



DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE,
PUBLIC LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

NEWSLETTER



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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!**

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● 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



2024-25 ACADEMIC YEAR IN REVIEW

DEBATE WATCH PARTIES

Toward the end of the Fall 2024 semester, the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration was delighted to host watch parties for the Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates. With refreshments provided and captivating political discourse combined, there was a fantastic turnout at both events!

Actively learning about and understanding our nation's many governmental processes, such as elections, is vital to shaping well-informed, confident individuals who can contribute to the betterment of society. Indeed, this was an excellent learning opportunity not just for political science, government, or public administration majors, but for students from all fields of study!



09/10/2024
Presidential Debate

Vice
Presidential
Debate
Watch Party

Tuesday Oct. 1
Door Opens: 6 pm
Debate
Starts: 7 pm
Breland 179

The Department of Government is excited to host another Watch Party! Please join us for the Vice Presidential Debate between Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Ohio Governor JD Vance. Pizza and beverages will be provided! Please RSVP by Noon Monday Sept. 30 at corcoran@nmsu.edu or shirshah@nmsu.edu

Follow us on social media for updates on future events!



GGSO CONSTITUTION DAY!

Dr. Sukala, joined by the NMSU Government Graduate Student Organization (GGSO), hosted 'Constitution Day', where they assisted staff and students alike in registering to vote before the commencement of the 2024 Presidential Election.

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 matters!**



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RESEARCH EXPERIENCE FOR UNDERGRADUATES PROGRAM (NSF REU)

Students can apply to take part in the NSF REU program, designed to provide undergraduate students with training in research methods and opportunities to conduct collaborative projects with community partners on the nature and impacts of U.S. immigration policy in the Paso del Norte borderlands region, specifically in the Las Cruces-El Paso-Ciudad Juárez area.

It is led by Dr. Neil Harvey from the NMSU Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, in partnership with Dr. Jeremy Slack from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UTEP.



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AMERICAN POLLING (POLS 350 MO1)



Students in the POLS 350 American Polling course had a wonderful opportunity to gain real-world experience.

Professor Daniel Gomez explained the activity:

“This project was intended to give students practical, hands-on experience generating their own data and interpreting it for an academic community. Students wrote and recruited respondents for our survey, analyzed the data, and drew interpretations from it. This gives students actual practice in conducting polling and learning about questions that actually interest them. Each group found a different set of results. One group found no differences in preferred news source, social or traditional media, by age group. Another found that there is general distrust in political scientists, with only those most politically knowledgeable showing trust in political scientists.”

Department of Political Science



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New Mexico State University

How does age impact political media consumption and trust?

Jesus Lucero Valencia, Mary-Kate Gober, Zach Musgrave, Department of Political Science, New Mexico State University

Introduction

We surveyed 509 people to prove our research question on how age impacts political media consumption and trust.

Hypotheses

Younger generations prefer social media over traditional media.

Older generations trust traditional media over social media

Methods

Participants (N = 507) were divided into two groups: Younger (≤ 30) and Older (> 30). Variables analyzed included media consumption frequency, media platform preference, and trust in various media sources.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics showed clear differences in media consumption patterns and trust between age groups.

T-Test Results

T-tests showed statistically significant differences in trust and consumption between age groups ($p < 0.05$).

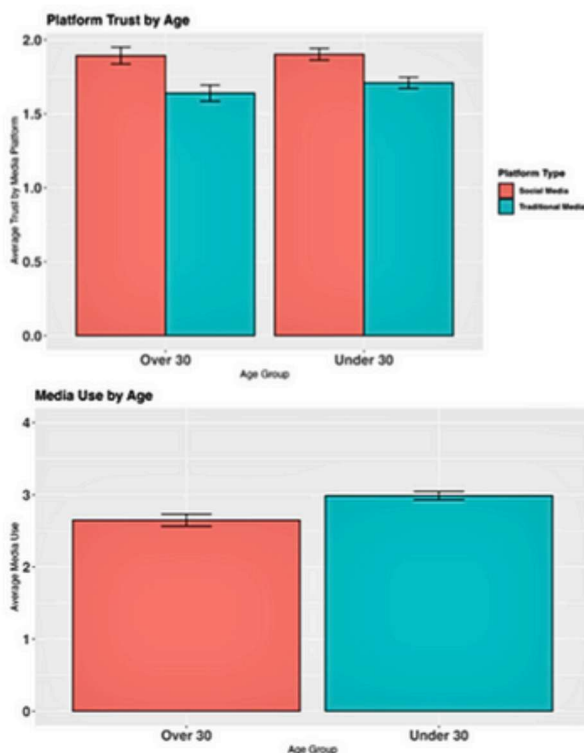
Chi-Square Test

Chi-square analysis confirmed a significant association between age group and media platform preference ($p < 0.01$).

