

Musa al-Gharbi

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EDUCATION

Columbia University

- Ph.D in Sociology (2023)
- M.Phil in Sociology (2020)
- M.A. in Sociology (2017)

University of Arizona

- M.A. in Philosophy (2013)
- BA in Near Eastern Studies (2012, Magna Cum Laude with Honors)
- BA in Philosophy (2012, Magna Cum Laude with Honors)

Cochise College

- AA in Philosophy (2009, with Honors)

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2024). *[We Have Never Been Woke: The Cultural Contradictions of a New Elite](#)*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Journal Articles

- Tyler, Chris w/ KL Akerlof, Musa al-Gharbi et al. (2026). "[Six Ways to Put the Public at the Heart of Science](#)." *Nature* 655: 34-37.
- Clark, Cory w/ Lee Jussim, Komi Frey, Sean Stevens, **Musa al-Gharbi** et al. (2023). "[Prosocial Motives Underlie Scientific Censorship by Scientists: A Perspective and Research Agenda](#)." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 120(48): e2301642120.
- Clark, Cory w/ **Musa al-Gharbi** et al. (2024). "[Reply to Darlow and Gray: Censorship Is Exclusion](#)." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 121(21): e2404156121.

- Rozado, David w/ **Musa al-Gharbi** & Jamin Halberstadt (2021). "[Prevalence of Prejudice-Denoting Words in News Media Discourse: A Chronological Analysis](#)." *Social Science Computer Review* 41(1).
- Rozado, David & **Musa al-Gharbi** (2021). "[Using Word Embeddings to Probe Sentiment Associations of Politically-Loaded Terms in News and Opinion Articles from News Outlets](#)." *Journal of Computational Social Science* 5: 427-448.
- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2021). "[People of the Book: Empire and Social Science in the Islamic Commonwealth Period](#)." *Socius* 7. DOI: 10.1177/23780231211021200.
- Smith, Benjamin w/ Andrea Figueroa-Caballero, **Musa al-Gharbi** & Michael Stohl (2020). "[Do You Know Your Enemy? The Role of Known Actors as Framing Devices in News Media](#)." *International Journal of Communication* 14: 4717-4738.

- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2019). "[Resistance as Sacrifice: Towards an Ascetic Antiracism](#)." *Sociological Forum* 34 (S1): 1197-1216.
- Smith, Benjamin w/ Michael Stohl & **Musa al-Gharbi** (2019). "[Discourses on Countering Violent Extremism: The Strategic Interplay Between Fear and Security After 9/11](#)." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 12(1): 151-168.
- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2018). "[Race and the Race for the White House: On Social Research in the Age of Trump](#)." *The American Sociologist* 49(4): 496-519.
- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2016). "[From Political Liberalism to Para-Liberalism: Epistemological Pluralism, Cognitive Liberalism & Authentic Choice](#)." *Comparative Philosophy* 7(2).
- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2013). "[Syria, Contextualized: The Numbers Game](#)." *Middle East Policy* 20(1): 56-67.

Reviews

- **al-Gharbi, Musa** (2024). "[Why We Disagree about Inequality: Social Justice vs. Social Order](#)." *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* 53(4): 346-349

Forthcoming

- **al-Gharbi, Musa**. "[How Journalists Can Foster Humble Inquiry In their Work and Readers](#)." *Humble Inquiry: New Perspectives on Intellectual Humility* (eds. Nathan Ballantyne, Jared Celniker & Norbert Schwarz). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press (slated for publication in late 2026).
- **al-Gharbi, Musa**. "Social Distance and Trust in Experts." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (invited contribution for the Winter 2026 volume).
- **al-Gharbi, Musa**. [Those People](#). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (slated for publication in early 2027).

TEACHING APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor, Communication, Journalism and (by courtesy) Sociology

Stony Brook University: 2023- Present

- *JRN 603: Storytelling and Narrative Design*
- *JRN 544: Freelance Writing*
- *COM 391: Studio Production*
- COM 206: Interpersonal Communication

Note: Italicized courses are ones I personally introduced to the catalog and/or developed and taught the first instantiation of.

