

# Political Science Research: Community-Engaged Research

## What is Community-Engaged Research?

“The creation and dissemination of knowledge and/or creative expression in furtherance of the mission and goals of the university and in collaboration with the community. Community-engaged scholarship (CES) addresses community needs through research and teaching in a mutually beneficial partnership” (Marquette University Community Engagement Task Force).

## Why Does it Matter?

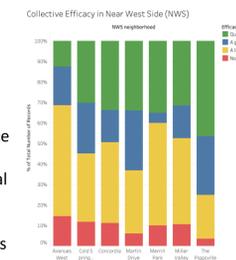
Political scientists study how people come together to solve shared problems. They might focus on political institutions—Congress, state legislatures, the United Nations—designed to produce collective action. Or, they might focus on the political attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups to understand the causes and consequences of conflict, cooperation, participation, and deliberation. Community-engaged research brings political science expertise on these issues to the places where individuals and groups work to overcome collective action problems. At the same time, political scientists can learn about power and politics by listening to those deeply engaged in civic and political life. CES in political science covers a wide range of partnerships. Collaborations with members of Congress have put theories of deliberative democracy into practice in the hopes of improving representative government.<sup>1</sup> Partnerships with schools have shed light on how STEM and civic education can be mutually supportive.<sup>2</sup> Experimental studies (co-designed and implemented with community-based organizations) have shown how groups can more effectively engage underrepresented voters in the democratic process.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Neblo, M. A., Esterling, K. M., & Lazer, D. M. (2018). *Politics with the people: Building a directly representative democracy* (Vol. 555). Cambridge University Press.  
<sup>2</sup> Condon, M., & Wichowsky, A. (2018). Developing Citizen-Scientists: Effects of an Inquiry-Based Science Curriculum on STEM and Civic Engagement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 119(2), 196-222.  
<sup>3</sup> Bedolla, L. G., & Michelson, M. R. (2012). *Mobilizing inclusion: Transforming the electorate through get-out-the-vote campaigns*. Yale University Press.

## Community-Based Organizations, Collective Efficacy and Civic Engagement

### Research Background

All else equal, communities with high collective efficacy tend to be healthier than communities with low collective efficacy.<sup>1</sup> There is also suggestive evidence that community-based organizations (CBOs) help explain variation in collective efficacy across neighborhoods. But correlation ≠ causation. Although there is some causal evidence that CBOs helped reduce crime in American cities *over the long-run*<sup>2</sup>, what this looks over the *short-term* is much more unclear; causal mechanisms are generally unstated or unspecified. Moreover, this research says nothing about other important measures of neighborhood wellbeing, and is generally silent about questions of agency, voice, and influence. Indeed, CBOs can sometimes facilitate elite authority and reinforce disparities in economic and political power<sup>3-5</sup>.



### Research Questions

1. What do CBOs do to increase collective efficacy in their neighborhoods?
2. What is the impact of their community organizing efforts?
3. Do their efforts help empower residents?

<sup>1</sup> Sampson, R. J. (2012). *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. University of Chicago Press.  
<sup>2</sup> Sharkey, P., Torrats-Espínola, G., & Talyar, D. (2017). Community and the crime decline: The causal effect of local nonprofits on violent crime. *American Sociological Review*, 82(6), 1214-1240.  
<sup>3</sup> Levine, J. R. (2016). The privatization of political representation: Community-based organizations as nonelite neighborhood representatives. *American Sociological Review*, 81(6), 1251-1275.  
<sup>4</sup> McQuarrie, M. (2013). No contest: Participatory technologies and the transformation of urban authority. *Public Culture*, 25(1), 143-175.  
<sup>5</sup> Rahman, K.S. and H.R. Gilman. (2019). *Civic Power: Rebuilding American Democracy in an Era of Crisis*. Cambridge University Press.

### Research Methods

Over the last four years, Dr. Wichowsky and her students in the Marquette Democracy Lab have worked with the Near West Side Partners (NWSP) to evaluate the organization’s community engagement efforts. Findings are used to inform ongoing efforts and new initiatives. Research methods have included:

- Experimental studies to identify the impact of their community outreach efforts;
- Spillover studies to consider whether their short-term efforts produce longer-lasting change;
- Community surveys to assess how collective efficacy, social trust, and civic engagement vary across the Near West Side, and to gather feedback from residents on NWSP programs and initiatives;
- Focus groups with residents to discuss barriers to engagement and ways to increase residents’ influence on community planning and development;
- Case studies of other cities to identify best practices that could be adapted to the Near West Side (e.g., participatory budgeting).

