Research Apprenticeship Program
Winter 2021 & Spring 2021

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] Download 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.

Graduate Student Projects

1. **Title of Research Project:** Stronger Together: The Dynamics of Racial Minority Interest Group Lobbying
   Graduate Student: Nhat-Dang Do
   Email: n4do@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** Since the 1890s, racial minority interest groups like the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) have engaged in racial justice advocacy. Racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) are organizations that work to represent and influence politics for the benefit of a specific racial minority group and, in doing so, act as an alternative mode of representation for these marginalized communities.

     Over time, these types of organizations grew in number but remained relatively weak or low in resources and political connections in comparison to other interest groups. Pluralist theorists like David Truman (1951) and Robert Dahl (1967) argued that numerous different types of organizations would form to represent diverse sets of constituencies in the policy-making process, especially when it has direct consequences for their prosperity and comfort. However, the ability of racial minority interest groups to thrive prior to the 1960s were limited through a prolonged process of economic exclusion, social banishment, and periodic violence (Kim 2000; Omni and Winant 1994). The interest group sphere in American politics seems to reproduce unequal representation rather than serve as a mechanism for all types of groups to engage in influencing their representatives. As E.E. Schattshneider (1960) succinctly states, ``The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent."

     The aim of this project is to dispel some of the uncertainty surrounding racial minority interest group lobbying, and provide empirical insight into whether RMIGs are able to compete on par with more well financed and politically-connected interest groups. Using

new data of interest group positions on legislative bills, I attempt to show 1) how active each minority racial group are in lobbying the legislature, 2) the types of bills that racial groups care about, and 3) a first-cut look at how successful they are in passing bills they support and stopping bills they oppose. I introduce a new identification strategy for assessing policy concerns among racial minority groups through structural topic modeling of bill names and the names of groups that sent in letters supporting or opposing bills.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - 1) Coding names of interest groups in large dataset
  - 2) Coding topics of legislative bills in dataset
  - 3) Minor data analysis (preparation of graphs, statistical analysis summaries, etc.)
  - 4) Reading/analyzing lobbying letters from interest groups
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.

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2. **Title of Research Project:** Racial Minority Interest Group Influence
Graduate Student: Nhat-Dang Do
Email: n4do@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** Racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) have been historically important for excluded racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. Organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights and interests of racial minority groups. In doing so, these advocacy groups enhance traditional representation by focusing and magnifying the voices of racial minority groups.

  Like other interest groups, RMIGs act as mechanisms to unify individuals to a common cause and provide an opportunity to voice concerns and grievances (Scholzman, Verba, and Brady 2012). They attempt to provide insider access to groups that have historically been on the margins of power and politics by offering them an institutionalized source of representation, outside of electoral politics. However, we know very little about the activities of these groups. How effective are they in achieving their goals? What strategies do they employ?
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - 1) Collection of bill texts over time
  - 2) Analysis of lobbying letters
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.

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3. **Title of Research Project: Use Their Force:** Interstate Security Alignments and the Distribution of Military Capabilities
   Graduate Student: Andres Gannon
   Email: jagannon@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** Why do countries possess militaries that leave them vulnerable to foreign threats, even when they can afford to do otherwise? Policymakers argue possessing a full spectrum of military capabilities provides the best defense in an unpredictable international environment yet states often forgo useful military assets and overproduce others. I argue that states possess seemingly inefficient militaries as a result of relationships with allies. When states trust their allies, they can forgo the development of some military capabilities and overproduce others to help provide for the common defense.