Teaching Fellow, Sociology

Columbia University: 2017-2023

- SOCI UN 3324: Global Urbanism
- SOCI UN 3009: Contemporary Social Theory
- SOCI UN: 3000: Classical Social Theory
- SOCI UN 1000: The Social World

In this role, I served as the lead TA, managing junior TAs and graders to ensure all students were being properly evaluated and sufficiently assisted – including multiple stints for a global core class that enrolled hundreds of students. I also taught weekly sections and delivered course lectures as needed when the professor was out.

SNF Agora Institute Visiting Fellow

Johns Hopkins University: Fall 2021

- FA21 SOUL: The Knowledge Economy and Inequality

Adjunct Instructor, Government and Public Service

University of Arizona South: 2014-15

- GPSV 341: International Organizations
- GPSV 314: National Security Policy
- GPSV 397A: Negotiation Workshop (T.A.)

Teaching Assistant, Philosophy

University of Arizona: 2011-2013

- PHIL 463/563: Philosophy of Language
- PHIL 347: Neuroethics
- PHIL 344: Issues and Methods in Analytic Philosophy
- PHIL 263: Medieval Philosophy
- PHIL 233: Philosophy of Religion
- PHIL 160D: Mind, Matter and God

GRANTS

The following table details foundation-supported grants that I (co) authored. Separately from these grants, I have helped raise money for organizations and institutions I've been affiliated with through private events for current and prospective donors where I discuss my work and connections between the themes of my research and the missions of the organizations hosting the event.

Year Awarded	Funder	Recipient	Award Amount	Project	Notes
2026	Arnold Ventures	Stony Brook University	\$70,000	Research development grant: analyzing trends in crime, media coverage and public perceptions at scale	Co-PI with David Rozado. Grant approved. Final paperwork being submitted.
2025	Sandefer Family Foundation	Heterodox Academy	\$100,000	Research support for my second book and continued work on viewpoint diversity	Awarded to HxA rather than Stony Brook University at donor's request.
2025	Open Society Foundation	Stony Brook University	\$40,000	Support for my international book tour and course buyouts to support the writing of my second book	N/A
2023	Heterodox Academy	Stony Brook University	\$20,000	I helped HxA refine a multimillion dollar grant proposal to launch a center in NYC. The intent was for me to run it. After I was hired by SBU, they reconceived the role but bought some of my bandwidth so I could support the center's launch.	N/A
2023	Templeton Religion Trust	Heterodox Academy	\$3,055,087	"Not All Great Minds Think Alike" – grant to support the launch of a center in NYC.	I worked closely with Jon Haidt, John Tomasi and Michael Regnier to conceptualize the center and refine the language for the grant.

					The idea was that I would serve as the inaugural director for the center that was ultimately funded by the grant. But I accepted an academic post instead.
2020	Ford Foundation	Heterodox Academy	\$50,000	General support to advance open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement on campuses	Co-PI alongside Jon Haidt and Deb Mashek. The three of us went to Ford Foundation headquarters, directly negotiated the grant and walked out with an agreement.
2019	John Templeton Foundation	Heterodox Academy	\$2,852,229	Promoting HxA Core Values on American College Campuses and in the Disciplines	I helped write and edit the grant proposal on behalf of Heterodox Academy while serving as Comms Director, working alongside the development team and executive leadership.
2018	Smith Foundation	Columbia University	\$20,000	Diverse Voices Initiative	Co-PI with Jon Haidt. Used to reduce my teaching obligations to free up bandwidth for an HxA initiative I created.
2017	Heterodox Academy	Columbia University	\$20,000	Support provided to my department in exchange for reducing my teaching obligations in order to facilitate my work with HxA as Comms director.	N/A

HONORS

The following table details fellowships and awards that included financial remuneration. For efficiency's sake, this CV will exclude recognition, prizes or fellowships that provide less than \$1,000 in direct funding.

Year Awarded	Award Name	Grantor	Award Amount
2026	Term Member (to be invested on Nov. 4)	American Academy of Sciences & Letters	\$2,500
2026	Faculty Champion	Center for Community News	\$1,000
2022	Daniel Bell Research Fellowship	Heterodox Academy	\$100,000
2022	Graduate Sabbatical Fellowship	Institute for Humane Studies	\$15,000
2022	Lead Teaching Fellowship	Center for Teaching and Learning: Columbia University	\$2,000
2022	Bell Award	Department of Sociology: Columbia University	\$2,000
2021	SNF Agora Fellowship	SNF Agora Institute: Johns Hopkins University	\$20,000

