

Zeynep Somer-Topcu

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Professional Experience

Associate Professor Department of Government, The University of Texas, Austin, 2018-present
(with tenure)

Faculty Affiliate, Center for European Studies, 2018- present
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian
Studies, 2018- present

Assistant Professor Department of Government, The University of Texas, Austin, 2015-2018

Faculty Affiliate, Center for European Studies, 2015- 2018
Department of Political Science, Vanderbilt University, 2009-2015
Joint appointment at the Max Kade Center for European and
German Studies
Faculty Affiliate, Latin American Public Opinion Project
Faculty Affiliate, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

Education

Ph.D. Department of Political Science, University of California, Davis, June 2009.

M.A. Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University, August 2005.

B.A. Department of Political Science and International Relations, Bogazici University, Istanbul,
Turkey, June 2003 (with Honors).

Honors and Awards

- Comparative Political Studies (CPS) Journal Extraordinary Reviewer Award, 2021.
- Political Research Quarterly (PRQ) Journal Extraordinary Reviewer Award, 2020.
- College Research Fellowship, UT-Austin, Fall 2019, Fall 2016.
- Faculty Travel Grant, The University of Texas at Austin, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019.
- Comparative Political Studies (CPS) Journal Extraordinary Reviewer Award, 2016
- 2013 Emerging Scholar Award given by the American Political Science Association (APSA) section on Political Organizations and Parties.
- 2013 Jack Walker Outstanding Article Award for “Government versus Opposition at the Polls: How Governing Status Changes the Impact of Policy Positions” (coauthored with Kathleen Bawn) given by the APSA section on Political Organizations and Parties.

- 2012-2013 Max Weber Fellowship, European University Institute, Florence, Italy (declined).
- 2012 American Journal of Political Science Best Article Award for “Is Anybody Listening? Evidence that Voters do not Respond to European Parties’ Policy Programmes” (coauthored with James Adams and Lawrence Ezrow), given by MPSA to the best paper published in the *American Journal of Political Science* in the previous year.
- NSF travel fellowship to attend the annual summer methods meeting of the APSA Political Methods Section (PolMeth), July 2010.
- 2008 Leon Weaver Best Paper Award for “Moderate Now, Win Votes Later” (with James Adams), given by the Representation and Electoral Systems Section of the American Political Science Association to the best paper presented in the section at the 2007 Meeting.
- The UC Davis Office of Graduate Studies Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2008-2009.
- Rothchild Memorial Graduate Research Award, UC Davis, 2008.
- Institute of Governmental Affairs Dissertation Improvement Grant, UC-Davis, 2007.
- NSF Fellowship to attend EITM VI (Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models workshop), organized by the University of California-Los Angeles, June 2007.

Grants

- Dassonneville, Ruth, Patrick Fournier and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. “Party Attachments: What Leads to Dealignment, Realignment and Polarization?” Canada Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Program Grant (CRSH Savoir). 2020–2025. Total Funding Awarded: CAN\$ 228,355.
- Cozza, Joseph and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. “The Party Divides? The Political Impact of Party Leadership Contestation.” Edward A. Clark Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. 2019. Total Funding Awarded: \$7,000.
- Debus, Marc, Zeynep Somer-Topcu, and Margit Tavits. “Where is my party? Party position-taking between elections and its consequences for party performance.” German National Science Foundation. 2019-2021. Total Funding Awarded: Euros 467,010.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep and Jeffrey Treem. “Twitter Politics: The Use and Consequences of Social Media Messages by Candidates in British Parliamentary Elections.” Associate Professor Experimental Grant by the University of Texas at Austin. Nov 2018-Nov 2019. Total Funding Awarded: \$100,000
- Debus, Marc, Zeynep Somer-Topcu, and Margit Tavits. “Where Is My Party? Voter Agreement about Party Ideological Position.” German National Science Foundation. 2014-2017. Total Funding Awarded: Euros 319,240.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep and Margit Tavits. “Where is My Party?” Discovery Research Grant, Vanderbilt University. 2014-2015. Total Funding Awarded: \$50,000.

Research: (* Graduate Student, # Undergraduate Student)

