

DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE,
PUBLIC LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

NEWSLETTER



CONTENTS

- Greetings from the Department Head
- 2025-26 Academic Year in Review
- What's Ahead for the Department
- MPA Program Highlight
- Meet our Faculty
- Meet our Graduate Assistants
- Alumni Success Stories
- Scholarships & Giving

Formerly known as the *Department of Government*, the **Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration** has existed for over six decades.

We've trained generations of elected officials, public administrators, attorneys, journalists, non-profit and business leaders, teachers, and university professors. When you study with us, **YOU STUDY THE WORLD!**

CONTACT US:

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Las Cruces, NM 88003-0066
MSC 3BN
PO Box 30001

(575) 646-4935
govdept@nmsu.edu

<https://deptofgov.nmsu.edu>

■ GREETINGS FROM DR. HARVEY

Welcome to the **Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration** Newsletter!

We are delighted to share with you some of the many achievements of our students and faculty. Our department's engagement with NMSU and the broader community has highlighted our commitment to learning, service, and making a lasting impact in the world.

Happy reading, friends!

Dr. Neil Harvey



2025-26 ACADEMIC YEAR IN REVIEW

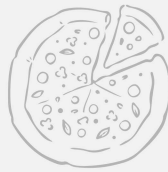
A SLICE OF POLITICS



Faculty, staff, and students of the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration met for a series of presentations and discussions on political issues, current events, and special topics (with pizza, of course).

Past topics have included:

- Job/Internship Opportunity Presentations
- Student Special Project Presentations/Thesis Presentations
- American Public Polling
- Artificial Intelligence in Scholarship & Teaching
- Current Events
- ... AND MORE!



In April 2026, Dr. Cheon Lee gave an insightful presentation of the pros and cons of Artificial Intelligence when conducting and evaluating scholarly research. His talk was part of our "Slice of Politics" series on new research and current political issues.



Follow us on social media for updates on future events!



GGSO CONSTITUTION DAY!

On September 17, 2025, GGSO tabled outside the Corbett Student Union Center in recognition of Constitution Day. GGSO members assisted students and staff with voter registration, quizzed attendees on their constitutional rights, and distributed pocket-sized copies of the U.S. Constitution.

Voting in elections is your *right* as a citizen of the United States of America to voice *your* vision for the future of our nation. Your voice, your vote!

Termina clase de verano internacional realizada por El Colech, UTEP y Universidad Estatal de Nuevo México

Jueves, Julio 3, 2025 - 09:19



CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION

Dr. Neil Harvey held discussions with Mexican colleagues at the Colegio de Chihuahua (COLECH) and the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo (UAEH) during the summer of 2026, leading to the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) between NMSU and each of these institutions. The MOU's will facilitate collaborative research and the exchange of students and faculty interested in binational relations and public policy. The relationship with COLECH has emerged from a collaborative summer program for students held in 2025 between NMSU, the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), and COLECH.

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AMERICAN PUBLIC POLLING (POLS 359)



Students in our American Public Polling (Spring 2026) course had the opportunity to gain real-world experience.

Professor Daniel Gomez explained the activity:

In American Public Polling, students don't just read about public opinion research; they do it. This semester, students designed original survey questions, recruited respondents, collected data, and presented their findings in the form of research posters at a department showcase. Working in small groups, each team identified a research question that genuinely interested them, built a survey instrument around it, and learned firsthand how difficult it is to ask a good question. Topics this semester ranged from how political ideology shapes sports fandom and favorite athletes, to how media consumption influences attitudes toward immigration, to whether empathy itself follows ideological lines. The course gives students practical skills in survey design, data analysis, and academic communication, the kind of experience that prepares them for graduate school, careers in policy, and engaged citizenship.



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New Mexico State University

What We See, What We Believe: Media in the Immigration Narrative

Katie Velasquez & Jayden Howley, Department of Government, New Mexico State University

Introduction

Immigration remains one of the most widely discussed and often debated issues in the United States, yet many individuals form their opinions without any direct personal experience.

Because of this, it is prominent to examine how media exposure may influence public attitudes toward immigration.

Hypothesis

H1: Consumption of media on different platform types will predict the nature of an individual's concerns about immigration issues.

H2: Individuals who consume mostly traditional media, (television, radio, newspapers) will believe that crime and safety is the main concern surrounding immigration. (Rumbaut, 2009).

H3: Individuals who consume mostly digital news (online news articles, podcasts, social media, and short form videos) will believe that human rights is the main concern surrounding immigration.

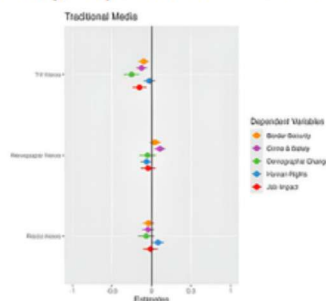
H4: Individuals who consume mostly news from their peers will believe that job impact is the main concern surrounding immigration.

Materials and Methods

Respondents selected which types of media they consume the most: Television, newspaper, radio, online news article, social media short form videos, podcasts or interpersonal (news from peers).

Respondents were asked how important each stated immigration issue was to them; border security, crime and safety, job impact, human rights, and demographic change.

