Why Should You Study American Politics at Indiana University?

The central goal in graduate training in American Politics at Indiana University is to develop top-notch research scholars and teachers. Our graduates hold faculty positions at universities ranging from the University of Michigan, Notre Dame, and University of North Carolina to Carleton College and Brown University. A smaller number of our graduates have gone on to high-level jobs in political consulting, government, and public policy research institutes.

Our distinguished faculty in American Politics includes PhDs from Duke, Harvard, Ohio State University, University of North Carolina, University of Minnesota, University of Illinois, University of Rochester, SUNY Buffalo, and University of Wisconsin. Over the last five years, members of the American Politics group have published articles in all of the major Political Science journals including the American Political Science Review and American Journal of Political Science, as well as books with leading publishers such as Cambridge University Press. We have received grants from the National Science Foundation (including multiple dissertation grants), the Ford Foundation, NCEEER, Pew Trust, NEH and Russell Sage. We have also won various disciplinary prizes for research and for teaching. All of the tenured members of the group have served on NSF Advisory Panels, and our faculty members have held the presidency of the American and Midwest Political Science Associations and the Public Choice Society.

Colleagues have been honored as Fellows of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton, and the Institute of United States Studies in London.

Graduate coursework in American Politics is organized around traditional research areas: elections and electoral behavior, judicial process, legislative institutions, political parties, public opinion, and state and local politics. All of us teach a mix of graduate and undergraduate American classes; many of us also teach in the department’s Theory and Methods sequence.

The department is located in the heart of the beautiful Indiana University campus in Bloomington, easily accessible from the Indianapolis International Airport or by car from Chicago, St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati, and Nashville. Its extensive support network includes these outstanding on-campus features:
The Social Science Research Commons, located in Woodburn Hall, promotes collaborative research among social scientists, and serves as a clearinghouse for data and information from the Inter University Consortium for Political and Social Research, the Roper Center, European Political Research Consortium, and many other sources. It also provides access to state of the art technology, training, consultation, and small seed grants to facilitate research synergies and external funding.

The Interdisciplinary Experimental Lab has state-of-the-art spatial, visualization, and experimental capabilities linked with field settings and other labs around the nation. Grad students as well as faculty members use the Experimental Lab to conduct their research and to provide instruction. Its multi-disciplinary nature allows our grad students to collaborate with other students, postdocs, and faculty in a variety of behavioral disciplines.

The internationally-known Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis brings together faculty, grad and undergraduate students and postdocs in a variety of disciplines to study institutional analysis and design. Founded on the principle that research skills are learned best in a setting where students are active participants alongside experienced scholars, the Workshop produces ground-breaking research on questions ranging from water rights in California to issues of sustainable democracy, both in America and throughout the world.

The central mission of the Center on Congress, directed by former Congressman Lee H. Hamilton, is to help improve the public’s understanding of Congress and to invigorate civic engagement, especially among young people, as a way to strengthen our basic institutions of government. The Center carries out its mission by producing newspaper and radio commentaries, website articles and brochures, teaching materials, conferences, books, videos, and interactive learning programs for students. The Center also sponsors national opinion surveys of the public’s attitudes about Congress and expert surveys that assess the performance of Congress.

Our placement record is excellent. In recent years, our Ph.D.s have won faculty positions at the University of Houston (Jennifer Hayes Clark), the University of Iowa (Tracy Osborn), the University of Mississippi (Jonathan Winburn), Louisiana State University (Jas Sullivan), and the University of Wisconsin (Mike Wagner). Clark and Jessica Gerrity have been awarded Congressional Fellowships from the American Political Science Association in the past three years. Two of our Ph.D.s now hold endowed chairs at major departments: Thomas Carsey (at the University of North Carolina) and Jeff Mondak (at the University of Illinois), and another (Darrell West) heads the Governance Studies division at the Brookings Institution.

And finally, our graduate students enjoy regular contact with other outstanding scholars from universities around the nation. The Center on American Politics supports research conferences and sponsors an American Politics Colloquium Series which included these speakers during 2012-2014: Larry Bartels (Vanderbilt), Katherine Cramer (University of Wisconsin), Frances Lee (University of Maryland), James Fowler (University of California, San Diego), and John Hibbing (University of Nebraska).


Current research: My research focuses on legislative institutions, representation, and strategic behavior. Current work includes an analysis of the conditions that produce legislative deadlock in the contemporary Congress and a study of how legislative interactions affects transitions to democracy. I also do research on international cooperation in space exploration; how the US and Russian space programs learn to work together running the International Space Station.