## Testing NeON Outreach Efforts

### Background

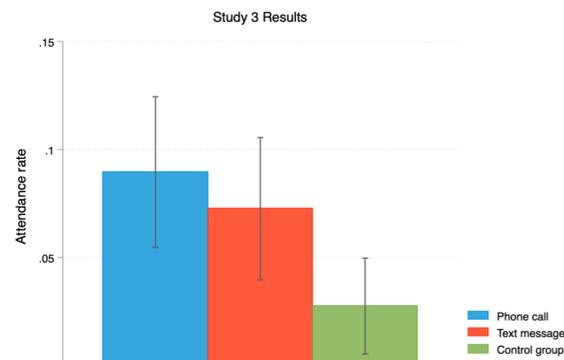
The Neighborhood of Neighborhoods (NeON) meeting is held monthly, and is open to all residents living in the Near West Side. NWSP wanted to know what it could do to increase attendance at NeON meetings.

### Interventions

In Study 1, 410 homeowners and 6,478 renters were randomly assigned to a control group or to receive a postcard invitation. In Study 2, 350 residents, who had previously provided their phone numbers to NWSP, were randomly assigned to a control group or to receive a text message. In Study 3, 367 residents, who had previously provided their phone numbers to NWSP, were randomly assigned with equal probability to one of three groups: (1) phone call invitation, (2) text message invitation and (3) control group, no invitation.

### Results

- *Postcards (Study 1)*: Postcards increased meeting attendance among both renters and homeowners, but increase was negligible (< 1 percentage point).
- *Text messages (Study 2)*: Text message invitation increased NeON attendance by about 2 percentage points.
- *Phone call or Text message (Study 3)*: Outreach increased attendance, but there was no statistically significant difference between whether that message was delivered personally over the phone or impersonally via text message. However, no evidence of spillover effects (residents were no more likely to attend *next* meeting).



### Lessons

- Personal invitations can increase attendance, but outreach works best when NWSP has had at least some contact with residents. NWSP organizers should continue their relational work in the community.
- Text messages are a much more cost-effective outreach method compared to postcards and are as effective as a personal phone call invitation. Invitations should be sent out for every NeON meeting.

## Using Political Science Research to Inform and Assess Community Engagement in the Near West Side

In September 2018, the Near West Side Partners (NWSP) and Marquette University received a Choice Neighborhood Planning grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This grant funds the development of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or “Transformation Plan,” as well as some “early action” community development projects. To inform plan development, Democracy Lab has been working to gather community input through surveys, focus groups, and community-wide discussions. Starting in early 2020, Democracy Lab will be working with NWSP and residents to design a participatory process for community members to develop and select grant-funded projects. Through these efforts, we are working to increase participatory democracy in the Near West Side.



# Political Science Research: Public Scholarship

FiveThirtyEight  
Politics Sports Science & Health Economics Culture

## What Is Public Scholarship?

Public scholarship works are relatively short, often online publications that distill political science research for policymakers and the general public. Public scholarship articles are typically published by well-known sites with editorial oversight. These works frequently contain links to research publications on the topic written by the author or other political scientists.

The New York Times

## Why Does It Matter?

Public scholarship provides research-based information that is relevant for understanding current events to individuals who are not likely to read longer political science research articles or scholarly books. In just one year, public scholarship publications from Marquette Political Science faculty, published in outlets like the Washington Post, New York Times, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, and FiveThirtyEight.com, had more than a quarter of a million online views.

The Washington Post  
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Vox

Journal Sentinel

Los Angeles Times

## Who Produces Public Scholarship?

**Dr. Julia Azari, Assoc. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** American electoral politics, the U.S. presidency, candidate debates, polarization and political parties, populism.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** FiveThirtyEight.com, VOX, Los Angeles Times.

**Dr. Risa Brooks, Assoc. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** U.S. military leaders and the American president.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Washington Post.

**Dr. H. Richard Friman, Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** Historical origins of the U.S. Travel Ban policy.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Washington Post.

**Dr. Susan Gianno, Adjunct Assoc. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** Global health policy.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** The Conversation.

