

Vanessa A. Lefler

Curriculum Vitae

Department of Political Science
& International Relations
1301 E. Main Street, MTSU Box 29
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Office Phone: 615-494-7679
Cell Phone: 319-541-5234
E-mail: vanessa.lefler@mtsu.edu
Website: <http://vanessalefler.com>

Appointment

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

Education

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

Research Activities

Publications

Lai, Brian and Vanessa A. Lefler. 2017. Examining the Role of Region and Elections on Representation in the UN Security Council. *Review of International Organizations*, 12(4): 585-611.

Lefler, Vanessa A. 2016. Experiments. *Oxford Bibliographies in International Relations*. Patrick James, editor. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Lefler, Vanessa A. 2015. Strategic Forum Selection and Compliance in Interstate Dispute Resolution. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 32(1): 76-98.

Works in Preparation

The (Dis)Use of Formal International Organizations in Interstate Conflict Management. In preparation for November 2017 submission.

Abstract: Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are important actors in the settlement of contentious, interstate disputes. An increasing number of IGOs include peaceful dispute resolution provisions, and when states turn to IGOs the effort is more likely to produce a settlement with which both parties comply. But countries typically do not submit their disputes to international organizations. Instead, most negotiate bilaterally or through other states. Why do states avoid institutional solutions to interstate conflict? A side-by-side test of the advantages of institutional management given the nature of rational choice strategies, Kantian norms, and dispute contingencies answers this question. The results find support for rationalist and Kantian approaches, but not the contingency framework. Altogether, the results suggest that rather than favoring IGOs for their direct efficacy as conflict managers, states look to IGOs and other management strategies to clarify procedural issues and commitment.

Dimensions of Forum Selection in Interstate Conflict Management: Transparency, Decision Control, and Distributional Bias. In preparation for December 2017 submission.

Abstract: The study of bargaining, mediation, and legal dispute resolution in interstate conflict management enjoy vibrant, but largely separate, traditions. This independence is puzzling, though, for practical and theoretical reasons. First, pre-negotiation or procedural phases of conflict resolution are likely to take into account the wide variety of bilateral and third-party choices rather than focus solely on one strategy. Second, as conflict management scholars incorporate strategic bargaining problems into theories about management efficacy, comparisons across approaches on these problems are infrequent or inconsistent. This paper presents a three-dimensional framework of a conflict management forum that permits comparisons between bilateral negotiations, mediation, and legal dispute resolution. These three dimensions, transparency, decision control, and distributional bias, unify the existing literature's explanations for management effectiveness and acceptability so that scholarship may advance on questions of management demand and supply and institutional design.

Improving Knowledge and Skills Acquisition? A Controlled Comparison of Active Learning and Conventional Instruction in Political Science, with David Carleton, Lisa Langenbach, and Kent Syler (Middle Tennessee State University). In preparation for January 2018 submission.

Abstract: Active learning instructional techniques require students to engage with the material and with each other. The implied hypothesis is that students instructed in such an active style will gain a better mastery of content, develop

stronger critical and analytic thinking skills, and be better equipped to work in collaborative settings. We test this hypothesis in introductory World Politics and American Politics courses by comparing knowledge and skills acquisition between students instructed using a conventional approach and students enrolled in sections that used active learning. This paper describes the approaches employed in the active learning designed courses and summarizes the main effects of our controlled comparisons: In sum, we find few substantive differences in knowledge and skills acquisition between active learning and conventional instruction sections, but evident differences suggest that active learning approaches have a greater influence on analytic and critical thinking growth and conventional instruction results in better content delivery.

Other On-Going Projects

The Consequences of Other Claims on Peaceful Settlement Attempts.

Abstract: Do other, unresolved claims cast a shadow on states' ability to reach a settlement agreement on a claim actively under negotiation? This paper investigates the effects of third party claimants on settlement negotiation success, arguing that the clarity of signals about resolve and capabilities depends on the characteristics of the management forum.

Systemic Conditions of Alliance Commitments: Norms, Market Volatility, and Investment, with Kelly M. Kadera (University of Iowa).

Abstract: This project examines 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 that systemic institutional reliability informs states' decisions to make new commitments.

Culture and Forum Selection in Interstate Conflict Management

Abstract: This project develops a bargaining model of forum selection and culture, which contrasts "face-saving" and self-interest. This model is then tested using laboratory experiments designed to elicit the different cultural frames and their effects on forum selection, management outcomes, and compliance.

Bargain Shopping for Peace? A Formal Bargaining Model of Conflict Management Forum Selection

Abstract: This paper examines bargaining over the selection and design of conflict management fora through a formal model. The theory conceptualizes the forum selection bargaining process as a strategic choice among three conflict management venue characteristics: transparency, decision control, and distributional

bias. Equilibrium analysis of the model identifies which types of management fora are optimal in varying conflict contexts and explains why some effective strategies (e.g., adjudication) are rarely used.

Investment and Alliance Formation: The Signaling Role of Systemic Conditions for Alliance Commitment and Reputation, with Kelly M. Kadera (University of Iowa).

