

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Political Science  
McMaster University  
1280 Main St. West  
Hamilton, ON L8S 4L8

(647) 883-8629  
[vargasct@mcmaster.ca](mailto:vargasct@mcmaster.ca)  
[www.thomasrvargas.com](http://www.thomasrvargas.com)  
Citizenship: Costa Rica / Canada PR

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Current      Postdoctoral Fellow in Political Methodology, **McMaster University**  
Department of Political Science

## DEGREES

2014-2020      Ph.D. in Political Science, **University of Minnesota**  
Fields: Comparative Politics, Political Methodology  
Committee: David Samuels, Teri Caraway, John Freeman, and Paul Glewwe.  
Dissertation: The Political Origins of Education Decentralization in Latin America

2012              Master of Public Policy, **The College of William & Mary**  
Fields: Public Policy, International Development

2010              B.S. in Foreign Service, **Georgetown University**  
Fields: International Politics, Latin American Studies

## RESEARCH

Thomas R. Vargas. Forthcoming. "Decentralization as a Political Weapon: Education Politics in El Salvador and Paraguay." *Comparative Politics*.  
· Honorable Mention, Latin American Studies Association Subnational Politics Section Best Paper Award.

Thomas R. Vargas. 2020. "Flying Blind: Education Reform in Latin America in the 1990s." *International Journal of Education Reform*, 30, 1: 39-55. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1056787920931487>.

## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

David N. Lopez and Thomas R. Vargas. "Subnational State Capacity, Trust in Government, and Responses to COVID-19: Experimental Survey Evidence from Mexico."

David Samuels and Thomas R. Vargas. "Democracy, Land Inequality, and Human Capital Formation."

Thomas R. Vargas, Sarah Parkinson, Benjamin Bagozzi. "Reporting versus Reality: US Political Processes and Overreporting Bias in International Events Data. "

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION FOR SUBMISSION TO PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

Michelle Dion and Thomas R. Vargas "The Political Preferences of Prospective Homeowners: Evidence from Canada."

Michelle L. Dion, Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, and Thomas R. Vargas "Do Altimetrics Amplify or Improve the Gender Gap in Scholarly Impact?"

"Slow Burn: The Incremental Effect of Unions on Social Spending in Latin America." Targeting *Studies in Comparative International Development*, submission expected October 2021.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	2021	Instructor of Record, Comparative Democratization, McMaster University.
	2021	Instructor of Record, Development and Public Policy, McMaster University.
	2020 - 2021	Editorial Assistant, <i>American Political Science Review</i> .
	2019 - 2020	Visiting Scholar, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University.
	2018	Instructor of Record, Political Economy of Development, University of Minnesota
	2016 - 2018	Managing Editor, <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> .
	2016	Teaching Assistant, Politics of the Middle East, University of Minnesota.
	2015	Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Comparative Politics, University of Minnesota.
	2012 - 2014	Policy and Training Analyst, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Chile.
AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS		SSHRC Explore - Standard Research and Creation Grant, McMaster University - CAN\$7,000.
		Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship 2019 (Top, University-Wide Prize), U of M - US\$25,000.
		Department of Political Science Dissertation Research Fellowship 2018, U of M - US\$6,000.
		Five-Year Department of Political Science Summer Fellowship, U of M - US\$40,000.
		Five-Year Department of Political Science Graduate Studies Fellowship, U of M - US\$113,000.
CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION		David N. Lopez and Thomas R. Vargas. 2021. "Subnational State Capacity, Trust in Government, and Responses to COVID-19: Experimental Survey Evidence from Mexico." Latin American Studies Association.
		David N. Lopez and Thomas R. Vargas. 2021. "Subnational State Capacity, Trust in Government, and Responses to COVID-19: Experimental Survey Evidence from Mexico." Midwest Political Science Association.
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2021. " <i>Slow Burn: The Incremental Effect of Unions on Social Spending in Latin America</i> ." APSA Educational Politics and Policy Winter Conference.
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2020. " <i>The Political Economy of Education Reform in Latin America</i> ." Latin American Social and Public Policy Conference at the University of Pittsburgh. <i>SUSPENDED</i> .
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2019. " <i>The Political Economy of Education Reform in Latin America</i> ." American Political Science Association.
		David Samuels and Thomas R. Vargas. 2019. " <i>Democracy, Land Inequality, and Human Capital Formation</i> ." Midwest Political Science Association.
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2019. " <i>Flying Blind: Re-Assessing The State of Latin American Education by the 1990s</i> ." Midwest Political Science Association.
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2018. " <i>The International Dimension of Social Policy Reform in Latin America</i> ." Midwest Political Science Association.
		Carly Potz-Nielsen and Thomas R. Vargas. 2017. " <i>Capital Mobility and Democratization: The Role of the Foreign Elites</i> ." International Studies Association Conference.
		Thomas R. Vargas. 2017. " <i>The Redistributive Effects of Constitutional Courts in Latin America</i> ." Graduate Student Public Law Conference at the University of Texas, Austin.
		Carly Potz-Nielsen, Robert Ralsont, and Thomas R. Vargas. 2016. " <i>Treating Text as Data over Time: Implications for Descriptive and Causal Inference</i> ." Society for Political Methodology Annual Conference.
		Sarah Parkinson, Benjamin Bagozzi, and Thomas R. Vargas. 2016. " <i>Bleeding but not Leading: Reporting Bias in Political Violence Events</i> " International Studies Association Conference.

SKILLS AND  
LANGUAGE

Software: STATA, R,  $\text{\LaTeX}$ , JAGS, SQL, Git, Beginner Python

Languages: Spanish and English (Native Proficiency)