Logistic Regression

Logistic regression showed that age was a strong predictor of preferring traditional vs social media platforms ($p < 0.001$).

Data and Results



Implications

In the past, several studies such as "Age Differences in Online News Consumption and Online Political Expression in the United States, United Kingdom, and France" by Shelley Boulianne and Adam Shehata (2021) <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9058403/> showed a clear trend in social media use by age, the studies showed that older people (thirty and over) were statistically less likely to use social media for political media consumption. With our study however, we saw a clear trend that in current times that gap has closed significantly. Our data shows that currently people thirty and over consume political news in social media to the same degree as those under thirty.

Conclusions

Our data proves that while the gap in social media usage is closing, the gap in trust is still significantly wide between how much older and younger generations trust social media for political news. Showing that younger generations trust social media, while older generations still trust traditional media more.

Citations

"Age Differences in Online News Consumption and Online Political Expression in the United States, United Kingdom, and France" by Shelley Boulianne and Adam Shehata (2021) <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9058403/>
"Generational Gaps in Media Trust and its Associations in Europe" by Anna Shehata, Jakob Ober, and Chao H. de Vries (2022) <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1063426922110356407>
"Trust in the Age of Social Media: Popular Politicians Score News Authenticity" by Gauri Sidi and Linda Thomson Rosenberg (2019) <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10634269198764037>
"Young Voters' Trust of Information and Media Sources: The 2008 U.S. Presidential Election" by Elaine Shannon, Leon G. Schifano, and Shana E. Thelen (2012) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/10.1080/15375757.2012.724294?needAccess=true>
"Modern News Consumers: Young adults" by Amy Mitchell, Jeffrey Goodrich, Michael Barthel, and Elin Skovron (2019) <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2019/05/07/young-adults/>

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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 *certificate* in Law and Politics, 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).

Masters 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 Government or the Master of Public Administration (MPA), speak with your professor about the MAP program or visit our website for the Ph.D. in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics.



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 in the 2024-25 chapter of the MUN participated in the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City, where the team was recognized as a Distinguished Delegation! Two students also received recognition for writing the best position papers for their committees: Jasmine Padilla (UNEA) and Will Whitworth (CWC).



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!



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Joining Aggie MUN was one of the best decisions I could have made for myself, and I strongly encourage everyone to consider joining this amazing team! Beyond preparing for conferences, Model UN offers an opportunity to enhance public speaking and writing skills, all while becoming more involved with the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration. We look for dedicated individuals eager to embrace this unique opportunity.

Apply here by September 15, 2025:

<https://forms.gle/9CuTrGNxSbSMaRfN8>

We can't wait to review your application!

Jasmine Padilla

President, NMSU Model UN

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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
Christina Medina
MPA Program

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



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.

Pi Sigma Alpha enables students to meet outside the classroom and participate in meaningful activities that explore politics, international relations, and a range of other current issues. What use is an education in political science if the only place to engage the subject is in the classroom? Pi Sigma Alpha aims to provide a forum for students interested in politics and current events to discuss these issues with like-minded peers.

Activities that members can participate in include the Speaker Series (Brown Bags), attending the National Student Research Conference in Washington, D.C. each February, Chapter Grants, On-Campus Activities, voter registration drives, local community organization and volunteering, and more! For application information and eligibility, scan the QR code below.



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2024-2025 DEPARTMENT AWARDS RECEPTION



PHOTOS BY: WENDY HARVEY

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A FOND FAIRWELL TO PROFESSOR

KIM SECKLER



Kim Seckler, a beloved member of the New Mexico State University Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, has officially announced her retirement.