**Dr. Paul Nolette, Assoc. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** U.S. attorneys general, opioid crisis.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Washington Post.

**Dr. Gerald Prout, Adjunct Asst. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** The politics of American infrastructure policy.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Milw. Journal Sentinel.

**Dr. Philip Rocco, Asst. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** Redistricting, federalism, the U.S. census, American health care.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Washington Post, Milw. Journal Sentinel.

**Dr. Amber Wichowsky, Assoc. Professor**

**Public Scholarship Topics:** Urban public policy, inequality, welfare reform, foreclosure crisis.  
**Public Scholarship Sites:** Milw. Journal Sentinel, LSE: U.S. Centre, Washington Post.

## Examples of Political Science Public Scholarship

### What We Know About the Impact of Primary Debates

And what that could mean for 2020.

By Julia Azari  
JUNE 23, 2019



The Republican party's 2016 primary, which featured candidates like (left to right) Marco Rubio, Donald Trump, Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina, eventually picked Trump as the nominee even though most party voters backed another candidate. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY FREDERICK H. ADAMS FOR CNN/GETTY IMAGES

The first Democratic primary debate is almost here. We've [learned a lot about the rules](#) for who makes the stage, but will these debates actually affect how Democratic primary voters make their decision who to vote for, or how they evaluate the candidates? Political science tends to be skeptical of general election debates. The people who are most likely to tune into debates tend to be [highly informed and already engaged in politics](#) — and thus already likely to have formed an opinion. This has become especially true in recent years as partisanship has grown stronger.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that debates can still affect voters' impressions of candidates, especially in primaries. It's all about the context in which a debate is taking place. And we happen to be at a point in the 2020 cycle when debates tend to be most effective.

Here's a look at what political science has told us about debates over the years and what that could mean for 2020.

### Debates help voters evaluate candidates, and can change minds — under the right circumstances

A debate's main purpose is to help voters decide which candidate they want to support. And there is evidence that primary debates can change people's minds. Research by University of Missouri communication professors Mitchell McKinney and Benjamin Warner [found](#) that nearly 60 percent of study participants experienced a shift in their candidate choices after watching a debate.

But the circumstances matter. First, debates are more important in primaries, as voters can't rely on their party identification in selecting a candidate. While vote choices in general elections are mostly shaped by partisanship — and thus debates have a limited effect — primary voters are looking for other differences, such as whether candidates are likable, electable or compatible with them on issues. Studies show that debates affect these perceptions.

Generally, the [academic research also agrees](#) that debates have the most impact when voters have relatively little information about the candidates and it's still early in the election cycle (that is, where we are now).

Debates are also most useful when the field is crowded (again, like now) because they can help lesser-known candidates appear [credible](#). One study from the [2006 Republican primary](#) found, for example, that watching the primary debates had a substantial effect on candidates' perceived viability. In that study, debate viewers rated businessman [Steve Pearce's](#) chances of winning the nomination and beating Bill Clinton in the general election more highly after the debate. By contrast, the debate hurt former Education Secretary [Lamar Alexander's](#) perceived electability.<sup>2</sup>

But there are potential effects are limited — particularly by the rules and structure of the debate. A [study of the 2012 Republican primary debates](#) noted that candidates who were already doing well in early polls were afforded more speaking time, so, depending on the format, debates might not actually do that much to boost minor candidates.

### How debates are covered in the media also matters

Debates don't just affect those who watch them; they can also influence the political environment by how they are covered in the media. Candidates don't have the final say on how their debate performances are portrayed, but that portrayal matters: not everyone will watch the debate, but there's evidence that voters are responsive to how the media reports on the candidates' performances. For instance, [a study from the 2008 general election](#) found that media coverage immediately following the 2008 general election debates favored then-President George W. Bush over then-Sen. John Kerry, and that that coverage "persuaded potential voters to alter their attitudes regarding the competing candidates." Voters were more likely to have a favorable opinion of Bush after the post-debate spin and analysis.

Which naturally raises a question: How do news media outlets decide who "won" a debate, or how to portray what happened? Well, that's not really clear. But it's not exactly a perfect reflection of what the candidates say. Researchers found that [news coverage](#) of both the Republican and Democratic primary debates in 2000 focused more on ongoing between the candidates than on the candidates' positions. Instead of engaging with the candidates' [statements on issues](#) such as homeland security or healthcare, news analyses focused on campaign strategy and election chances.