     I substantiate this theory of a "shared production model of defense" with new data on all national military capabilities over the past half century that develops a new measure of the degree of "specialization" in each country's military and find that states in strong alliances have more specialized militaries. Burden-sharing decisions go beyond just cost and should investigate the capabilities that allies provide.
   - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** Gathering data on national military capabilities
   - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

4. **Title of Research Project:** Cruisin' for a Bruisin': The Effects of US Cruise Missile Strikes Since the Gulf War
   Graduate Student: Andres Gannon
   Email: jagannon@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** Research on aerial bombing has primarily focused on its effects. However, less is known about variation in the manner in which that bombing occurs. This paper contributes to research about how states fight by providing the first comprehensive dataset of the entire universe of US cruise missile strikes from 1991-2017 – a type of bombing that has been largely excluded from prior analysis on aerial bombing campaigns. This fine-grained data allows scholars to examine how the type of bombing a state undertakes is affected by international and domestic factors, geography, and tactical considerations. We demonstrate how new information on military platforms, the geography of long-range strikes, and the timing of conflict alters theories about the effects of technological innovation on international conflict.
   - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** Identifying geographic location of US bombing campaigns in the Middle East
   - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

5. **Title of Research Project:** Anti-Asian Racism: Causes and Consequences
   Graduate Student: Daegyeong (D.G.) Kim
   Email: dak110@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** My project examines the political causes and consequences of anti-Asian sentiments and racism in the United States, utilizing public opinion surveys, survey experiments, media coverage, and social media data. More specifically, for example, I examine the correlates of anti-Asian sentiments in public polls such as individual economic conditions, local backgrounds, and other political outlooks. My research also highlights the intersection between domestic racial politics and evolving U.S.-China relations, focusing on how elite rhetoric on China shapes public racial sentiments and how the anti-Asian racial resentment, in turn, factors into American public opinion on the rise of China.
   - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** Research assistants will help me with the following:
     - Collecting and cleaning large-scale public opinion survey data
     - Multi-year national census
     - (Social) media data for quantitative analyses
     - Given the quantitative nature of the project, candidates with strong skills in R and/or Python are preferred
   - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.

6. **Title of Research Project:** Why do Third Parties Exist? Major Party Adaptation to Third Party Electoral Threats
   Graduate Student: Cassidy Reller
   Email: creller@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** Why are third parties so successful at fielding candidates for elective office when so few win office? This paper examines the non-office seeking motivation of third parties in the American states. The paper theorizes unique non-office seeking mechanisms that allow third parties to act as agenda setters through their ability to pose electoral threats. Leveraging the unique composition and strength of third parties in state politics the paper finds that a third party's ability to spoil an election and field candidates allows them to seek ideological and issue concessions. The paper examines changes major party platforms and legislative behavior directly link to strong third-party activity. This paper adds to the literature on why candidates run for office, party organization, and the unique role third parties play in the American party system.
   - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** The project will require the collection of data from various websites and compiling the data into a specific form.
   - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

7. **Title of Research Project:** Do High Ballot Access Thresholds Lead to Greater Polarization?
Graduate Student: Cassidy Reller
Email: creller@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** How do electoral institutions affect polarization? This paper examines the understudied electoral rule of ballot access laws, advancing a novel theory that denying ballot access to minor parties forces extremists into major parties. I find states that adopt high ballot access thresholds experience higher rates of polarization, and those that reduce their thresholds experience a reduction in polarization. The paper finds evidence consistent with the theoretical mechanism: that when thresholds are high, independent and third party candidates opt to run in major party primaries. Using an original dataset on state level changes to ballot access thresholds from 1994 to 2016, I find that an increase in both the number and type of primary competition leads to an increase in the polarization of state legislatures, and increased heterogeneity within both party caucuses. This paper adds to the literature on polarization and electoral institutions by demonstrating the role that ballot access laws play in producing polarization, and weakening party ideological unity within a legislature, demonstrating the role institutions have in polarizing elites.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** This project requires accessing and compiling data into a generalized form.
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

8. **Title of Research Project:** Moral Values, Social Norms, and Political Differences
Graduate Student: Todd Levinson
Email: tslevins@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** What do the people within a community morally owe to their members? This project will investigate how and why individuals vary in their answers to this question. It will build on previous research that I have done by looking at the role of individuals' level of trust, uncertainty, and feelings of personal control. It will also examine how individuals' views on these moral questions impact their level of political polarization and the level of conviction in their political attitudes. The survey you will be analyzing will specifically be fielded in two waves - one before the election and one after the election so that we can analyze the change in respondents' emotions and attitudes.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Analysis of survey experiment data
  - Summaries of research articles
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

