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Department of Political Science,

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to apply for the position available in your institution. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Political Science at Rutgers University, where I will earn my Ph.D. in June 2017. My dissertation advisors are Robert Kaufman (political science professor, chair), Daniel Kelemen (political science professor and Jean Monnet chair in European union politics), Douglas Blair (political science and economics, professor), and Paul Poast (political science, University of Chicago).

My research explores the economic origins of state capacities as well as the political economy of institutional development and the role of inequality on democratic development. I use historical analyses, quantitative methods and experimental designs. Though my research focuses mostly on Latin America, any of my current and future research projects can be expanded to others developing countries.

My job market paper argues that the modernization of the fiscal apparatus was product of an inter-elite bargaining process between the agricultural and industrial classes. This paper is embedded into a larger book manuscript where I analyze how these structural transformations helped states to make institutional investments that lead to the formation of states with higher capacities. I use fine-grained historical case study comparisons, sectoral outputs from 1900 to the present, time-series econometric techniques along with hazard models, and a novel earthquake dataset to measure state capacities. The manuscript builds on the fiscal sociology literature and the dual-sector economy model. My findings strongly suggest that national industrialization processes challenged the traditional sector, creating the incentives to self-impose state institutions such as skilled bureaucracies and semi-competitive congresses (oligarchic republics). This structural transformation and the subsequent institutional investments gave way to the modernization of the state and their respective societies in a way that differs entirely from modernization theory.

In addition to the book manuscript, I am developing a research agenda on clientelism. This research agenda builds on a set of working papers related to inequality and vote-buying/selling in the Americas. Using an experimental design, and thanks to a generous grant I received from the Graduate School and the Department of Political Science, I fielded two experiments in the U.S. out of a series of experiments to be fielded in Latin America for further comparison. I look at price elasticities on vote-selling relative to individual democratic values. Employing a *list experiment* to capture non-biased answers on socially-condemnable/illegal behaviors (like vote-buying), my identification strategy allows me to observe the “tipping point” where individuals prefer the cash over being a democratic citizen. In a separate study that was already fielded in the U.S., I designed a *conjoint experiment* to identify which of the Dahl’s democratic dimensions should fail to predict

individual propensities of vote-selling. Conjoint experiments allow researchers to directly isolate complex multi-dimensional concepts (such as support for democracy) and observe which dimension(s) is/are associated to the outcome of interest (in my case, vote-selling). Preliminary results show that when the liberal component, particularly the *right to associate* fails, individuals are more likely to sell. In this sense, this project is very innovative as it departs from the common strategy of correlating the standard support for democracy question with vote-buying. My identification strategy is better since it *decomposes* “support for democracy” in several dimensions which are theoretically and substantively relevant (i.e., Dahl’s democracy dimensions).

As a comparativist and political economist, I believe that advanced methods should be used to keep answering important/“big” questions. In this sense, my research also has a disciplinary agenda. My scholarly work for example tries to examine classic problems in comparative political development (for example state capacities) while at the same time incorporating cutting-edge econometric techniques. Similarly, my working paper and my experiments, which are framed within the behaviorist tradition, are concerned with fundamental questions regarding democratic theory (“broken” democratic values and vote-selling) and political development. Incorporating the U.S. as a “developed” case will allow me to systematically compare it with “developing” Latin American countries. For me, it is very important to make this methods-substance connection. I make sure to transmit this message to all grad students I have mentored (or had closed professional relationships with).

As an instructor, I am interested in courses that are carefully designed to answer “big” questions in comparative politics. Not only from a Latin American perspective, but also broader courses too. As a political economist, I mostly focus on economic development, economic history, institutional development and democratic development/underdevelopment. However, I am also interested in political participation, competitive authoritarianisms, welfare politics, party politics and others topics. To study these, it seems natural to me to incorporate other relevant cases (outside of Latin America). Similarly, though I adopt a structuralist epistemology, I have been broadly trained so other approaches could be considered as well. I feel comfortable teaching comparative politics where other approaches such as political anthropology and political psychology could be included too.

More information and papers are available on my website: www.HectorBahamonde.com. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Hector Bahamonde