Benjamín Muñoz

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Research Interests

My research examines how judicial bureaucrats respond to security-driven pressures and how these forces shape their decisions. More broadly, I study how punitive policies affect political behavior, with a focus on Latin America.

Comparative: Political Behavior, Law and Courts, Bureaucratic Politics, Public Policy, Latin American Politics

Methods: Causal Inference, Network Analysis, Machine Learning

Education

Ph.D.   **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Political Science   2020 – present
- Fields of Interest: Comparative Politics and Quantitative Methods
- Dissertation:

M.A.   **Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile**, Political Science   2014 – 2015
- Ranked 1st out of 19 students
- Honors

B.A.   **Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile**, Political Science   2009 – 2014
- Ranked 1st out of 52 students
- Highest Honors

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Plaza, A. , Beck, G., Iturra, J., **Muñoz, B.** (2026) Networked Inequality: The Role of Changes in Network Heterogeneity and Network Size in Attitudes towards Inequality ↗, *Social Networks 84 (January): 27-45*

Bargsted, M. , Somma, N., **Muñoz, B.** (2019) Electoral Turnout in Chile: An Age-Period-Cohort Approach ↗, *Revista de Ciencia Política 39(1): 75-98*

Book Chapters

Plaza, A. , Cantillán, R., **Muñoz, B.** (2023) Multilevel Analysis for the Study of Egocentric Networks ↗ [ESP]. *In Ortiz, F. and Espinosa-Rada, A. (Eds.)* Social Networks: Theory, Methods, and Applications in Latin America *(pp 183-202), Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*

Suárez-Cao, J., **Muñoz, B.** (2019) The Right in the Territory: A Subnational Approach on the Structuring of Electoral Competition in Chile ↗ [ESP]. *In Alenda, S. (Ed.)* Anatomy of the Chilean Right: State, Market, and Value Formation in Times of Change *(pp 191-225), Santiago: Fondo de Cultura Económica*

Suárez-Cao, J., **Muñoz, B.** (2017) The Localization of Politics in Municipal Electoral Competition in Chile ↗ [ESP]. *In Luna, J.P. and Mardones, R. (Eds.)* The Fractured Backbone: Revisiting Political Intermediaries in Chile *(pp 57-86), Santiago: RIL Editores*

Policy Documents

González, R. , Bargsted, M., **Muñoz, B.**, Plaza, A., Miranda, D., Carvacho, H. (2019) Radiografía del Cambio Social. Resultados ELSOC 2016-2018 ↗ [ESP]. *Nota COES de Política Pública*

González, R. , Bargsted, M., Miranda, D., Carvacho, H., Tropp, L., van Laar, C., **Muñoz, B.**, …, Cheyre, M. (2019) Resultados Primera Ola del Estudio Longitudinal Social de Chile: Cohesión Social y Migración ⎘ [ESP]. *Nota COES de Política Pública N° 1*

UNDP (2015) Opinión Ciudadana y Cambio Constitucional. Análisis desde la Opinión Pública ⎘ [ESP]. *Serie Más y Mejor Democracia. Santiago: Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo*

Projects

Working Papers

Muñoz, B., Plaza, A. , Espinoza, V. (2026) When Do Acquaintance Networks Grow? Life Events, Civic Participation, and Social Dynamics *(Revise and Resubmit) Social Networks*

Muñoz, B., Campbell, A. (2026) Do Policies Drive Politics? A Causal-Inference Review of the Policy Feedback Literature *(prepared for submission)*

Muñoz, B., Bargsted, M., González, A. (2026) The Longitudinal Unexpected Event During Survey Design *(prepared for submission)*

Work in Progress

Muñoz, B. No Crime but Punishment: How Migration Triggers Punitive Behavior Among Judicial Bureaucrats *(Presented at APSA 2025).*

Muñoz, B. The Efect of Judicial Institutions on the Attitudes of Mass Publics *(Presented at CHISOC 2024).*

Muñoz, B. Heavy Baggage: Bias against Working-Class Candidates *(Presented at MPSA 2024).*