9. **Title of Research Project:** Evaluation of Safe Parking Program for Homeless Individuals
   Graduate Student: Todd Levinson
   Email: tslevins@ucsd.edu

   - **Brief Description of Research Project:** I am also currently working on an evaluation of a local homelessness program for those living in their cars. Those who RA with me will also have an opportunity to help out with this research.
   - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
     - Data analysis
     - Possibly some literature review research and writing
   - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

10. **Title of Research Project:** American Identity & Foreign Policy
    Graduate Student: Alexandra Lange
    Email: arwoodru@ucsd.edu

    - **Brief Description of Research Project:** What does it mean when a policymaker calls a particular foreign policy "un-American" or instead argues that a foreign policy "reflects American values"? This project seeks to understand the role of national identity in foreign policy. Specifically, I aim to 1) define American identity with particular attention to how it relates to international relations, 2) understand how and why politicians appeal to national identity to mobilize their constituents, and 3) explore the consequences of national identity for individuals' attitudes and policymakers' foreign policy decisions. To accomplish these aims, I use a mix of surveys, text analysis, experiments, and case studies. This project may be of interest to students interested in the domestic politics of International Relations (especially public opinion about foreign policy and political psychology), and students interested in learning about conducting survey experiments or using text analysis in R. Experience working in R will be beneficial but not required. Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Please don't hesitate to email me with any questions.
    - **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** I aim to tailor research tasks based on students' experience, goals, and interests. Likely tasks include:
      - Analyzing survey responses
      - Participating in survey experiment design
      - Analyzing presidential and congressional speeches
      - Data collection
      - Literature review assistance
    - **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?** Preferred, but not required.

11. Title of Research Project: Public Opinion about Foreign Policy
   Graduate Student: Alexandra Lange
   Email: arwoodru@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** How does the public think about and form preferences about foreign policy? What roles do partisanship and human psychology play in this process? Our ambition will be to identify an interesting question about the domestic politics of International Relations and design and conduct a study to answer the question, with the ultimate goal of producing a co-authored journal article. To that end, we aim to work through each step of the research process, including literature review, research design, data collection and analysis, and reporting results. We will work together to tailor the project to student interests, goals, and experience. Students do not need to know how to do all of these steps before applying. I will provide guidance and additional resources to help with each step of the process. This project will be well suited for ambitious, hardworking students with a desire to learn about the research process, write a senior honors thesis, and/or apply to graduate school. Experience working in R and/or a willingness to learn R will be beneficial. Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Please don't hesitate to email me with any questions.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** We aim to work through the entire research process from start to finish. To this end, tasks will include:
    - Conducting a literature review
    - Identifying a research question and developing testable hypotheses
    - Research design
    - Data analysis
    - Writing up results
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.

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12. Title of Research Project: Farming for Votes: Producer Organizations and the Political Economy of Rural Africa
   Graduate Student: Brian Engelsma
   Email: bengelsm@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** The road to a majority in African politics runs through the countryside. Despite their pivotal position, we know surprisingly little about rural African voters. Most studies paint Africa's agrarian households either as undifferentiated political objects under the thumb of local big men and ethnic power brokers or as uncaptured actors evading pernicious governments. However, today across sub-Saharan Africa we see politicians courting farmers and farmer organizations. I argue agrarian households have distinct political preferences, shaped by the nature of agricultural production, and use farmer organizations to press politicians for government benefits. The central question motivating this project is how do Africa's agrarian

households extract benefits from the state. I argue agricultural production generates a unique set of policy demands in rural African communities. While agricultural production serves as a source of demand, demand alone is not enough to understand their political behavior. As atomized actors, they cannot realize their political goals. Farming households can turn their demands into reality through rural producer organizations, local civil society organizations that provide goods and services to farmers. These organizations articulate membership's political demands and bargain with politicians. Exchanges between organizations and politicians take many different forms. At times organizations may offer the votes of their members, while at other times they may offer campaign funding or other in-kind campaign contributions.