Control variables included: political interest, gender, age, education, race (White), voter status, income, symbolic ideology, and partisanship.



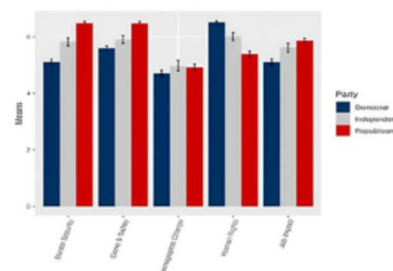
Data and Results

H1 findings: Our study finds that diverse types of media will partially have effects on how important participants feel each immigration issue is.

H2 findings: Individuals who most often consume television as their main source of traditional media rated immigration issues as less important. Newspaper readers found crime and safety as slightly more important, and radio listeners were slightly more likely to care about human rights.

H3 & H4 findings: For digital news, almost nothing was statistically significant. It did not predict what issues participants cared about most. Similarly receiving news from peers also had no statistical significance on which immigration issues participants found most important.

Saw a stronger correlation between party and immigration issues.



Conclusions

Our study found some evidence that an individual's view on immigration is related to the type of media they consume, as well as how frequently they consume it.

Implications

When individuals actively choose traditional news sources, they tend to engage with information more deliberately, with some awareness of its perspective.

In contrast, social media is based on algorithms, which quietly shape what users see based on past behavior, often reinforcing existing beliefs without users fully realizing it.

Media framing of immigration can shape public attitudes in ways that directly influences support for policies and political decisions that are related to immigration. Repeated exposure to reinforcing media narratives can deepen polarization, leading to more extreme and less flexible views on immigration.

Citations

- Ausat, A. M. A. (2023). The role of social media in shaping public opinion and its influence on economic decisions. *Technology and Society Perspectives (TACIT)*, 1(1), 35–44. <https://doi.org/10.61109/tacit.v1i1.37>
- Rumbaut, R. G. (2009). Undocumented immigration and rates of crime and imprisonment: Popular myths and empirical realities. In A. Khashu (Ed.), *The role of local police: Striking a balance between immigration enforcement and civil liberties* (pp. 119–139). Police Foundation.

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APPLY TO ONE OF OUR GRADUATE PROGRAMS!

Master of Arts in Political Science (MA)



Master of Public Administration (MPA)

- *Nationally Accredited Program!*



Ph.D. in Transborder and Global
Human Dynamics



We also offer a graduate *minor* in Security Studies and a graduate *minor* in Public Administration.

If you are unsure about committing to a full Master's program, try out one or more graduate classes through the Master's Accelerated Program (MAP).

Master's Accelerated Program (MAP)

Qualified undergraduate students can ask to take up to 12 credits of graduate-level coursework as part of the Master's Accelerated Program (MAP) and have these credits count both for the BA and an eventual Master's degree. If you are thinking of applying to the MA in Political Science or the Master of Public Administration (MPA), speak with your professor about the MAP program.



SCAN FOR DEPT. PROGRAMS



SCAN FOR MAP PROGRAM INFO

Contact Dr. Neil Harvey at nharvey@nmsu.edu for further details about the application process and the value of a graduate degree.

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NMSU MODEL UNITED NATIONS (MUN)

The NMSU Model United Nations (MUN) is a student-led organization sponsored by the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration. The organization has served New Mexico State University on campus for over fifteen years as an award-winning national team. The program itself is an academic simulation of the United Nations (UN), an international organization comprising over 190 Member States that work together to maintain global peace and promote multilateral diplomacy. The program focuses on effective communication, academic growth, and skill development for all active members. Representing one of the many Member States of the UN is an arduous task, and through continued work, members are taught, through experience, productive time management, concise writing skills, and unsurpassed oratory abilities.

As many as 400,000 college students participate in Model United Nations (MUN) Conferences around the world, in American cities such as New York City and San Francisco, and in international countries like Germany, the People's Republic of China, and the Czech Republic. At one of these conferences, NMSU MUN students represent the national policy decisions of one of the 192 Member States of the United Nations, serving on committees such as the General Assembly or Security Council. Students are responsible for working closely with other delegates from universities worldwide to write and advance policy papers and resolutions on key international issues, such as environmental sustainability, security in high-risk regions, and development aid for less advantaged Member States.

Members of the NMSU Model UN team participated in the 2026 National Model United Nations Conference in New York City, where the delegation was recognized with an *Outstanding Delegation Award*, the highest honor awarded to an entire delegation at the conference. This achievement continues NMSU Model UN's 19-year streak of receiving one of the conference's highest delegation-level honors and reflects the team's continued dedication, preparation, and excellence on the national stage.



ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Outstanding Delegation
- Distinguished Delegation
- Best Position Paper (UNEA)
- Best Position Paper (CWC)
- Best Position Paper (GA2)
- Best Position Paper (UNHCR)
- Best Position Paper (IOM)
- Best Position Paper (GA3)
- Outstanding Delegate Award (ECLAC)

...and more!

