

LESLIE K. FINGER

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- ACADEMIC POSITIONS UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Assistant Professor of Political Science, 2020-
- HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Lecturer on Government and Social Studies, 2017-2020
- EDUCATION HARVARD UNIVERSITY, Cambridge, MA
Ph.D., Government, 2017
Dissertation: "Group Power and Policy Change in Education."
Awarded the 2018 Charles Sumner Prize by the Harvard Government Department for the Best Dissertation from "the legal, political, historical, economic, social, or ethnic approach."
M.A., Government, 2012
- PACE UNIVERSITY, New York, NY
M.S.T., Childhood Education, 2009
- STANFORD UNIVERSITY, Stanford, CA
B.A., International Relations, Latin American Studies minor, 2007
Departmental Honors, Phi Beta Kappa
- PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS "Politics, Markets, and Pandemics: Public Education's Response to COVID-19," with Michael T. Hartney (conditionally accepted, *Perspectives on Politics*)
- "Advocates For Hire: How Government Contracting Shapes Politics," 2021. *Governance*. With Carlos Lastra-Anadon.
- "Financial Solidarity: the Future of Unions in the post-*Janus* Era." 2019. *Perspectives on Politics*. With Michael T. Hartney.
- "Interest Group Influence and the Two Faces of Power." 2019. *American Politics Research*. 47(4): 852-886
- "Giving to Government: The Policy Goals and Giving Strategies of New and Old Foundations." 2018. *Interest Groups & Advocacy*. 7(3): 312-345
- "Vested Interests and the Diffusion of Education Reform across the States." 2018. *Policy Studies Journal*. 46(2): 378-401
- "Teachers' Unions in Mexico: The Politics of Patronage." 2016. In Terry Moe & Susanne Wiborg, Eds., *The Comparative Politics of Education: Teachers Unions and Education Systems Around the World*, Cambridge University Press. With Christopher Chambers-Ju.

“From Proposal to Policy: Social Movements and Teachers’ Unions in Latin America.” 2015. *Prospects: Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*. 45(3): 365-378. With Julián Gindin.

BOOK REVIEWS “*Making Social Welfare Policy in America: Three Case Studies since 1950*, Edward D. Berkowitz.” Forthcoming. *Political Science Quarterly*.

“*Citizens by Degree: Higher Education Policy and the Changing Gender Dynamics of American Citizenship*.” December 2018. *Perspectives on Politics*. 26(4): 1187-1189.

WORKING PAPERS “Policy Feedback and the Polarization of Interest Groups,” with Sarah Reckhow (revise & resubmit, *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*)

“DCPS or Sidwell Friends? How Politician Schooling Choices Affect Voter Evaluations,” with Thomas Gift (under review)

“Advocacy Groups, Policy Subsidies & Policy Change: The Case of Teacher Evaluations”

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA “The Politics of School from Home.” *The Science of Politics* podcast. January 13, 2021. [link](#)

“What determined if schools reopened? How many Trump voters were in a district.” *The Washington Post*. November 20, 2020. With Michael T. Hartney. [link](#)

“Remote or In-Person Reopening Decisions Are Linked to Trump 2016 Vote Share, Catholic School Presence, a New Study Finds.” *Education Next*. October 29, 2020. With Michael T. Hartney. [link](#)

“Walmart Heirs Shift From Red To Purple: The Evolving Political Contributions Of The Nation’s Richest Family.” *HistPhil*. June 3, 2019. With Sarah Reckhow. [link](#)

“Some People Want Lottery-Based Admissions. That’s a Terrible Idea.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. April 1, 2019. With Thomas Gift. [link](#)

“Interest groups’ influence on policy comes through the presence of faithful legislative allies – not gifts to their campaigns.” *London School of Economics USAPP - American Politics and Policy*. February 28, 2019. [link](#)

“How Teach for America Shapes State Education Policy.” *The Education Exchange: An EducationNext Podcast*. Episode 75. January 19, 2019. [link](#)

“Giving To Government: Foundation Grants To State Education Agencies.” *HistPhil*. November 19, 2018. [link](#)

“Do Strikes Signal Union Strength?” *Education Next*. March 21, 2018. [link](#)

“How Friedrichs Saved Public Sector Unions - But Not In The Way You Think.” *Education Next*. April 6, 2016. [link](#)

“Promoting Education Quality: The Role of Teachers’ Unions in Latin America,” with

Julián Gindin. Background paper commissioned for the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/14, Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all*. UNESCO. [link](#)

“Bônus de SP não deve morrer com o de NY,” [São Paulo’s teacher bonus shouldn’t die with New York’s] Op-ed published in the *Folha de São Paulo*. August 5, 2011. [link](#)

SELECTED
PRESENTATIONS

Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG). February 2020.

