

SONJA CASTAÑEDA DOWER

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Political Science, University of Chicago	<i>Expected graduation: June 2026</i>
Subfields: American Politics & Comparative Politics	
Committee: Jon Rogowski (Chair), John Brehm, Monika Nalepa	
M.A. Political Science, University of Chicago	March 2021
M.A. Politics and Education, Columbia University	June 2007
B.A. English Literature, University of Wisconsin - Madison	June 1999

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Summer Institute, Princeton University	Summer 2023
Cornell University Migrations Summer Institute	Summer 2022
Essex University (UK) Summer School in Social Data Analysis	Summer 2020

AFFILIATIONS

<i>Doctoral Fellow</i> , Pozen Center for Human Rights, University of Chicago	2022-2023
<i>Early Career Fellow</i> , APSA Elections, Public Opinion, and Voting Behavior Section	2022-2023
<i>Visiting Scholar</i> , Malmö University (Sweden), Department of Society, Culture, and Identity	2022-2023
<i>Visiting Scholar</i> , Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska – Anchorage	2020-2021

PUBLICATION

Castañeda Dower, Sonja. "[Assimilation and Delegation: A Formal Model of Federal-Tribal Dynamics](#)" *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy* 5, no. 2 (2024): 305-334.

WORKING PAPERS

"Institutional Design, Assimilation, and Political Participation: Evidence from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act" (*Job Market Paper*)

"Congressional Selection of Tribes for Termination" (*with Scott Cooley, University of Chicago*)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"Forced Assimilation and Demands for Self-Determination: Renaming Indigenous People in the U.S., 1890-1910"

"Seventh Generation Politics: Culture, Resources and Discounting for the Future in Alaska and Greenland"

"Descriptive Representation and Electoral Accountability in Congress"
(*with Jaclyn Kaslofsky, Rice University and Jon C. Rogowski, University of Chicago*)

"Effects of Culturally-Based Policy in Heterogeneous Places: Evidence from Indigenous Communities in Alaska"

"Post-Racial? Effects of Sweden's Official Ban on the Word 'Race'"
(*with Martin Lund, Malmö University, Sweden and Jordan White, Lund University, Sweden*)

EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association, various locations	2020, 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025
Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL	2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
Western Political Science Association, various locations	2023, 2025
International Conference on Arctic Research Planning, Boulder, CO	2025
Greenland Science Week, Nuuk, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland)	2025
Women in Legislative Studies, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	2025
Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Conference, Oklahoma City, OK	2025
Barney Ford Lab & Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium (PRIEC), Boulder, CO	2025
Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy Symposium, USC, Los Angeles, CA	2024
Elections, Public Opinion, and Voting Behavior Conference, Florida State University, Tallahassee	2023, 2024
Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models Summer Institute, Princeton University	2023
Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium (PRIEC), University of Texas, Austin	2022
Cornell University Migrations Summer Institute, Ithaca, NY	2022
Southern Political Science Association, San Antonio, TX	2022
Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies, Chicago, IL	2020, 2022

UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO PRESENTATIONS

American Politics Workshop	2021, 2022, 2023, 2025
American Politics Conference, Harris School of Public Policy	2023
Comparative Politics Workshop	2023
Pozen Center for Human Rights	2023
Comparative Politics Working Group	2021
American Politics Summer Working Group	2020

GRANTS and AWARDS (*Total for multiple years)

\$5,318	Grodzins Prize Lectureship, University of Chicago	2025-2026
\$10,000	Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts, University of Chicago	2024-2026
\$5,000	Pozen Center for Human Rights, Summer Research Grant, University of Chicago	2024-2025
\$4,750	Agnes and Nathan Janco Award, Research Grant, University of Chicago	2024
\$6,600	Forum for Free Inquiry and Expression, Research Grant, University of Chicago	2024
\$2,500	Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, Research Grant, University of Chicago	2023-2024
\$1,500	Bienen Summer Research Award, University of Chicago	2021, 2023
\$2,000	Pozen Center for Human Rights Fellowship, University of Chicago	2022-2023
\$500	APSA Elections, Public Opinion and Voting Behavior Fellowship	2022-2023
\$5,000*	Institute of Politics summer support, University of Chicago	2020, 2022
\$2,000	Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Cornell University Migrations Institute	2022
\$2,500	APSA Advancing Research Grant for Indigenous Politics	2022
\$6,000	Graduate Global Impact Award, University of Chicago	2020
£1,100	Political Science, University of Chicago, for Essex (UK) Social Data Analysis Summer School	2020

CONFERENCE/TRAVEL SUPPORT (*Total for multiple years)

\$366	Polar Science Early Career Travel Grant	2025
\$17,500	Jointly raised for UChicago Indigenous Politics Workshop events + participant travel	2025
\$1,000*	APSA Fund for Latinx Politics Scholarship	2023, 2024
\$550*	APSA for travel to Annual Meetings	2021, 2022, 2024
\$1,600*	University of Chicago Department of Political Science Travel Awards	2021, 2022, 2024
\$1,000	EPOVB Section & FSU Institute of Politics for travel: EPOVB Conference, Tallahassee, FL	2023
\$500	Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium (PRIEC) Conference, Austin, TX	2022