Collaborated with graduate student(s) on: I have coauthored articles with graduate students that appeared in various journals such as Journal of Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, American Politics Quarterly, and Political Analysis. In addition, two of my students have won National Science Foundation Dissertation Grants.

Teaching fields: American politics – Congress, graduate statistics, formal/positive theory, political institutions.

Graduate seminars typically offered: Legislative Politics, Introduction to Positive Political Theory
EILEEN BRAMAN
Associate Professor
Ph.D., Ohio State University, 2004
J.D., Fordham University, 1996
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Editorial boards: Professor Braman has served on the editorial board of The Journal of Politics and is currently on the editorial board of Justice System Journal.


Current research interests: My research interests in American politics include political decision-making (broadly defined), Congress/Court relations and the determinants of public support for government regulation. Specifically my work on legal decision making lies at the intersection of three fields: law, political science and psychology. Using experiments with undergraduates and law students, I investigate how decision makers reach conclusions consistent with their policy preferences in the context of stylized norms used by people with legal training. I have used “motivated reasoning” to study how case facts and policy preferences interact to influence perceptions of precedent drawing on understandings of analogical perception from cognitive psychology. I also use the paradigm to test how decision makers’ preferences for ultimate outcomes in complex litigation can influence their reasoning with respect to preliminary “threshold” issues.

Collaboration with Graduate Students: I am collaborating with Beth Easter on a project “Normative Legitimacy: Rules of Appropriateness in Citizens’ Assessments of Individual Judicial Decisions” looking at how rules of legal decision-making and democratic context interact to shape citizens’ evaluations of particular court outputs.

Teaching fields: Constitutional Law, Civil Rights, Judicial Process, and Political Psychology

Graduate seminars offered: Political Psychology, Decision Making in Institutions
EDWARD G. CARMINES
Distinguished Professor, Rudy Professor, and Warner O. Chapman Professor of Political Science
Director of Research, Center on Congress
Director, Center on American Politics
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President, Midwest Political Science Association, 2014-15
Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2012-
Fellow, Center for Advanced Study of in the Behavioral Sciences, spring 2012
Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2011-
Fellow, Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton University, 2006-2007; Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University, 2000-2001; Visiting Professor of Politics at Oxford University, spring, 1998

Philip E. Converse Award, American Political Science Association, 2012 for Issue Evolution, recognizing outstanding and influential book published at least five years ago;
Distinguished Alumnus Award, Department of Political Science, University at Buffalo SUNY, 2011; Elected to Phi Beta Kappa by the College of William and Mary in 2001 based on exceptional scholarship since graduation; American Political Science Association Gladys M. Kammerer Award for the best political science publication in the field of U.S. national policy in 1998 for Reaching Beyond Race (with Paul M. Sniderman) and in 1990 for Issue Evolution (with James A. Stimson); Best Paper Award at the American Political Science Association convention in 1994, the Midwest Political Science Association convention in 1982, and the Southern Political Science Association conventions in 1977 and 1978; Program Committees, American Political Science Association convention, 1992; Midwest Political Science Association convention, 1990 and 1986; Vice President, Midwest Political Science Association, 2001-2002; Council member, Midwest Political Science Association, 1991-1994; chaired the Ph.D. committee of Mike Berkman, who won the APSA's William Anderson award for the best dissertation completed during 1989 or 1990 in the field of intergovernmental relations, Geoff Layman, who won the APSA's Aaron Wildavsky Award for the best dissertation completed in 1995 on religion and politics, and Beth Easter and Mike Wagner, who were awarded National Science Foundation Dissertation Research Grant Awards.

Amoco Foundation award for distinguished teaching, 1987
Student Choice Teaching Award Nominee, 2006
Graduate Student Faculty Mentor Award Nominee, 2007

EDWARD G. CARMINES (cont.)


*Current research:* My research focuses on various aspects of American politics, including public opinion, elections and electoral behavior, political parties, and political psychology. Currently, I am working on several major collaborative projects focusing on the public’s evaluation of Congress, electoral behavior in the 2004, 2006 and 2008 presidential and congressional elections, party polarization in the electorate, and changes in Americans’ racial attitudes.

*Collaborated with graduate student(s) on:* During the last several years: Nicholas D’Amico two articles forthcoming in *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*; Heather Evans article in the *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*; Beth Easter article in the *ANNALS*; Jessica Gerrity, Mike Wagner article in *Politics and Policy*.

*Teaching fields:* American politics -- political behavior, elections, public opinion, and political psychology.