I hypothesize that the likelihood of any bargain between organizations and politicians, and the terms of an eventual bargain, vary according to an organization's features (e.g. size, local concentration, internal democratic governance, etc.), organizational activities (e.g. demonstrated group collective action, goods and services supplied to members, etc.), and agricultural and sectoral features (e.g. types of crops grown, the existence of domestic processing, etc.). Producer organizations are a ubiquitous, yet largely overlooked, feature of rural life in sub-Saharan Africa. Most research focuses on other types of African institutions or views them as ineffective dinosaurs from another era of African political economy. With increasing electoral competition across the continent, however, comes new opportunities for these organizations to use their organizational strength. I use a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, including analyses of survey data, government records, election results, and geospatial data on agronomic features.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Transcribing and digitizing data/records
  - Researching figures/organizations/public policy programs and writing case studies about them
  - Preparing data visualizations
  - Summarizing data
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

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13. Title of Research Project: Authoritarian International Organizations Project
Graduate Student: Christina Cottiero
Email: ccottier@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** The research assistants would work to gather and describe information on authoritarian regional international organizations from around the world for the Authoritarian Regional Organizations Dataset. This is the first dataset to list and characterize the activities of all regional organizations from 1900 to present whose members are predominantly non-democratic states, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, League of Arab States, and other organizations across Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. While we have an updated list of authoritarian regional organizations, we need to gather

more information about the types of cooperation each organization engages in at various points in time (eg. counter-terrorism, military interventions, election monitoring).

Research assistants could choose to work on gathering information for organizations from particular regions based on their personal interests or language skills, and focus either on gathering information about treaties and creating data visualizations of over-time trends or writing up case studies depending on their interests. This dataset that will enable us and other political scientists to study questions such as "what are the most common issue areas where authoritarian regimes cooperate through regional international organizations", "how has authoritarian cooperation through regional international organizations changed over time", "in what regions are authoritarian regional international organizations more active, and to what extent do they impact domestic politics in member states and successfully counter efforts toward democratization."

There are no specific skill prerequisites, as we can try to find tasks tailored to any student's interests or skill sets. Students who are interested in making use of foreign language skills - and especially those who can read and search for information in Russian, French or Spanish - are particularly encouraged to apply.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
    - Searching online for treaties
    - Gathering records of events from news outlets or academic sources
    - Note-keeping
    - Updating excel sheets
    - Data visualization
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

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14. Title of Research Project: US and European Military Assistance in Africa
Graduate Student: Christina Cottiero
Email: ccottier@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** This project will focus on 1. trends related to support and funding for African militaries provided by the US and European countries in the post-Cold War era and 2. the extent of regional organization partnerships with the US and European countries on military training projects.

    This will involve a combination of data collection, collection of reports and academic material on the topic, and either writing case studies or analyzing data, depending on student interest and skill sets. French or other European language skills are a bonus but not required.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Data collection
  - Literature review
  - Note-taking
  - Either data analysis or writing case studies based on literature review
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

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15. Title of Research Project: From Aid to Accountability: Tracing the Access Equilibrium in Developing Countries
Graduate Student: Syeda ShahBano Ijaz
Email: ssijaz@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** The project considers whether last-mile access to foreign aid in developing countries, specifically Pakistan, has any effect on voters' political preferences, their likelihood of supporting the incumbent and on their political participation. I trace these effects through a series of telephonic survey experiments that I collate with administrative data on access infrastructure (including roads and ATMs) to understand whether last-mile access to foreign aid matters, particularly when such aid is designed to bypass local politicians.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:** I will require assistance on data analysis of survey experiment data as well as administrative data from Pakistan.
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Yes

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16. Title of Research Project: Criminal Organizations and Politician Capture in Democratic Societies
Graduate Student: Marco Alcocer
Email: m2alcoce@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** In political science and economics, the literature exploring the relationship between the state and organized crime is growing. However, this literature has primarily focused on explaining the onset of criminal violence in Mexico and Latin America, especially by highlighting the role that government crackdowns have played. However, systematic work on the inverse relationship, that is, the influence that organized crime has on government policy, has lagged behind.