2020	Mellon-Sawyer Fellowship on Trust and Mistrust of Science and Experts	INCITE + The American Assembly: Columbia University	\$10,000
2020	Racial Equity Media Fellowship	Interfaith America	\$2,000
2020	Summer Research Fellowship	Institute for Humane Studies	\$5,000
2018	Critical Language Scholarship: Arabic	U.S. Department of State	Won the award but withdrew for family reasons
2016	Provost Diversity Fellowship	GSAS: Columbia University	\$5,000
2012	Graduate Access Fellowship	University of Arizona	\$4,000
2011	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship: Arabic	U.S. Department of Education	\$38,000

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Below, I will briefly describe appointments held at academic centers, institutions and non-profits. In addition to the roles listed below, I sit on the editorial board of the journal *Theory and Society* and serve as occasional reviewer for *Journal of Communication*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Social Science Computer Review*, *Oxford University Press*, *Routledge* and *The MIT Press*. Academic publishers also regularly reach out to me to blurb their important releases that touch on social divides and the role of knowledge/ culture professionals in society. I often turn these down for bandwidth reasons (my ability to read unsolicited manuscripts is fairly limited at present), but I try to make time for as many as I can. My comments have been featured in new titles by [Harvard University Press](#), [Stanford University Press](#), [Oxford University Press](#) and [Princeton University Press](#) to help publishers move more units of these important works within their disciplines (political theory, political science, sociology) and beyond.

I'm also a member of Sigma Xi (the scientific research honor society), the American Sociological Association, the Eastern Sociological Society, the National Communication Association, and the Scholars Strategy Network. I've been a senior fellow at the Niskanen Center since 2021, and I've held a number of other formal roles in academic spaces beyond being a scholar or instructor:

Director of Communications, Heterodox Academy

New York, NY: 2016-2020

Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a non-profit membership organization that provides tools and resources to improve research and pedagogy. Under my tenure, the organization saw significant growth in our membership, readership, engagement, donations, public profile, and attendance at our events. Responsibilities included:

- Developing communication strategies and plans to advance HxA's long term strategic goals and respond to novel and pressing situations.
- Overseeing organizational content to include the website, blog, podcast, weekly bulletin and social media channels alongside press releases, marketing materials, grant applications, and more.
- Developing and tracking metrics to gauge organizational impact.
- Representing HxA at events and public talks; serving as the primary point of contact for media inquiries and interviews about HxA and its mission; publishing essays for popular outlets to promote the organization, its work and its ideals.

- Managing writer groups helping HxA-affiliated students, faculty and staff develop a public-facing profile and place articles in mass media outlets to promote the organization's values and mission and establish our members as thought leaders.

Managing Editor, Southwest Initiative for the Study of Mideast Conflicts

Tucson, AZ: 2012-16

Based out of the University of Arizona, SISMEC brought together scholars who were combat veterans and scholars from war-affected regions to study Middle East conflict together in a transdisciplinary way. As the managing editor I advanced this mission by:

- Helping our researchers develop and execute long-term and collaborative research projects.
- Editing and placing work by SISMEC researchers in journals and mass media outlets.
- Soliciting, curating and editing contributions from within and without our network for our bi-weekly bulletins.
- Administering the organization's website, listserv and social media pages – all of which experienced dramatic increases in traffic and subscriptions.
- Serving as the primary point of contact for the Initiative for media and other stakeholders; representing the Initiative at events and in media interviews.
- Assisting with tailored fundraising and grant-writing from within the campus community and beyond—commensurate with SISMEC's innovative pay-as-you-go model.
- Assisting with the conceptualization, organization and promotion of highly-successful events that consistently enjoyed strong attendance from non-academics as well as students and faculty from a range of disciplines.

Year	Date	Event
2015	March 3	"Women, Writing and War"
2015	October 30	"Arid Lands, Agriculture, Food Security & Public Health."
2014	January 1	"Ethics & Methods in Conflict: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Promise and Peril of Research and Reporting in Conflict Zones"
2013	October 24	"Afghanistan 2014: Will the U.S. Exit Strategy Work?"
2013	March 20	"Trajectories of American Diplomatic & Military Policy: A Conversation with the Eisenhower Fellows (U.S. Army War College)"
2013	February 27	"10 Years Later: Lessons from Iraq"
2012	October 25	"In the Crucible of Geopolitics: Cutting Through the Fog of War in Syria"
2012	April 23	"Ripple Effects of the Arab Spring"
2012	March 8	"Drones: The Past, Present & Future of the New American Way of War"

Outreach Scholar, University of Arizona Center for Mideast Studies

Tucson, AZ: 2012-2013

In this role, I responded to speaking engagements on behalf of the UA CMES to engage and inform the public on issues tied to the broader Middle East.

