Sharif Amlani

PhD · American Politics

Miami, Florida

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Research Interests

Research Interests: American politics, political methodology, U.S. Congress, campaign finance, elections and voting behavior, political polarization, generative AI, synthetic respondents, agentic workflows

Education

University of California – Davis

Davis, CA

PhD, Political Science — *2023*

- Committee: Scott MacKenzie, Erik Engstrom, Michael Rocca, & Walter Stone
- Dissertation: "Competing Principals: The Influence of Out-of-District Donors on Congressional Representation"

University of New Mexico

Albuquerque, NM

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, *summa cum laude* — *2015*

- Thesis Chair: Michael Rocca
- Honors Thesis: "When the Pork Barrel Runs Dry: The Ban on Earmarks and its Effect on the 2012 Election"
- Honors College Commencement 2015 — Student Speaker

Work Experience

UC Center Sacramento (University of California)

Sacramento, CA

Adjunct Assistant Professor — *2026 – Present*

- **POL 196E: Research Methods for Political Science and Public Policy** (Summer 2026, Fall 2026) — design and deliver a term-long applied methods course covering research design, causal inference, measurement, data analysis in R, and data visualization; students complete a policy brief or original research project presented at the UCCS Undergraduate Research Showcase
- **Student mentorship** — advise undergraduates one-on-one through their term-long research projects (question formulation, data collection, analysis, writing, and poster presentation) and support their internship placements across California state government, legislative offices, and Sacramento-area nonprofits
- **Research initiatives** — leading development of the **Sacramento Policy Innovation Lab** (city-funded municipal field-experiment lab), an **AI Research Dissemination Pipeline** (forecasting California legislative priorities and matching UC faculty research to policymakers), and applied field experiments using UCCS's Sacramento political network
- **Prior role:** Class Coordinator, Applied Research (Spring 2021 – Spring 2023, 8 consecutive quarters) — coordinated undergraduate research placements across California state government and nonprofits

HumanAI (Survey Fluency)

Sacramento, CA

Founder & CEO — *2025 – Present*

- **Survey Fluency (flagship product)** — building an AI-powered survey analysis platform that automates toplines, cross-tabs, executive summaries, and PowerPoint generation from raw survey data, reducing 25-hour manual workflows to 10 minutes
- **Agentic AI workflows** — designed and deployed LangChain and LangGraph pipelines using Claude and OpenAI APIs to autonomously plan, execute, and critique statistical analyses with 95% accuracy
- **Production engineering** — built and deployed backend API on Google Cloud Run with Docker, CI/CD, FastAPI, and Supabase authentication
- **Customer development** — conducting discovery with political pollsters and market research firms; managing active design-partner pilots with KL Communications, Beacon Research, and C+R Research
- **Synthetic Respondents** — developed AI digital-twin research using LLM/ML to predict survey response distributions across demographic subgroups
- **SkyDeck Pad-13** — selected as founder for UC Berkeley's Pad-13 incubator program (acceptance rate ~3%)

Moody's Analytics

San Francisco, CA

Assistant Director of Research, Commercial Mortgage Metrics platform — *2023 – 2025*

- **Performance recognition** — rated as ***exceptional*** by colleagues and manager for performance and contributions
- **Generative AI product leadership** — led generative AI product development for the Commercial Mortgage Metrics (CMM) platform, building AI agents for commercial real estate credit risk analysis
- **AI agents shipped** — developed and deployed the Run CMM Agent, CMM Reporting Agent, and Red Flag Agent to automate credit risk workflows, outsourcing manual analyst work to AI
- **Pipelines and integrations** — built API integrations and standardized reporting processes for commercial mortgage data processing using Python and R, reducing workloads from 3 days to 3 minutes
- **Enterprise deployment** — translated advanced quantitative methods into production-grade enterprise data and modeling products used by more than 20 clients whose valuations exceed $1 trillion

Congressional Experience

U.S. Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham — *Washington D.C.*

Fred Harris Congressional Intern — *Fall 2014*
U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich — *Albuquerque, NM*