SCAN FOR AN MUN-RELATED ARTICLE:



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Aggie MUN first came into my life through a mentor who encouraged me to apply, and it quickly became one of the most meaningful parts of my NMSU experience. I believe MUN offers students far more than academic simulations. It creates an environment where students can develop their voices, practice civic advocacy, build meaningful connections, and become thoughtful leaders. I am honored to lead this organization and encourage anyone looking to challenge themselves and become more involved to take the same step that changed my NMSU experience.

Ruben Morales

President, NMSU Model UN

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Pi Alpha Alpha®



The **NMSU Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha** is an Honor Society sponsored by the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration. Pi Alpha Alpha is the Global Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration. There are more than 160 chapters located around the world at NASPAA member schools. The purpose of Pi Alpha Alpha is to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in public affairs and administration. Its objectives, such as fostering integrity, professionalism, and effective performance, promote the advancement of quality in the education and practice of the art and science of public affairs and administration. PAA membership identifies those with the highest performance levels in educational programs, preparing them for careers in public service.

Membership in NMSU's PAA Chapter provides students with access to a range of benefits, including awards, recognition for academic achievement, service opportunities, professional networking, and job-seeking resources. If you are interested in joining, please contact the Faculty Advisor. Scan the QR code below for more info on Pi Alpha Alpha.

ARE YOU A STUDENT
OF HIGH ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT?

JOIN PI ALPHA ALPHA



NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Contact Dr. Christina Medina, Director
MPA Program

P: 575-646-4353
camedina@nmsu.edu



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ΠΣΑ PI SIGMA ALPHA

The National Political Science Honor Society

The **NMSU Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha** is a National Political Science Honor Society that recognizes academic excellence in the field of political studies. The organization aims to provide all students with the opportunity to explore current political events, national elections, international relations, and political philosophy, thereby building a group of like-minded individuals passionate about engaging in and advocating for vibrant and energetic public discourse. What use is an education in political science if the only place to engage the subject is in the classroom?

New Mexico State University political science students presented research at the Pi Sigma Alpha National Student Research Conference in Washington, D.C. Seven NMSU students joined more than 400 participants from colleges and universities worldwide. NMSU Pi Sigma officers Cossette Luna and Miguel Beltran presented on Indigenous population policy and nuclear waste disposal politics, respectively. The conference provides opportunities to present research, receive expert feedback, network, and explore careers and graduate education. NMSU participation was supported by the College of Arts and Sciences, ASNMSU, the political science department, and the Lofton Scholarship.

To apply to the Eta Eta chapter of New Mexico State University, students can access this link: <https://deptofgov.nmsu.edu/student-information/pi-sigma-alpha.html> to review membership requirements and the application form. Interested applicants can send a copy of their degree audit to the organization's email: nmstatepsa@gmail.com. In the subject line, please write "MEMBER APPLICATION: Full Name". After a thorough review, applicants that meet all requirements will be notified and sent a link to register for national membership.

JOIN NOW!

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OUR DC CONFERENCE!



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2025-2026 DEPARTMENT AWARDS RECEPTION



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A WARM WELCOME TO PROFESSOR JEFFERY WILLIAMS



The New Mexico State University Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, is pleased to announce Dr. Williams as the newest member of our faculty.

Dr. Williams will be teaching courses in public law (such as Constitutional Law and Judicial Process) as well as Supreme Court and Civil Liberties. He will also be the main adviser for students seeking to go to law school as well as serving as the Coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Supplemental Major in Law and Society.

Dr. Williams grew up in Penrose, Colorado. He studied at the University of Wyoming, where he earned BA degrees in Criminal Justice and Political Science. He earned his Ph.D. in American History at the University of South Carolina in 2023 and earned his Juris Doctorate (J.D.) in San Diego. His teaching combines practical courtroom experience as a public defender with his academic research on civil rights.

Dr. Williams conducted research on civil rights litigation in the years before Brown vs. Board of Education desegregated schools. He spent last year as a fellow at Emory University's Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry. Dr. Williams is a long-suffering Colorado Rockies fan. He does not expect the suffering to end anytime soon.

Dr. Williams' office is located in Breland Hall, Room 343. For more information about the Law and Society Supplemental Major, scan this QR code:



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WHAT'S AHEAD FOR THE DEPARTMENT

COMING UP IN FALL 2026:



→ Join us for a “Slice of Politics”, a series of presentations on faculty and student research, current issues in politics, and professional development – always with pizza! (Please note that this series is only for students, faculty, and staff in the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration). Presentations will be at **4:30 pm- 5:30 pm in Breland 179 and via Zoom**. Check your email for the Zoom meeting ID a few days before each meeting. Presenters will also provide some recommended background readings prior to each meeting. Look out for those in your email. You are not required to read these materials in order to attend, but they will provide some context for the topics to be discussed.

- **September 28** – Dr. Seong Kang: Observations from the REAL-LIFE Project SAF (Safe, Alive and Free) Gun Violence Prevention Program
- **October 7** – Dr. Sabine Hirschauer: Democracy Today
- **October 21** – Dr. Jeffery Williams: Brown v. Board
- **December 2** – GGSO Student Presentations



→ Please also join us in recognition of our department’s graduating students on **Friday, December 11, 12.00-1.30 pm, Breland 179**.

LOOKING FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM?

