

Theodoros Ntounias

Present Address

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Education

University of California San Diego 2020-
PhD Political Science
San Diego, CA

University of California San Diego July 2022
M.A. Political Science
San Diego, CA

University of Warwick September 2020
M.Sc. Statistics with Distinction
Coventry, UK

Reed College January 2018
B.A. Mathematics and Political Science (Interdisciplinary)
Portland, OR

National Technical University of Athens Transferred June 2016
B.Eng. Electrical and Computer Engineering
Athens, GR

Focus

Democratic Backsliding • Fiscal Federalism • Sub-national Government •
European Politics • Promissory Democracy • Ranked Choice Voting

Published Research

Voter Information and RCV, an experimental approach to examining how information seeking behaviour changes when voters are faced with ranked-choice voting, rather than traditional single-preference. (*Election Law Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 2023)

Ongoing Research

Fiscal Recentralization as an Aspiring Autocrat Strategy Dissertation research about how aspiring autocrats in Central and Eastern Europe use fiscal recentralization as part of their executive aggrandizement strategy. Investigation on the goals, methods, and outcomes of fiscal recentralization on sub-national funding allocation and the ability of local opposition to successfully contest national power through effective public goods provision. (*dissertation work at UC San Diego*)

Globalization and Political Ambiguity, use of party manifesto text data to test whether political parties rely on strategic ambiguity during election campaigns to evade sanctioning by voters in future elections. (*with Christina J. Schneider and Robert Thompson*)

Project on Climate Change in Europe and Political Party Support, early stage research that uses novel climate disaster data to explore how increasing rates of catastrophic events related to climate change may affect party preference. (*with Lisa Dellmuth, Evelina Jonsson, and Christina J. Schneider*)

Effects of Employee Hardship Funds on Worker Politics, a project that uses precise survey targeting methodology to explore the impacts of Employee Hardship

	Funds on variables such as worker unionization preference, employer loyalty, financial well-being, and job attachment. <i>(with John Ahlquist, as Research Assistant)</i>
Past Projects	Quantifying Gerrymandering with MCMC Methods , a summary and quick application of the most current methods used to quantify gerrymandering in US States, based on Markov Chain Monte Carlo simulation. <i>(M.Sc. dissertation project)</i>
Conferences	APSA 2025 Full Paper Panel: "Subnational Perspectives on Democratic Erosion and Resilience" (Chair)
Invited Talks	APSA 2025 Full Paper Panel: "Cutting Off the Respirator: Fiscal Recentralization as an Aspiring Autocrat Strategy"
	EPSA 2025 Full Paper Panel: "Comparative Politics of High Income Countries" (Chair)
	EPSA 2025 Full Paper Panel: "Cutting Off the Respirator: Fiscal Recentralization as an Aspiring Autocrat Strategy"
	MPSA 2025 Full Paper Panel: "Cutting Off the Respirator: Fiscal Recentralization as an Aspiring Autocrat Strategy"
	Invited Speaker at the Princeton Electoral Systems Conference, March 2025.
	Invited Visiting Scholar at the University of Rochester Democracy Center, February 2024.
	APSA 2023 Full Paper Panel: "Globalization and Political Ambiguity"
Honors Awards	UC San Diego Graduate and Professional Student Association Community Award for Outstanding Graduate/Professional Student Leader 2025
	Nominated by the UCSD Political Science Department for the Marye Anne Fox Dissertation Year Fellowship 2025
	UC San Diego Summer Graduate Teaching Scholar Fellowship, Summer 2025. (\$500)
	Institute for Humane Studies Fellowship Award, Summer 2024. (\$2500)
	Social Sciences Dean's Supplementary Funding Award, UC San Diego 2024. (\$600)
	UC San Diego Center for American Politics funding award for revisions on <i>Voter Information and RCV</i> . (\$2000)
	Outstanding Dissertation in Statistics (Postgraduate) Award, University of Warwick 2020. (£500)
	Invited to deliver a TEDx Talk on debating and community in Greece, TEDx Patras 2016.
	World Universities Debating Champion in the English as a Foreign Language category, WUDC Thessaloniki 2016.

Phi Beta Kappa

Leadership Activities

Adjudicator Trainer and Consultant

2024-

USA National Speech and Debate Association

- Hired to help train over 200 judges in World Schools Debating.
- Provided on-site feedback and hands on corrections to judging procedures at a tournament of almost 12,000 participants from high schools across the country.

Faculty Liaison for Graduate Student Council

2023-

Elected position communicating graduate student needs and issues to faculty. Also sat on admissions committee in this role.

Chief Adjudicator

2016-

Several Debating Tournaments

- Chief Adjudicator of several schools and universities tournaments in Greece.
- On the Chief Adjudicator's Panel for the World Schools Debating Championship in **2019**, **2021**, **2023**, and **2025**.
- For the above, helped train, test, and allocate a judging pool of over 150 judges.

Co-coach

2016-2019

Greek National Schools Debate Team, Athens, GR

- Trained five-member national debating delegation to compete in the World Championship.
- Placed in top twenty teams for three years running.

Teaching

Completed the UCSD Teaching and Learning Commons Equity-Minded Course Design series, Introduction to College Teaching, and Advanced College Teaching.

Instructor of Record Political Consequences of Electoral Systems

Grader Introduction to Business Law • Analyzing Elections: Political Economy • The VRA 50 Years Later • Economic Theories and Political Behavior • Politics of Multiculturalism • Design and Effects of Electoral Systems

Teaching Assistant/Section Leader UCSD Political Science Senior Honors Seminar • Introduction to Comparative Politics • Introduction to American Politics

Non-academic Speech and Debate teacher at the Hellenic-American Educational Foundation (2014-2021), multiple students reaching national finals.

Professional Memberships

American Political Science Association • European Political Science Association • Greek Political Science Association • Royal Statistical Society

Other Skills

Languages: Greek (Native), English (Fluent), French (B2), Spanish (Basic Reading/Listening).
Software: LaTeX, R, Python, STATA, SQL, C++, Git.