

# Robert Kubinec

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## Current position

2024- *Assistant Professor of Political Science*, Department of Political Science, University of South Carolina

## Previous positions

2019-2024 *Assistant Professor of Political Science*, Social Sciences Division, New York University Abu Dhabi  
2018-2019 *Postdoctoral Research Scholar*, Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance, Princeton University

## Education

2018 PhD in Foreign Affairs, University of Virginia  
2010 MA in Middle East Studies, George Washington University  
2008 BA in International Relations, Wheaton College

## Publications

### Books

2023 Kubinec, Robert. *Making Democracy Safe for Business: Corporate Politics During the Arab Uprisings*. Cambridge University Press.

- Blog on Cambridge Fifteen Eighty Four
- Podcast with Marc Lynch, Project on Middle East Political Science

## Journal Articles

- 2025 Francis, David and Kubinec, Robert. "Beyond Political Connections : A Measurement Model Approach to Estimating Firm-level Political Influence in 41 Economies." *Conditionally accepted at Political Science Research and Methods*. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/f0c8959b-f2d6-5526-9284-df4df3a33429>
- 2025 Dolan, Lindsay; Kubinec, Robert; Nielson, Daniel, and Zhang, Jack. "The Impact of Information on Corporate Political Activity: A Survey Experiment on U.S. Businesses." Forthcoming at *Business and Politics*. doi:10.1017/bap.2024.41
- 2024 Kubinec, Robert; Carvalho, Luiz Max; Barcelo, Joan; Cheng, Cindy; Messerschmidt, Luca; Cottrell, Matthew Sean and Duba, Derek. "A Bayesian Latent Variable Model for the Optimal Identification of Disease Incidence Rates Given Information Constraints." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A*. Forthcoming. doi:10.1093/jrsssa/qnae040
- 2024 Kubinec, Robert; Barcelo, Joan; Goldszmidt, Rafael; Grujic, Vanja; Model, Timothy; Schenk, Caress; Cheng, Cindy; Hale, Thomas; Spencer Hartnett; Allison, Messerschmidt, Luca; Petherick, Anna, and Thorvaldsdottir, Svanhildur. "Cross-National Measures of the Intensity of COVID-19 Public Health Policies." Accepted at the *Journal of Politics*. doi:10.1086/734241.
- 2024 Cheng, Cindy; Messerschmidt, Luca; Bravo, Isaac; Waldbauer, Marco; Bhavikatti, Rohan; Schenck, Caress; Grujic, Vanja; Model, Tim, and Kubinec, Robert. "Harmonizing Government Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Scientific Data*. doi:10.1038/s41597-023-02881-x.
- 2023 Cheng, Cindy; Messerschmidt, Luca; Bravo, Isaac; Waldbauer, Marco; Bhavikatti, Rohan; Schenck, Caress; Grujic, Vanja; Model, Tim, and Kubinec, Robert. "A General Primer for Harmonizing Data." *Scientific Data*. doi:10.1038/s41597-024-02956-3j.
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert and Milner, Helen. "Taxes in the Time of Revolution: An Experimental Test of the Rentier State during Algeria's Hirak." *World Politics*. doi:10.1353/wp.2024.a924508.
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert; Lee, Haillie and Tomashevskiy, Andrey. "Why Corporate Political Connections Can Impede Investment." *Comparative Political Studies* doi:10.1177/00104140231204227.
- 2022 Kilavuz, Tahir; Grewal, Sharan and Kubinec, Robert. "Ghosts of the Black Decade: How Legacies of Violence Shaped Algeria's Hirak Protests." *Journal of Peace Research* doi:10.1177/00223433221137613.
- 2022 Kubinec, Robert. "Ordered Beta Regression: A Parsimonious, Well-Fitting Model for Continuous Data with Lower and Upper Bounds." *Political Analysis* doi:10.1017/pan.2022.20.
- 2022 Barcelo, Joan; Kubinec, Robert; Cheng, Cindy; Hoyer Rahn, Tiril; and Messerschmidt, Luca. "Windows of Repression: Using COVID-19 Policies against Political Dissidents?" *Journal of Peace Research* doi:10.1177/00223433211062389.