Muñoz, B. Coethnic Love or Policy Preferences? The Interaction between Descriptive and Substantive Representation *(Presented at MPSA 2024).*

Muñoz, B., Bargsted, M. Voting as a Short-lived Habit. Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Chilean Registry Data

Fellowships, Honors and Awards

MIT Center for International Studies, Fellowship (USD $5,000)	2025
Luksic Scholars , Research Grant (USD $5,000)	2024
Luksic Scholars , PhD Fellowship	2020 – present
FONDECYT, Regular Grant N° 12000534 • Co-Researcher: *Rational Voters, Socioeconomic Resources and Behavioral Inertia*	2019 – 2022
Fulbright Program, Scholarship for Doctoral Studies (Declined)	2018
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Award for Outstanding Academic Performance	2016
CONICYT, Scholarship for Master Studies in Chile	2015
Universidad Católica de Uruguay, Student Grant for Winter School in Methods and Data Analysis	2015
Chilean Association of Political Science, Best Undergraduate Thesis Award	2014
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Academic Excellence Scholarship for BA and Master Studies	2012 – 2014
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Student Grant for Summer School on Mixed Methods	2014

Teaching

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Multiple Teaching Roles   Feb 2023 – present
- Spring 2025: Workshop Instructor, Writing Clean and Efficient Code (2 hours)
- Summer 2024: Teaching Fellow, Experiential Ethics (UG, 6 Units, Evaluation: 7.0/7.0)
- Summer 2024: Workshop Instructor, The Causal Inference Toolbox: A Gentle Introduction (2 hours)
- Spring 2024: Teaching Assistant, Causal Inference for Prof. Teppei Yamamoto (UG, Evaluation: 6.5/7.0)
- Fall 2024: Workshop Instructor, Writing Clean and Efficient Code (2 hours)
- Summer 2023: Teaching Fellow, Experiential Ethics (UG, 6 Units, Evaluation: 6.7/7.0)
- Spring 2023: Teaching Assistant, Quantitative Research Methods IV: Advanced Topics for Prof. F. Daniel Hidalgo and Teppei Yamamoto (G, Evaluation: 7.0/7.0)
- Fall 2023: Workshop Instructor with Adam Kaplan, R Coding Practices for Social Scientists (2 hours)

Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Department of Anthropology, Instructor   Mar 2019 – Dec 2019
- Fall 2019: Applied Statistics for Social Sciences (UG)
- Spring 2019: Quantitative Methods I (UG)

Universidad de Chile, School of Government and Public Administration, Instructor   Oct 2015 – Jan 2017
- Spring 2019: Data Analysis with Stata (Workshop for Scholars)
- Spring 2016: Qualitative Methods for Public Administration (UG)
- Fall 2016: Research Methods for Public Administration (UG)
- Spring 2015: Methods and Techniques for Social Research (UG)

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Multiple Teaching Roles   Aug 2011 – Aug 2025
- Summer 2025: Workshop Instructor, Fixed and Random Effects Modeling (1 day, ELSOC-COES Methods School)
- Summer 2024: Workshop Instructor, Fixed and Random Effects Modeling (1 day, ELSOC-COES Methods School)
- Spring 2019: Teaching Assistant, Multilevel Analysis for Prof. Matías Bargsted (G, ISUC)
- January 2018: Workshop Instructor, Social Network Analysis with R (Summer School on Mixed Methods)
- January 2017: Workshop Instructor, Programation with R (Summer School on Mixed Methods)
- January 2016: Workshop Instructor, Introduction to Stata (Summer School on Mixed Methods)
- Fall 2015: Teaching Assistant, Quantitative Analysis II for Prof. Jake Bowers (G, ICP)
- Spring 2015: Teaching Assistant, Quantitative Analysis I for Prof. Carmen Le Foulon (G, ICP)
- Fall 2014: Teaching Assistant, Data Analysis for Political Science for Prof. Carmen Le Foulon (UG, ICP)
- Spring 2014: Teaching Assistant, Data Analysis for Political Science for Prof. Anthony Pezzolla (UG, ICP)
- Fall 2013: Teaching Assistant, State and Stateness in Comparative Politics for Prof. Juan Pablo Luna (UG, ICP)
- Spring 2013: Teaching Assistant, Political Economy for Prof. Juan Pablo Couyoumdjian (UG, ICP)
- Spring 2013: Teaching Assistant, Data Analysis for Political Science for Prof. Anthony Pezzolla (UG, ICP)
- Fall 2012: Teaching Assistant, Political Development of Chile for Prof. Ricardo Gamboa (UG, ICP)
- Fall 2012: Teaching Assistant, Political Development of Chile for Prof. Ricardo Gamboa (UG, ICP)