With the generous support of the Honors College’s M. Eugene Sundt Professorship, Dr. Hirschauer will again offer the experiential seminar “Democracy in the World” in spring 2027. The Sundt seminar seeks to “de-mystify” democracy as an abstract political concept by allowing honors students to explore democracy at work as a lived and local form of governance. Last spring, students visited the Roundhouse in Santa Fe during the 2026 legislative session, met with State Reps. Micaela Cadena and Nathan Small, and observed policy debates and consensus building. Students also attended Las Cruces City Council meetings and budget discussions, met with Councilor Becky Corran, and visited the Doña Ana County Clerk’s Office to learn about local elections. The seminar also explored challenges and darker chapters of American democracy. Students traveled to Lordsburg to learn about the former Japanese internment camp and visited Acoma Pueblo to discuss the relationship between Indigenous communities and the federal government. Throughout the spring 2026 semester, students created unique Podcasts about their experiences. To learn more about this opportunity, reach out to Dr. Sabine Hirschauer at shirschau@nmsu.edu.



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— HOMECOMING — 2026 —



**Thursday,
November 5th**
4:20 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.



Breland 179

THE DEPARTMENTS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, PUBLIC LAW AND ADMINISTRATION & ENGLISH PRESENT:

Amanda Breiding

NMSU BA GOVERNMENT AND ENGLISH LITERATURE, 2019
MPA, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Amanda serves as the Budget Director for the New Mexico House of Representatives and the Chief of Staff for the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, where she helps lawmakers research budget priorities, write tax and financial legislative policy, and ultimately craft the state budget.

A born and raised New Mexican, she grew up in Alamogordo and Las Cruces and has served as budget director for three years after five years at the Legislative Finance Committee. During her time at NMSU, Amanda gained hands-on experience as an intern with State Representative Angelica Rubio and received an Outstanding Government Student Scholarship.

Amanda will share insights from her own professional journey and discuss internships and career opportunities in public service.



REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED • CONTACT ANJAH@NMSU.EDU
FOR MORE INFORMATION

THE NMSU COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES INVITES YOU TO THE BOOK PRESENTATION:

What Side Are You On?

A Tohono O'odham Life Across Borders

(University of North Carolina Press, 2024. Available on Open Access.)

WITH AUTHORS MIKE WILSON AND JOSÉ ANTONIO LUCERO



Monday, November 9
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.



**Hardman Jacobs
Learning Center, Room 230**

Mike Wilson (Tohono O'odham) is a human rights activist, U.S. military retiree, and film documentarian. He lives in Tucson, Arizona. José Antonio Lucero is chair and professor in the Comparative History of Ideas Department at the University of Washington, Seattle and holds a joint appointment in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies.

This richly textured and collaboratively written memoir brings Wilson's experiences to life. Joining Wilson as coauthor, José Antonio Lucero adds political and historical context to Wilson's personal narrative. Together they offer a highly original portrait of an O'odham life across borders that sheds light on the struggles and resilience of Native peoples across the Americas.



Free and open to the public

More Information:

Anja Hansen, Administrative Assistant
Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration
anjah@nmsu.edu

Co-sponsors:

Departments of Political Science, Public Law and Administration; History; Borderlands and Ethnic Studies. Stan Fulton Chair. Office of Land-Grant Excellence, Access, and Partnership (LEAP). Ph.D. Program in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics.



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Ph.D in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics

The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics is designed to provide doctoral students with a rigorous program of cultural, anthropological, political, historical, artistic, literary, and linguistic subject matter in the social sciences and humanities.



At the heart of the endeavor is a program that fosters the study of cultural pluralism and social, political, linguistic, and creative interactions that emerge from and shape the diverse practices, interpretations, and reproduction of transnational borders. Such a program is ideally suited to forge new interpretations, solutions, and understandings of relevant issues for scholars and students living and studying in the US-Mexico transborder region, with implications not only for our border region but also for other border communities around the world.

The program is based on the Cambridge-Oxford collaborative research and instruction model. The program curriculum closely follows the NMSU Graduate School's requirements and timelines for admission, doctoral committee formation, and comprehensive and qualifying examinations. The program has limited residency requirements, since doctoral students will perform research in the field but come together to participate in colloquia at NMSU. The program centers on a set of common courses and colloquia exploring theory, methods, and mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis, and six interdisciplinary research concentrations. Credits for fieldwork, archival work, and community engagement may involve transborder internships and experiences at universities, policy institutes, archives, and think tanks supervised by the student's committee.

NEXT APPLICATION DEADLINE - FOR FALL 2028: JANUARY 8TH, 2028

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOCUS AREAS

- Cultural and linguistic translation, interpretation, literature, and heritage
- Refugees, asylum-seekers, and migration
- Transnational public policy and human rights
- Environmental justice, landscape, archaeology, and heritage management
- Food security, water and energy security, human health, and sustainability
- Power, Inequality, and Racial Justice

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- Anthropology
- Political Science, Public Law and Administration
- Languages and Linguistics

English, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Geography and Environmental Studies, History, Philosophy, Criminal Justice, Borderlands and Ethnic Studies, Sociology, Center for Latin American and Border Studies, American Indian Programs, Latin American Programs

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Department of
Political Science,
Public Law and
Administration

Spring 2027

Get ready! Get advised!



