

# ROBERT SHAFFER

## CONTACT

---

EMAIL: [shafferr@upenn.edu](mailto:shafferr@upenn.edu)  
WEBSITE: <https://rbshaffer.github.io>  
INSTITUTION: Perry World House, University of Pennsylvania  
ADDRESS: 3803 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

---

2018-PRESENT Postdoctoral Fellow, *University of Pennsylvania*  
SUMMER 2013 Visiting Scholar, *Australian National University*

## EDUCATION

---

2018 Ph.D., Government, *University of Texas, Austin*  
2016 M.S., Statistics and Data Science, *University of Texas, Austin*  
2012 B.A., Political Science, *University of California, Berkeley*

## PUBLICATIONS

---

2020 **Shaffer, Robert.** “Power in Text: Implementing Networks and Institutional Complexity in American Law”. Conditionally accepted at the *Journal of Politics*.

2019 **Shaffer, Robert** and Stephen Mayhew. “Legal Linking: Citation Resolution and Suggestion in Constitutional Law”. *Proceedings of the NAACL Workshop on Natural Legal Language Processing* (2019): 39-44.

2019 Pete Mohanty and **Robert Shaffer.** “Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS”. *Political Analysis* 27, no.2 (2019): 127-144.

2017 **Shaffer, Robert.** “Cognitive Load and Issue Engagement in Congressional Discourse.” *Cognitive Systems Research* 44 (2017): 89-99.

2017 Pan, Janice, **Robert Shaffer**, Zenia Sinno, Marcus Tyler, and Joydeep Ghosh. “The Obesity Paradox in ICU Patients”. *Proceedings of the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society* (2017): 3360-3364.

2014 Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, James Melton, **Robert Shaffer**, Juan F. Sequeda, Daniel P. Miranker. “Constitute: The World’s Constitutions to Read, Search, and Compare”. *Journal of Web Semantics* 27 (2014): 10-18.

2013	<b>Shaffer, Robert.</b> “Judicial Oversight in the Comparative Context: Biodiversity Protection in the US, Australia, and Canada”. <i>Environmental Law Reporter</i> 43, no.2: 10169-10188.
------	---

## WORKING PAPERS

---

IN PROGRESS	<b>Shaffer, Robert</b> and Zachary Elkins. “On Measuring Textual Similarity”.
IN PROGRESS	Simmons, Beth and <b>Robert Shaffer.</b> “Globalization and Border Securitization in International Discourse”.

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

---

FALL 2017	Continuing Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$15,000)
SUMMER 2017	NSF/Society for Political Methodology Travel Grant (\$1,100)
SUMMER 2017	Data Science for Social Good Fellow, eScience Institute, <i>University of Washington</i> (\$6,500)
2015-2016	Continuing Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$30,000)
SUMMER 2013	Fellow, Clark Center for Australia and New Zealand Studies, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$6,000)
2012-2013	Malcolm Macdonald Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$28,000)

## INVITED PRESENTATIONS

---

2019	<b>Robert Shaffer.</b> “Partisanship or Policy? Understanding Institutional Complexity in American Law.” Maastricht University Institute for Data Science/Faculty of Law. November 2019.
2019	<b>Robert Shaffer.</b> “Similarity Measures for Legal Texts.” University of Pennsylvania Department of Computer and Information Systems. September, 2019.
2016	Zachary Elkins, <b>Robert Shaffer</b> , and Jesse Baugher (team presentation). “Agnostic Constitute: An Open-Data Platform.” <i>Sunlight Foundation Transparency Workshop</i> . October, 2016.
2014	Zachary Elkins, <b>Robert Shaffer</b> , and Juan Sequeda (team presentation). “We Can Help Countries Write Better Constitutions.” <i>South by Southwest</i> . March, 2014.

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

---

<i>APSA</i>	2013, 2015-2019
<i>MPSA</i>	2014-2017, 2019
<i>PolMeth</i>	2014-2018
<i>Poliinformatics</i>	2014, 2017
<i>IPSA/AISP</i>	2017

## TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

SPRING 2018	TA, Graduate, Statistics II ( <i>for Alison Craig</i> )
SPRING 2017	TA, Graduate, Statistics II ( <i>for Robert C. Luskin</i> )
FALL 2016	TA, Undergraduate, Constitutional Law ( <i>for Benjamin Gregg</i> )
2013 - 2015	Research Assistant, <a href="#">Constitute</a> / <a href="#">CCP</a> ( <i>for Zachary Elkins</i> )

## SOFTWARE

---

<i>bigKRLS</i>	R package (with Pete Mohanty) implementing improvements to KRLS described in Mohanty and Shaffer (2019) ( <a href="#">CRAN</a> / <a href="#">github</a> ).
<i>constitute_tools</i>	Python toolset designed to assist Constitute data collection ( <a href="#">github</a> ).

## SERVICE

---

REVIEWER	<i>American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Law and Courts, Policy Studies Journal</i>
FOUNDER	<i>University of Texas Graduate Conference in Public Law</i>

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

---

PROFICIENT	Python, R, $\text{\LaTeX}$
INTERMEDIATE	HTML, C++, SQL

## REFERENCES

---

Zachary Elkins (*chair*)  
University of Texas, Austin  
158 W. 21st St, STOP A1800  
Austin, TX, 78712  
[zelkins@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:zelkins@austin.utexas.edu)

Stephen Jessee (*committee member*)  
University of Texas, Austin  
158 W. 21st St, STOP A1800  
Austin, TX, 78712  
[sjessee@utexas.edu](mailto:sjessee@utexas.edu)

Beth Simmons (*postdoctoral supervisor*)  
University of Pennsylvania  
Perry World House, 3803 Locust Walk  
Pennsylvania, PA, 19104  
[simmons3@law.upenn.edu](mailto:simmons3@law.upenn.edu)

Bryan D. Jones (*committee member*)  
University of Texas, Austin  
158 W. 21st St, STOP A1800  
Austin, TX, 78712  
[bdjones@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:bdjones@austin.utexas.edu)

John Wilkerson (*committee member*)  
University of Washington  
101 Gowen Hall, Box 98195  
Seattle, WA, 98195  
[jwilker@uw.edu](mailto:jwilker@uw.edu)