Additionally, some candidates may receive a more favorable portrayal based on factors outside their control. In the 2020 cycle, the media has already [favored criticism](#) for portraying male candidates differently from [female candidates](#), and for emphasizing ill-defined characteristics such as [loyalty](#) over policy issues.

### What this means for 2020

As we've discussed, primary debates are a way for voters to evaluate candidates — with, that is, the media also playing a big role in how they are perceived. Something to watch in the 2020 Democratic primary debates is whether candidates hovering around 1 percent in the polls will be able to garner more support, or if the field will winnow as momentum builds around a few front-runners.

How minor candidates do is particularly relevant for 2020 because the field is so crowded. While most of the [strongest candidates](#) — based on their [current online averages](#) — will be in Thursday's debate, the first night will feature Sen. Elizabeth Warren alongside a few candidates who have struggled to hit more than 2 percent in the polls and six more who barely cracked 1 percent. The [research](#) is inconclusive as to whether being the front-runner is a built-in advantage in a debate. It's possible that being the polling leader — at least, on that night's debate stage — may give Warren an [edge](#) such as earning her additional speaking time. Or, a more level playing field might be an opportunity for someone like [Alex Ocasio-Cortez](#) or [Amy Klobuchar](#) to have a breakout moment.

The other 2020-relevant lesson from the research: A breakout moment is more likely to happen if the news media agrees that it happened. If a "tree falls in the forest..." If Kamala Harris or Warren — who have both hovered around [breakouts](#) in the polls — were to be crowned the "winner" of a primary debate, it could shake up the race and threaten Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders' polling leads. If the post-debate media narrative is more muddled, we're less likely to see a big shift in the race.

Finally, beyond the horse-race, the debates might serve simply to add to the interest in the presidential primary, drawing voters into the process — as [research has shown debates can](#). If the [high turnout in the 2018 midterms](#) is any indicator, political engagement is high right now. It's also possible that the debates will help to focus the discussion, highlighting critical differences in [policies](#), and approaches among candidates.

Or, we may just end up talking about Pete Buttigieg answering a question in Norwegian. Stay tuned.

Julia Azari is an associate professor of political science at Marquette University. Her research interests include the American presidency, political parties and political theory. She is the author of "Overseeing and Persuading: The Changing Politics of the Presidential Mandate" (Wiley, 2011).

### The Citizenship Question Isn't the Only Threat to the Census. Here's What's at Stake.

Are states and local governments ready?



A demonstrator holds a sign referring to the census outside the U.S. Supreme Court on June 27. (Andrew Harvey/Reuters)

Editor's note: This post has been updated to reflect the Trump administration's new position. After repeated [setbacks in the courts](#), the Trump administration has [given up](#) on its efforts to place a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. Even so, Trump's repeated emphasis on citizenship — combined with operational challenges in carrying out the census — could still risk what's called a "differential undercount," in which some states and demographic groups are undercounted much more than others. How are public officials and others trying to ensure that everyone is counted?

The [Urban Institute](#) estimates that if the citizenship question is included, the population would be undercounted by 1.22 percent, and the Hispanic/Latino population by 3.57 percent. That would be the largest undercount since 1990 — former census director John Thompson thinks the 2020 undercount could be even [worse](#) — and would distort the distribution of federal resources and congressional seats accordingly.

But as the Institute's report notes, even if the citizenship question is not included, new operations — including an Internet option — could bring the undercount to 0.84 percent overall and 2.84 percent for the Hispanic/Latino population. And as some census [experts](#) have noted, public debate about the citizenship question may discourage participation, whether it appears on the form or not.

In either case, the federal government has a constitutional obligation to get the numbers right. And to ensure as [full a count](#) as possible, the Census Bureau depends [crucially](#) on cooperation from civil-society organizations and businesses. Their efforts can be challenging to coordinate. And it might be harder this year, given the controversy. In a recent New York Times [interview](#), the chief executive of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials reported greater difficulties securing business' cooperation in the 2020 Census, suggesting that "business leaders are allergic to issues that are perceived to be controversial, especially if they have any kind of racial oratory mixed in."