- 2021 Kubinec, Robert; Lee, Haillie and Tomashevskiy, Andrey. "Politically-Connected Companies Are Less Likely to Shutdown Due to COVID-19 Restrictions." *Social Science Quarterly*. doi:10.1111/ssqu.13040.
- 2020 Kubinec, Robert and Owen, John. "When Groups Fall Apart: Identifying Transnational Polarization with Twitter from the Arab Uprisings." *Political Analysis* doi:10.1017/pan.2020.46.
- 2020 Cheng, Cindy; Barcelo, Joan; Hartnett, Allison; Kubinec, Robert and Messerschmidt, Luca. "COVID-19 Government Response Event Dataset (CoronaNet v.1.0)." *Nature Human Behavior*. doi:10.1038/s41562-020-0909-7.
- 2020 Kropko, Jonathan and Kubinec, Robert. "Why the Two-way Fixed Effects Model is Difficult to Interpret, and What to Do About It." *PLOS One*. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0231349

### **Working Papers**

- 2024 Kubinec, Robert; Bhandari, Abhit; Jabateh, Sekou, and Mighri, Hamza. "The Political Nature of Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries: Experimental Evidence from Tunisia and Senegal." *SocArchiv Preprint*. doi:10.31219/osf.io/unby5
- *Under review*
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert. "Holistic Causal Learning with Causal Graphs: A Credible Method for Study Design and Preregistration in the Social Sciences." *SocArchiv Preprint*. doi:10.31235/osf.io/a492b
- *Under review*
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert; Morse, Anna and Pandya, Sonal. "Offshore Capital and Onshore Discrimination: The Biased Effects of India's Anti-corruption Campaigns on Muslim Businesses." *SocArchiv Preprint*. doi:10.31235/osf.io/aqtxs
- *Under review*
- 2024 Kubinec, Robert. "Generalized Ideal Point Models for Robust Measurement with Dirty Data in the Social Sciences." *SocArchiv Preprint*. doi:10.31219/osf.io/8j2bt
- *Under review*

- 2019 Kubinec, Robert and Grewal, Sharan. "When National Unity Governments are neither National, United, nor Governments: The Case of Tunisia." *SocArchiv Preprint*. doi:10.31235/osf.io/6z74r
- 2018 Kubinec, Robert. "Patrons or Clients? Measuring and Experimentally Evaluating Political Connections of Firms in Morocco and Jordan." *Economic Research Forum Working Paper Series*. No. 1280. <https://erf.org.eg/publications/patrons-or-clients-measuring-and-experimentally-ev>

### Reports and Op-eds

- 2025 Kubinec, Robert, "As Syria ponders a democratic future: 5 lessons from the Arab Spring.", *The Conversation*
- 2024 Kubinec, Robert, "Aleppo Fell. The Rest of the Middle East Is Wobbling.", *The Bulwark*
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert, and Amr, Yakout, "Kais Saied: How the fear bias affects the opinions of Tunisians", *Inkyfada Data Stories*
- 2023 Kubinec, Robert, "Arabs Want Democracy–But Not With Corruption", *Cambridge University Press 518 Blog*
- 2022 Kubinec, Robert and Mighri, Hamza, "Tunisia Faces the Specter of Government Failure", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*
- 2022 Kubinec, Robert, "COVID-19 Responses in the Middle East and North Africa in Global Perspective", *Project on Middle East Political Science*
- 2022 Dolan, Lindsay; Kubinec, Robert; Nielson, Daniel; and Zhang, Jack. "Trump's Trade War with China Failed. Why Didn't US Companies Push Back More?", *Washington Post*
- 2021 Kubinec, Robert, (Spring 2021), "Pandemic Safe Research with Online Surveys", *American Political Science Association MENA Politics Newsletter*
- 2020 Kubinec, Robert, (April 2020), "The CoronaNet Database", *Project on Middle East Political Science Studies No. 39*
- 2019 Grewal, Sharan; Kilavuz, Tahir M.; and Kubinec, Robert, (July 2019), "Algeria's Uprising: A Survey of Protesters and the Military", *The Brookings Institution*
- 2017 Kubinec, Robert, (Aug. 13, 2017), "How to Respond to Terrorism", *The Daily Progress*
- 2016 Kubinec, Robert, (Dec. 19, 2016), "How Foreign Aid Could Hurt Tunisia's Transition to Democracy", *Washington Post*