POLS 1111 – Intro Seminar in Political Science (1 credit)

Required for all BA Political Science majors – held in the first 8 weeks of the spring semester only.



Mondays
10:30 – 11:45 AM



Breland 179



Instructor:
Dr. Neil Harvey



General Education Courses

POLS 1110G – Introduction to Political Science (3 credits) and
POLS 1120G – American National Government (3 credits) – see course schedule for days/times and instructors. Required for BA Political Science and our sub-field minors.



Graduation Requirements

For graduation, BA Political Science students must successfully complete a class in at least four of the six subfields of political science, as well as POLS 300 Research Methods, and, in your final year, POLS 415 Senior Seminar (2 cr.). You also need to fulfill General Education, Viewing the Wider World, and Second Language requirements for our BA degree.



Internship Credits

Internship credits are also available to eligible students (150 hours of internship work = 3 credits of POLS 410 Internship which can count towards your total of 33 credits for the BA Political Science major). Plan ahead and leave at least three weeks before start of the next semester to set up internship credits. Speak with your professor or the department head about internship opportunities that you wish to pursue.



We're Here to Help!

We are happy to provide you with advice on course selection. Registration is more than ensuring you take the required courses for graduation – it is also the best time to meet with the professors in your major to discuss your goals after graduation and which courses can most help you gain the skills, knowledge, and practical experience to succeed in your chosen career.

MPA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT



In August 2026, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) announced that its Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA) had reaccredited New Mexico State University's Master of Public Administration (MPA) program for another six years, through August 2032.

NASPAA accreditation represents a high standard of quality in public service education. Accredited programs undergo an extensive process of self-study, peer review, and evaluation to demonstrate their commitment to academic quality, continuous improvement, ethical public service, and student success. Only about one-third of MPA programs nationwide hold NASPAA accreditation.

NMSU's reaccreditation process was led by Dr. Christina A. Medina, Professor and MPA Program Director, with support from MPA Core Faculty Drs. Thaddieus Conner, Seong Kang, Ani Ter-Mkrtchyan, and Cheon Lee, as well as departmental faculty and staff. "This recognition is just one more benefit for our students as they go into the workforce and start or continue their professional endeavors," Medina said. "Only a third of MPA programs nationwide can claim this high standard of quality, and we are happy to be among them!"

NMSU's MPA program appears on NASPAA's 2026–2027 Roster of Accredited Programs.

Scan the QR codes below to view NASPAA's Roster of Accredited Programs (left) and NMSU's MPA Program Accreditation (right).



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OUR FACULTY & STAFF



The faculty of the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration at New Mexico State University represent a diverse and accomplished community of scholars, educators, practitioners, and mentors. Their collective expertise spans an exceptional range of fields, including American and comparative politics, public administration and management, public policy, law and civil rights, political theory, international relations, border and migration studies, nonprofit administration, tribal governance, public finance, research methods, and many others.

This breadth of knowledge provides students with an education that extends far beyond the classroom. Through their teaching, research, professional experience, and mentorship, faculty encourage students to think critically, engage with different perspectives, and develop a deeper understanding of government, politics, law, and public service. Together, they prepare students for careers in government, law, public administration, nonprofit leadership, academia, and countless other areas of public and civic life.

The Department is strengthened further by its adjunct faculty, whose professional knowledge and experience complement the expertise of its full-time faculty and provide students with additional perspectives grounded in both scholarship and practice. Together, the Department's faculty share a commitment to academic excellence, meaningful mentorship, public service, and, above all, the success of their students. Scan the QR code below for more information.

FACULTY

- Thaddieus Conner
- Daniel Gomez
- Neil Harvey
- Sabine Hirschauer
- Seong Kang
- Cheon Lee
- Christina Medina
- Cory Sukala
- Ani Ter-Mkrtyan
- Jeffery Williams

ADJUNCT FACULTY

- William Corbett
- Michael Toje
- Cynthia Wise
- Mike Bengenchew
- Frank Lopez
- Gabriela Vitela

STAFF

- Anja Hansen
Administrative Assistant

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MEET OUR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS



Our Graduate Assistants are an important part of the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, assisting both faculty and students in support of the Department's teaching, research, and academic mission.

They come from a diverse range of academic and professional backgrounds, including government, criminal justice, public administration, justice, political philosophy and law, computer science, business, and other areas, to name a few. Collectively, they bring experience from the public and nonprofit sectors, military service, research, and other professional settings.

While pursuing advanced degrees at New Mexico State University, our Graduate Assistants work closely with faculty and contribute to the academic experience of students throughout the Department. We are honored to have these individuals serving as members of our departmental staff and appreciate the work they do in support of our faculty, students, and programs.