Local and state governments also play an important role in census outreach. Organizing 50 states and over 89,000 local governments is a formidable task. Beginning in [2010](#), the Census Bureau formally asked local governments to create Complete Count Committees to raise awareness and motivate census participation. That year, only 22 percent of the local jurisdictions contacted by the bureau did so; 35 percent relied on existing governmental structures to get the word out, and 43 percent refused to take part altogether.

Since then, the Census Bureau has expanded its efforts to engage state and local partners. Before the 2010 count, [California's](#) State Complete Count Committee (SCCC) convened public meetings with community leaders, determined locations for Questionnaire Assistance Centers and provided community partners with training materials.

For the 2020 count, the Census Bureau has invited all states to create their own [SCCCs](#) to coordinate outreach and mobilization. Thus far, however, only 32 states and the District of Columbia have done so.

SCCCs also face [challenges](#) in attracting adequate staff capacity or operational funding. The [Chicago Urban League](#), for example, has called on Illinois to increase its census outreach appropriations by several million dollars. In their most recent legislative sessions, only 17 states and the District of Columbia allocated specific funding for census outreach and mobilization. Funding bills in states such as North Carolina and Arizona have either stalled in committee or died when the legislature adjourned. With millions of federal grant dollars and congressional reauthorization on the line, these states are leaving the task of ensuring an accurate census to [state, county](#) and civil-society groups.

Why wouldn't states want to fund census outreach? Officials in states with small "hard-to-count" populations may not be as worried about missing out on federal funds or losing a congressional seat as states with large numbers of immigrants, documented or otherwise. States are significantly more likely to engage in census planning and outreach activities when they are risking a large undercount. In the Urban Institute's "high risk" scenario, the average projected undercount for states that have thus far funded census outreach is 1.12 percent, compared with an average 0.78 percent undercount for states that have not funded outreach.

Which party controls state government matters as well. Only 13 percent of states with unified Republican government have funded census outreach — compared with 42 percent of states with divided government and 60 percent of states with unified Democratic government. Of course, these partisan differences partly map onto the size of the states' probable undercounted populations. Projected undercounts are higher on average in Democratic-controlled states than Republican-controlled states.

But partisanship appears to have an independent influence as well. In Democratic-controlled states that have voted to fund census outreach, the average projected undercount is 1.38 percent compared with 0.96 percent undercount in Democratic-controlled states that haven't funded outreach. But among states with a divided or Republican-controlled government, those with higher projected undercounts were not significantly more likely to invest in census outreach. In Pennsylvania, where the 2020 undercount could be as high as 0.58 percent, Republicans have [voted](#) the SCCC's [request](#) for \$1 per resident in outreach funding.

The story of the 2020 Census will not be written in the White House alone. The Census does not belong to any one president or party. Its success depends on national, state and local public officials, nonprofits, businesses, and many others in civil society as well. Ensuring a complete census requires efforts that depend not only on what happens in the White House, but also in statehouses and municipal buildings throughout the country.

Philip Rocco (@PhilipRocco), an assistant professor of political science at Marquette University, is the co-author of "Disempower Wars: Federalism, State Politics, and the Affordable Care Act" (University Press of Kansas, 2016).

### The Opioid Litigation Has More Than 2,000 Plaintiffs. Here's What That Means behind the Scenes.

There's a lot of conflict and cooperation involved in tackling complex public health challenges in court.



(Jeff Chiu/AP)

More than 2,000 state, local and tribal governments are suing two dozen pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors, arguing that they've helped create an opioid crisis that has [claimed hundreds of thousands of American lives](#). The suits include claims that the industry misled doctors and consumers about the drug's safety and [permitted](#) [allowed opioids to fall into the wrong hands](#). Most of the [litigation](#) has been consolidated in federal district court in Ohio, where trial is set to begin Oct. 21.

The government plaintiffs agree that the industry is complicit in the crisis, but the public officials involved disagree on a variety of issues. Several state attorneys general [recently criticized](#) the tentative deal between most of the government plaintiffs and OxyContin manufacturer Purdue Pharma. The states and localities have also tangled over who will control the litigation.

Why are we seeing these conflicts, and where is the litigation likely to go next?

Large-scale public health litigation is difficult to resolve, for three main reasons. First, the scale of this public health crisis is vast, affecting millions either directly or indirectly — which means millions of Americans strongly want to see justice for its victims. Second, each government within the massive plaintiff pool wants a share of the proposed settlement for its own jurisdiction's opioid abuse victims. Finally, federal law limits the amount of money a court can award in such lawsuits, meaning those governments will have to skram among themselves to divvy up those funds.