Year	Date	Event
2013	September 25	Delivered a talk to a discussion group at Trinity Presbyterian Church titled, "Obstacles to a Negotiated End to the Crisis in Syria."
2013	February 28	Delivered a primer on Mali and facilitated discussion of a Malian film at the 5 th Annual Cinema Africa Village of Nations Culture Celebration, co-hosted by the University of Arizona South, Cochise College, and the U.S. Army Culture Center
2013	February 14	Delivered a talk to a southern AZ senior citizen community titled, "Getting to the Facts of the Syrian Civil War."

2012	October 27- November 3	Facilitated a workshop series for gifted high school students: "War, Conflict Resolution, and Reconstruction in the Modern Middle East"
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PRESENTED RESEARCH

For the sake of efficiency, the “Presented Research” and “Public Talks” sections will skip events mentioned previously in this document. These sections will also exclude events tied to *We Have Never Been Woke*. My book tour for that title encompasses several dozen events in locales across the U.S., Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand (and continues to expand). More info on pre and post release book events is available on my website [here](#).

2026

- April 3: “Aesthetics, Public Space and Housing Abundance.” Presented at *The Politics of Housing Supply and Diversity* hosted by the Center for Economy and Society at Johns Hopkins University.

2025

- September 19: Discussant for panel, “Humility in Politics and Social Life.” The Humility in Inquiry Project. Arizona State University.
- September 8: “Trust, Mistrust and Social Distance.” Keynote address for *Communicating Science for Policy in a Populist World*. George Mason University.
- August 11: “What’s Wrong With Those People,” presented as part of a panel debating the place for value commitments in sociology. 2025 American Sociological Association conference.
- January 10: “(Self)Censorship in Science is More a Problem of Culture Than Laws or Policies.” Presented at *Censorship in the Sciences: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* at University of Southern California.

2024

- April 19: “We’re All on the ‘Blue’ Line. Why That Matters.” Keynote Address at the UMass Boston Annual Sociology Research Symposium.

2023

- August 18: “What’s Wrong With Those People? How Analyst Positionality Informs Interpretation of Political Struggles.” Presented at the 2023 American Sociological Association conference.

2019

- March 19: “Towards an Ascetic Antiracism” presented at the 2019 annual conference of the Eastern Sociological Society (ESS).

2018

- October 18: “Resistance as Sacrifice (and Vice Versa)” presented for the Brown University Political Theory Project PPE Research Seminar.

- August 13: “How to better engage skeptics on civil rights legislation” presented at “Inequality, Policy and Affirmative Action” panel of the 113th American Sociological Association conference.
- February 22: “Want to Change Attitudes About Affirmative Action? Look to Cultural Cognition and Moral Psychology” presented at the 2018 Eastern Sociological Society (ESS) conference.
- January 20: “Legitimacy, Securitization and the ‘War on Terror’” presented at the workshop, “Is there an After 9/11? Terrorism, Threats, Challenges and Responses” hosted by the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies, UC Santa Barbara.

2017

- November 21: “Interpreting Narratives of ISIS’ Western Sympathizers” presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA).
- October 14: “On Social Research in the Age of Trump.” IHS Fall Graduate Research Symposium.

2016

- November 12: “Al-Qaeda in the American Consciousness” presented at the 102nd Annual Conference for the National Communication Association (NCA).
- February 26: “Who Joins ISIS (and Why)?” delivered at “Security Populisms & Insecure Transmissions: Global Security Workshop,” hosted by the Orfalea Center for Global Studies at University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB).

2015

- March 28: “Five U.S. Policies That Contributed to the Rise of ISIS (And are now being rehashed to combat them)” delivered at the 15th Annual Conference in Middle East and North African Studies, hosted by UA MENA Graduate Student Organization.

2014

- April 11: "From the Numbers Game to the End Game in Syria," delivered at the 14th Annual Conference in Middle East and North African Studies, hosted by UA MENA Graduate Student Organization.