American Political Science Association Conference. August 2019 (Washington, D.C.), August 2018 (Boston), September 2017 (San Francisco), September 2016 (Philadelphia).

American Educational Research Association (AERA) Conference. April 2019 (Toronto). April 2018 (New York).

Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society Junior Scholars Forum. Stanford. June 2018.

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) Annual Conference, Grand Rapids, MI. November 2017.

Workshop on the Political Economy of Education Reform, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE), Mexico City. February 2017.

Politics of Education Workshop, University of Konstanz, Germany. 2016.

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference, Chicago. 2014.

Workshop on Methodological Approaches to the Study and Evaluation of Social Policy and Programs at the Local Level, Havana, Cuba. 2012

RESEARCH
GRANTS

Lemann Brazil Research Fund, Harvard University, 2017- , with Emmerich Davies, Jonathan Phillips, and Julia Coyoli

GSAS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Harvard University, 2016-2017

Committee on General Scholarships Traveling Fellowship, Harvard University, 2014

Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences Research Grant, Harvard University, 2014

Center for American Politics Seed Grant, Harvard University, 2014

Pedro Pick Fellowship, Harvard University, 2013

Kenneth Maxwell Summer Research Travel Grant, Harvard University, 2011

Tinker Field Research Grant, Harvard University, 2011

PRIZES AND
AWARDS

Charles Sumner Dissertation Prize, awarded by Harvard Government Department, 2018

Bok Center Certification of Distinction in Teaching, Fall 2012, Spring 2018, Fall 2018 (x2 - awarded for both seminars), Fall 2019 (x2 - awarded for both seminars)

AmeriCorps grant for masters in education, 2008 and 2009

Teacher of the Month, Middle School 322, June 2008 and September 2008

Grants for classroom materials, Teacher's Aid Program and DonorsChoose.org, 2009

Firestone Medal for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, awarded for thesis, "Transitions, Tactics and Ideology: The Strategic Moderation of the Chilean Socialist Party," 2007

Community Writing Project Prize, for excellence in writing for public service, for "Education in East Palo Alto," 2005

COURSES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

PSCI 2316: Honors U.S. and Texas Government, Spring 2021

PSCI 3300: Political Science Research Methods, Fall 2020, Spring 2021

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

GOV 93c: Public Policy Practicum, Spring 2020

SOC-STD 98QB: Democracy and Education in America, Fall 2017, 2018, 2019

GOV 94LF: Philanthropy, Non-Profits and the Politics of Education in America, Fall 2017, 2018, 2019

GOV 97: The Sophomore Tutorial, Spring 2018, 2019, 2020 (designed and managed course with Prof. Enos; also taught in 2018 and 2019)

ADVISING EXPERIENCE

Senior Thesis Advisor, Harvard Social Studies Committee, 2013-2014, 2016-2020

Senior Thesis Advisor, Harvard Government Department, 2012-2013, 2017-2019

Masters Thesis Advisor, Harvard Extension School, 2018-2019

Resident Tutor, Harvard Dudley House Co-op undergraduate residence, 2013-2014, 2015-2018

SERVICE

Co-Founder and President-Elect of the American Political Science Association (APSA) Education Politics and Policy Section, 2019-

Founder and Chair of the APSA Education Politics and Policy Related Group (first-ever APSA organized group for scholars interested in the politics of education), 2017-2019

Founder and Coordinator of the Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG) Research and Writing Colloquia, 2016-2020

Harvard Department of Government Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Task Force, 2019-2020

Harvard Department of Government Climate Change Committee, Subcommittee on Teaching and Training, 2018-2019

Reviewer for: *American Educational Research Journal*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *American Politics Research*, *Educational Policy*, *Journal of Comparative Politics*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Journal of School Choice*, *Latin American Politics & Society*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Policy Sciences*, *Sociology Compass*, *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*

OTHER
EXPERIENCE

Co-Founder and Project Manager, ABLConnect (with Dustin Tingley), 2012-2017 [link](#)

Curriculum developer for HarvardX massive open online course (MOOC) *Saving Schools: History, Politics, and Policy in U.S. Education*, (for Paul Peterson), 2014

Teach For America, 6th and 7th grade public school classroom teacher, Spanish-English Bilingual Language Arts & Social Studies, Washington Heights, NY, 2007-2010

LANGUAGES

English (native), Spanish (fluent), Portuguese (advanced).