

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

RICHARD L. SASLAW
Majority Leader
35th Senatorial District
Post Office Box 1856
Springfield, Virginia 22151



Committee Assignments:
Chair, Commerce and Labor
Education and Health
Judiciary
Finance & Appropriations
Rules

November 17, 2021

Ms. Muriel-Theresa Pitney
Clerk of Court
Supreme Court of Virginia
100 N. 9th St, 5th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Ms. Pitney:


Pursuant to the Court's November 12, 2021 Order, the Senate Democratic Caucus hereby submits Professor R. Michael Alvarez as an additional nominee, in the event our original nominees are unavailable, to serve as special master to assist the Court in the establishment of districts for the Virginia Senate, the Virginia House of Delegates, and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Professor Alvarez is a Professor of Political and Computational Social Science at California Institute of Technology (Caltech), and Co-Director of the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project. Excerpts from Professor Alvarez's personal website, which contain information ordinarily found in a CV, are attached as Exhibit 1. The Senate Democratic Caucus appreciates the Court's consideration of the nomination of Professor Alvarez, along with the original nominations set forth in our November 1 letter.

Additionally, we respectfully direct to the Court's attention to the timing of the release of the special masters' proposed maps and the accompanying public comment period. Unless the Court directs otherwise, the special masters' proposed maps will be released 30 days after their appointment. *See* Redistricting Rule 2(d). Given the significance of this once-a-decade process to every Virginian, as well as the interests in transparency and public engagement reflected in the Redistricting Amendment, we believe it is important to allow for a robust period of public comment following the release of the proposed maps. However, we recognize that this period of public comment would likely overlap with the holidays, and we ask that the Court schedule the public comment period and any public hearings so as not to conflict with the season's religious observances. As noted in our initial submission, we also urge the Court to establish a formal briefing process with dates for submissions from the majority and minority caucuses.

We appreciate the Court's consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Richard L. Saslaw in cursive script.

Senate Majority Leader Richard L. Saslaw

CC: Speaker of the House of Delegates Eileen R. Filler-Corn
Senate Minority Leader Thomas K. Norment
House of Delegates Minority Leader C. Todd Gilbert

Enclosures: Exhibit 1 (Alvarez website excerpts)

EXHIBIT 1

R. MICHAEL ALVAREZ

INTRO ABOUT RESEARCH TEACHING PROJECTS

ABOUT ME



I'm a Professor of Political and Computational Social Science at Caltech, and Co-Director of the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project. At Caltech, I am a faculty member in the Social Sciences, and am an associated faculty member in the Social and Decision Neuroscience program. I'm a Fellow of the Society for Political Methodology, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. I've been recognized for my mentoring work, both at Caltech by the Graduate Student Council (twice) and by the Society for Political Methodology. During the last three NCAA basketball seasons, I've been the faculty liaison to Caltech's men's basketball program. I'm active in the community, and work mainly with educational institutions and non-profits.



R. MICHAEL ALVAREZ

INTRO ABOUT RESEARCH TEACHING PROJECTS

TEACHING

My teaching interests cover electoral politics, election administration, and political behavior. Methodologically, I've taught survey methodology, maximum likelihood, discrete choice, causal inference, and machine and deep learning, mainly at the graduate level and often in special topics or independent study courses. I also participate in Caltech's unique Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program, which gives me the opportunity to work one-on-one with Caltech undergraduates through the summer, which is both a teaching and research activity. I also serve as the Political Science Option Representative at Caltech.

The classes that I have taught recently are:

BEM/Ec/PS 80: Frontiers in Social Science

PS 99ab: Political Science Research Seminar

PS 101: The 2020 Presidential Election

PS 120: American Electoral Behavior and Party Strategy (Spring 2022)

PS 130: Introduction to Social Science Surveys: Methods and Practice (Fall 2021)

SS 202c: Political Theory

SS 224: Social Science Data (Winter 2021)

SS 231abc: American Politics (Winter 2021) (Fall 2021)

SS/Psy/CNS 285: Topics in Social, Cognitive, and Decision Sciences

In addition to these courses Caltech students interest in Independent Study in Political Science, Social Science, or Computer Science can contact me about opportunities in the 2021-2022 academic year.



R. MICHAEL ALVAREZ

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research spans a variety of topics in social and political science, social and decision neuroscience, and research methodology. On the substantive side, my current research is largely on electoral politics and voting behavior, in both the United States and other nations. On the methodological side, my research focuses on computational social science, machine and deep learning, and survey methodology.

Here are links to books and articles I've recently published.

Recent Books

Securing American Elections: How Data-Driven Election Monitoring Can Improve Our Democracy, with Nicholas Adams-Cohen, Seo-young Silvia Kim, and Yimeng Li. Cambridge Elements, September 2020.

The Oxford Handbook of Polling and Survey Methods, edited with Lonna Rae Atkeson, Oxford University Press, 2018.