2013

- September 27: "Contextualizing Justice and the Good," delivered at the 2nd Annual Saguaro Symposium on Governance hosted by the UA School of Government and Public Policy.

2012

- October 27: "Diplomacy, Geopolitics, and the Syrian Civil War" presented at the "Syria Bleeds" panel hosted by UA STAND
- September 28: "Against Ethics," presented at the 1st Annual Saguaro Symposium on Institutions hosted by the UA School of Government and Public Policy.

2011

- November 4: "Philosophical Reflections on Christ and America: How Would Jesus Vote?" presented in the 2011 Student Showcase at the University of Arizona.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Beyond my other academic and professional appointments, I've served as a columnist for *The Guardian* (2022- present), *Salon* (2015-2016) and *Al-Jazeera America* (2013-2015). My freelance journalistic work has been [published](#) in prolific outlets including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *CNN*, *The Atlantic*, *New Republic*, *The Nation*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*. I am also a [Substack Bestseller](#), with hundreds of paid subscriptions, roughly 12k overall newsletter subscribers, and nearly 18k platform followers.

I've done interviews with *NPR*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Slate*, *Reason*, *Mic*, *Voice of America* and many other outlets to contextualize current events. My research has been featured in stories for *Bloomberg*, *New York Magazine*, *Times of London*, *Foreign Affairs* and more. My book has enjoyed [positive reviews and coverage](#) in a wide range of outlets. Both my scholarly work and my publicly-oriented essays have been cited in publications by the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, the U.S. Army War College, the Countering Terrorism Center at West Point and beyond. I regularly consult with policymakers, nonprofits and executives in the U.S. and abroad on issues related to my research. I'm also regularly invited to give talks to more generalized audiences on a range of sociopolitical and cultural topics. A selection of these events follows below.

2026

- July 6-10: Co-taught a seminar on [Don Quixote](#) to lifelong learners at St. Johns College, Santa Fe.
- April 24: "How Political Commitments Shape Research on Politics." Keynote address, *Hx West Coast Annual Conference*. UC Berkeley.

2025

- December 5: "Persuasion Is Underrated." *Serious Disagreement* conference. Boston University.
- October 27: "[Diversity and Knowledge Production](#)." Keynote address at the HxCANADA Fall Conference.
- April 29: "Distortions and Omissions in Sociological Research." Delivered for event, *A Discipline In Disarray? The State of Sociology*. American Enterprise Institute (Washington D.C.).

- January 18: Plenary discussant for session, "Conservatives Are Rare in Academe. Does It Matter?" for the AEI 2025 Faculty Summit (San Diego).

2024

- November 14-17: Discussant for conference, "Liberty, Free Speech and Cancel Culture." Liberty Fund (Savannah).
- October 17: Panelist for [session](#), "Academic Freedom and the Role of Universities." Global Free Speech Summit 2024. Vanderbilt University.
- October 13: Keynote speaker for series, "What Might Peace Look Like?" and, on the same day, a discussant for the symposium, "Free Expression and Diversity." Forum for Free Inquiry and Expression at the University of Chicago.
- April 13: Featured speaker for event, "The Future of Publishing: A Festival in New York City." InterIntellect.
- March 19: Presenter for education + comedy event, "[Seriously Entertaining: Off the Record](#)." House of Speakeasy.

- March 1: Panelist (multiple panels) for event, “Restoring Inclusive Critical Discourse on Campus.” Stanford University.

2023

- October 29: “Class and the Democratic Party.” The Liberal Patriot National Policy Retreat (Philadelphia).
- August 16: Discussant for panel, “Business, Military” in “Professions, Polarization and Political Economy” symposium. Johns Hopkins University, Center for Economy and Society, SNF Agora Institute
- July 31: Discussant for [online event](#), “How Will the College Admissions Ruling Change Diversity in Higher Ed?” Heterodox Academy.