*Graduate seminars typically offered:* Public Opinion; Voting, Elections and Party Realignment
CHRISTOPHER DeSANTE
Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Duke University, 2012
E-mail: cdesante@indiana.edu


Current research interests: My current research focuses on political psychology, values, political partisanship and race and racism in America. I’ve also been working on several papers in political methodology, specifically focusing on measuring changes in attitudes across birth cohorts. My coauthor, Candis Watts Smith, and I are finishing a book on the changing structure of white Americans’ racial attitudes. I am most interested in how race and racial attitudes affects policy positions, partisanship and political behavior. I use a variety of quantitative methods in my own work and while I do not teach classes in all of them, I’d be happy to any and all of the following with graduate students: experimental methods, Bayesian statistics, structural equation modeling, factor analysis, multilevel modeling, maximum likelihood estimation and computational simulation.

Teaching fields: Political psychology and quantitative political methodology.

Graduate seminars typically offered: Two-semester statistics sequence, seminars in political psychology (possibly).
BERNARD L. FRAGA
Assistant Professor
Ph.D., Harvard University, 2013
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Other Affiliations: Professor Fraga is a faculty affiliate of the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society (CRRES) at IU, and a faculty affiliate of the Latino Studies Program at IU.


Current research interests: I specialize in the areas of American political behavior, electoral politics and policy, and racial and ethnic politics. Broadly, I study the ways in which distinctive features of the American electoral system shape participation at the group and individual level. My methodology tends toward the statistical analysis of comprehensive, large-N datasets associated with voter data and election results, including analysis of data provided by Catalist, LLC, a vendor to various political campaigns, and the collection of demographic information about congressional primary and general election candidates.

My most recent project (which comprised my dissertation) examined how the demographic and partisan composition of congressional districts impacts who votes and who runs for office. A second project explored the effect of electoral competition on voter turnout. Currently, I am studying the impact of the 2012 round of redistricting on individual behavior, leveraging the redistricting process as a natural experiment to study voter turnout.

Teaching fields: Elections and Voting Behavior, Race and Ethnicity in American Politics, Political Behavior

Graduate seminars typically offered: Electoral Politics and Political Participation, The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Identity.
Visiting Professor, Victoria University in Wellington; Benedict Visiting Professor at Carleton College; Lippincott Visiting Professor at the University of Minnesota; Fellow at the Institute of United States Studies at the University of London; Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto.

1997 Best Paper Award, State Politics Section of the American Political Science Association

Pi Sigma Alpha Teaching Award, American Political Science Association, 2007; IU Trustees Teaching Award, 2007; IUB Freshmen Learning Project Fellowship, 2004-05, IUB Teaching Excellence Recognition Award, 1997; 1998.

Editorial boards: I have served on the editorial boards of the American Political Science Review and Journal of Politics.

Grants from: Ford Foundation; Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin, Madison; National Science Foundation.


Research: Professor Hanson’s interests lie at the intersection of American politics and political philosophy. He is especially concerned with the historical development of liberalism in the United States, its impact on the development of American federalism, and the corresponding prospects for democratization. Professor Hanson also investigates the dynamics of social welfare policy in the American states, and questions of equity raised by the wide variation in state programs.

His current research explores the emergence of self-styled liberal reform movements in the post Civil War period and their political connections to related movements in Victorian Britain. Such movements emphasized individual autonomy, and criticized laws and social norms that limited possibilities for personal expression and development. In so doing these movements reconceived the basic tenets of liberalism and hence the proper role of government in social and economic life. In this way the United States became liberal, for it was not always so.
RUSSELL L. HANSON (cont.)

Teaching fields: Professor Hanson teaches courses on state and local politics in the United States, American political thought, and modern political thought.

Collaborated with graduate students on:


Co-chaired Michael Berkman’s The State Roots of National Politics, which won the APSA’s William Anderson Award for Best Doctoral Dissertation in State & Local Politics, Federalism or Intergovernmental Relations in 1991.

Graduate seminars: Tocqueville, Liberalisms, Liberalism in America, American Political Thought.
**MATTHEW HAYES**  
Assistant Professor  
Ph.D. University of Illinois, 2013  
E-mail: mh34@indiana.edu


*Current research interests:* My current research primarily lies at the intersection between race and political representation. I am continuing to work on extensions of my dissertation project. That project investigates how citizens evaluate the importance of descriptive and substantive representation. I use experiments to determine whether minority descriptive representation can compensate for unfavorable political outcomes for African Americans, and whether such descriptive representation is accepted as legitimate by whites. On a related topic, I have ongoing co-authored research that investigates whether the presence of black elected officials leads to black empowerment and higher electoral turnout.

