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Political Scientist | Experienced Undergraduate Instructor| Expert in Civic Engagement, Local Government, and Global Democracy. Experienced political scientist with experience conducting research on democratic institutions, representation, and civic engagement in academic, social media company, and non-profit settings. In each case, I spearheaded research programs on innovative approaches to the study of democracy. In industry, I spearheaded a research agenda on protecting vulnerable populations from online violence incitement and hate with actionable impacts on company policies reaching millions of people. Taught original courses on elections, local governance, American institutions, international development, and ethnic politics. I also developed an applied local democracy course for undergrads and a civics education curriculum for adults to expand democratic pedagogy beyond the college setting.

EDUCATION

Columbia University , New York City PhD in Political Science (Comparative Politics)	2015
University of Michigan , Ann Arbor Michigan Bachelor of Arts (Highest Honors in Political Science)	2005

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATION

(with Neelanjan Sircar) “Does Local Leaders Prioritize the Poor? Identifying the Distributive Preferences of Local Leaders in India”, February 2024 (Online), *Electoral Studies*.

(With Milan Vaishnav et al.) “Rethinking Electoral Politics in India”, March 2021, *Perspectives on Politics*.

“The Discerning Voter: Partisan Alignment and Local Distribution Multi-Level Governance”, February 2020, *Party Politics*.

“Do Local Leaders Know Their Voters? A Test of Guessability in India”, November 2019, *Electoral Studies*.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Does Increasing Competition Increase Pro-Poor Responsiveness? Distributive Preferences of Partisan Brokers in Mexico (With Tesalia Rizzo, UC Merced). *Manuscript available upon request*.

Explaining Local Competition and Its Effects in India: The political economy of competition in Rajasthan.

Does Civics Education Increase Local Civics Engagement Among Adults in the United States? Los Angeles Pilot.

Misinformation in Los Angeles Local Government and Campaigns (With Prof. Fernando Guerrero, LMU).

DATA COLLECTION

Government data on electoral competition at the level of village councils in Rajasthan is being compiled and will be shared after research is complete. It will be linked to census data and data on GP-level governance outcomes.

2025 Phone Survey of village council presidents and panchayat secretaries (Original Survey of 500 local representatives and 500 line-level bureaucrats in rural Rajasthan).

Online surveys and large-scale qualitative studies on online hate speech, violence and incitement, and attitudes about content moderation (Original surveys fielded in India, the U.S., Turkey, and other countries for internal research at Meta). This research was complemented with interviews with politicians, academics, journalists, and human rights activists in countries such as Sri Lanka, India, and Bangladesh.

2019 Election and Social Media Survey (Original Citizen Survey of over 5,000 respondents in Sri Lanka).

2013 Voter and Local Representatives Survey (Original Survey of over 180 village council representatives and 960 voters in rural Rajasthan).

TEACHING AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Columbia University and Barnard College 1/2026 to Present
Lecturer in Comparative Politics

- Teach undergraduate courses in comparative politic, social media, and local governance.

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles 8/2025 to 12/2025
Visiting Professor in Comparative Politics and Local Governance

- Taught courses in local democracy, international relations, and comparative politics.

Center for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania
Non-Resident Fellow 8/2015 to 8/2019; 2023 to Present

- Publish research and media pieces on Indian politics.

Fordham University Bronx, NY, USA
Adjunct Professor of Political Science 1/2025 to Present

Developed and teach original courses on comparative democracy and democratic backsliding.

Tulane University, New Orleans LA
Adjunct Professor of Political Science 9/2018 to 12/2018

- Taught original undergraduate courses on comparative politics, ethnic politics, and international development.

Pitzer College, Claremont CA

Visiting Professor of Comparative Politics

9/2016 to 6/2018

- Designed and taught original courses in comparative politics, local democracy (with experiential components), and development policy.
- Researched and published articles based on original research on local representation and governance in India.

Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA

Visiting Professor of Comparative Politics

1/2015 to 6/2016

- Designed and taught original courses in comparative politics and South Asian Politics.
- Researched and published articles based on original research on local representation and governance in India.

