

Vanessa A. Lefler
Curriculum Vitae

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Education

- 2012 Ph.D., Political Science, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA.
Fields: International Relations, Formal Theory, Methodology (minor)
Dissertation: Bargaining for Peace? Strategic Forum Selection in Interstate Conflict Management.
- 2006 B.A., Political Science and English (*Summa Cum Laude*), Westminster College, Fulton, MO.

Academic Appointment

August 2012-present Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations,
Department of Political Science, Middle Tennessee State University,
Murfreesboro, TN.

Research & Teaching Interests

International Relations: conflict and cooperation, conflict management, international organization, international law, formal theory in international relations

Formal Theory & Methodology: introductory game theory, strategy in politics, dynamic modeling, empirical implications of theoretical models, research design, experimental methodology

Papers Under Review

Trading Effectiveness for Acceptability: The (Dis)Use of Formal International Organizations in Interstate Conflict Management. Revise and Resubmit, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*.

UN Security Council Nonpermanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation?, with Brian Lai. Under Review.

Working Papers**Bargain Shopping in Conflict Management: A Cross-Cultural Experimental Analysis of Strategic Forum Selection**

Abstract: The relationship between culture and conflict attitudes has a well-documented, but less well-tested, history in international relations. This project contributes to this research by testing a formal conflict bargaining model in a cross-cultural setting. Implications from the model suggest that states “bargain shop” for peace by leveraging relative power and estimations about third-party outcomes to broker bilateral agreements that approximate third-party features, but that are less effective because bilateral agreements lack external enforcement. The theory is tested with laboratory experiments conducted in the United States and China. Analyzing the theoretical model in China provides an interesting contrast to the American analysis because subjects come from a society that is both non-Western and of significant international influence, which affects realist predictions about conflict resolution.

Systemic Alliance Reliability and Incentives to Make New Commitments, with Kelly Kadera.

Abstract: Alliances are exceptionally reliable institutions, so when violations are frequent states may be more cautious about investing in new treaties because these commitments are more likely to be challenged. Likewise, optimism might prevail when abrogations are few, stimulating states to expand their alliance ties. Using the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions data from 1816 to 2003, we examine whether system-wide levels of treaty abrogation influence individual states' decisions to augment, maintain, or lessen their alliance commitments. Controlling for levels of systemic conflict along with other factors that predict alliance membership, we find support for the theory that systemic institutional reliability informs states' decisions to make new commitments.

State Sovereignty and Delegation to International Institutions: Patterns of Authority.

Abstract: What impact does IO growth have on state sovereignty? States delegate to IOs in order to enhance cooperation and reduce transaction costs. Institutions meet their principals' demands by being independent and centralizing agents. But, this independence increases the opportunity for slack and slippage. In response, internationalist critics express the fear that this paradoxical relationship between institutional independence and state autonomy could compromise states' unilateral options. To explore this relationship, I adapt a dynamic model of budgetary competition using differential equations to pattern state sovereignty and agency slack over time. Results from the model suggest that international organizations possess the capacity to overrun states, but rarely any real capability. Competition between states actually leads to more delegation—fitting with institutionalist views of IOs as security-dilemma-resolving institutions.

Grants

- 2011 Dissertation Research Grant, International Programs Global Initiatives and Department of Political Science, University of Iowa (\$2000).
Dissertation Research Grant, Center for Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Iowa (\$1000).
Small Research Grant, Department of Political Science, University of Iowa (\$500).

Awards

- 2011 Workshop Travel Grant, Winter Institute in Political Methods, Texas A&M University (\$850).
Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Professional Advancement Travel Grant, University of Iowa (\$300).
Executive Council of Graduate and Professional Students (ECGPS) Professional Advancement Travel Grant, University of Iowa (\$300).
Ballard Seashore Dissertation Year Fellowship, University of Iowa (\$23,000).
2010 GSS Professional Advancement Travel Grant, University of Iowa (\$200).
ECGPS Professional Advancement Travel Grant, University of Iowa (\$300).
2008 Best Graduate Student Poster, Dynamic Models of International Politics, Department of Political Science, University of Iowa.

Recent Conference Participation

- 2012 Bargain Shopping in Conflict Management: A Cross-Cultural Experimental Analysis of Strategic Forum Selection. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Crafting a Deal: An Experimental Analysis of Interstate Conflict Management Bargain Shopping. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Chair. Alliance Formation and the Effects of International Institutions on Conflict. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Systemic Alliance Reliability and Incentives to Make New Commitments, with Kelly Kadera. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association*.
Bargain Shopping for Peace? An Experimental Analysis of Forum Selection in Interstate Conflict Management. Poster presentation. *NYU-CESS Experimental Political Science Conference*. New York University.

Recent Conference Participation, continued

- 2011 Bargain Shopping for Peace? An Experimental Analysis. Poster presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Peace Science Society (International)*. University of Southern California.
- Bargain Shopping for Peace? Evaluating Conflict Management Strategies, Theory and Experimental Analysis. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
- Designing Peace-Making Mechanisms: Transparency and Conflict Management Forum Selection. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of Midwest Political Science Association*.
- Discussant/Chair. Cooperation as a Conflict Deterrent? *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
- 2010 Bargaining for Peace: The Use of IGOs in Conflict Management. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Peace Science Society (International)*. University of North Texas.
- Why Do States Use Formal IGOs in Conflict Management? Paper presentation. *Journeys in World Politics Workshop*. University of Iowa.
- Participant. Small States in International Negotiations Working Group. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
- Bargaining for Peace: An Economic Analysis of Forum Selection in Conflict Management. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
- Discussant/Chair. Third-Party Mediation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
- Conflict Management as a Bargaining Process: Transparency and Forum Selection. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association*.
- State Sovereignty and IO Delegation: Patterns of Authority. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association*.
- 2009 Let's Talk: Forum Selection in Conflict Resolution. Paper presentation. *Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
- Detering the Defender: When the Best Offense is a Strategic Offense. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
- U.N. Security Council Non-Permanent Membership: Equitable Distribution for Equitable Representation? with Brian Lai. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.

Professional Service

Reviewer

International Studies Quarterly

Program Assistant

Journeys in World Politics Workshop. 2009-2010.

Political Methodology Annual Summer Meeting. July 2010.

Visions in Methodology Workshop. March 2010.

Teaching

PS 3210: Introduction to International Relations (Undergraduate)

PS 4860: Resolving Conflict in World Politics (Undergraduate)

Professional Association Memberships

American Political Science Association

Conflict Processes Section of the APSA

Experimental Political Science Section of the APSA

International Studies Association

Midwest Political Science Association

Peace Science Society (International)

Women in Conflict Studies (WICS)

References

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