

José J. Alcocer, Ph.D., M.P.P.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Harvard Law School, Harvard University
1545 Massachusetts Ave,
Cambridge, MA 02138, USA

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations, 2025

University of Southern California, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences
Committee: Christian R. Grose (USC), Jeb Barnes (USC), Pablo Barberá (Meta), Nicolas Duquette (USC)

Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.), 2019

University of Southern California, Sol Price School of Public Policy

B.A. in Political Science, 2017

California State University, Long Beach, College of Liberal Arts

EXPERTISE

Methodological: Artificial Intelligence (Large Language Models, Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing), Quantitative Research Design (Cross-Sectional, Experimental, Longitudinal, Quasi-Experimental), Statistical Inference (Causal, Descriptive, Predictive)

Substantive: Political Institutions, Electoral Systems, Elite Behavior, Public Policy Analysis, Race and Ethnicity, Voting Rights

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Research Scientist, 2025 –

[Department of Empirical Research Services](#),
Harvard Law School, Harvard University

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

[3] Múzquiz, José and **Jose J. Alcocer**. 2025. "[Legislator Responsiveness to Racialized Constituencies in Mexico](#)." Forthcoming. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.

[2] **Alcocer, Jose J.** 2025. "[Minority Elites Sponsor and Cosponsor Differently from Whites: Causal Evidence from U.S. Congress](#)." *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*, pp. 1-13.

[1] **Alcocer, Jose J.** 2020. "[Exploring the Effect of Colorado's Recreational Marijuana Policy on Opioid Overdose Rates](#)." *Public Health*, 185, pp. 8-14.

OTHER
PUBLICATIONS

[2] Hua, Whitney, and **Jose J. Alcocer**. 2024. ["Transforming the Vote: How Voting Reforms Can Improve Equity for Underrepresented Minorities."](#) The Center for Election Science. Last Updated January 2025.

[1] Hua, Whitney, **Alcocer, Jose J.**, and Mike Piel. 2024. ["America \[Mis\]Represented: 2022 Vote-Split Elections Report."](#) *The Center for Election Science*.

UNDER REVIEW

Muttram, Harry, **Jose J. Alcocer**, Lauren Brown, Benjamin A.T. Graham, Michael Sierra-Arévalo, and Nicholas Weller. ["Street-Level Bureaucrats and Political Control: Do Los Angeles Police Change Their Behavior in Response to Policy Changes?"](#) *Journal of Politics*.

Alcocer, Jose J. ["Institutional Constraints Shape Minority Agenda-Setting: Evidence From the U.S. House \(1981 – 2020\)." *Policy Studies Journal*](#).

Graham, Benjamin A.T., **Jose J. Alcocer**, Lauren Brown, Georgios Chochlakis, Morteza Dehghani, Raquel Delerme, Brittany Friedman, Ellie Graeden, Preni Golazizian, Rajat Hebbar, Parsa Hejabi, Aditya Kommineni, Harry G. Muttram, Shrikanth Narayanan, Mayagüez Salinas, Michael Sierra-Arévalo, Jackson Trager, and Nicholas Weller. ["Community-Informed AI Models for Government Accountability."](#) *Political Analysis*.

WORKING
PAPERS

Alcocer, Jose J. ["Examining Minority and Non-Minority Legislators' Willingness to Cooperate Across Racial Groups in Legislative Cosponsorship."](#)

Gonzales, Esther, **Jose J. Alcocer**, and Cynthia Wilkes. ["Equity and Exhaustion: The Link Between Fairness Perceptions and Burnout in Local Government Workers."](#)

Sierra-Arévalo, Michael, **Jose J. Alcocer**, Lauren Brown, Raquel Delerme, Benjamin A.T. Graham, Harry G. Muttram, Jackson Trager, and Nicholas Weller. ["Disconnected Policing: Street-level bureaucrats, policy representation, and traffic stops in Los Angeles."](#)

Alcocer, Jose J., and Christian R. Grose. ["Top-Two Open Primary Systems Increase Ideological Diversity in State Legislative Parties."](#)

Alcocer, Jose J. ["Racial Discourse in the Digital Age: Comparing Tone and Framing of Racial Issues in Legislator Communication."](#) Presented at WPSA 2023.

Alcocer, Jose J. ["Strategic Legislating: Measuring Electoral Priorities of the Elite via Survey Experimentation."](#) Presented at SPSA 2023.

GRANTS,
AWARDS, AND
FELLOWSHIPS

University of Southern California

2024. Political Science and International Relations Summer Research Award. \$3,500.00

2024. Graduate Student Government Professional Development Fund Award. \$500.00

2024. Graduate School Travel/Research Award. \$1,500.00

2023. Political Science and International Relations Summer Research Award. \$4,500.00

2023. Graduate School Summer Research and Writing Grant. \$2,000.00

2022. Political Science and International Relations Summer Research Award. \$2,500.00

2022. Graduate School Summer Research and Writing Grant. \$2,500.00

2021. Political Science and International Relations Summer Research Award. \$2,500.00

2020. Graduate Diversity Scholarship and Tuition Fellowship Award. \$40,000.00/yr.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Associate, 2023 – 2025

[The Security and Political Economy \(SPEC\) Lab](#), University of Southern California

Supervising Professor: Benjamin A.T. Graham

Apply advanced statistical, computational, and analytical techniques to assist with ongoing projects. Assist faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students with questions on research design and statistical inference along with troubleshoot code inquiries related to R, Python, and Stata. Key contributor to [Everyday Respect](#) Project.