Columbia University

GSAS Teaching Fellow, Columbia University

2007-2014

GSAS Summer Teaching Scholar

2013 -2015

- Taught an original seminar, Challenges for Developing Democracies, to undergraduates for three consecutive summer sessions.
- Serves as a TA for Introduction to Comparative Politics, Middle East Politics, Race and Ethnicity, the Senior Honors Thesis Seminar, among other courses.

NON-ACADEMIC RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Senior Research Adviser and Consultant

2/2023 to Present

- As a senior research consultant for Community Change, I design literature reviews and survey experiments to examine the effects of environmental and infrastructure legislation on voter engagement and voter turnout in local elections.
- Developed a guide to integrity risks and mitigation strategies for Civil Society Groups for The Global Institute.
- Consulted with National Democratic Institute (Washington DC) on information integrity risks and opportunities during moments of democratic transition to guide democracy promotion investments.

Meta - New York, NY, USA and Menlo Park, CA, USA

Senior Policy and User Experience Researcher, Civic and Central Integrity

1/2019 to 02/2023

- Served as the lead research on hate and violence and incitement risks and content moderation solutions for the Critical Countries team, which was created to prevent the spread of online hate and violence incitement in the Global South in the aftermath of ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. My work on this team involved road-mapping research, proposing product and policy changes based on my findings, and socializing findings to protect vulnerable users in Global South countries. This work identified and measured policy and enforcement gaps that could create real-world harm for vulnerable populations around the world – resulting in 4 policy changes and numerous product and design changes.
- Spearheaded, designed, and analyzed surveys, remote and in-person in-depth interviews (including a historically large minority group sample) that resulted in the largest content moderation policy (Inflammatory Content) in the Global South to date, reducing exposure to violent and hateful content by hundreds of millions of views.

- Spearheaded and designed the first systematic study of racial bias in enforcement and perceptions of enforcement by a social media company – in collaboration with research scientists, data scientists, data engineers, and the civil rights team.
- Managed multi-disciplinary research projects, including data scientists, data engineers, and researchers, and consistently delivered results within scheduled timelines, thus influencing decision-making and policy decisions.
- Developed new measurement strategies for surveying members of vulnerable populations using surveys triangulated with qualitative research. This shaped the creation of a new analytics team.
- Led fieldwork in Sri Lanka on anti-Muslim risks of violence resulting in major product changes at a time of anti-Muslim backlash following a terror attack by Islamic fundamentalists in the country. This resulted in one of the most aggressive product changes to protect vulnerable users in the history of the company.
- Spearhead, designed, and led a qualitative research study on risks of violence and discrimination (and the perceptions of this by religious majority and minority facing Indian Muslims in 2019-20 connected to covid-19, Delhi riots, and other issues. This project was the first of its kind at the company and was ultimately featured in the [Wall Street Journal](#).
- Conducted the first in-depth analyses of content moderation decisions to identify enforcement mistakes across four subject areas. Following from my conclusions, I held weekly office hours with content experts in 10 languages to identify common challenges and developed a global training program for content reviewers to improve precision.
- Developed conceptual frameworks, empirical research, and policy and product recommendations to address ambiguous problems including dangerous misinformation (e.g., rumors), risks and responses to political and violent crises, and social media risks during violent crises. This work played an agenda-setting role at the company by defining and simplifying complex problems; created a model for experimental and survey research adopted by researchers across the company; and created playbooks for rapid response teams during crises.
- Onboarded and supervised junior researchers, country specialists, and contractors on research projects.
- Led collaborative projects with cross-functional staff in multiple countries, including collaborators from data science, engineering, policy teams, and researchers from different social science disciplines.
- Socialized research findings in high-level company meetings through presentations and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders and the creation of working groups that advanced the mission of protecting vulnerable users.
- Served as an internal consultant on survey design and trust and safety for the Responsible AI Team, Civic Integrity Team, Local Civic Team, and Equity Team.