  This project aims to fill this gap by providing both new theoretical insights and strong empirical evidence. The project does this by looking at how the Mexican War on Drugs drove drug trafficking organizations to diversify into oil theft and expand their presence into municipalities with oil pipelines. Through this case, the project investigates how the introduction of criminal organizations into

territories where they had previously not operated—those with oil pipelines—has affected the electoral process and public policy in these places. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to test these effects.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Data collection
  - Data cleaning
  - Background research on organized crime, corruption, and Mexican politics
  - Flexible given interests/skills of applicant
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** No

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17. Title of Research Project: Consequences of Ideology: How our Ideological Identities Shape Our Party Allegiances
Graduate Student: Lucas de Abreu Maia
Email: ldeabreu@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** Are you interested in how voters choose who they vote for or how they come to hold the views they do? Are you concerned about the future of American democracy? Or do you love getting to the root causes of political phenomena? Then this project is for you! Political scientists have established that voters' ideological identity–e.g., "liberal," "moderate," or "conservative"–increasingly align with their partisanship–"Democrat'' or "Republican". But what is causing what? Are voters liberal/conservative because they are Democrat/Republican? Or is it the other way around–do voters choose their parties based on their ideologies?

  This project seeks to answer this, one of the most central questions in political science. Whatever answer we find has direct consequences to our understanding of democracies. If political views define our party identities, then democracy is working as expected: voters have political/moral beliefs that drive their behavior. If, however, it is our group allegiances that explain our political choices, then democracy is based on an unwarranted assumption.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Collecting and helping me analyze survey data
  - Thinking of databases we can use for this project
  - Brainstorming research designs to address the question we're interested in
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.

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18. Title of Research Project: The Art of Crafting Decisions: Policymaking in China's Authoritarian State
   Graduate Student: Jiying Jiang
   Email: jij090@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** How is policy made in non-democratic regimes? Why do authoritarian leaders, who exercise supreme power, often issue vague decisions? By examining the logic of vagueness in China's policy space, my study aims to open the black box of authoritarian policymaking. Theoretically, I propose a new theory of authoritarian policymaking that explains why dictators craft vague decisions. By strategically controlling the decision language, the autocrat is able to manage pressures from within (the elites) and below (the public). I highlight two dimensions of decision language in policymaking: resoluteness and vagueness. Statements of resolve express government commitment to issues of high citizen attention, allowing the autocrat to manage public opinion pressure. Vague instructions on implementation defers conflicts among bureaucratic stakeholders, allowing the autocrat to manage intra-regime policy competition. When both pressures remain high, resolute but vague statements become an optimal strategy. Methodologically, I combine large-scale text analysis with in-depth case studies to test the hypotheses and elaborate the mechanisms. I collect an original dataset of laws and regulations from all arms of the central government in China between 2003 and 2017. Using machine learning methods, I will construct new measures of resoluteness and vagueness in China's policy space. Meanwhile, I will complement the quantitative analysis with in-depth studies of a few selected policies by analyzing data obtained in the fieldwork. Additionally, I will field a survey experiment to assess whether the "resolute but vague" strategy is effective in shaping public opinion.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Coding sentences of laws and regulations in Chinese
  - Data-cleaning
  - Basic data analysis
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.
- **Other:** Undergraduate students shall be fluent in Chinese to apply

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19. Title of Research Project: The Political Economy of Assassinations
   Graduate Student: Mariana Carvalho
   Email: macarval@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** In recent years, hundreds of mayors, city councilors, and candidates for these positions have been executed in countries as diverse as Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, South Africa, and others. This project investigates the causes and consequences of violence against politicians in Brazil. What conditions make violence against politicians more likely? What

consequences for such assassinations have for democratic accountability? Another part of the project looks at criminal organizations in Latin America.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
    - Data collection
    - Data analysis
    - Literature review
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Yes

