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Citizenship: Germany; F1 visa

Fields of Concentration:

Primary Field: Political Economy
Secondary Field: Development Economics

Desired Teaching:

Political Economy, Applied Econometrics, Game Theory

Comprehensive Examinations Completed:

2019 (Oral): Development Economics
2017/2018 (Written): Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Political Economy

Dissertation Title: *Essays in Political Economy*

Committee:

Professor Giovanni Maggi (Co-Chair)
Professor Frances Rosenbluth (Co-Chair)
Professor Susan Rose-Ackerman
Professor Ebonya Washington

Expected Completion Date: May 2022

Degrees:

Ph.D., Political Science and Economics, Yale University, 2022 (expected)
M.Phil., Political Science and Economics, Yale University, 2019
M.A., Economics, Yale University, 2018
M.Sc., Political Science and Political Economy, London School of Economics, 2015
B.A., Politics and Public Administration; Economics, University of Konstanz, 2014

Fellowships, Honors and Awards:

Baden-Wuerttemberg Foundation Fellowship (2020)
MacMillan Center International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Yale University (2020-2021)
Pierre B. A. Keller Fellowship, Yale University (2017-2018)
MacMillan Center Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowship, Yale University (2018)
Leitner Political Economy Fellowship, Yale University (2016-2018)
Graduate Student Stipend, Yale University (2016-2022)
Carlo-Schmid-Fellowship, German Academic Exchange Service (2015-2016)
MSc Distinction at the LSE (2015)
Konrad-Adenauer Foundation Scholarship (2013-2015)
VEUK Award as best departmental BA graduate at University of Konstanz (2014)
German Academic Exchange Short Term Scholarship (2013)

Research Grants:

Tobin Center Grant (2020). Amount: \$5,400
Leitner Grant (2020). Amount: \$2,000
Leitner Summer Grant (2019). Amount: \$3,630
Leitner Summer Grant (2018). Amount: \$6,000
PROMOS Travel Grant (2013). Amount: ~\$1,000

Teaching Experience:

Fall 2020, Grader with Contact for Introduction to Statistics (with Prof. Jonathan Reuning-Scherer), Yale College
Fall 2018/2019, Teaching Fellow for Mathematics for Political Science (with Dr. Chris Li and Dr. Andrew Bridy), Yale Graduate School
Spring 2019, Teaching Fellow for Game Theory and Political Science (with Dr. Christian Salas), Yale College
Spring 2014, Teaching Assistant for Comparative Politics (with Prof. Christian Breunig), University of Konstanz

Research and Work Experience:

Research Assistant to Prof. Susan Rose-Ackerman, Yale University, 2017
Research Assistant to Prof. Frances Rosenbluth, Yale University, 2017
Research Assistant to Dr. Raju Huidrom, The World Bank, 2015-2016
Research Assistant to Dr. Philip Leifeld, University of Konstanz, 2013-2014

Publication:

“Who Do You Trust? The Consequences of Partisanship and Trust for Responsiveness to COVID-19 Orders” (2021) [with Daniel A. N. Goldstein], *Perspectives on Politics* (forthcoming).

Working Papers:

“Firm Lobbying in the European Union”, (November 2021), *Job Market Paper*

“Experimental Evidence on Social Trust and Responsiveness to COVID-19 Mitigation Policies” [with Daniel A. N. Goldstein], (May 2021), *Working Paper (under review)*

“Campaign Contributions, Political Connections, and Investment – Firm-Level Evidence from US State Attorney Elections”, (September 2020), *Working Paper*

Work In Progress:

“Discretion, Efficiency, and Trust in European Public Procurement” [with Daniel A. N. Goldstein]

“Causal Effects of Seat Safety on Lobbying – Evidence from Redistricting”

“Unionization and Firm Lobbying”

Seminar and Conference Presentations:

APSA Annual Meeting, 2021

MPSA Annual Meeting, 2021

APSA Annual Meeting, 2020

MPSA Annual Meeting, 2019

Referee Service:

American Political Science Review

Languages:

German (native), English (fluent), Spanish (intermediate), French (beginner), Arabic (beginner)

References:

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Dissertation Abstract

Firm Lobbying in the European Union [Job Market Paper]

The European Union (EU) Single Market is the largest internal market worldwide, and EU institutions such as the EU Commission have far-reaching authority in a wide array of policy realms. Hence, the policy stakes in the EU are high, and a wide array of actors tries to exert influence at the EU level; private companies play a prominent role in this process. Yet, a systematic empirical account of the determinants and effects of firm lobbying in the EU is lacking. I address this gap, and explore the following questions: which types of companies are lobbying, and what are the effects of firm lobbying in the EU?