I am in the early stages of two new research projects. The first investigates how citizens judge incumbent governments in light of longer-term evaluations (what we dub “political nostalgia”) of government performance. The second is an attempt to validate measures of racial bias by comparing the consistency of multiple measurement tools (implicit, explicit, physiological).

*Teaching fields:* Racial and ethnic politics, political behavior, and political psychology

*Graduate seminars typically offered:* Research design, political psychology
MARJORIE RANDON HERSHEY
Professor
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Past President, Midwest Political Science Association; previously President-Elect, Vice President, and Program Chair; Program Committees for 2002, 1994 and 1980 American Political Science Association convention and for the 1983 and 1979 Midwest Political Science Association conventions; author, APSA Syllabus Collection in American politics, I and II; chair, APSA's Epstein Book Award Committee to choose the best book on parties and interest groups, 2006, and member, 2008; chair, Eldersveld Career Achievement award, 2012


Editorial boards: I am or have been a member of the boards of the American Journal of Political Science, Political Behavior, and Social Science Quarterly.

Grants from: National Endowment for the Humanities, Lilly Foundation


Current research: I am particularly interested in the process by which political activists come to attribute meaning to election results -- to reach some agreement as to what a majority of voters meant when they selected one candidate rather than the other, and what these constructed explanations mean for future politics and policy. That interest has led me to several projects on presidential, congressional, and gubernatorial campaign coverage. I am also involved in research on the sources and levels of polarization among party and campaign activists.

Collaborated with graduate student(s) on: articles with Nathaniel Birkhead and Beth Easter on party activists and ideological extremism, with Nick Clark on congressional campaigns, and with Darrell West on the adaptation of Senate campaigns to new stimuli.
MARJORIE RANDON HERSHEY (cont.)

*Teaching fields:* Political parties and interest groups; American politics; political participation; environmental policy. I write a text (*Party Politics in America*), now in its 16th edition, on political parties.

*Graduate seminars typically offered:* Parties, Organized Interests, Social Movements, and the Media; Issues and Approaches in American Politics; Introduction to Effective Teaching and Advanced Seminar in Teaching.
GERALD C. WRIGHT  
Professor  
Ph.D., University of North Carolina, 1973  
E-Mail: wright1@indiana.edu  

President, State Politics Organized Section, American Political Science Association, 1995-97; Chair, APSA's Schattschneider Award committee to choose the best dissertation in American politics, 1989-90; Pi Sigma Alpha award for the best paper presented at the 1985 Western Political Science Association meetings; previously member of the APSA's Executive Council; State Politics and Policy Award for the best paper on state politics presented at any conference, 2001; Program Co-Chair, 1982 Midwest Political Science Association meetings; Program Director for Political Science, National Science Foundation, 1978-81


Chaired the dissertation committee of Thomas Carsey, who won the William Anderson Award for the Best Doctoral Dissertation in 1994-95 in the field of state and local government, federalism, or intergovernmental relations and co-chaired Geoffrey Layman’s dissertation which won the best dissertation award from the Religion and Politics Section of the American Political Science Association.


GERALD C. WRIGHT (cont.)


Current research: I am current working on a study of party and policy representation in U.S. state and national legislatures. This work examines the linkages between citizens and elected officials in all of the state legislatures as well as Congress. The project gathered the first comprehensive collection of roll calls for the states as well as presidential votes for all state legislative districts. It is taking form as a book, tentatively titled "Party and Representation in the American Legislature." Several recent and current graduate students have based seminar and convention paper on data from the project and three have used data from the project as the primary data for their dissertations.

I also am doing research on patterns of inequality in representation and policy making in the states. I am interested in how variation in responsiveness to different groups is reflected in policy and then in patterns of economic inequality.

Collaborated with (now former) graduate students with articles published: Nate Birkhead (Political Research Quarterly); Tracy Osborn, Jon Winburn and Jennifer Clark (State Politics and Policy Quarterly); Thomas Carsey (American Journal of Political Science); Brian Schaffner (American Political Science Review); Matt Streb and Brian Schaffner (Political Research Quarterly); Robert Jackson and Robert Brown (American Politics Quarterly and Political Research Quarterly); Michael Birkman (American Political Science Review); Robert Brown (American Politics Quarterly).

Teaching fields: American politics (elections representation; state politics; inequality)

Graduate seminars typically offered: Representation; State Politics and Policy; Economic Inequality and American Democracy)