

Joshua Yoshio Lerner

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EMPLOYMENT

NORC at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
Senior Research Methodologist, *Methods and Quantitative Social Sciences*, January 2025 - Present
Research Methodologist III, *Methods and Quantitative Social Sciences*, January 2021 - December 2024

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina
Postdoctoral Fellow, *Political Institutions and Public Choice Program*, September 2019 - January 2021
Visiting Assistant Professor, January 2020 - January 2021

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, Chicago, Illinois
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, June 2017 - July 2019

EDUCATION

Duke University, Durham, North Carolina
Ph.D., Political Science, 2017
M.A., Political Science, 2015

University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
B.A., Political Science (with Honors), 2012

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, Causal Inference, Generative AI, American Politics, Congressional Politics, Political Ideology, Judicial Politics

PUBLICATIONS

“Does the Gift Keep on Giving? House Leadership PAC Donations Before and After Majority Status” with John Aldrich, Andrew Ballard, and David Rohde. *Journal of Politics*. 2017. 79 (4): 1449-1453.

“Getting the Message Across: Evaluating Think Tank Influence in Congress” *Public Choice*. 2018. 175:347-366.

“Physicians with Multiple Paid Medical Malpractice Claims: Are They Outliers or Just Unlucky?” with Bernard Black and David Hyman. *International Review of Law and Economics*. Volume 58, June 2019, Pages 146-157

“The Efficacy of Measuring Judicial Ideal Points: The Mis-Analogy of IRTs” with Mathew D. McCubbins and Kristen Renberg. 2021 *International Review of Law and Economics*

“Environmentalism among Poor and Rich Countries: A Natural Language Processing Approach to Conversational Dynamics” with Tana Johnson 2021 *Review of International Political Economy*

“Using Machine Learning and Disambiguated Author Identifiers to Improve Record Linkage for Funding Program Evaluation” with Brandon Sepulvado and Jennifer Hamilton *Annuals of Metrics* 2021. <https://www.asist.org/sig/sigmet/events/>

“Inducing Polarization? The Effect of Congressional Procedure and Partisan Lawmaking on Ideal Point Estimation” with Austin Bussing 2022 *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy*

“How Random Are Paid Medical Malpractice Claims?” with Bernard Black, David Hyman, and David Magid *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Health Forum*. 2023; 4(2): e225436. doi:10.1001/jamahealthforum.2022.5436

“Leveraging Predictive Modelling from Multiple Sources of Big Data to Improve Sample Efficiency and Reduce Survey Nonresponse Error.” With David Dutwin, Patrick Coyle, Ipek Bilgen, and Ned English *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*. Accessed August 28, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jssam/smad016>

“Setting the Committee Agenda: Measuring Speaker Influence in Congressional Hearings” with Robert Shaffer (Conditional Acceptance at *Political Science Research Methods*)

“Can Deliberation Have Lasting Effects? Reflections on ‘America in One Room’” with James Fishkin, Alice Sui, Valentin Bolotnyy, and Norman Bradburn *American Political Science Review*, 2024; 118(4):2000-2020. doi:10.1017/S0003055423001363

“State Capacity and COVID-19 Responses: Comparing the US States” with Kiran Auerbach and Hannah M. Ridge. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*. 2024. 24(4): 349–369. doi:10.1017/spq.2024.11

“Scaling Dialogue for Democracy: Can Automated Deliberation Create More Deliberative Voters?” with James Fishkin, Valentin Bolotnyy, Joshua Lerner, Alice Siu, and Norman Bradburn. *Perspectives on Politics*. 2025. 23(2): 1–18. doi:10.1017/S1537592724001749

“The Language of Delegation: An NLP Analysis of Congressional Bill Text” with Austin Bussing and Gregory P. Spell. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 2025. 50(4): e70012. First published June 5, 2025. doi:10.1111/lsq.70012

“Can We Measure Legislative Complexity with LLMs?” with Austin Bussing and Nicholas O. Howard. *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy*. Published October 1, 2025. 6(3–4): 407–426. doi:10.1561/113.00000130

“Position: Evaluating Bias in AI Agents Is (Still) a Social Science Measurement Challenge” with Soubhik Barari and Diwas Bhattarai. Forthcoming at *ACL 2026 Workshop on Evaluating AI in Practice*.

PAPERS UNDER
REVIEW AND
WORKING PAPERS

“What Happens When We Prompt the Model, Not the People? Evaluating LLMs as Survey Estimators” with Trent D. Buskirk (Submitted to *Public Opinion Quarterly*).

“Detecting LLM-Generated Answers to Open-Ended Survey Questions: A Survey-Specific Data-Quality Review Tool” with Brandon Sepulvado, Lilian Huang, and Ting Yan (Submitted to *Public Opinion Quarterly*).

“Using Deep and Active Learning Classifiers to Identify Congressional Delegation to Administrative Agencies” with Gregory Spell (*Center for the Study of the Administrative State Working Paper series*, George Mason Law)

“The Trouble with Coarsening: Coarsened Exact Matching as Balancing Method” with Bernard Black and Parth Lalkiya (Under Review)

“From Hearings to Legislation: Idea Transmission and the Writing of Laws in Congress” (Revise and Resubmit from *Congress and the Presidency*).

“Presidential Ads, Campaign Contributions and Asymmetric Partisanship: A Matching and Reweighting Approach” with Bernard Black (Under Review).