TEACHING – UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

<i>Instructor</i> , Indigenous Politics and Policy in the United States (Undergraduate), The College	Spring 2026
<i>Head Teaching Assistant</i> , Politics and Policy (Undergraduate), The College	Fall 2022
Instructor: Christopher Berry, Professor, Harris School of Public Policy	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Democratic Erosion (Undergraduate), The College	Winter 2022
Instructor: Susan Stokes, Professor, Department of Political Science	
<i>Guest Lecturer</i> , Democratic Erosion (Undergraduate), The College	Winter 2022
“Interpreting, Integrating, and Improving the Varieties of Democracy Database”	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Survey Design (Graduate), Harris School of Public Policy	Spring 2021
Instructor: Rene Bautista, PI, General Social Survey; Co-director, National Opinion Research Center	

FIELD and ARCHIVAL WORK

United States

Alaska	Archives: U of Alaska, Anchorage; Fieldwork: Various	Summer 2020, 2023, 2025
New Mexico	Archives: Pojoaque Pueblo and New Mexico State Library, Santa Fe	Spring 2024, 2025
Oregon	Archives: Klamath Falls, Chiloquin; University of Oregon, Eugene	Spring 2024
Washington D.C.	National Archives and Bureau of Indian Affairs	Summer 2022

International

Greenland	Fieldwork: Ilulissat, Sisimiut, Nuuk; Archives: Nuuk	Fall 2023, 2025
Sweden	Archives: Lund University and Malmö University	Fall 2022, Summer 2025
New Zealand	Fieldwork, Archives: Gisborne, Rotorua	Fall 2023 to Summer 2024
Australia	State Archives, Brisbane; State Archives, Sydney	Summer 2024
Denmark	National Archives and Greenlandic House, Copenhagen	Summer 2021, Fall 2022
Norway	National Archives, Oslo	Summer 2021

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

<i>Research Assistant</i>	2022-2023
William Howell, Professor/Chair, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago	
<i>Grant Writer</i>	2015-2018
EcoWorks Int. (Ganthier, Haiti/Miami, FL); Caridad Medical Center (Boynton Beach, FL)	
<i>Researcher/Evaluator/Editor</i>	2008-2015
National Research University, Higher School of Economics (HSE) (Moscow, Russia)	
New Economic School (Moscow, Russia)	

RECENT SERVICE

Service to the University and Discipline

<i>Member, Advisory Board, APSA Indigenous Studies Network</i>	2023 - present
<i>Co-Coordinator, Future Generations in Indigenous Politics Workshop, University of Chicago</i>	2024-2025
<i>Discussant, WPSA, Session: American Indians and American Governance, Seattle, WA</i>	April 2025
<i>Session Co-Chair, Arctic Social Science, Conference on Arctic Research Planning, Boulder, CO</i>	March 2025
<i>Session Chair, APSA Annual Meeting, Session: Indigenous Politics</i>	September 2024
<i>Panelist, PhD Recruitment, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago</i>	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
<i>Co-coordinator, American Politics Workshop, University of Chicago</i>	2021-2022, 2022-2023
<i>Panelist, Grants & Fellowships Workshop, University of Chicago</i>	November 2023
<i>Panelist, PhD Student Orientation, Division of Social Science, University of Chicago</i>	2021, 2022

Mentoring

<i>Research Mentor (re: Indian Termination), Undergraduate, UPenn, Philadelphia, PA</i>	2024 - present
<i>Research Mentor (re: Indian Assimilation and Allotment) Millard West High School, Omaha, NE</i>	2024 - present
<i>Research Mentor (re: Alaska Native Constitutions), Valley High School, Las Vegas, NV</i>	2021-2024
<i>Research Mentor (re: Indigenous Feminisms), GEMS Academy High School, Chicago, IL</i>	2021-2023
<i>Research Mentor (re: Den'a - Athabaskan), Service High School, Anchorage, AK</i>	2022-2023
<i>Research Mentor (re: Muwekma Ohlone Tribe), Berkeley High School, Berkeley, CA</i>	2022-2023
<i>Program Mentor, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago, IL</i>	2020-2022
<i>Program Mentor, Institute of Politics, University of Chicago, IL</i>	2020-2022
<i>Program Mentor, Leaders of Color, University of Chicago, IL</i>	2020-2022

MEMBERSHIP

American Political Science Association (APSA)
APSA Indigenous Studies Network
APSA Latina/o/x Caucus
Association for the Economic Research of Indigenous People
Chicagoland Native American and Indigenous Studies Working Group
Comparative Politics Working Group, University of Chicago
Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee Collaborator
Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)
Midwest Women's Caucus for Political Science
MPSA Latina/o/x Caucus
National American Indian Education Association
Native American and Indigenous Studies Association
Women in Legislative Studies

LANGUAGES

Primary - English; Intermediate - Norwegian, Spanish; Basic - Danish, Russian, Swedish

SKILLS

STATA, R, L^AT_EX, Survey Design

REFERENCES

Professor Jon Rogowski (Chair)
Department of Political Science
University of Chicago
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Professor John Brehm
Department of Political Science
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Professor Monika Nalepa
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