All these difficulties affected the tobacco litigation of the 1990s, when states sought to hold tobacco companies accountable for misdeeds that allegedly harmed public health. The litigation resulted in a [2001 tobacco settlement agreement](#), among 46 states and several leading tobacco companies, which included restructuring how the industry did business. While they did finally come to an agreement, public officials sketched among themselves throughout the litigation. Republican attorneys general and those from tobacco-producing states were [notably slower to join the lawsuit than Democrats](#). Further, local governments complained they were largely cut out of the tobacco settlement proceeds — complaints that grew louder when many states used settlement funds for purposes other than tobacco control.

The opioid litigation involves cooperation and conflict among the plaintiffs — much as in other public health litigation.

[Our research finds that multistate litigation today involves similar patterns of conflict and cooperation](#). For example, conflicts frequently emerge in lawsuits challenging federal policy. Republican coalitions of attorneys general filed 63 lawsuits challenging the Obama administration over two terms. Democratic coalitions have already filed more lawsuits than that [against the Trump administration](#). In just its first term, however, state attorneys general from both parties generally support corporate settlements such as the tobacco litigation and the 2012 \$25 billion bank settlement over [illegal and fraudulent foreclosure practices](#).

In some ways, various governments are cooperating more in the opioid litigation than they did against the [Obama administration](#). For example, 24 attorneys general have agreed to a tentative deal with Purdue that would require it to pay out roughly \$10 billion over the next several years; of those, [22 are Republicans](#).

While Republican attorneys general seem to believe those funds will be enough to repair communities hurt by the opioid crisis, Democratic attorneys general are largely skeptical — and are skeptical about Purdue's ability to pay and whether the settlement inappropriately [protects the Sackler family](#), which owns Purdue. That's because settlement money is supposed to come from the company's sale of opioid treatment drugs that the FDA has not yet approved and that will face market competition if and when they come to market. What's more, the New York attorney general [recently reported](#) that the Sacklers have moved [billions of dollars offshore](#) out of the reach of even potential settlements. That has hardened the Democratic attorneys' general opposition to the settlement, and will likely increase public pressure to not let the Sacklers off the hook.

Partisanship isn't the only line of conflict. Believing they were unfairly shut out of the tobacco litigation, local governments sue the opioid industry separately from the states. A bipartisan group of AAs, in turn, has complained to the Judge overseeing the consolidated litigation that the local governments' involvement was [unjustified settlement negotiations](#).

What's next? As expected, Purdue [filed for bankruptcy](#) shortly after reaching the proposed settlement — but still [want to pay \\$34 million in bonuses](#) to high-performing employees. The states objecting to the settlement say they will [join the deal in bankruptcy court](#), aiming to override any of bankruptcy's usual protections from further litigation. Expect a partisan battle among the states in one of the most high-profile bankruptcy cases in years.

Also expect still more skirmishing between states and localities over who gets paid. Local governments are generally represented by private class action attorneys who will expect a share of the proceeds, further complicating any discussions. In the tobacco lawsuits, large payments that went to private law firms were controversial — and surely would be in this case as well.

Purdue isn't the only company being sued. The other defendants are supposed to go to trial in October. As that gets closer, expect the uncertainty of trial to pressure all parties to settle. In response, the parties will likely fight for last-minute advantages. Earlier this month, [several attorneys general asked](#) the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to halt the localities' suits in federal district court while the attorneys general alone complete settlement talks. While the defendants have asked the judge overruling the case [to reverse himself](#), alleging bias — which plaintiffs argue is just an attempt to delay the trial.

Of course, no one knows yet whether the opioid litigation will lead to the sort of public agreement that ended the tobacco litigation. But the patterns of cooperation and conflict are anything but surprising in litigation trying to address complex areas of public policy.

Colin Provost is an associate professor of public policy at University College London. Paul Nolette is an associate professor of political science at Marquette University. He is the author of "Evolution of State Attorneys General and National Policymaking in Contemporary America" (University Press of Kansas, 2015).

# Political Science Research: In the News

## MU Political Science “In the News”

Research expertise leads news media outlets to seek out Political Science faculty for interviews or to cite their research in stories. In some cases, the story’s topic is directly related to a faculty member’s research. In other cases, the reputation of our faculty members as experts leads to interview requests on broader topics that go beyond their specific research interests.