Professor Seckler completed both her undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of New Mexico, earning a Juris Doctorate (JD) in 1986. Her time as an instructor at NMSU began in 1999. Since then, she has been an integral part of the department's growth and success. Over the years, she has made significant contributions to the development of both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Professor Seckler specializes in New Mexico state and local government, the New Mexico State Legislature, elections, election law, education law, the U.S. and New Mexico Constitutions, the U.S. Supreme Court, and American National Government. Throughout the years, she has taught courses including Congress and Legislative Process, Judicial Process, the Supreme Court, Public Policy and Indigenous Communities, Constitutional Law, New Mexico Law, American National Government, and LSAT Prep. Additionally, Professor Seckler directed the College of Arts and Sciences' Law and Society program and served as the primary pre-law advisor on campus. She is also the co-author and co-editor of the book *Governing New Mexico* (UNM Press, 2006), and her most recent publication appears in the January 2019 volume of the *California Journal of Public Policy* (UC Berkeley Press).

Her courses have challenged students to think critically, engage with real-world issues, and develop a strong foundation in political science and government. Needless to say, she has left a lasting impact on the lives of so many incredibly grateful staff, students, and faculty.

Professor Seckler, on behalf of the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, and the NMSU community, thank you for your many years of service devoted to knowledge and learning. Congratulations on your retirement - may it be filled with joy and well-deserved rest!

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR THE DEPARTMENT

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Tuesday, September 9, 2025: 3.00-5.00 PM**

WELCOME PARTY for new and returning Government majors (undergraduate and graduate). Food, drink, and a fun time to celebrate the new school year and honor Prof. Seckler on her retirement.

Location: North side patio of Breland Hall



- **Tuesday, September 30, 2025: 10.00 AM-2.00 PM**

NMSU GRAD PROGRAMS SHOWCASE! Come learn about the various Graduate Programs that NMSU has to offer.

Location: Corbett Center, Ground Floor



- **Friday, October 3 - Sunday, October 5, 2025**

IMAGINING AMERICA National Gathering at NMSU. Providing Passages: Practicing the Worlds We Want. Free NMSU registration using code NMSUIA25.

See details at: <https://liagathering.org/>



- **Tuesday, October 7, 2025: 3.00-4.00 PM**

DEPARTMENT ORIENTATION to graduate programs and the Master's Accelerated Program.

Location: Breland Hall, 358



LOOKING FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM?

Ask faculty about internships for credit and explore two experiential learning opportunities led this year by Dr. Sabine Hirschauer:



“In spring 2026, I will offer an Honors College experiential course, **Democracy in the World**. Students will study democracy in practice by visiting New Mexico’s Roundhouse, meeting legislators, attending local council sessions in Las Cruces, and engaging with Indigenous leaders in northern New Mexico. The course also includes a visit to the former Japanese internment and POW camp in Lordsburg and virtual exchanges with partners in Germany, as we examine democracy’s past, present, and prospects for the 21st century.

In June 2026, I will lead students to **Munich** for a **service-learning study-abroad program** focused on Europe’s migration challenges. Students will work alongside refugee nonprofits, volunteer groups, and state agencies while also learning about Germany’s political history. This year, we will emphasize connecting with Ukrainian and Afghan migrant communities and examining the rise of xenophobia and the far-right AfD, now Germany’s second-largest party and the first far-right group in parliament since the Nazi era. If you are interested in any of these experiential opportunities, please don’t hesitate to reach out at shirscha@nmsu.edu.”

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Ph.D in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics

The Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration is pleased to announce the creation of a new interdisciplinary program!



The 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.

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR FALL 2026: JANUARY 8TH, 2026

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
- Food security, water and energy security, human health, and sustainability

SPONSORING & AFFILIATED DEPARTMENTS

- College of Arts and Sciences
- Anthropology
- Government
- 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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MPA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

NASPAA REACCREDITATION

The Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration is proud of our Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, which is accredited by the **Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA)**.

The program has been in existence *and* accredited since 1978. Only about a third of MPA programs are accredited *nationwide*. Earning a degree from a NASPAA-accredited program is a valuable credential that students can include on their resumes.

Our MPA program is currently undergoing reaccreditation, a process of renewal and review. Each renewal period is good for a term of six years.