Intern — *Summer 2013*
U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich — *Albuquerque, NM*

Intern — *Summer 2012*
U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich — *Albuquerque, NM*

Intern — *Summer 2011*

Peer-Reviewed Articles

1. Kiesel, Spencer & **Sharif Amlani** (2025). "Affective Polarization in a Word: Open-Ended and Self-Coded Evaluations of Partisan Affect." ***PLOS ONE*** 20(1): e0310772.
2. **Amlani, Sharif**, Spencer Kiesel, and Ross Butters."Polarization in COVID-19 Vaccine Discussion Networks." ***American Politics Research*** 51.2 (2023): 260-273.
3. Algara, Carlos, **Sharif Amlani**, Samuel Collitt, Isaac Hale, & Sara Kazemian. "Nail in the Coffin or Lifeline? Evaluating the Electoral Impact of COVID-19 on President Trump in the 2020 Election." ***Political Behavior***.(2022): 1-29.
4. **Amlani, Sharif** & Samuel Collitt (2021). "The Impact of Vote-By-Mail Policy on Turnout and Vote Share in the 2020 Election." ***Election Law Journal***.
5. **Amlani, Sharif** & Carlos Algara (2021). "Partisanship & Nationalization in American Elections: Evidence from Presidential, Senatorial, & Gubernatorial Elections in the U.S. Counties, 1872–2020." ***Electoral Studies*** 73 (October 1, 2021): 102387.
    - ***Research featured in The Economist: The Democrats' structural disadvantage is not caused by demographics alone (October 29, 2021)***.

Other Articles

1. **Amlani, Sharif**, and Spencer Kiesel. "Analysis | How much do vaccinated Americans dislike the unvaccinated? We measured." *The Monkey Cage | Washington Post*, January 27, 2021.
2. **Amlani, Sharif**, Ross Butters, and Spencer Kiesel. "Analysis | With Nearly 800,000 U.S. Covid Deaths, What's Keeping People from Getting Vaccinated? Their Own Social Circles." *The Monkey Cage | Washington Post*, December 14, 2021.
    - ***Research featured in The Washington Post: Will Pfizer's pill presage a return to normal? (December 15, 2021)***.
3. **Amlani, Sharif** (2015). "Cosponsorship in Congress: Does the Number Matter?" *The Journal of Politics and International Affairs* 9.1: 120-139.
4. Rocca, Michael, **Sharif Amlani**, Lisa Sanchez, & Julia Hellwege (2015). "Crony Capitalism, Corruption and the Economy in the State of New Mexico." *Thornburg Foundation*.

Working Papers

1. **Amlani, Sharif**, Samuel Collitt, Christopher Hare, & Spencer Kiesel. (Original Affective Polarization Survey Research). "Conjoint Analysis of Interpersonal Affective Polarization: A Study of Partisan Bias in Dating, Housing, and Consumerism." *Working Paper*. ***Under Review***.
2. **Amlani, Sharif**. "Please Make a Donation Today, Says Lindsey Graham: How Fox News Influences Out-of-District Contributions." *Working Paper*.

Invited Talks & Conference Presentations

Midwest Political Science Association Conference

Conjoint Analysis of Interpersonal Affective Polarization: A Pilot Study of Partisan Bias in Dating, Housing, and Consumerism (With Spencer Kiesel) — *April 2021*

The Impact of Vote-By-Mail Policy on Turnout and Vote Share in the 2020 Election (With Samuel Collitt) — *April 2021*

Candidate Strategies in Two-Stage Elections Beginning with a Primary: Uncertainty over Public Opinion Can Drive Elite Polarization (With James Adams) — *April 2019*

Donor and Cosponsorship: Evidence from a Network Analysis — *April 2019*

Candidate Strategies in Two-Stage Elections Beginning with a Primary: Uncertainty over Public Opinion Can Drive Elite Polarization (With James Adams) — *April 2018*

Western Political Science Association Conference

The Impact of Vote-By-Mail Policy on Turnout and Vote Share in the 2020 Election (With Samuel Collitt) — *April 2021*