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20. Title of Research Project: Mapping Criminal Organizations in Brazil
Graduate Student: Mariana Carvalho
Email: macarval@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** This project studies the dynamics of criminal activity in Brazil. We will use different methods and sources to map criminal organizations. From identifying the gangs in Brazil to machine learning and natural language processing algorithms, the main goal of the project is to collect incident-level information about conflict involving non-state armed groups. The goal is to construct a high-frequency dataset of geocoded events to map the spatial distribution of criminal activity and identify which groups operate at particular locations.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
    - Manually search for news sources and information about criminal activities
    - Validation of the data
    - Portuguese or Spanish required
    - Interest in computational social science
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Yes

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21. Title of Research Project: Do Online Teaching Resources Improve Learning Outcomes?
Graduate Student: Leonardo Falabella
Email: lfalabel@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** A team of graduate students is developing an online module with videos, instructional text, and quizzes to support students taking POLI 30 (Political Inquiry). We are looking for students who have taken POLI 30 to assist us on two fronts: the first is to help us fine-tune the material by testing and providing feedback, so that we can fix occasional bugs and/or text that isn't clear. The second task is to help us collect and analyze data on student performance to verify if the material is effective. At the conclusion of the program, we will help research apprentices in writing up compelling reports of the work

experience for future job applications. Research apprentices will have an opportunity to develop marketable skills in statistics, research design, and data science, while also contributing to the learning of future POLI 30 students.

- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Navigating beta versions of the online material
  - Suggesting changes to beta versions of the online material
  - Doing literature searches and writing notes on the literature on online teaching resources
  - Collecting and analyzing data on student performance
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Yes

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22. Title of Research Project: Environmental Politics in Brazil

Graduate Student: Kathryn Baragwanath

Email: kbaragwa@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** This paper studies the relationship between natural resources and corruption at the micro-level in Brazil. Using geo-referenced data on the location of all mines in Brazil, I analyze whether municipalities containing mines have higher levels of corruption, conditional on the type of mineral being extracted. I find significant effects of mine presence on corruption. Additionally, I find that this has real world implications not only for the quality of governance, but also for environmental outcomes. I find a strong positive correlation between mining, corruption and deforestation. I seek to gather more data on environmental outcomes, monitoring and enforcement at the municipal level in order to establish further evidence of mining's effect on the environment.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
  - Gather data such as water pollution data, municipal fines and enforcement data as well as data on socio-economic outcomes at the municipal level
  - Work in R to clean and manage data
  - Students may also do some case study work in order to investigate the causal chains in a more qualitative manner
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.
- **Other:** Some knowledge of Portuguese or Spanish preferred, but students who do not speak the languages are more than welcome to apply

23. Title of Research Project: Corruption and Compensation: Evidence from Brazil
   Graduate Student: Kathryn Baragwanath
   Email: kbaragwa@ucsd.edu

- **Brief Description of Research Project:** Corruption is a huge issue in Latin America. Some theories posit that higher salaries attract better candidates, and prevent incumbents from extracting illegal rents since they are well paid. However, there is no data on mayoral salaries in Brazil with which we can test this theory.

   We will construct a novel dataset consisting of data on mayors' salaries in every Brazilian municipality. Currently, there is no unified source where researchers and voters can query the salary of their mayor. Mayors' salaries in Brazil vary greatly. The Constitution states that they can be as high as the salary of a Supreme Court judge, or as low as the municipal council sees fit. Just amongst capital cities of each state, we observe a 157% difference between the highest and lowest salaries. Information on the salaries of mayors is invaluable for the estimation of my structural model as knowledge of the "legal rents" that politicians can make from office is an important part of the decision to enter politics when considering opportunity costs. Furthermore, a dataset with mayors' salaries will be undoubtedly useful for researchers studying career politics, the value of political office, as well as looking at politician selection in a more general context.
- **Common tasks required of Undergraduate Research Assistants for this project includes:**
   - Searching the web for data in municipality websites
   - Submitting transparency requests to local governments for the information required
   - Studying the context of local politics in Brazil
- **Is completion of POLI 30(D) - Political Inquiry required?:** Preferred, but not required.
- **Other:** Some knowledge of Portuguese or Spanish preferred, but students who do not speak the languages are more than welcome to apply