Dr. Tad Conner

Native American Studies & Faculty Senator

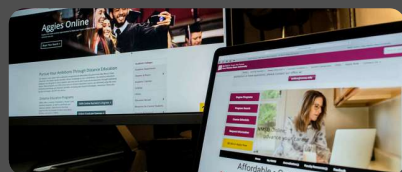
Dr. Conner's research in the field of Native American Studies is a shining example of what the MPA program aims to prepare students to do after earning a degree. He is currently working on a project that explores the adoption of intergovernmental agreements between Tribal and non-Tribal governments.

Dr. Conner is particularly interested in Tribal gaming compacts, which vary considerably from state to state in the degree to which they restrict gaming operations on Tribal land, as well as revenue-sharing requirements that are highly controversial. For this project, he examines the adoption of more than 900 agreements spanning over 30 years of Tribal gaming in the United States.

Dr. Conner has also represented the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration since 2022 as a member of the Faculty Senate, and will begin his second (and last) term next academic year. As a Faculty Senator, he has the responsibility of considering legislation across a wide range of issues, including student success, faculty support and development, university governance, financial management, curriculum development, and other issues that impact the institution and/or the NMSU community. Dr. Conner has served on the Student Success Committee and currently serves on the Budget and Resources Committee. Recently, he sponsored legislation to change the name of the Department of Government to the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, which successfully passed in Fall 2024. Dr. Conner looks forward to collaborating with President Ferme on initiatives to enhance the lives of students, staff, and faculty at NMSU in the upcoming academic year and continuing the work of the Budget Committee.



ONLINE MPA COMING FALL 2027



The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program is in the process of becoming fully available online via the NMSU Global Campus.

A large number of courses required for program completion are already offered online. Making the program available through the Global Campus will provide an opportunity for non-traditional and working students to earn an MPA degree, emphasizing flexibility with unwaveringly high-quality education.

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MEET OUR FACULTY

Dr. Thaddieus (Tad) Conner
Associate Professor



Dr. Conner completed his Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Oklahoma in 2012 with an emphasis in Public Administration, Public Policy, and American Politics. He is interested in questions related to public management and collaboration with a particular focus on the involvement of Native American communities in service delivery networks. Dr. Conner has published several articles on collaborative governance, intergovernmental relations, public opinion, education policy, and race and ethnic politics. He also teaches a number of courses, including research methods, public budgeting and finance, public administration, political science, and Native American politics. He also served as Editor of the Indigenous Policy Journal and currently serves on the Editorial Board of the American Review of Public Administration.

Dr. Daniel Gomez
Assistant Professor



Dr. Daniel Gomez is an Assistant Professor of Government at NMSU. He is a native New Mexican, originally from the Peñasco valley in the Northern part of the state. He received his B.A. in Communication from the University of New Mexico before receiving his PhD in Political Science, with a focus on Political Communication and American Politics from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Dr. Gomez's research focus is on social media and its influences on American democracy, the effects of group identity on political attitudes and democratic sentiment, and youth collective action in the digital age. His work has been published in numerous journals in political science, and he is a founding member of the UCSB Center for Information and Society's Citizen's Guide to Fake News.

Dr. Neil Harvey
Professor & Academic Department Head



Dr. Harvey's main areas of interest are politics in Mexico and Latin America, particularly the role of social movements in the struggle for democracy and new forms of political representation. He has carried out field research in Chiapas, Mexico, focusing on independent peasant movements, land conflicts, and agrarian reform. He studied the causes of the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas in 1994 as well as its subsequent development, including the formation and practices of autonomous governments run by Indigenous communities. Dr. Harvey has written extensively on rural politics and indigenous people's movements, including a book, *The Chiapas Rebellion: the struggle for land and democracy* (Duke University Press, 1998). He also co-authored a textbook on Latin American politics, entitled *Governing Latin America* (with Joe Foweraker and Todd Landman; Polity Press, 2003).



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Dr. Sabine Hirschauer
Associate Professor



Dr. Hirschauer received her Ph.D. in International Studies with a concentration in Security Studies and second major in Comparative Politics from the Graduate Program in International Studies at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Her research interests include security studies, migration, and memory studies. She is the author of the book *The Securitization of Rape: Women, War and Sexual Violence* (2014) with case studies of Bosnia and Rwanda. She received a post-doctoral research fellowship with the University of Bloemfontein in South Africa in 2013 and 2014. She presented her research at conferences in Europe, Latin America, South Africa, Rwanda, and Canada and at major international studies and security studies conferences in the U.S. She also serves as a manuscript referee for several journals in the areas of IR, migration, and security studies.