2022

- September 23: Roosevelt Island Forum (bringing together politicians, activists, scholars and journalists to explore the present and future of the Democratic Party). Hosted by Blue Rose.
- May 6: “Most Diversity Trainings Don’t Work. How Can We Do Diversity Training More Effectively?” 2022 State of Mind Festival, University of Toronto.
- April 20: Featured discussant for [event](#), “Social Justice and the Language of the Elite.” Heterodox Academy
- February 25: Discussant for [panel](#), “Meritocracy and the Populist Response” in “Renewing America’s Civic Compact” symposium. Arizona State University, School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership, Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law

2021

- September 29: Discussant for [event](#), “Race, Identity, and Ideology,” part of the “SNF Agora Conversations: Diversity and Democracy” series. Johns Hopkins University, SNF Agora Institute
- June 3: Moderator for panel, “DEI Training Programs: What Do They Aim For? What Should they Aim For?” Heterodox Academy
- April 19: Discussant for author roundtable for Richard Alba’s book, “The Great Demographic Illusion: Majority, Minority, and the Expanding American Mainstream.” American Enterprise Institute.
- April 9: Discussant for panel, “Intellectual Diversity: What is to Be Done?” Michigan State University, The LeFrak Forum
- March 30: Lead a New York Law School Faculty Workshop on Viewpoint Diversity in Higher Ed
- March 12: Discussant for event, “State Legislators and Academic Freedom” hosted by PEN America.
- February 18: Discussant for panel, “Are People of Color Becoming Swing Voters” for virtual event, “The 74 Million Voter Question.” USC Dornsife Center for the Political Future.

2020

- November 20: “The Role of Education in America’s Civic Crises” delivered (remotely) for the Department of Education, Reform Lecture Series. University of Arkansas, Department of Education Reform
- November 13: Discussant for virtual event, “Self-Censorship, Free Speech and Race on Campus: Discussing the FIRE/ RCE College Free Speech Rankings.” Institute for Humane Studies.
- November 8: Discussant for (virtual) panel, “Election Reflection” for the 2020 Decolonizing International Relations Conference hosted by the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University
- October 13: Discussant for (virtual) event, “Socially Distant: How Our Networks Shape Our Politics” hosted by American Enterprise Institute.
- July 30: Discussant for (virtual) event, “The Great Awakening,” hosted by the Manhattan Institute.
- February 21-23: Discussant for workshop, “Sociology and the Classical Liberal Tradition.” Institute for Humane Studies (D.C. Metro area).

2019

- May 9: Discussant for symposium, “Academic Freedom Under Threat: What Is To Be Done?” Oxford University, McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics and Public Life
- April 16: Discussant for event “The State of Debate on Campus.” The Village Square/ Florida State University
- April 4: Discussant for event, “Whose Freedom? Whose Speech?” PEN America/ Columbia University
- March 13: “Getting Good at Disagreeing” University of Southern California, Institute for Digital Civic Culture
- March 7: Discussant for panel, “Open Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Disagreement: Pathways for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?” 2019 National Association for Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) conference
- February 22: Discussant for symposium, “Polarization and Disagreement: Combatting America’s Civic Crisis.” Arizona State University, School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership, Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law.
- January 26: Moderator for “In Conversation” series discussion on “The Niceties.” McCarter Theater Center at Princeton University

2018

- August 17-19: Discussant for colloquium, “Modernity and Its Discontents.” UC Berkeley, Critical Review Foundation
- April 21: Moderated panel, “Bridging the Political Divide: Lessons from Leaders Who Take Risk.” Bridge USA/ Earth X Conference (Dallas, TX)
- February 13: “How Minds Change.” University of Southern California, Institute for Digital Civic Culture

2017

- September 27: Participated in a dialogue on academic freedom alongside former U.C. Berkeley Chancellor Nic Dirks. Times Higher Education U.S. Student Success Forum.

SERVICE

I travel a lot for talks and other obligations. In the last three years at SBU, I've done roughly 70 book talks, a half-dozen other research presentations, an additional 30 public addresses not connected to any particular piece of research, plus other conferences and workshops. Combined, these obligations required me to travel for most weeks that I've been an assistant professor. When I'm not on the road, I also keep quite busy: I've done hundreds of podcasts, media interviews and consultations (for policymakers and institutions) since becoming an assistant professor. I've also published around 50 journalistic essays and a book with Princeton University Press, alongside co-authored articles in PNAS and Nature, and a chapter for an edited volume slated for publication with Cambridge University Press. And I'm actively working on my next book. Despite being stretched thin with all these commitments, as a civil servant (employed at a public university), I view it as a priority to give as much as possible to my department, colleagues and students. And so, I've taken on a lot of service in my time at SBU to date.

