global Scope of Competitive Legalities in the Early 19th-century South China Sea: The Topaz Incident," *European Journal of International Law* (SSCI, Q1), Vol. 35, Issue 4

Current Graduate students: Alvarez, Robert D.* and Jason P. Casellas. 2025. *Shifting Allegiances: The Election of Latino Republicans to Congress and State Legislatures*. Cambridge University Press.

Kennedy, Ryan, Lydia Brashear Tiede. Amanda Austin*, Kenzy Ismael*, "Law Enforcement and Legal Professionals' Trust in Algorithms," *Journal of Law and Empirical Analysis* (forthcoming).

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

TWO STUDENTS SELECTED FOR PEEK SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Undergraduate students Kelly Nguyen and Amman Dhanani have been selected to receive the Peek Scholarship, created to recognize top Political Science undergraduate students with an interest in public service.



Kelly Nguyen, featured above, spoke about the influence of political science courses on her life and career pursuits: "My political science courses have stayed with me long after the semester ends—the intellectually curious environments have challenged the way I think and pushed me to approach research with greater depth and intention. The department's incredibly supportive faculty have made a lasting impression on me, and my experience in the program has been nothing short of formative."



Amman Dhanani, featured above, also commented on his coursework and its effect on his goals: "I transferred to UH in the Fall 2024 semester and was naturally nervous about the shift from community college to university. However, the political science professors guided me, showing me career paths beyond law school—which I once thought was my only option. My coursework has sharpened my writing, research, and communication abilities—skills that are crucial for becoming a future professor of political science!"

POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY IN AZERBAIJAN



UH Undergraduate student Mohammad Nobani, currently working as a Hobby Fellow legislative aide for Texas State Senator Paul Bettencourt, has been awarded the Benjamin Gilman Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State, selected from 8,000 applicants, to study abroad in Baku, Azerbaijan, in Fall 2025. This scholarship was created to help American students gain proficiency in a variety of languages and cultures, skills that are critically important to their academic and career development.

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

CREATING COMMUNITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

ACADEMIC GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE ENTHUSIASTS

WHO WE ARE

An organization of Political Science students at UH that

- Promotes scholarship about politics through panels, workshops, and student research.
- Connects students to careers via networking events, alumni mentorship, and internship panels.
- Strengthens community among students with political debates, socials, and student-led programming.
- Leads collaborative outreach with fellow organizations through social media, branding, and promotion of events and initiatives.

OUR LEADERSHIP

- President: Vincent Ruggiero | Junior
- Vice-President: Keith Maddox | Senior
- Secretary: Sydney Thomas | Sophomore
- Communications: Hope Nguyen | Sophomore
- Treasurer: Madison Rainwater | Junior

For more info: psuuh@gmail.com
Follow Us on Instagram: @psuuh

POLITICAL SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATION LAUNCHED

With the help of Professor Tanya Bagashka, several Political Science students founded the Political Science Undergraduate Association, which will organize speakers, arrange networking opportunities, and create opportunities for socializing among majors.

FACULTY NEWS



DR. ALEX BADAS CHOSEN TO BE A CLASS RESEARCH EXCELLENCE PROFESSOR

Dr. Badas has been chosen to be one of the inaugural CLASS Research Excellence Professors starting this fall. This title is meant to recognize and support significant research being conducted by tenured faculty members within CLASS. The term for this position is three years, and will include extra funds to be used for research support purposes.



DR. BORIS SHOR EARNS APSA JEWELL ENDURING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Dr. Shor has been given this award by the American Political Science Association (APSA) for his article, "The Ideological Mapping of State Legislatures". This award is given to works on US state politics and policy published more than ten years ago which, in their time, have had a large impact on the discipline.

VISITING SCHOLARS



DR. LIBBY JENKE TO BE A VISITING SCHOLAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Congratulations to Professor Libby Jenke, who will be a Visiting Scholar in the next academic year at the Institute for the Study of Citizens and Politics at the University of Pennsylvania, where she will be working with Professor Diana Mutz.



DR. MICHAEL SOULES TO BE VISITING SCHOLAR AT CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Dr. Soules will be spending this summer at Cardiff University in Wales as a Visiting Scholar. This position affords Dr. Soules the opportunity to continue his research abroad at a highly accredited institution with like-minded colleagues.

MENTOR AWARDS

Dr. Soules and Dr. Ling are being recognized for their excellent mentorship over the past academic year. In particular, both professors have gone above and beyond. In Dr. Zhu's case, she was on several comps, dissertation, and QP committees this semester, in addition to doing a stellar job in her first year as DGS. Dr. Soules was nominated for the award because he has made clear efforts to engage with and make himself available to grad students.

PROMOTION CASES

Congratulations to Professors Aleman, Casellas, and Cortina, who have been successfully promoted to the rank of Full Professor, starting 9/1/2025.



EVENTS

This semester featured multiple opportunities for students to hear from notable individuals in politics, from State Representatives Brad Buckley (R-Bell) and Gene Wu (D-Harris), to Former U.S. Attorney General for the Southern District of Texas Alamdor Hamdani, to Professors Jennifer Clark and Jason Casellas. We also hosted two successful department mini-conferences, one on Terrorism and one on Communications and Politics.

“New Frontiers in Research on Terrorism and Civil Wars”



Michael Soules, co-organizer

THE OBLIGATIONS, HISTORY, TRADITIONS, POWERS, AND LIMITATIONS OF THE FEDERAL PROSECUTOR

Alamdor Hamdani led the office in approximately more than 10,000 criminal cases against over 12,000 defendants in just over two years as U.S. Attorney. He placed particular emphasis on cases linked to cartels, the fentanyl crisis, human smuggling resulting in death, violent crime, national security, foreign corrupt practices, cybercrime and crimes involving children and the elderly.

EVENT DETAILS
 Tuesday, March 25, 2025
 1:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.
 CBB 108

Political Science
 College of Liberal Arts
 and Social Sciences

Spring 2025 Webinar Series: Issues and Impact of the Upcoming Texas Legislative Session

Discussion with State Representative Brad Buckley (R-Bell) – Chairman, House Public Education Committee 88th Legislative Session

THURSDAY, Feb 20
 2:30-3:30 p.m.



Discussion with State Representative Gene Wu (D-Harris)

THURSDAY, Feb 27
 2:30-3:30 p.m.



UH Professors Jennifer Clark and Jason Casellas, “The Texas Legislative Session: Analysis and Predictions”

TUESDAY, Apr 01
 2:00-3:00 p.m.



Scan QR Codes or Click on Event Title to Register!



DR. JERONIMO CORTINA & DR. BRANDON ROTTINGHAUS SUM UP THE TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION AT ALUMNI BREAKFAST

Dr. Cortina and Dr. Rottinghaus spoke at the May 28th at an alumni breakfast, giving their takes on the conclusion of the most recent Texas Legislative Session. In it, they discussed the winners, losers, and major implications for the future of Texan politics from this session.

MINI-CONFERENCE CO-ORGANIZED BY PROFESSORS JAE-HEE JUNG, ALLISON ARCHER, AND SUSAN SCARROW



Political Science
 College of Liberal Arts
 and Social Sciences

Mini Conference on Information and Messages in Sociopolitical Life

Department of Political Science

University of Houston

Thursday, May 1 – Friday, May 2, 2025

Mini-conference co-organized by Professors Jae-Hee Jung, Allison Archer, and Susan Scarrow.

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



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