Dr. Seong C. Kang
Associate Professor



Dr. Kang received his Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy with a concentration in public management from the University of Georgia. His research focuses on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery processes. His research examines citizen participation in the delivery of public services through initiatives such as volunteering, coproduction, and how this improves organizational performance and accountability. His work has appeared in journals such as *Administration & Society*, *Public Administration*, and *Public Administration Review*, among others. Dr. Kang has experience working at the Korea Institute of Public Administration, and also served as an enlisted soldier in the Republic of Korea Army from 2006 to 2008.

Dr. Cheon Lee
Assistant Professor



Dr. Lee's research interests cover public and nonprofit management with a focus on nonprofit financial management and nonprofits' role in fostering political participation of citizens. He is currently interested in nonprofit financial structure such as restricted funding and commercial revenue and how nonprofits facilitate online political actions. He is also interested in education policy and has published several reports on racial and economic segregation in New Jersey high schools.



Dr. Christina Ann Medina
Professor & MPA Program Director



Dr. Christina A. Medina, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Government and the Director of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at New Mexico State University (NMSU). She earned her doctorate in Public Affairs at the University of Colorado at Denver in 2008. Her research interests include education policy, immigration policy, program evaluation, and community engagement. Dr. Medina has published articles on Public Administration, education policy, cultural competency, parental involvement, and on issues regarding higher education, specifically Hispanic serving (HSI) and Minority serving (MSI) institutions.

Dr. Cory Sukala
Assistant Professor



Dr. Sukala received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Louisiana State University with a primary concentration in Political Theory, a secondary concentration in American Politics, and a minor in Religion and Politics. He is interested in the questions of how distinct political traditions are able to coexist and how competing social forces, such as political and religious authority, dictate our behavior.

His current research focuses on Buddhist political thought and the consequences of the conflict caused as the Buddhist political world comes together with the liberal West in the age of globalization. Prior to coming to NMSU, Dr. Sukala worked in public policy research and served as the Director of Elections for Beaver County, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Ani Ter-Mkrtchyan
Assistant Professor



Dr. Ter-Mkrtchyan is an ACUE credentialed instructor whose teaching and research lie at the intersection of public policy and administration. While working on her PhD, she trained at the Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis at the University of Oklahoma, where she engaged with nationwide projects on environmental policy and energy security. Her dissertation research focuses on public opinion, public trust, and citizen engagement in the governance of environmental and energy policy issues. Her current focus is on the role of nonprofits and community engagement in the policymaking process. Before starting her academic career Dr. Ter-Mkrtchyan had been a practitioner in public and nonprofit fields for more than ten years.

Adjunct Faculty: William Corbett (QR below), Michael Toje, Ashlerose Francia, Clifton Perry, and Cynthia Wise



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MEET OUR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Jonah A. Arzapalo

Graduate Teaching Assistant



Jonah completed his undergraduate studies here at New Mexico State University, earning two baccalaureate degrees:

Bachelor of Criminal Justice (CJ) and **Bachelor of Arts in Justice, Political Philosophy, and Law (JPPL)**.

He is a full-time Master's student enrolled in the MPA Program, expected to graduate with a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in December of 2026.

Currently, Jonah assists *Dr. Tad Conner*.
A fun fact about Jonah is that he is a classically trained percussionist!

Katelyn Beaufort

Graduate Teaching Assistant



Katelyn completed her undergraduate studies at Doña Ana Community College and New Mexico State University's Main Campus, earning an Associate's Degree in Pre-Business and a Bachelor of Arts in Justice, Political Philosophy, and Law (JPPL) with a Minor in Business Law.

She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in the MPA Program and expects to graduate in December of 2026.

Currently, Katelyn assists *Dr. Christina Medina*.
A fun fact about Katelyn is that she enjoys reading and is always on the lookout for her next great book!

Claire Bluhm

Graduate Research Assistant



Claire completed her undergraduate studies here at New Mexico State University, earning a Bachelor of Criminal Justice (CJ).