Computational Social Science: Discovery and Prediction, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Recent Articles

2021

How (Not) To Reproduce — Practical Considerations to Resolve the Replication Crisis in Political Science, with Simon Heuberger. **PS: Political Science & Politics**, forthcoming.

Why Do Election Results Change After Election Day? The “Blue Shift” in California Elections, with Yimeng Li and Michelle Hyun. *Political Research Quarterly*, forthcoming. [[Working paper](#)].

Dynamic Social Media Monitoring for Fast-Evolving Online Discussions, with Maya Srikanth, Anqi Liu, Nicholas Adams-Cohen, Jian Cao, and Anima Anandkumar. In the Proceedings of the 27th ACM SIGKDD Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining (KDD 21), August 14-18, 2021, Virtual Event, Singapore. ACM, New York, NY, USA.

<https://doi.org/10.1145/3447548.3467171>. [[Preprint](#)].

Voting Experiences, Perceptions of Fraud, and Voter Confidence, with Jian Cao and Yimeng Li. *Social Science Quarterly*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12940>. [[Preprint](#)]. [[Replication Materials](#)].

2020

Personality Traits Are Directly Associated with Anti-Black Prejudice in the United States, with Chujun Lin. *PLOS-ONE*, July 1, 2020.
(<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235436>).

Conventional and Unconventional Political Participation in Latin America: A Hierarchical Latent Class Approach, with Gabriel Katz, Ines Levin, and Lucas Nunez. *Political Science Research Methods*, 2020
(<https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2020.35>). [[Preprint](#)]. [[Replication Materials](#)].

Who Voted in 2016? Using Fuzzy Forests to Understand Voter Turnout, with Seo-young Silvia Kim and Christina Ramirez. *Social Science Quarterly*, 2020
(<https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12777>). [[Preprint](#)].

Hidden Donors: The Censoring Problem in U.S. Federal Campaign Finance Data, with Seo-young Silvia Kim and Jonathan N. Katz. *Election Law Journal*, 2020
(<https://doi.org/10.1089/elj.2019.0593>). [[Preprint](#)].

2019

Abstention, Protest, and Residual Votes in the 2016 Presidential Election, with Charles Stewart III, Stephen Pettigrew, and Cameron Wimpy. *Social Science Quarterly*. December 2019, (<https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12757>). [[Preprint](#)].

Finding Social Media Trolls: Dynamic Keyword Selection Methods for Rapidly-Evolving Online Debates, with Anqi Liu, Maya Srikanth, Nicholas Adams-Cohen and Anima Anandkumar. Thirty-third Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems, December 2019. [[Preprint](#)].

Election forensics: Using machine learning and synthetic data for possible election anomaly detection, with Mali Zhang and Ines Levin. PLOS ONE, October 31, 2019. (<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0223950>). [[Replication materials](#)].

Using Machine Learning to Uncover Hidden Heterogeneities in Survey Data, with Christina Ramirez and Marisa A. Abrajano. Scientific Reports, November 5, 2019. ([doi:10.1038/s41598-019-51862-x](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-51862-x)). [[Replication materials](#)].

Evaluating the Quality of Changes in Voter Registration Databases, with Seo-young Silvia Kim and Spencer Schneider. American Politics Research, (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X19870512>). [[Preprint](#)].

Computational Social Science, with Seo-young Silvia Kim. In Oxford Bibliographies in Political Science. Ed. Sandy Maisel. New York: Oxford University Press, (DOI: [10.1093/OBO/9780199756223-0285](https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780199756223-0285)).

The Impact of Personalized Information on Vote Intention: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment, with Joelle Pianzola, Alexander H. Trechsel, Kristjan Vassil, and Guido Schwerdt. *Journal of Politics* (<https://doi.org/10.1086/702946>), 2019. [[Replication materials](#)].

Waiting to Vote in the 2016 Presidential Election: Evidence from a Multi-county Study, with Robert M. Stein et al. Political Research Quarterly (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912919832374>), 2019. [[Replication materials](#)].

Paying Attention to Inattentive Survey Respondents, with Lonna Rae Atkeson, Ines Levin, and Yimeng Li. *Political Analysis* (<https://doi.org/10.1017/pan.2018.57>), 2019. [[Replication materials](#)].

2018

Inferring Whether Officials Are Corruptible From Looking at Their Faces, with Chujun Lin and Ralph Adolphs. *Psychological Science* (<https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797618788882>), 2018.

Answering Questions About Race: How Racial and Ethnic Identities Influence Survey Response, with Marisa Abrajano. *American Politics Research* (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X18812039>), 2018.

Low-Information Voting: Evidence From Instant-Runoff Elections, with Thad E. Hall and Ines Levin. *American Politics Research* (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X18759643>), 2018.

Research Replication: Practical Considerations, with Ellen M. Key and Lucas Nunez. *PS: Political Science & Politics* (<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096517002566>), 2018.



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