Research Assistant, 2021 — 2022

Primary Investigator: Sherry Zaks, University of Southern California

Translated archival documents of Salvadoran guerilla organization, FMLN, from Spanish to English using NLP models. Annotated and created detailed summaries of Salvadoran Spanish documents conveying political organizational structure, combat and campaign strategies, and organizational policies. Contributed to building and updating a dataset on guerilla organizations transitioning to political parties.

Research Assistant, 2021 — 2022

Primary Investigators: Abby Wood; Pamela McCann, University of Southern California

Analyzed several U.S. federal and state executive orders for the purpose of qualitatively coding and defining different definitions of essential workers and essential business industries throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Collected, cleaned, organized, and interpreted state-level data regarding essential worker definitions for the purpose of creating a dataset reflecting these several definitions across states. Created Python and R scripts that allowed the ability to web scrape tables from government websites and PDFs, such as the Book of the States reports. Researched and reported U.S. state differences in COVID-19 pandemic response, from their moment of closure to how they continued to evolve throughout the pandemic.

Research Associate, 2021 — 2022

Democracy Lab, University of Southern California

Supervising Professor: Christian R. Grose

Collected, cleaned, and organized data on U.S. state legislatures and their respective representatives' policy positions on several issues. Wrote several literature reviews on the topic of legislative term limits within the context of the U.S. Collected and analyzed several quantitative regression analyses related to citizen voting behavior within the U.S. Ran several racial polarized

voting analyses and ability-to-elect analyses across several U.S. states using created Python scripts streamlining the output processes.

Directed Research, 2019 — 2020

Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics, University of Southern California

Faculty Advisor: Sarah Axeen

Collected, cleaned, and organized data from various resources to conduct several statistical analyses. Quantitatively analyzed the collected data to construct several synthetic control models of Colorado to assess the causal impact of recreational marijuana legislation at the state level. Drafted and successfully published a manuscript that investigated the effects of recreational marijuana legislation on opioid overdose rates in the state of Colorado.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE**

Computational Social Scientist, 2024 – 2025

[Center for Election Science](#), Applied Data and Research Team

Applied advanced statistical, computational, and analytical techniques to assist with projects that analyzed voter attitudes and behavior, election outcomes, and the impact of voting systems on democratic processes with the goal of advancing scientific research and inform decision-makers within the organization as well as key stakeholders about high-impact findings.

Survey Statistician, 2022 – 2025

[Federal Statistical Research Data Center \(FSRDC\)](#)

U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Enterprise Dissemination, LA-USC Branch

Assisted researchers with accessing and analyzing large-scale restricted microdata that is collected and governed by multiple federal agencies. Conducted U.S. Title 13 and Title 26 disclosure avoidance reviews on statistical outputs produced by researchers. Served as point of contact between researchers, University of Southern California faculty, and the Census Bureau.

Policy Analyst, 2018 – 2019

The City Project

Specialized in conducting comprehensive literature reviews on the health impacts of public parks, particularly for underprivileged urban areas, collaborating on policy research through stakeholder interviews, and contributed to agency papers and a best practices white paper on California's Proposition 68 grant process.

**TEACHING
EXPERIENCE**

Graduate Teaching Assistant

University of Southern California

Ideology and Conflict (Spring 2023)

Environmental Challenges (Fall 2022)

Instructor

University of Southern California

Python for Social Science Workshop (Spring 2023)

University of California, Los Angeles

Introduction to Programming in R (Summer 2022)

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

Papers Presented

"Top-Two Open Primary Systems Increase Ideological Diversity in U.S. State Legislative Parties," Midwest Political Science Association, April 4 - 7 (2024); SoCal Political Institutions and Political Economy Conference, October 27 (2023); European Political Science Association, June 26 - 28 (2025)

"Minority Elites (Co)Sponsor Differently from Non-Minorities. Causal Evidence from U.S. Congress," Western Political Science Association, March 28 - 30 (2024); SoCal Political Institutions and Political Economy Conference, March 22 (2024); Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology, July 18-20 (2024)

"Identity Legislating: Examining How Minority Legislators Engage in Non-Roll Call Position-Taking." Midwest Political Science Association, April 13 - 16 (2023); Western Political Science Association, April 6 - 8 (2023)

"Perceiving Tweets: Can Twitter trends influence agenda-setting?" Southern Political Science Association, January 11 - 14 (2023)

Workshops Attended

Spring School in Advanced Research Methods, University of Oxford, Department of Politics & International Relations, March 27-31 (2023)

Institute for Qualitative and Mixed Method Research (IQMR) Workshop, Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, June 13-24 (2022)

SOFTWARE

[TextViz Studio](#): Streamlit application with data visualization, statistical inference, and text analysis tools.

[AppendIDs](#): R package providing tools to standardize and merge cross-sectional and CSTS country data across differing country-coding schemes.

[topicmodelCV](#): R package for 10-fold cross-validation to determine the optimal number of topics for Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic models.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Programming Languages: CSS & HTML, Java, JavaScript, LaTeX, Python, R, SQL, Stata

Web Applications: Click-Up, Google Suite, Infogram, MS Office, Qualtrics, Survey Monkey, Tableau

Last Updated: 06/30/2025