“Measuring State Capacity in the U.S. States” with Kiran Auerbach and Hannah Ridge (Under Review)

“Electoral Competition and State Capacity in the U.S. States” with Kiran Auerbach and Hannah Ridge (Under Review)

“Measuring the Undercounted: Ideology and Partisanship in Probability-Based Panel Recruitment Nonresponse Follow-up” with Ipek Bilgen, David Dutwin, and J. Michael Dennis

“Navigating New Methods for Dealing with Common Threats to Validity in Difference-in-Differences Designs with Health Care Data” with Kiegan Rice, Liyang Xie, and Quentin Brummet

“Why (or Why Not) Committees?” with Austin Bussing and Nicholas O. Howard

“Different Stages, Different Scores: Campaign-Finance Ideology Across the Electoral Cycle” with Austin Bussing and Nicholas O. Howard

“Do Actions Speak Louder than Words? How Parties Reward Loyal Speech and Voting Behavior” with Andrew Ballard and Shahryar Minhas.

“Measuring Institutional Influences on Behavior: Approaches to Overcoming Selection Bias in Multination Surveys” with John Aldrich, Victoria Dounoucos, Haohan Chen, and Gregory Schober.

“Parties and Agenda Setting: A Final Passage Approach to Ideal Point Estimation”

“Dividing the Question: Concurrences on the Supreme Court and Ideal Point Estimation” with Mathew D. McCubbins and Kristen Renberg.

WORKS IN
PROGRESS

“A Bayesian Parametric Approach to Measuring Legislative Productivity” with Austin Bussing

“Matching Methods: A Comparison of Various Matching and Reweighting Strategies for Pure Observational Studies” with Bernard Black and Parth Lalkiya

”Inducing Polarization: Procedural Bias in Ideal Point Estimation” with Austin Bussing

“Assessing Bayesian Instrumental Variables Approaches” with Bernard Black.

“Using Ideas as My Maps: Tracing the Flow of Ideas Through the Legislative Process.”

NON-PEER
REVIEWED
PUBLICATIONS

“Spin Class: A Review of Left Turn by Timothy Groseclose.” *Commentary* 2011.

“The Political Science of James Q. Wilson.” with Jeremy Rozansky *The New Atlantis*, 2012, pp. 84-98.

HONORS, AWARDS,
AND GRANTS

NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention (2013)

Program in the Study of Democracy, Institutions, and Political Economy (DIPE) Research Grant (2013)

Political Institutions and Public Choice (PIPC) Summer Fellowship (2013-2016)

Duke University Graduate Summer Research Fellowship (2014-2016)

Duke University Dissertation Support Award (2015)

Program in the Study of Democracy, Institutions, and Political Economy (DIPE) Dissertation Improvement Grant (2016)

LECTURES GIVEN With Soubhik Barari. 2024. “How to Use NLP and Generative AI in Survey Research.” AAPOR Mid-Year Short Course, October 10.

With Soubhik Barari. 2025. “How to Use NLP and Generative AI in Survey Research.” WAPOR Webinar Short Course, February 26.

Duke University School of Law Lecture “Legislation and Natural Language Processing” **Spring 2019**

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS “What Can LLMs Not (yet!) Do for Research” at *New Directions: Bridging Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Survey Research at SurvAI-Day 2024*, University of Maryland Social Data Science Center and the Artificial Intelligence Interdisciplinary Institute.

“Reimagining Automated Large-Scale Data Collection” with Brandon Sepulvado and Jennifer Hamilton *Annual conference of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness*. 2021 <https://sree.confex.com/sree/2021/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/3467>

American Association for Public Opinion Research Annual Meeting **2023 - 2024**

AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting **2023**

Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting **2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2024**

Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting **2019, 2022, 2024**

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting **2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024**

Society for Political Methodology Annual Summer Meeting **2016, 2017, 2018, 2019**

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Summer Meeting **2016**

Conference on Empirical Legal Scholarship **2016**

Conference on Empirical Legal Scholarship: Special Session on Replication **2018, 2019**

Northwestern-Duke Causal Inference Workshop **2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022, 2023, 2024**

Congress and History **2021**

TEACHING EXPERIENCE **Duke University Department of Political Science**, Durham, North Carolina USA

Teaching Assistant: POL130 Introduction to Political Inquiry **2014**

Teaching Assistant: POL201 Public Opinion **2015**

Teaching Assistant: POL709S Seminar in Behavior and Identities **2015**

Teaching Assistant: POL899 Research Design and Causal Inference

2016, 2017

Main and Advanced Northwestern-Duke Causal Inference Workshop, Chicago, IL USA

Instructor: "Introduction to R" and "Using R for Causal Inference" **2016, 2017, 2018, 2019**

Instructor: Causal Inference and Machine Learning **2018, 2019**

Duke University Department of Political Science, Durham, North Carolina USA

Instructor: POL 690 Machine Learning

Spring 2020

Instructor: POL 690S-5-02 Measurement

Spring 2020

Instructor: POL 337 Law and Politics

Fall 2020

SKILLS

R, Python, STAN, Stata, L^AT_EX

PROFESSIONAL
SERVICE

Reviewer for: *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Political Analysis*, *Political Science Research and Methods*, *Applied Network Science*, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Law and Courts*, *The Independent Review*, *Conference on Empirical Legal Scholarship*