I leverage novel data on firms' meetings with the EU Commission, and so provide an answer to the first question: larger, more profitable, and more valuable companies lobby more.

Next, I show that lobbying leads to higher stock market value for the firms that lobby, employing an event study approach. Around meeting dates with EU Commission officials, firms experience cumulative abnormal returns (CARs) of between 0.3% and 0.5%. Exploiting the surprise outcome of the Brexit referendum in 2016, I furthermore employ a difference-in-differences design that indicates that firms' connections to the EU Commission lost value when the UK decided to leave the EU. This further suggests that financial markets value firm lobbying in the EU.

I then investigate direct benefits that companies may receive from the EU Commission. Exploiting a three-dimensional panel with firm, year, and commissioner dimensions, I demonstrate that firm lobbying is associated with companies receiving higher grant amounts from the EU Commission. I argue for a causal interpretation of this finding based on an instrumental variable design that relies on the fact companies are significantly more likely to lobby commissioners from their respective home countries. In a placebo check I assess non-lobbying companies' nationality and EU Commission funding awards, and argue that shared nationality of commissioners and firms indeed affects grant and procurement allocation decisions through the meetings channel.

Lastly, I explore whether the detected effects generalize to EU regulatory politics. I show that companies that had met with commissioners before regulations were proposed experience greater CARs around regulation proposal dates, particularly when proposals appear relatively uncontroversial. Lobbying therefore may also convey firm-level regulatory benefits.

I discuss the findings against the backdrop of the literature, and conjecture that lobbying in the EU context should not primarily be understood as quid-pro-quo lobbying. The EU features a relative absence of money in politics, and few cases of revolving doors; the provision of information and technical expertise on the other hand appear to play a larger role, which is why lobbying here may mainly be understood as informational. My results therefore more broadly imply that informational lobbying can lead to private gains for firms.

Who Do You Trust? The Effects of Partisanship and Trust on Compliance with COVID-19 Orders [with Daniel A. N. Goldstein]

Non-uniform compliance with public policy by citizens can undermine the effectiveness of government, particularly during crises. Mitigation policies intended to combat the novel coronavirus offer a real-world measure of citizen compliance, allowing us to examine the determinants of asymmetrical responsiveness. Analyzing county-level cellphone data, we leverage staggered roll-out to estimate the causal effect of stay-at-home orders on mobility using a difference-in-differences strategy. We find movement is significantly curtailed, and examination of descriptive heterogeneous effects suggests the key roles that partisanship and trust play in producing irregular compliance. We find that Republican-leaning counties comply less than Democratic-leaning ones, which we argue underlines the importance of trust in science and acceptance of large-scale government policies for compliance. However, this partisan compliance gap shrinks when directives are given by Republican leaders, suggesting citizens are more trusting of co-partisan leaders. Furthermore, we find that higher levels of social trust increase compliance; yet, these gains attenuate or intensify depending upon community-level partisan sentiments. Our study provides a real-world, behavioral measure that demonstrates the influence of partisanship, social trust, and their interaction on citizen welfare. Finally, we argue our results speak to how trust in government may impact successful containment of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Campaign Contributions, Political Connections, and Investment – Firm-Level Evidence from US State Attorney Elections

The literature on political connections of firms predominantly focuses on the legislative branch and – to a lesser extent – on the executive branch. However, companies may also benefit from political connections to the judicial branch. In this paper I shed light on this phenomenon by examining the effects of firms’ political connections to state attorneys general (state AGs) in the US. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these connections may be beneficial for firms, as they may contribute to decreased law enforcement stringency that firms face. I leverage campaign contribution data to operationalize firm-state AG political connections. Employing a regression discontinuity design, I show that political connections to state AGs lead to increases in firms’ investments. I provide suggestive evidence that these effects might be due to the reduced uncertainty in the business environment, as manifested in a lowered latent risk of being investigated and/or penalized by connected state AGs. The observed investment effects may be inefficient as capital may be misallocated across firms.