### Why Does It Matter?

As political scientists, we believe that we have an obligation to use our research-based knowledge to improve policymakers’ (and the general public’s) understanding of important political and social issues. Our media visibility is also important to Marquette. In 2018, Dr. Paul Nolette was the featured expert in a story on the CBS Evening News, which ran again the next day on the CBS This Morning show. It is estimated that more than 11 million people saw his interview, in addition to countless more who viewed the story online. When our research is cited or we are interviewed in a news story like this, our expertise as a *Marquette faculty member* is on display. As a result, we look to do media events, whenever possible, at the local, state, and national levels.

## Select Local and Wisconsin Media Interviews

## National Media – Interviewed POSC Faculty Members or Cited Their Research (2019 Only):

## Online Chats and Podcasts

# Political Science Research: Public Policy

## MU Political Science and Public Policy

The study of public policy is an important subfield in the discipline of political science. Public policy research seeks to explain the causes and consequences of the policies produced by formal political institutions at the local, regional, and national levels. While some research centers on understanding variation in policy approaches across time or in different settings, other works examine the effectiveness of different policy approaches in addressing the problems they were designed to solve. Key policy areas studied by political scientists include fiscal and monetary, regulatory, environmental, urban, economic development, social welfare, education, health, housing, criminal justice, immigration, defense and security, and foreign relations.

## Why Does It Matter?

Public policy choices affect nearly every part of our daily lives. Understanding public policy requires not only acute knowledge about the various policy areas but also a deep understanding of the political institutions that produce that policy. As a result, Political Science departments play a central role in the study of public policy across the United States and around the world.

## Our Recent Public Policy-Related Books



## Select Recent Articles on American Public Policy

How Issue Policy Demands Shape Postreform Politics: Evidence from the Affordable Care Act

Philip Neuman  
Michigan State University

Abstract: This article examines the relationship between issue policy demands and political institutions in the context of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). It argues that the ACA's passage was a result of a combination of factors, including the need for a comprehensive reform, the political environment, and the role of various stakeholders. The article discusses the challenges faced by the ACA and the implications for future policy-making.

Change and Continuity in the Role of State Attorneys General in the Obama and Trump Administrations

Michael J. Healy  
University of Virginia

Abstract: This article explores the role of state attorneys general in the Obama and Trump administrations. It examines how their roles have evolved over time and how they have responded to the challenges posed by the federal government. The article discusses the importance of state attorneys general in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

Is the Institutions, Stupid?

David Collier  
University of Virginia

Abstract: This article discusses the role of institutions in the political process. It argues that institutions are not just passive structures but active participants in the process. The article discusses the importance of institutions in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

Civic Life in the Divided Metropolis: Social Capital, Collective Action, and Residential Income Segregation

Robert Putnam  
University of Virginia

Abstract: This article examines the relationship between social capital, collective action, and residential income segregation. It argues that social capital is a key factor in the success of collective action and that income segregation is a result of a lack of social capital. The article discusses the importance of social capital in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

Reforming Health Care in the United States, Germany, and South Africa: Comparative Perspectives on Health Policy

Susan Branson  
University of Virginia

Abstract: This article compares health care reform in the United States, Germany, and South Africa. It examines the challenges faced by each country and the implications for future policy-making. The article discusses the importance of health care in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

The Presidential Leadership Dilemma: Between the Constitution and a Political Party

Julia R. Azari, Lara M. Brown, and Zim G. Nwokora

Abstract: This article discusses the presidential leadership dilemma in the United States. It examines the tension between the Constitution and a political party and the implications for future policy-making. The article discusses the importance of the presidential leadership dilemma in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

Obamacare Wars: Federalism, State Politics, and the Affordable Care Act

Daniel Beland, Philip Recca, and Alex Waldman

Abstract: This article discusses the challenges faced by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). It examines the role of federalism, state politics, and the ACA's implementation. The article discusses the importance of the ACA in the federal system and the implications for future policy-making.

The Politics of Leverage in International Relations: Name, Shame, and Sanction

Edited by M. Rebecca Grimm

Abstract: This book discusses the politics of leverage in international relations. It examines the use of name, shame, and sanction as tools of foreign policy. The book discusses the importance of leverage in international relations and the implications for future policy-making.

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