Master's Graduate Assistants

- Jonah A. Arzapalo
- Lauren Minor
- Brennan Ramsey
- Mason Schuette
- Isaac Cramer
- Jarrod Rodriguez
- Claire Bluhm
- Andres Uribe
- Katelyn Beaufort

Doctoral Graduate Assistants

(Not Pictured Above)

- Alejandro Flores
- Megan White
- Esther Korsah
- Jessica Baidoe-Ansah
- Denise Garcia
- Hamed Aziziangilian
- Cody McCarty

**GRADUATE ASSISTANT OFFICES FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
PUBLIC LAW AND ADMINISTRATION
CAN BE FOUND ON THE 3RD FLOOR OF
BRELAND HALL**

**EACH ASSISTANT DETERMINES THEIR
OWN OFFICE HOURS & AVAILABILITY**

**VISIT OUR DEPARTMENT WEBSITE FOR
CONTACT INFORMATION**

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ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES



Zimzi Lovett

B.A. Political Science; B.A. Justice, Political Philosophy, and Law — 2025



My time in the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration empowered me on my journey toward law school. From courses that taught me about the legal system to professors who provided mentorship, the department has ensured that I feel supported even beyond graduation. Since graduating, I have participated in three internships on Capitol Hill, where I have witnessed the inner workings of American government firsthand. Courses such as Congress and the Legislative Process, Constitutional Law, Political Research Methods, and Public Opinion Polling provided knowledge and skills that I have applied directly to my work, from interacting with constituents to drafting memoranda and working with data. I still intend to attend law school, but I am currently enjoying the opportunities I have found on Capitol Hill and am thankful to the department for giving me the knowledge and skills to pursue both.



Jillian McBeth

B.A. Political Science — 2025



My time in the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration opened many doors and helped shape my professional goals and passion for public service. At NMSU, I became involved with ASNMSU, served as president of Pi Sigma Alpha, and conducted original research that I presented at a national conference in Washington, D.C. The department also helped me gain professional experience through research and co-op opportunities, while faculty supported me with career guidance and mentorship. After graduation, I interned with New Mexico Food & Water Watch before returning to NMSU as an academic advisor. I now work in Human Resources within the College of Arts and Sciences while pursuing my Master of Public Administration. The department strengthened my research, communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills and showed me the many ways a Government degree can lead to a meaningful career in public service.



Abigail Agyei Baffour

M.A. Political Science — 2025

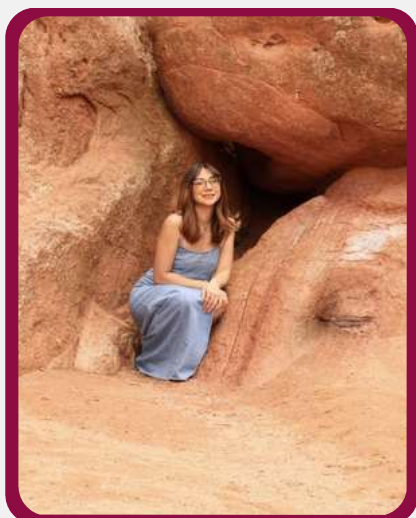


My experience in the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration helped me develop both academically and personally. The program allowed me to explore different areas of political science while strengthening my ability to think critically, conduct research, and engage with complex political questions. I particularly enjoyed the department's "Slice of Politics" discussions, which exposed me to different perspectives on democracy, governance, and political participation. My time at NMSU also helped me become more confident as a researcher and prepared me for the next stage of my academic journey. I am now pursuing my Ph.D. in Political Science at Georgia State University, where my research interests focus on African democracy, political institutions, and the rise of authoritarian regimes. I am grateful for the foundation NMSU gave me and excited to carry those experiences forward in my doctoral studies.

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Celeste Trujillo

M.A. Political Science — 2025



My thesis, *Technology in Public Education in the 21st Century – A Comparative Policy Analysis*, helped me become much more confident in addressing technology issues, particularly artificial intelligence, in my own classroom. My research examined the challenges and opportunities of technology in public education, including smartphone policies and the rapidly growing role of AI. As a high school social studies teacher, I now use what I learned to help students recognize appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI and better navigate research. These lessons I also share with my colleagues, and I have had several colleagues ask to read my thesis, which has been an amazing feeling. One of the most important things I learned is that technology is not going anywhere. Students need to be taught when and how to use emerging technologies responsibly so they can develop the skills needed to use them effectively.



Aditya Ghalsasi

M.A. Political Science — 2024



I transitioned into Political Science from an engineering background, and the Department of Government at NMSU was incredibly supportive and welcoming. My professors and peers helped me build a strong foundation through courses in International Relations, Comparative Politics, American Politics, and Political Theory, which prepared me to write and defend my master's thesis and pursue doctoral study. The department also supported me as a graduate assistant and provided funding to present my research at political science conferences. My involvement with the Graduate Student Council and Government Graduate Student Organization helped me strengthen skills such as public speaking. I am now pursuing my Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, focusing on International Relations and Security Studies. I hope to become a professor, and I could not have gotten where I am today without the foundation and support I received at NMSU.



Joshua Lew McDermott

M.A. Political Science — 2014



As an M.A. student in Political Science at NMSU, I gained the confidence, support, and foundation to become a globally engaged scholar and advocate. NMSU supported my first overseas fieldwork in Sierra Leone as well as volunteer work in Mexico, experiences that eventually helped shape my research career. My faculty mentors and peers taught me what it means to be a professional social scientist while providing the personal support I needed to succeed. My M.A. was also crucial in preparing me for my Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. It was at NMSU that I discovered the topics, theoretical approaches, and research methods that have defined my career in international political economy. I am now an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Southeastern Louisiana University, and the skills, connections, and experiences I gained at NMSU continue to shape my work today.