## Software

- 2022 Kubinec, Robert. `ordbetareg`: Ordered Beta Regression Models with Brms. CRAN link
- 2022 Kubinec, Robert. `idealstan`: An R Package for Bayesian Ideal Point Modeling. Github link
- 2022 Model, Timothy and Kubinec, Robert. `CoronaNetR`: Access CoronaNet COVID-19 Policy Data. CRAN link

## Grants and fellowships

### External

- 2020 European Unions Horizon 2020 for “CoronaNet Government Response Event Datasets” (€835k)
- 2019 Koch Foundation Grant for “Online Survey Research on the U.S. - China Trade War” (\$10k)
- 2017-2018 Economic Research Forum, “A Survey of Firm-Level Political Participation” (\$6k)
- 2017 Koch Foundation Dissertation Grant (\$5k)
- 2016 Project on Middle East Political Science Travel, Research & Engagement Grant (\$3k)

### Internal

- 2024 Faculty Research Grant (\$10k)
- 2020 COVID-19 Facilitator Research Fund (\$30k)
- 2017 Quantitative Collaborative Bynum Grant
- 2015 - 2016 Quandt International Research Fund travel grant, University of Virginia
- 2015 Summer Research Grant, Graduate School for Arts and Sciences, University of Virginia
- 2014-2015 Developing Students for Leadership in Data-intensive Research and Innovation fellowship, Data Science Institute, University of Virginia
- 2014 Summer Foreign Language Fellowship, University of Virginia
- 2008-2010 Elliott School High Achievement Fellowship, George Washington University
- 2009 Banville Tuition Fellowship, George Washington University

## Invited Talks

- 2024 Design and Data Analysis Lecture Series, University of Virginia
- 2023 Department of Political Science, Universite de Montreal
- 2023 Governance and Local Development Institute, University of Gothenburg
- 2022 Connected Politics Lab, University College Dublin
- 2022 Summer Institute for Computational Social Science, Rutgers University
- 2022 Department of Political Science, Seoul National University
- 2021 European Union Periscope Project

2017 Tunisia Country Team, Millennial Challenge Corporation, Washington DC

## Service to the Profession

### Meetings

2023 Formateur for Pandemic Politics Conference at New York University Abu Dhabi  
2024 Formateur for Polmeth MENA/Asia Conference at New York University Abu Dhabi

### Journals & Reviewing

I have been a reviewer for *Political Analysis*, *The American Political Science Review*, *The American Journal of Political Science*, *Political Science Research and Methods*, *Political Analysis*, *World Politics*, *Mediterranean Politics*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *PLOS One*, *PLOS Global Public Health*, *The Japanese Journal of Political Science*, *SAGE Open*, *Global Environmental Politics*, *The Journal of Public Policy*, *The European Journal of Political Economy*, *The British Journal of Political Science*, *Scientific Reports*, and *Middle East Law and Governance*.

### Editing

2023-2025 Evaluation Manager for Unjournal

### Public Reviews

2024 Kubinec, Robert. *Evaluation Summary* of “How Effective Is (More) Money? Randomizing Unconditional Cash Transfer Amounts in the US.” *Unjournal*. doi:10.21428/d28e8e57.8a1cac7b  
2023 Kubinec, Robert. “Evaluation 1 of ‘Does the Squeaky Wheel Get More Grease? The Direct and Indirect Effects of Citizen Participation on Environmental Governance in China’”. *Unjournal*. <https://unjournal.pubpub.org/pub/buntaineeval1revised>.

## Professional Experience & Consulting

2017-2018 Chief Data Scientist, Unbias  
2011-2013 Foreign Service Officer, U.S. Department of State  
2010-2011 Data Mining Consultant, IBM Advanced Analytics & Optimization