

# Stephanie M. Ahrens

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## Academic Interests

History of political thought, political philosophy, democratic theory, U.S. politics, political thought, and political development

## Education

University of Chicago

Ph.D., Political Science, August 2020 | M.A., Political Science

Dissertation: “Democratic Trust and the Limits of Distrust”

Committee: Nathan Tarcov (chair), William G. Howell, and James L. Wilson

Baylor University

B.A., University Scholar (Political Science, Classics, Great Texts)

## Academic Positions

Boston University, Kilachand Honors College

Postdoctoral Associate, beginning September 2022

Princeton University, James Madison Program

John and Daria Barry Postdoctoral Research Fellow, 2021-2022 [deferred from 2020-2021]

## Current Papers

-Rethinking Institutionalized Distrust (R&R)

-Defining Democratic Trust

-Untangling the Webs of Trust and Distrust in *The Federalist*

-Trusting in Things That Can Easily Deceive You: Machiavelli’s Use of Trust in *Discourses*

## Workshops, Conference, and Talks

“Untangling the Webs of Trust and Distrust in *The Federalist*”

Shawnee Trail Conference, Baylor University, April 2022

“Democracy and the Problem of Trust: Why We Need Trust, How the U.S. Systems Fail Us, and How We Might Remedy the Problem”

Princeton University’s Human Values Forum, March 2022

“Rethinking Institutionalized Distrust”

Political Theory in and as Political Science Conference, Stanford University, March 2022

American Political Science Association, October 2021

“Trust in Machiavelli’s *Prince*”

Western Political Science Association, April 2021

“Care for Each Other in Ideal Democratic Constitutions”

Western Political Science Association, April 2021

- “Trust in the Government, Distrust Each Other: A Democratic Dilemma”  
American Political Science Association, September 12, 2020  
Kinder Institute for Constitutional Democracy, Shawnee Trail Conference, April 2020\*
- “What Is Democratic Trust?”  
Western Political Science Association, May 22, 2020
- “The Diminishing Returns of Relying on Distrust to Protect a Democracy”  
Duke Graduate Conference in Political Theory, February 6-7, 2020
- “Foundations of Distrust: The State of Political Trust in *The Federalist*”  
Midwest Political Science Association, April 4, 2018  
Southern Political Science Association, January 4, 2018
- “Distrust and *The Federalist*”  
University of Texas Graduate Conference on Public Law, November 4, 2017
- “Trusting in a Thing That Can Easily Deceive You: Political Faith in Machiavelli’s *Discourses on Livy*”  
Midwest Political Science Association, April 17, 2015

### **Teaching**

- Teacher of Record, Boston University  
Honors College Writing Studio, two sections, Autumn 2022
- Teaching Assistant, University of Chicago  
Introduction to Political Theory, Autumn 2020, Winter 2019, Spring 2016  
The American Presidency, Winter 2019  
Political Leadership: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives, Autumn 2015  
Introduction to American Politics, Autumn 2015

### **Fellowships and Awards**

- Barry Center Fellowship, 2021-2022  
Dissertation Completion Fellowship, University of Chicago Division of Social Sciences, 2019-2020  
Institute for Humane Studies Fellowship, 2018-2019  
Social Sciences Fellowship, University of Chicago, 2012-2017

### **Academic Service, Professional Development, and Editorial Experience**

- Reviewer, *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*  
University of Chicago Political Science Association Mentor, 2016-2017  
Workshop on Teaching in the College, Chicago Center for Teaching, 2014  
Editorial Assistant, Leo Strauss Center, 2013-2016  
Social Sciences Minority Graduate Student Development Program, 2012-2014

\*Indicates cancelation due to the pandemic