Leslie Finger

How Education Reformers are Changing the Face of Education Politics

This project will explore how the politics of education has been transformed over the last three decades by the rise of the education reform movement. It will do this by getting a better sense of how teachers’ unions have changed and evolved over time. It will also examine how education reform groups have developed and spread and explore whether there are now more outsiders without traditional education backgrounds among state superintendents and the superintendents of large cities. Lastly, this project will explore how TFA has shaped politics through alumni that run for office and become education reform advocates.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): None.

Contact: If you’re interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: lfinger@fas.harvard.edu

Payam Mohseni

Iranian Regional Security Policy and Sectarian De-Escalation in the Middle East

This project focuses on sectarian politics in the Middle East and Iran’s regional foreign policy. In specific, this project focuses on the “Axis of Resistance” comprising of Iran, Iraq and Syria as well as various non-state actors such as Hezbollah, Iraq’s Hashd al-Shaabi and other militia actors. We will be looking at larger geo-political struggles, social transformations, and political thought affecting Axis players. Researchers may also be required to undertake analysis of Saudi and GCC state foreign policies, as well as Sunni Salafi movements in the Middle East. Responsibilities will include news and analysis monitoring, collecting and synthesizing secondary scholarship, and attending and summarizing talks/events pertaining to the research project.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): Reading ability in Arabic or Persian is preferred but not required.

Contact: If you’re interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: Dr. Payam Mohseni, Payam_Mohseni@hks.harvard.edu

Jon Rogowski

Perspectives on Presidential Power

I seek one or more students to conduct research on presidential power. Students participating in this project will review legal, political, and philosophical arguments about executive power and apply them to the contemporary American presidency. To do so, students will review historical documents, political and legal philosophy, judicial and congressional challenges to presidential power, and media coverage of the presidency.

Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills): GOV30 and/or GOV50 are strongly recommended but not required.

Contact: If you’re interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: rogowski@fas.harvard.edu
Daniel M. Smith  
*Candidates and Elections in Comparative Perspective*

This project involves the collection of candidate-level and legislator-level biographical and electoral data from several democracies. The RA will be involved in collecting and cleaning the data and, in the process, will learn about the electoral systems, candidate selection methods within parties, and patterns of representation in each of the countries included in the study.

**Prerequisites (courses and/or methodological skills):** None. Japanese, Norwegian, Italian, French, Spanish, or Swedish language skills are helpful, but not required. The student should be familiar with Microsoft Excel. Other data management skills (e.g., STATA, R) are helpful, but not necessary.

**Contact:** If you're interested, send a CV, 2 references, and a short paragraph on why this project interests you to: danielmsmith@fas.harvard.edu