Abstract: Alliances are generally reliable, but they have not been so consistently. In particular, regular alliance abrogations weaken alliance credibility internationally. We argue that systemic conditions temper states' evaluations of potential allies. In a system with weak compliance norms, states seek out more reliable allies. Alternatively, states are more forgiving when systemic conditions convey alliance reliability.

The Electoral Politics of United Nations Security Council Non-Permanent Membership, with Brian Lai (University of Iowa).

Abstract: What factors influence the vote share received by candidates in United Nations Security Council Elections? To answer this question, we present two models of UNSC electoral success: One based on domestic, electoral politics theories – median voter and campaign effects – and a second leveraging international approaches – adherence to international peace and security and structural, geopolitical influences.

Grants

- 2016 Access and Diversity Grant. Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Middle Tennessee State University (\$1237.40).
- 2015 Faculty Research and Creative Activity Grant for Summer Research. Faculty Research and Creative Activity Committee. Middle Tennessee State University. (\$4950.03)
Access and Diversity Grant. Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Middle Tennessee State University (\$3715.60).
- 2014 Access and Diversity Grant. Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Middle Tennessee State University (\$2645.24).
Access and Diversity Grant. Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Middle Tennessee State University (\$2529.06).
- 2012 Tennessee Board of Regents Access and Diversity Grant. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Middle Tennessee State University (\$1693.63).
Faculty Research and Creative Activity Grant for Summer Research. Faculty Research and Creative Activity Committee. Middle Tennessee State University (\$4781.25).

Grants, continued

- 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).
Workshop Travel Grant. Winter Institute in Political Methods. Texas A&M University (\$850).
Small Research Grant. Department of Political Science. University of Iowa (\$500).

Recent Conference Participation

- 2017 Dispute Resolution and Reputation: Floodgates or Barely Ripple Effects. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Chair. Experiments in State Capacity and Popular Legitimacy. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Chair. Innovations and Improvements in Conflict Data. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Conflict Bargaining Strategies and the Shadow of International Courts. Paper presentation. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Chair. Territorial Claims and Other States Interests. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Discussant. Alternatives to Sanctions. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Chair. Old and New Frontiers of International Cooperation and Coordination. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
- 2016 The Consequences of Other Claims on Peaceful Settlement Agreement. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
- 2015 Two's Company, Three's a Crowd? Explaining Bilateral Negotiation and Settlement. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Peace Science Society (International)*.
Two's Company, Three's a Crowd? Explaining Bilateral Negotiation and Settlement. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Chair. Women in Conflict Processes. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
Chair/Discussant. Different Dynamics of International Relations. *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
The (Dis)Use of IGOs in Interstate Conflict Management. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Avoiding Conflict, Saving Face: A Cultural Analysis of Strategic Forum Selection in Interstate Dispute Resolution. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.

Recent Conference Participation, continued

- 2015 Chair. Institutions and Political Violence. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Chair/Discussant. Security Cooperation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
The (Dis)Use of IGOs in Interstate Conflict Management. Paper presentation. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Avoiding Conflict, Saving Face: A Cultural Analysis of Strategic Forum Selection in Interstate Dispute Resolution. Paper presentation. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Discussant. Scientific Study of International Politics (SSIP) Poster Session. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
Chair. Domestic Politics and Interstate Conflict. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
- 2014 Strategic Forum Selection and Settlement Compliance in Interstate Dispute Resolution. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Chair. Domestic Information Environment and Foreign Policy Evaluation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Discussant. International Institutions and Conflict. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Strategic Forum Selection and Settlement Compliance in Interstate Dispute Resolution. Paper presentation. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
The Electoral Politics of United Nations Security Council Non-Permanent Membership, with Brian Lai (University of Iowa). Paper presentation. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*.
- 2013 The Consequences of Strategic Forum Selection on Dispute Resolution. Paper presentation. *Annual Meeting of the Peace Science Society (International)*.
Chair/Discussant. Bargaining, Power, and Interstate Conflict. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
Chair/Discussant. New Methods in the Study of International Cooperation. *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*.
- 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*. (Conference canceled).

Invited Talks

- 2016 The Consequences of Other Claims on Peaceful Settlement Agreement. Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance Brown Bag Lecture Series. Middle Tennessee State University. Murfreesboro, TN.
Mentoring STEM Women Faculty. Panel member. Middle Tennessee State University ADVANCE Conference. Middle Tennessee State University. Murfreesboro, TN.
Gender, Activism, and the Academy. Panel member. Department of Sociology and Anthropology Graduate Program in Sociology, Middle Tennessee State University. Murfreesboro, TN.
- 2015 China's Contentious Claims in the West Pacific: A Conflict Management Approach. Columbia State Community College. Columbia, TN.
- 2013 Strategic Forum Selection and Settlement Compliance in Interstate Dispute Resolution. Department of Political Science. University of Memphis. Memphis, TN.
Bargain Shopping for Peace? Effects of Institutions and Norms on Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Claims. Rotary International, Murfreesboro, TN, Chapter.