Paige Sharp

Master of Public Administration (MPA) — 2017



After completing my first term of service with AmeriCorps VISTA I realized that working with local communities addressing poverty was where I needed to focus my efforts with my career. With a bachelor's degree completely unrelated to public service, I knew that I needed to go back to school. Although there were plenty of options for a Master's in Public Administration (MPA), New Mexico State University (NMSU) was my first choice because of my interactions with the staff and faculty right from the beginning of the application process. The faculty was all helpful in explaining to me what the next two years would like as a student and where these courses could take my career. From learning about economics to ethics I felt more than prepared to take on a position in public service. My two years as a student and Graduate Assistant I felt supported and encouraged to complete my second degree. I know this is something I would not have been able to get from other universities. NMSU and their government department helped me get to where I am today.



Diana Bolsinger

M.A. Government — 2016



The same NMSU Government program that gives young students such a great start on their careers was perfect for making this retiree's lifelong dream come true. I've always wanted to earn a doctorate and teach in a university. NMSU's Masters of Arts in Government program turned out to be the perfect first step towards a new career. Now that I'm a doctoral student at the LBJ School at University of Texas, I'm more grateful than ever for the mix of coursework and personalized guidance that NMSU gave me. NMSU courses were rigorous, well-taught, and turned out to have been the perfect preparation for doctoral work. Best of all, I was able to personalize the program to fit my own interests. The program's small size means that the faculty knows each student as an individual, working with us one-on-one to build the skills we need to move forward... In short, I'm much further along to fulfilling a dream thanks to the support and professional skills of the NMSU Government faculty. I couldn't recommend the program more highly.



Caren Davila Varela

B.A. Political Science — 2025



My Political Science degree from NMSU shaped my career in many ways and gave me opportunities to apply what I learned beyond the classroom. As a student, I completed internships with the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., and the City of Las Cruces. These experiences allowed me to participate in human rights and international affairs discussions while also learning how local governments plan for the future and make decisions that shape communities. After graduation, I began working at Carrillo Law Firm, where my experiences in federal and local government helped me develop a deeper understanding of the law. My education at NMSU gave me a broader perspective on how laws, government, and communities are connected. Political Science provided me with more than a degree—it expanded my understanding of the world and gave me the confidence and experience to grow professionally.

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Ashley Infante

B.A. Political Science, Supplemental Major in Law & Society - 2024



My experience in NMSU's Government Department transformed the trajectory of my professional career through meaningful coursework, experiential learning, and supportive faculty mentorship. Courses in U.S.-Mexico Border Politics and Law & Society helped me discover my academic interests and better understand political and legal systems. I also participated in a National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates, where I studied the impact of immigration policy on borderland communities. I interviewed migrants about their experiences arriving in the United States, presented my research to the community, and published an article in an international newspaper. These opportunities strengthened my research skills and helped shape my path toward a legal career. I will attend the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, where I plan to pursue opportunities in social justice lawyering and human rights. I am forever grateful for the knowledge, experience, and community NMSU provided.



Department of
Political Science,
Public Law and Administration

CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

Are you a graduate of our department?

We would love to hear where your NMSU education has taken you. Share your career, academic, or public service journey with us for the opportunity to be featured in a future edition of our departmental newsletter.



Reach out to Dr. Neil Harvey.
nharvey@nmsu.edu



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AN EXAMPLE OF AGGIE EXCELLENCE



ISAAC CRAMER

CLASS OF SPRING 2026

Outstanding Graduates

Each semester, the NMSU Alumni recognizes graduating seniors from each academic college, plus a master's and doctoral student, with the Outstanding Graduate Award. As NMSU Alumni's highest student honor, the award recognizes exceptional academic achievement, leadership, and commitment to the university and community.

This past spring, the Department of Political Science, Public Administration, and Law was proud to see one of its own, Isaac Cramer, selected as the Spring 2026 Outstanding Graduate for the College of Arts and Sciences. Isaac earned a 4.0 GPA while completing a demanding curriculum and distinguished himself through his intellectual curiosity and critical thinking. In his Public Opinion and Polling course, he identified a significant data-quality issue within a survey sample that ultimately strengthened his group's analysis.

According to Dr. Daniel Gomez, Isaac is "one of the most energetic, passionate, and talented students" he has taught. Beyond the classroom, Isaac served as President of the Wesley Student Center's leadership team and co-founded and led three chartered student organizations, including No Student Left Behind, a mental health peer-support organization. He also completed an internship with a local food bank and remained an active member of the Department community. Dr. Gomez described Isaac as "academically excellent, a builder of community, and genuinely invested in the people around him." **Congratulations, Isaac!**

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DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS & ENDOWMENTS

Our department provides a variety of scholarships to Undergraduate and Graduate students.

For a detailed list of all our scholarships and endowments, along with their eligibility requirements, please visit our website.

Please note that to be considered for an award, students must apply to NMSU's Scholar Dollar\$ program.