Research Experience

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Research Assistant   June 2021 – present
- Spring 2025: Volha Charnysh, *Slave Trade, State Building, and Economic Development*
- Fall 2024: Andrea Campbell, *Policy Feedback Effects*
- Summer 2024: Volha Charnysh, *Slave Trade, State Building, and Economic Development*
- Fall 2023: Andrea Campbell, *How Americans Think about Taxes*
- Fall 2022: Andrea Campbell, *How Americans Think about Taxes*
- Summer 2022: Andrea Campbell, *How Americans Think about Taxes*
- Summer 2021: Ariel White, *Minority Voting after the Supreme Court's Shelby Decision*

Centre for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies, Multiple Roles   Aug 2015 – July 2020
- **Technical Coordinator** of the Chilean Longitudinal Social Survey (ELSOC). PI: Roberto González. Tasks: Questionnaire design, Sample design, Technical support and Quality Control, Data management and Documentation

- **Research Assistant** of Group and Individual Interactions Research Line. PI: Juan Carlos Castillo. Tasks: Monitoring of Scientific Productivity, Survey Design and Research Assistance

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Research Assistant   Aug 2012 – Aug 2020
- Project *Indigenous People and Psychology* (for Annual Review of Psychology). Roberto González, Héctor Carvacho and Gloria Jiménez-Moya
- Academic Insertion Fund, Prof. Carmen Le Foulon
- FONDECYT Fellowship Project N° 11130538, Prof. Julieta Suárez-Cao
- FONDECYT Fellowship Projects N° 11100174 and 1140974, Prof. Valeria Palanza
- FONDECYT Fellowship Projects N° 1110565 and 1150324, Prof. Juan Pablo Luna
- Millennium Nucleus for the Study of Statehood and Democracy in Latin America (NS10014)

Conference and Presentations

American Political Science Association Annual Conference	2025
Latin American PolMeth Meeting	2019, 2024
Justice and Injustice Conference	2024
Congress of the Chilean Society of Criminology	2024
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference	2023, 2024
Chilean Congress of Political Science	2016, 2018, 2023
Latin American Social Network Analysis Meeting	2019
Congress of the Argentine Society of Political Analysis	2015, 2019
Congress of the Latin American Association of Political Science	2019

Professional Experience

Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello, Policy Consultant   Dec 2018 – Aug 2020

United Nations Development Programme, External Consultant   Dec 2013 – June 2015
- Reports: *Audit of Democracy*, *Citizen Opinion and Constitutional Change* and *The Participation of Civil Society in the Chilean Legislative Process*

Academic Service

Member: American Political Science Association, Chilean Association of Political Science, Midwest Political Science Association, Society for Political Methodology, Latin American Studies Association

Reviewer: British Journal of Political Science, Revista Estudios Públicos

Department: Search Committee Comparative Politics (2024), Graduate Student Council President (2023-2024)

Skills

Technical: R (advanced), Stata (advanced), Python (advanced), LaTeX (advanced), Markdown (advanced), GeoDa Space (advanced), Git (intermediate),ArcGIS (intermediate), QGIS (intermediate), SQL (intermediate), SPSS (intermediate), Mplus (basic), Nvivo (basic), Julia (basic)

Language: Spanish (native), English (fluent), Italian (basjc)