COURSES TAUGHT

Loyola Marymount University (Lead Instructor)

Introduction to International Relations (Fall 2025)
 Introduction to Comparative Politics (Spring 2026)
 Local Democracy in Comparative Perspective (Fall 2025)
 Challenges for Developing Democracies (Fall 2025)
 Introduction to Social Science Research Design (Spring 2026)
 Indian Politics (Spring 2026)

Fordham University (Lead Instructor)

Introduction to Politics, Spring 2025 (A basic introduction to comparative democracy and the field of political science).

Tulane University (Lead Instructor)

Introduction to International Relations, Fall 2018; Ethnic Politics, Fall 2018;
 Development Issues and Strategies, Fall 2018 (An introduction to international development)

Pitzer College (Lead Instructor)

Introduction to Development Policy (Fall 2016, Spring 2018);

Local Democracy in Comparative Perspective (Spring 2018); Ethnic Politics (Spring 2017, Spring 2018); Introduction to Comparative Politics (Fall 2016, Fall 2017); Challenges for Developing Democracies (Spring 2015, Spring 2016); Parties, Voters, and Elections in the Developing World (Spring 2017).

Swarthmore College (Lead Instructor)

Challenges for Developing Democracies (Spring 2015, Spring 2016) Ethnic Politics (Spring 2016); The Politics of Poverty Alleviation in the Developing World (Spring 2016); Government and Politics in South Asia, Spring 2015.

Columbia University (Lead Instructor)

Challenges for Developing Democracies (Summer 2013, Summer 2014, Summer, 2015).

GRANTS AND AWARDS

American Political Science Association Small Research Grant Recipient, 2018.
Pitzer College, Doman Award Recipient, 2016, 2017.
National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant Recipient, 2012-2013.
GSAS Summer Teaching Scholar, 2013.
ICPSR Warren E. Miller Scholar, University of Michigan, Summer 2009.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Hate Speech, Content Moderation, and Public Policy, Guest Lecture, SIPA, Columbia University, March 2025.

Technology and Democracy Lecture Series, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, March 2024.

Senior Thesis Seminar Guest Lecture on Election Integrity in India, UC Merced, March 2023.

Edited Volume on Clientelism Workshop at Princeton University, March 2019.

Electoral Integrity and Civic Engagement Lecture, Facebook Headquarters, July 2018.

Faculty Seminar. Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies, Claremont McKenna College, September 6, 2017.

India at 70: Governance and Democratic Challenges (Workshop), Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies, Claremont McKenna College, April 13-15, 2017.

Rethinking Electoral Politics in India (Workshop), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 30, 2016.

Clientelism and Redistributive Politics Seminar, Department of Politics (Princeton University), April 21, 2016.
Indian Politics Workshop (Center for the Advanced Study of India) March 2015, 2016.

Swarthmore College Inter-Departmental Lunch Series, September 30, 2015.

South Asian Politics Workshop, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 24, 2015.

Brokering Votes: Clientelism in Comparative Perspective (Conference), Center on the Politics of Development, University of California at Berkeley, February 2015.

Comparative Politics Seminar, Columbia University, October 2014, 2015.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association, 2014-2018, 2024, 2025.
Midwest Political Science Association, 2013-2015, 2024.
Annual Conference on South Asia, 2014-2015.

PROFESSION SERVICE

- Anonymous Reviewer for *APSR*, *AJPS*, *BJPS*, *CPS*, *CP*, *Party Politics*, and *Electoral Studies*.
- Reviewer, APSA Spring Centennial Center Research Grants, 2025.
- Non-Academic Careers Panelist, 2019, 2022 (UC Merced); UC Santa Barbara (2021); American University (2024).
- Creator and Organizer of the South Asia Political Science Happy Hour at APSA, 2013-2019. Continues to this day with official status and led to the creation of an APSA section.
- Creator of the Social Science in NYC Networking Happy Hour, 2025.
- Organizer of the South Asia Political Economy Workshop, University of Pennsylvania (2015-2016).

REFERENCES

Robert Shapiro, Professor
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