Migration Research Center Faculty Symposium

Emotional Reactions to Migrant Deaths on the U.S.-Mexico Border (and why we should care) (With Bradford Jones) — *December 2020*

Western Social Science Association Conference

Congress and Baseball: Charging the Mound — *April 2014*

Research Assistantships

UC Davis Aggie Square — *Sacramento, CA*
Graduate Student Researcher — *Fall 2021 - Spring 2023*

UC Center Sacramento — *Sacramento, CA*
Graduate Student Researcher — *Fall 2020 - Spring 2023*

Political Networks Conference — *Davis, CA*
Graduate Student Researcher — *Spring 2021*

Professor Michael S. Rocca — *Albuquerque, NM*
Undergraduate Research Assistant — *Summer - Fall 2015*

Teaching

Class Coordinator

Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Spring 2023*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Winter 2023*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Fall 2022*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Summer 2022*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Spring 2022*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Winter 2022*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Fall 2021*
Applied Research, UC Center Sacramento — *Spring 2021*

Mentorship

Political Science Undergraduate Honors Program, R Consultant — *Winter 2019*
Political Science Undergraduate Honors Program, R Consultant — *Winter 2018*

Teaching Assistant

Research Methods Seminar, Jordan Kujala *Summer 2021*
Public Sector Policy, Ross Butters *Spring 2021*
Public Sector Policy, Ross Butters *Winter 2021*
American Politics Seminar, Ross Butters *Winter 2021*
Political Methodology, Rachel Bernhard *Fall 2020*
Political Methodology, Christopher Hare *Spring 2020*
American Politics, Cheryl Boudreau *Winter 2020*
Political Methodology, Bradford Jones *Fall 2019*
American Politics, Scott MacKenzie *Summer 2019*
Political Methodology, Bradford Jones *Summer 2019*
National Security Policy, Lindsay Reid *Spring 2019*
Mass Media & Politics, Amber Boydston *Winter 2019*
Political Psychology, Cheryl Boudreau *Fall 2018*
Race and Ethnic Politics, Bradford Jones *Spring 2018*
International Relations, Heather Elko McKibben *Winter 2018*
Chicano Politics, Bradford Jones *Fall 2017*
Constitutional Politics, Mark Verbitsky *Spring 2017*
Media and Politics, Amber Boydston *Winter 2017*

Workshops

Excel Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Fall 2021*
Excel Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Summer 2021*
R Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Spring 2021*
R Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Winter 2021*
R Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Fall 2020*
STATA Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Spring 2021*
STATA Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Winter 2021*
STATA Workshop, UC Center Sacramento *Fall 2020*
R Workshop, Undergraduate Honors Program *Winter 2019*
R Workshop, Undergraduate Honors Program *Winter 2018*

Awards

2020	**Summer Collaborative Grant, with Scott MacKenzie**, UC Davis, Department of Political Science	*$5,000*
2019	**Department Travel Grant to the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association**, UC Davis, Department of Political Science	*$500*
2019	**Summer Methods Travel Award**, UC Davis, Department of Political Science	*$1,500*
2018	**Summer Collaborative Grant, with James Adams**, UC Davis, Department of Political Science	*$5,000*
2018	**Department Travel Grant to the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association** , UC Davis, Department of Political Science	*$500*

Service

2018 **Graduate Student Association**, Political Science Representative
2017 **Graduate Student Association**, Political Science Representative

Skills

Programming	R (Advanced), Python (Advanced), SQL, STATA, Tableau
Generative AI	LangChain, LangGraph, OpenAI API, Anthropic API, Prompt Engineering, RAG, Agentic Workflows, MCP
Platforms & Tools	Google Cloud Run, Docker, CI/CD, FastAPI, Streamlit, Supabase, Git/GitHub, Excel, Qualtrics
Statistical Methods	OLS, MLE, GLM, Machine Learning, Causal Inference, Experimental Methods (Conjoint, A/B), Survey Design, Social Network Analysis, Measurement & Scaling, Duration Modeling, Text Analysis
Data Visualization	ggplot2, Plotly, Matplotlib

References

Dr. Scott MacKenzie
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