Government General Scholarship



Open to all majors in good academic standing who are enrolled in the BA Government, MA Government, or Master's in Public Administration (MPA) Program. Awards are made to students who apply for support for specific projects, such as attending professional conferences or participating in study abroad programs, as well as general book stipends and other forms of assistance to ensure student success, particularly during their freshman and sophomore years.

Social Justice Award Endowment

This endowment provides monetary awards and recognition to faculty, students and staff who contribute to social justice through activities that go beyond their normal teaching, research or service work. The award is presented each year at NMSU's J. Paul Taylor Social Justice Symposium.

Nick Franklin Endowed Scholarship for Public Policy

Funds provided to make one annual award each Fall to majors in the BA Government, MA Government, and MPA programs with a strong commitment to the study of public policy. Awards are given to an undergraduate in one year and to a graduate student in the department the following year. The first award was made in Fall 2016 to an undergraduate student.

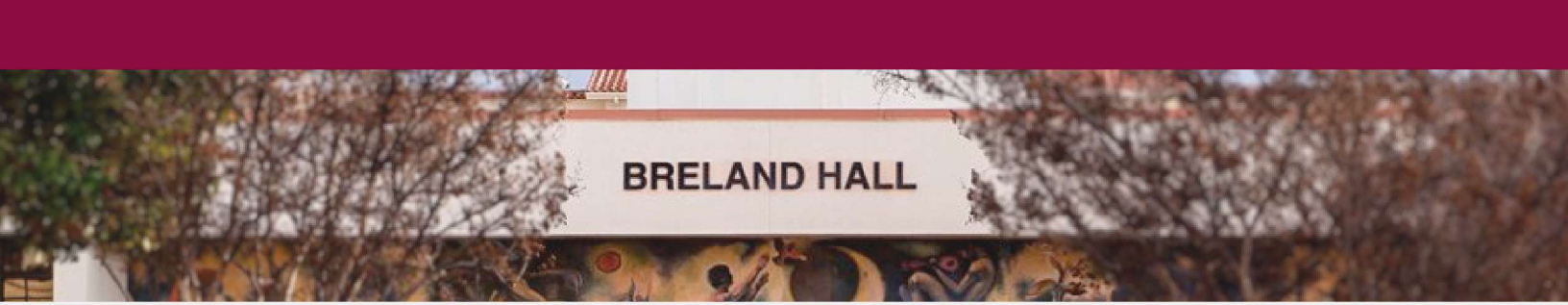


Nick Franklin Government Endowed Fund

Provides monetary awards and recognition to outstanding undergraduates who are enrolled in the BA Government or the Supplementary Major in Law & Society. Each spring, the department makes two awards from this fund, both named for Mr. Nick Franklin's government professor in the mid-1960s, Professor Donald Kreitzer: the Donald Kreitzer Government Scholarship and the Donald Kreitzer Law & Society Scholarship.

Roque M. Lujan Fund for the Study of Public Administration and Government

Honoring the memory of Roque M. Lujan, father of Mary Lujan (MPA 2002), this fund provides scholarships to graduate students in Public Administration and Government.



BRELAND HALL

Hendrickson Family Endowed Scholarship

Funds are provided to support undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration. Preference will be given to students who are also enrolled in the Honors Program.

Louis A. Vega Endowed Scholarship for Experiential Learning

Funds are provided to support outstanding students who engage in internships or similar extracurricular programs that connect government, business, and civil society.

Jose Uranga Endowed Scholarship

Supports the Government and Law & Society major, particularly those seeking to go into a law-related field.

Robert and Toshiko Nosbisch Scholarship

Supports junior, senior, and graduate students majoring in Government, Political Science, or Public Administration with a minimum 3.0 GPA. Preference is given to students committed to helping others and interested in foreign policy or international relations.

Robert and Toshiko Nosbisch Hardship Award

Provides emergency financial assistance to junior and senior Government or Political Science majors facing unexpected hardships. Recipients must demonstrate academic determination and an interest in foreign policy or international relations.

Roque M. Lujan Seminar Endowed Fund

Funds provided to support computer equipment and other needs to keep the Roque M. Lujan Seminar Room (Breland 358) in top working order.

Nick Franklin Model United Nations Current Use Fund

Provides support to help cover expenses related to the activities of NMSU's Model United Nations team, including participation in the annual National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference in New York City each spring.

Dr. Leonard R. Sugerman Model United Nations Endowed Fund

Named in honor of long-term NMSU Model UN supporter, Col. Leonard Sugerman, this endowment supports the activities of the Model United Nations program at NMSU.

Jerry Nevarez Endowed Fund

Established by Mr. Gerard "Jerry" Nevarez ('78), this endowment aims to assist graduate students enrolled in the MPA Program. *Scholarships will become available in Spring 2027.*



SUPPORT OUR DEPARTMENT

EMPOWER TOMORROW'S LEADERS THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY

Your gift truly makes a difference! There are a variety of options to choose from in which to direct a donation to the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration.

You can:

- Donate to the general department fund
- Donate to our general scholarship fund
- Donate to a specific scholarship
- Donate to an endowed fund
- Donate to one of our student organizations
- Establish an endowed fund of your own
(Contact Dr. Neil Harvey)

.... and more!

Scan the QR code to be directed to our donation website:



PHOTOS BY WENDY HARVEY

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