Committees

1. Faculty Senate Communications Committee (2026-present)
2. Provost Committee on the implementation of SUNY's new [Civic Discourse Core Competency Requirement](#) (Spring 2025)
3. Bylaws Committee (Fall 2023- Spring 2026; the bylaws have now been passed and the committee is adjourned)
4. Journalism MS Admissions Committee (2024- present)
5. Journalism Curriculum Committee (Spring 2026- Present)
6. SoCJ Scholarships Committee (Spring 2026)
7. Hiring Committees
 - PRODIG+ Fellow (Spring 2025, hired [Zheng Fu](#))
 - Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (Fall 2023, hired [Brenda Hoffmann](#))
 - Dean of the School of Communication and Journalism (Spring 2026, hired [Karin Gwinn Wilkins](#))

Campus-Based Events

Since Fall 2023, I have run the SoCJ colloquium series, alongside a rotating partner in the communications department. At the time I took over, the colloquia had an online-only format (carried over from the pandemic) and was focused narrowly on communications (largely to the exclusion of journalism, because the series was carried exclusively by COM faculty). I shifted to a hybrid format, sought more prolific speakers of relevance to *both* units, and found innovative ways to bring these scholars and practitioners to campus with no budget. Participation has increased. The in-person format also helps the colloquia better build relationships between guests, faculty and students (in at least one case, leading to an internship).

Separate from the colloquium series, I helped organize larger events hosted by the School of Communication and Journalism that brought together stakeholders from across campus and beyond. These included:

2026

- October 5: “Midterm Matters,” a tentpole university event organized by the provosts’ office to help Stony Brook students, faculty, staff and community members work through what’s at stake in the impending midterm elections (and contextualize the likely results).
- March 10: “Writing Op-Eds,” a workshop conducted in partnership with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute to help local stakeholders understand how to exercise their voice in local and national media.

2024

- October 23: Panelist for event, “[Democracy in the Digital Age: AI’s Influence on the 2024 Elections](#),” organized by SBU Libraries. In addition to joining the panel myself, I helped identify and recruit two additional panelists ([Klaus Mueller](#), who was previously a guest for the SoCJ colloquium series I host, and [Tom Costello](#), a longtime friend and colleague who works in this space).

- October 8: “[We Were Promised Social Justice: A Conversation About Diversity and Equality in the Knowledge Economy](#),” co-sponsored with the D13 office. The event was kicked off by SBU’s chief diversity officer, and then featured sociologist Colleen Eren in conversation with myself.
- February 22: Organizer and panelist for event, “[The Unique Challenges of Reporting on the 2024 Election](#),” featuring James Bennet (The Atlantic, NY Times, Economist), Matt Yglesias (co-founder Vox, Slow Boring) and Jane Coaston (MTV News, Vox, CNN). Conceived, organized and moderated by myself. A major flagship event for the SoCJ and SBU more broadly, bringing together donors / donor prospects and students, faculty, staff and alumni across departments, alongside Stony Brook community members.

2023

- December 6: Moderator and organizer of event, “[Journalists at Risk: Reporting on Gaza and Israel](#),” an event featuring the president of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and correspondents who have reported in both theaters. Organized by myself and [Sarah Baxter](#), moderated by myself

Mentoring

In my time at SBU, I served as the thesis chair for one MS student (Samantha Rutt, *The Jobs Journal: Understanding the Lives and Perspectives of Working Class Long Islanders*). At the time, she aspired to live and work as a journalist in NYC, and graduated with a position in-hand from [The Daily Mail](#).

Both before and throughout my time at SBU, I helped many undergrad and graduate students identify

professional opportunities; I provided coaching and reviewed their application materials; I helped them edit and place work in mass media outlets; I’ve served as a reference for prospective employers and directly leveraged my contacts to place students in media and communication jobs.

In addition to making time for national and international journalists, I regularly adjust my commitments to make myself available for SBU’s student reporters. Because my research prominently touches on areas that many students are deeply interested in (polarization, identity, inequalities, etc.), I am regularly tapped as a source by our students (and, occasionally, my colleagues). Multiple SBU broadcasts and published stories by our students feature my comments, and many others were shaped by “on background” interviews. I’m a regular fixture in undergrad student honors and capstone projects as well as MS theses.

I also meet regularly with undergraduate and grad students from *other* departments (English, polisci, psychology, history, engineering, sociology) to kick around ideas and think through career options.