She is a Master's student enrolled in the dual MCJ-MPA Program, expected to graduate with a Master of Criminal Justice (MCJ) and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in May 2027.

Currently, Claire assists *Dr. Seong Kang* in a research capacity.

A fun fact about Claire is that she has three fur babies named Carmelo, Terrance, and Scraggles!

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Jay Choate

Graduate Teaching Assistant



Jay completed his undergraduate studies here at New Mexico State University, earning a **Bachelor of Arts in Political Science** with a Minor in Public Administration.

He is a full-time Master's student pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) and a Master of Arts in Political Science degree, with an expected graduation date in Fall 2026.

Currently, Jay assists *Dr. Cory Sukala*.

A fun fact about Jay is that he is involved in several political parties!

Ethan Ortiz-Ulibarri

Graduate Teaching Assistant



Ethan completed his undergraduate studies at New Mexico State University, earning a **Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business and Economics**, and also earned a Mini-MBA Certificate from Miami University.

He is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in the MPA Program and expects to graduate in May 2026.

Currently, Ethan assists *Dr. Cheon Lee*. A fun fact about Ethan is that he is currently in the process of earning his Lighter-Than-Air certification, which will allow him to fly hot air balloons!

Molly Carrier

Graduate Teaching Assistant



Molly completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Missouri, Columbia, earning a **Bachelor of Social Work**, along with certificates in Intensive Writing and Multicultural Studies.

She is currently a Master's student enrolled in the MPA Program, expected to graduate with a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in December 2025.

Currently, Molly assists *Dr. Daniel Gomez*.

A fun fact about Molly is that she enjoys rock climbing, hiking, and reading!

Abigail Baffour
Graduate Teaching Assistant



Abigail completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana. She earned a **Bachelor of Arts in Political Science Education**.

She is a full-time Master's student, expected to graduate with a Master of Arts in Government (MA) degree in May of 2026.

Currently, Abigail assists *Dr. Sabine Hirschauer*.

A fun fact about Abigail is that she loves trying out new baking recipes!

Mason Schuette
Graduate Teaching Assistant



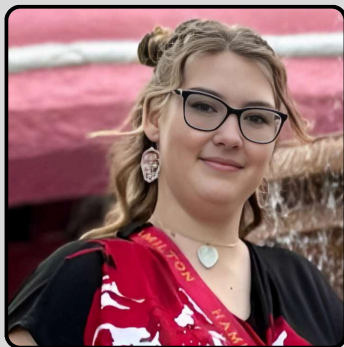
Mason completed his undergraduate studies at New Mexico State University, earning a **Bachelor of Science in Computer Science**.

He is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in the MPA Program and expects to graduate in Fall 2026.

Currently, Mason assists *Dr. Ani Ter-Mkrtchyan*.

A fun fact about Mason is that his last name is of German origin, meaning "archer" in some regions. He has set a goal for himself to explore Germany by the end of his graduate degree journey!

Ali Holley
Graduate Teaching Assistant



Ali completed her undergraduate studies here at New Mexico State University, earning a **Bachelor of Arts in Government** and a **Bachelor of Arts in Psychology**.

She is currently a Master's student pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science, and is expected to graduate in Spring 2027.

Ali will assist our department's *adjunct faculty*.

A fun fact about Ali is that she loves writing and spent nine years taking part in color guard!



Brennan Ramsey
Graduate Teaching Assistant



Brennan completed her undergraduate studies here at NMSU, earning a **Bachelor of Arts in Government**.

She is currently a Master's student, expected to graduate with a Master of Arts in Government (MA) degree in May of 2027.

Currently, Brennan assists *Dr. Neil Harvey*.
A fun fact about Brennan is that she is an award-winning competitive fruit preserve maker. She can underwater basket weave, and she has a black cat named Binx, after the 1993 Classic Hocus Pocus!

**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

Anja Hansen
Administrative Assistant



The Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration would like to welcome **Anja Hanen**, our new Administrative Assistant, who will provide a range of administrative and clerical support to our students, faculty, and staff.

We look forward to working with you!

Tel: 575-646-4935

Email: anjah@nmsu.edu

Connect with us on Social Media!





ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES



Daniel Bolsinger

MPA, 1985



My MPA degree from NMSU took me places I never would have dreamed of. During my career as a Foreign Service Officer from 1985-2012, I served in Zaire, The Philippines, Kyrgyzstan, South Korea, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen. One highlight of my career was the chance to be part of a five-person team that opened the US Embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan as the former Soviet Union fell apart. In January 1992, I was sent as the General Services Officer (GSO) responsible for obtaining supplies, housing, vehicles, and arranging diplomatic flights into the country. I coordinated with the Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry, served as backup Consular Officer, liaised with the small American community, and supported a constant stream of official visitors. All of this was conducted in a country that was trying to transition from a Soviet style economy and market. The management generalist skills I learned in the MPA program at NMSU were key to my success, not just opening our embassy in Bishkek, but during my entire career.

Joshua Lew McDermott

MA Government, 2015



My time in the government graduate program at NMSU was formative for me as a young scholar and activist. The faculty at NMSU and the climate in the government department made feel especially welcome and encouraged; I forged lifelong friendships and professional relationships during my time there. Thanks to opportunities offered by the department and the university, I was able to do field work in West Africa that has laid the groundwork for my career; I also became connected to and interested in issues related to Mexico and the borderlands which have led to publishing and research opportunities. During my time at NMSU, I met great thinkers and people, became involved in the community, and gained the intellectual foundations necessary to be a successful young researcher and college instructor. The department at NMSU actively encouraged me to innovate and explore within my research. I can honestly say that my time in the government department at NMSU was one the richest periods, both personally and intellectually, of my life.

Stephen Groll

Bachelor of Arts



Lt. Col. Stephen Groll received his bachelor's degree in Government and History from New Mexico State University, graduating with distinction. He currently serves as the department head of the NMSU Aerospace Studies Department. He was commissioned via ROTC in May 1991. He also has Masters Degrees in Public Administration and Military Operations. He has just been reassigned to NMSU from the Pentagon where he was the Branch Chief, Future Requirements Branch, for the E-4B National Airborne Operations Center. Lt. Col Groll is a Master Navigator with over 3,200 flying hours in the T-43, EC/KC-135 and the E-4B aircraft.

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Paige Sharp

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

MA 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.

Marcia Mundt

Bachelor of Arts



With the generous support of NMSU faculty and staff, especially my professors in the Government Department, I was awarded a Fulbright Full Grant to continue my education at the graduate level. As such, I am now working towards an MA in Peace Studies at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom. I have been fortunate to take advantage of the opportunities at NMSU and apply them in a globally vital and challenging career path. On a more personal note, I look forward to learning more about the international community, particularly the United States' special relationship with the UK, through this exciting cultural exchange.

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AN EXAMPLE OF AGGIE EXCELLENCE



JILLIAN MCBETH

CLASS OF 2025
Outstanding Graduate

Each semester, the NMSU Alumni recognizes graduating seniors from each of the academic colleges, plus a master's and a doctoral student, to receive the Outstanding Graduate Award.

This is the **NMSU Alumni's** highest honor for students. Awardees are selected by their college deans and a committee within their respective colleges or the Graduate School. The recognition celebrates exceptional academic achievements, demonstrated leadership skills, and a strong commitment to the university and community through volunteerism.

This past academic year, out of the entire College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration was elated to hear that one of its own, Jillian McBeth, was awarded the Outstanding Graduate Award. Jillian, a native of Jacksonville, NC, is the Department's highest-achieving student in the Class of 2025, graduating with a GPA of 3.992. A Government and Anthropology double major, Jillian also has minors in Public Administration and Spanish.

According to Dr. Neil Harvey, chair of the Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration, "Jillian is an exceptional student who combines academic excellence with a strong commitment to advocacy and education in the broader community." At NMSU, she served as chapter president of the National Political Science Honor Society (Pi Sigma Alpha), helping to organize a student panel on reproductive rights at a national conference in Washington, D.C. "She will be an inspiring leader in whichever career path she takes." Jillian's accolades include the Nick Franklin Public Policy Scholarship and the college's Community Engagement for Social Justice award. She notes, "I've been fortunate to never be afraid to speak my mind in class and to have the opportunity to advocate for change, exercise my rights, and be recognized for doing so. Not all college campuses value this." **We are so proud of you, Jillian!**

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.

BRELAND HALL

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.

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

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 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:



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