Other Professional Development

- 2017 Grant Writing Enhancement Program, Office of Research Services, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN.
Learning While Leading: Supporting Intercultural Development Through Study Away, CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange, Madrid, SPN.
The Data Scientist's Toolbox and R Programming, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD.
- 2014 An Introduction to Interactive Programming in Python, Rice University, Houston, TX.
- 2012-2015 Faculty Writing Group, Learning, Teaching and Innovative Technologies Center, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN.
- 2012 Experimental Political Science Methodology, Winter Institute in Political Methods, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.

Teaching

Courses Taught

Undergraduate: Introduction to Global Politics, International Relations, International Law, International Conflict, Resolving Conflict in World Politics, Model United Nations, Political Science & International Relations as a Profession

Graduate: Peace and Conflict Resolution, International Security, Global Governance

Other Teaching Competencies

Formal Theory & Methodology: Introductory Game Theory, Formal Theory in International Relations, Research Design, Experimental Methodology, Limited and Categorical Dependent Variables

Teaching Awards

2016, 2017 Recognition for Contributions to Student Success. Graduating Class and Division of Student Affairs. Middle Tennessee State University.

Student Assessment Supervision

MAIA Capstone Projects

<i>Student Name</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Term Completed</i>	<i>Role</i>
Ahmed, Mahmood	Practicum	In progress	Adviser
Doremus, Kevin	Practicum	In progress	Adviser
Putnal, Kylie	Practicum	Summer 2017	Adviser
Stubblefield, Katherine	Practicum	Spring 2017	Reader
Squadrin, Guilia	Practicum	Fall 2016	Adviser
Peters, John	Practicum	Spring 2015	Adviser
Jalal, Balen	Thesis	Fall 2014	Adviser
Courtoy, Jason	Thesis	Spring 2014	Adviser

MAIA Comprehensive Exam Committee:

International Affairs Core: Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017

International Security & Peace Studies: Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Projects

<i>Student Name</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Term Completed</i>	<i>Role</i>
Fleischmann, Jason	International Relations	In progress	Reader
Henderson, Caitlin	International Relations	Fall 2016	Adviser
Kennedy, Joseph	International Relations, Spanish	Fall 2016	Adviser
McCrary, Kayla	International Relations	Fall 2016	Adviser
Walker, Bonnie	International Relations	Fall 2016	Adviser
Thompson, Davis	Political Science	Spring 2015	Adviser

Other Undergraduate Projects Supervised: Fall 2013 (2), Spring 2013, Summer 2014, Summer 2015, Fall 2016, Fall 2017

Service

Profession

Reviewer: American Political Science Review, Conflict Management and Peace Science, International Interactions, International Studies Quarterly, International Studies Review

Conference/Workshop Program Assistance:

2015-2017	On-line Peace Science Colloquium Program Committee. Peace Science Society (International).
2009-2010	Journeys in World Politics Workshop. University of Iowa. Iowa City, IA.
July 2010	Political Methodology Annual Summer Meeting. University of Iowa. Iowa City, IA.
March 2010	Visions in Methodology Workshop. University of Iowa. Iowa City, IA.

Memberships: American Political Science Association, Conflict Processes Section of APSA, Experimental Political Science Section of APSA, International Studies Association, Peace Science Society (International), Women in Conflict Studies (WICS)

Department, College, and University

Aug. 2017-present	Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.
Aug. 2017-present	Faculty Senate Executive Committee Member.
Apr. 2017	MTSU Scholars Week Research Poster Judge
Feb. 2017-Apr. 2017	President's Compensation Advisory Committee Member.
Sep. 2016-March 2017	Political Science and International Relations Department Chair Search Committee Member
Aug. 2016-Aug. 2017	Faculty Senate Representative
Aug. 2016-present	Political Science External and Student Relations Committee
Aug. 2015-present	Society for International Affairs Faculty Sponsor
Sep. 2014-present	NSF ADVANCE IT Catalyst Grant Internal Advisory Board (MTSU)
July 2013-June 2017	MAIA Graduate Committee
Oct. 2014-Apr. 2015	College of Liberal Arts Strategic Planning Committee, Student Success Subcommittee Chair
April 2014	MTSU Scholars Week Research Poster Judge
Jan.-Aug. 2014	General Education Course Redesign Faculty Working Group
Aug. 2012-July 2016	Political Science Department Library Liaison
Oct. 2012-March 2013	Asian Comparative Politics Faculty Search Committee Member

Community

May 2016-present	Board of Directors. United Nations Association of the United States (UNA-USA), Nashville-Cordell Hull Chapter.
------------------	---

References

Kelly M. Kadera
Associate Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Iowa
341 Schaeffer Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242
319-335-2363
kelly-kadera@uiowa.edu

Stephen Morris
Professor
Department of Political Science
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 E. Main Street, MTSU Box 029
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
615-494-7687
stephen.morris@mtsu.edu

Brian Lai
Associate Professor
Department of Political Science
341 Schaeffer Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242
319-335-2353
brian-lai@uiowa.edu