Additional SBU Service

Beyond my extensive committee, event and mentorship work, I am regularly leveraged by administration as a public face for the department in cultivating partnerships and recruiting students. I've worked closely with the SoCJ dean(s) to cultivate donors and donor prospects. In addition to trips for this purpose, I also travelled with interim dean [Stephanie Kelton](#) to (successfully) secure new internship opportunities for our students with local institutions and media outlets. In Spring 2026, I served as the journalism department's representative for Admitted Seawolves Days to provide an overview of the School of Communication and Journalism, answer questions from prospective students and their families, and give attendees a tour of our facilities (newsroom, studio, career center, etc.). I also recruited student panelists to join myself and a communication colleague for these presentations.

With respect to curriculum, there is a mismatch in most communication programs wherein enrolled *students* hope to move into roles as PR professionals, campaign managers, communications directors, etc. However, most communication professors went straight from undergrad, to grad school, to the tenure track having never worked at *any* of these jobs. As a consequence, it's possible to graduate with a BA, MA or even PhD in communication but have no idea how to write a press release, run a social media campaign, shoot and edit video, or any number of other routine communications tasks – let alone having direct experience working for real clients, or having developed relationships with professionals in these sectors. SBU was no exception to this general rule. As a result of my own extensive real-world communication experience, I was well-positioned to fill this hole in our curriculum.

I created a class in the COM department where students produce a PR program about Stony Brook University and the surrounding community that actually airs during the half-time of SBU sports games on ESPN+. FloCollege, SNY and other channels. In addition to producing this show, students learn how to do practical communications tasks, and take on actual clients in the community to address their communication needs. By the end of the semester, the students are basically functioning as a PR firm. The class has had maxed-out enrollment every time it's been offered, has received really positive feedback from students, and has served as a springboard for their communication careers. In addition to creating and teaching this class, I worked with [Madeline Rosenberg](#) and [Paul Christensen](#) to conceptualize and spur attendance for a series of alumni-led professionalization workshops. SBU graduates who work in communications or journalism teach students practical skills they wished they'd had more practice with while they attended. This not only helps students cultivate, practice and demonstrate key skills (filling holes in the curriculum), it helps them form relationships with each other and with professionals in the field. Alumni, meanwhile, get to stay involved, give back and scout out new talent.

On the journalism side, most programming is built around the notion that students will get hired into a full-time role and “work their way up” as a permanent employee of a media institution. Increasingly, however, media professionals spend a significant portion of their careers as freelancers. Thriving as a freelancer requires unique skills: building an audience that follows you from outlet to outlet, building and maintaining relationships with editors at a range of institutions or being able to adjust the same content to work with the editorial policies and specific audiences of different outlets. The financial aspects of thriving as a freelancer are completely different than working as a full-time employee too. Yet, students in most journalism programs are not equipped for contemporary market realities. I developed a class to fill this hole at SBU, where students learn about these aspects of freelance work, and get direct experience with developing, editing, pitching, and promoting freelance content (helping students build out their portfolio in addition to mastering key skills). The course has an immense impact on student professionalization from the beginning of the semester to the end and has directly contributed to the professional success of multiple enrollees.

Finally, every year, Stony Brook University holds an event, Roth Regatta, where students build themed boats out of duct tape and cardboard and race them across a pond on campus. More than 5,000 students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members attend on average.

For those unable to attend in-person, the School of Communication and Journalism hosts a live broadcast each year, *Roth Regatta Live*, where we do a play-by-play of the action, conduct interviews with the teams and other campus stakeholders (dean, provost, president), and air student-produced video packages about Stony Brook University (and the surrounding community and the theme of the year). This is a flagship event for our broadcast classes – pulling students from across the SoCJ. It's a capstone event for graduating seniors, generating great broadcast clips for their portfolios. The show has a large viewership (thousands usually livestream the event). It is also a massive undertaking (a four hour live show with multiple anchor and field teams, over a dozen packages, tons of graphic assets, and more). Most years, the program was overseen by a longstanding broadcast professor, [Phil Altieri](#), who left SBU in 2025. During his last year, I worked closely with Phil and the students to develop content and promote the event. For Spring 2026, I served as the lead producer for the show, overseeing all the content and roles, supported by colleagues [Brian Jingleski](#), [Dini Zimmerman](#) and Paul Christensen.

All said, in addition to my teaching and research, I devote considerable energy to serving Stony Brook students, colleagues, administration and community members.