Robert Shaffer

Contact

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Academic Positions

2018-Present   Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania

Education

2018   Ph.D., Government, *University of Texas, Austin*

Committee: Zachary Elkins (chair), Bryan Jones, Stephen Jessee, and John Wilkerson

Dissertation: Power in Text: Extracting Institutional Relationships from Natural Language

2016   M.S., Statistics and Data Science, *University of Texas, Austin*

2012   B.A., Political Science, *University of California, Berkeley*

Peer-Reviewed Publications

2018   Pete Mohanty and **Robert Shaffer**. "Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS." Forthcoming at *Political Analysis.*

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

2017   Pan, Janice, **Robert Shaffer**, Zenia Sinno, Marcus Tyler, and Joydeep Ghosh. "The Obesity Paradox in ICU Patients." *Proceedings of the 39th Annual International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society.*[†]

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*, 2014.

[†] Conference paper which involved a competitive submission process and double-blind peer review.

Non-Peer Reviewed Publications

2013	Shaffer, Robert. "Judicial Oversight in the Comparative Context: Biodiversity Protection in the US, Australia, and Canada." *Environmental Law Reporter* 43, no.2 (2013).

Software Authored

bigKRLS	R package (with Pete Mohanty) implementing improvements to Hainmueller and Hazlett's (2013) KRLS model, with a focus on incorporating KRLS into R's high-performance *bigmemory* suite. Available via CRAN and github.
constitute_tools	Back-end Python toolset designed to assist with Constitute data collection pipeline. Includes a hierarchical parser designed to read legal documents and a series of formatting tools. Available via github.

Invited Presentations and Workshops

2017	Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, Alex Hudson, and Jesse Baugher. "Constitute and the Semantic Web." *IPSA/AISP 2017 International Conference.* December, 2017.
2017	Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, and Jesse Baugher. "Constitute and the Semantic Web." *PoliInformatics Invitational Workshop.* August, 2017.
2016	Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, and Jesse Baugher. "Agnostic Constitute: An Open-Data Platform." *Sunlight Foundation Transparency Workshop.* October, 2016.
2014	Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, Michelle Wolfe, and Bryan D. Jones. "Attribute Uncertainty and the U.S. Financial Crisis." *PoliInformatics Invitational Workshop.* November, 2014.
2014	Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, Michelle Wolfe, and Bryan D. Jones. "Attribute Uncertainty and the US Financial Crisis." *PoliInformatics Challenge, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.* August, 2014.
2013	Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, James Melton, Robert Shaffer, Juan F. Sequeda and Daniel Miranker. "Constitute: The World's Constitutions to Read, Search and Compare." *Semantic Web Challenge.* October, 2013

Working Papers and Presentations

PolMeth 2018, *APSA* 2017, *MPSA* 2017	Robert Shaffer. "Power in Text: Extracting Institutional Relationships from Natural Language."

useR! 2016, *APSA* 2016, *MPSA* 2017	Pete Mohanty and Robert Shaffer. "Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS."
PolMeth 2016, *APSA* 2015	Robert Shaffer and Zachary Elkins. "An Evaluation of Measures of Textual Similarity."
MPSA 2016	Brian J. Cook, Robert Shaffer, and L. Maria Ingram. "The Design and Implementation of Chemical Disclosure Requirements and Trade Secret Protections in State Fracking Regulation."
PolMeth 2015, *MPSA* 2015	Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, and Bryan D. Jones. "The Political Effects of Uncertainty."
PolMeth 2014	Robert Shaffer. "Power in Language: A Grammar-Based Approach for Measuring Delegation of Authority."

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SPRING 2018	Teaching Assistant, Graduate, Statistics II *(for Alison Craig)*
SPRING 2017	Teaching Assistant, Graduate, Statistics II *(for Robert C. Luskin)*
FALL 2016	Teaching Assistant, Undergraduate, Constitutional Law *(for Benjamin Gregg)*
2013 - 2015	Research Assistant, Constitute/Comparative Constitutions Project *(for Zachary Elkins)*
SUMMER 2013	Visiting Scholar, *Australian National University*

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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

Service

2014-present	Founder and Co-Organizer, *University of Texas Graduate Conference in Public Law*
2016-present	Reviewer, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Law and Courts*, *Policy Studies Journal*

Skills

Proficient	Python, R
Intermediate	HTML, LaTeX, C++
Basic	Javascript

References

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