- (1) Dassoneville, Ruth, Patrick Fournier, and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 202X. "Partisan Attachments in a Multi-Dimensional Space." *West European Politics*.
- (2) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep** and Daniel Weitzel*. 202X. "Valence Rhetoric and Vote Choice: How do Valence Attacks Affect Vote Choice?" *Comparative Political Studies*.
- (3) Cozza, Joseph* and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2021. "Membership Vote for Party Leadership Changes: Electoral Effects and the Causal Mechanisms Behind." *Electoral Studies* 71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102326>
- (4) Jung, Jae-Hee and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. "United We Stand, Divided We Fall? The Effects of Parties' Brexit Rhetoric on Voters' Perceptions of Party Positions." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*. Online published on November 4, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2020.1839470>
- (5) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep**, Margit Tavits, and Markus Baumann. 2020. "Does Party Rhetoric Affect Voter Perceptions of Party Positions?" *Electoral Studies* 65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102153>
- (6) Fernandez-Vazquez , Pablo and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2019. "The Informational Role of Party Leader Changes on Voter Perceptions of Party Positions." *British Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 977-996.
- (7) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep**. 2017. "Agree or Disagree: How do Party Leader Changes Affect the Distribution of Voters' Perceptions." *Party Politics* 23(1): 66-75.
- (8) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep**. 2015. "Everything to Everyone: The Electoral Consequences of the Broad-Appeal Strategy in Europe." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(4): 841-854.
- (9) Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2014. "Do Voters Respond to Party Manifestos or to a Wider Information Environment? An Analysis of Mass-elite Linkages on European Integration" *American Journal of Political Science* 58(4): 967-978.
- (10) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep** and Laron Williams. 2014. "Opposition Party Policy Shifts in Response to No-Confidence Motions." *European Journal of Political Research* 53(3): 600-616.
- (11) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep** and Michelle Zar#. 2014. "European Parliamentary Elections and National Party Policy Change." *Comparative Political Studies* 47: 878-902.
- (12) Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow, Samuel Merrill III, and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2013. "Does Collective Responsibility for Performance Alter Party Strategies? Policy-Seeking Parties in Proportional Systems?" *British Journal of Political Science* 43(1): 1-23.

- (13) Bawn, Kathleen and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2012. "Government versus Opposition at the Polls: How Governing Status Affects the Impact of Policy Positions." *American Journal of Political Science* 56(2): 433-446.
 - Winner of the 2013 Jack Walker Outstanding Article Award
- (14) Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow, and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2011. "Is Anybody Listening? Evidence that Voters do not Respond to European Parties' Policy Programmes." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2): 370-382.
 - Winner of the 2012 American Journal of Political Science Best Article Award
- (15) Maoz, Zeev and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2010. "Polarization and Political Stability in Multiparty Systems (1945-1998)." *British Journal of Political Science* 40(4): 805-833.
- (16) Adams, James and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2009. "Do Parties Adjust Their Policies in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts? Spatial Theory and the Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Postwar Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 39: 825-846.
- (17) Adams, James and **Zeynep Somer-Topcu**. 2009. "Moderate Now, Win Votes Later: The Electoral Consequences of Parties' Policy Shifts in Twenty-Five Postwar Democracies." *Journal of Politics* 71(2): 678-692.
 - Winner of the 2008 Leon Weaver Best Paper Award
- (18) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep**. 2009. "Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy." *Journal of Politics* 71(1): 238-248.
- (19) **Somer-Topcu, Zeynep** and Laron Williams. 2008. "Survival of the Fittest? Cabinet Duration in Post-Communist Europe." *Comparative Politics* 40 (3): 313-329.

Other Publications

- (1) Jung, Jae-Hee and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. "Brexit: how intra-party unity helps voters understand and feel certain about party policy positions." London School of Economics British Politics and Policy blog post. December 7, 2020.
- (2) Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. 2019. "Close to Home: Local Ties and Voting Radical Right in Europe. By Jennifer Fitzgerald." *Perspectives on Politics* 17(2): 616-617. (Book Review)
- (3) Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. Can a New Leader Change a Party's Fortunes? How Leadership Changes Affect Voter Perceptions about Party Policy. London School of Economics EUROPP blog post. September 19, 2016.
- (4) Somer-Topcu, Zeynep & Laron Williams. Motions of No-Confidence Can Negatively Impact upon the Public's View of the Government. London School of Economics Democratic Audit UK blog post. June 5, 2014.

Research in Progress:

Party Message Distortion: Why, when, and to what end? (with Margit Tavits). Book Manuscript.

“Message Distortion as a Campaign Strategy: Does Rival Party Distortion of Focal Party Position Affect Voters?” (with Margit Tavits). Revise and Resubmit.

“Party Policy, Issue Ownership, and Their Electoral Consequences: The Advantages of Shifting to the Right” (with James Adams, Luca Bernardi, Lawrence Ezrow). Under Review.

“The Electoral Consequences of Message Inconsistencies: How do Changes from Manifestos to Campaign Positions Affect Party Performance?” (with Laron Williams). Under review.

“Leadership Turnovers and Their Electoral Consequences: A Social Democratic Exceptionalism?” (with Daniel Weitzel) submitted for an edited volume.

“Gender and Party Leadership Change” (with Andrea S. Aldrich)

“Snap Elections’ Diverse Effects on Voters” (with Kendall Curtis*)

“Party Leader Characteristics and Voters’ Perceptions of Party Ideological Positions” (with Oguzhan Alkan*)

“The Informational Environment and the Voters’ Perceptions of Parties’ Ideological Positions” (with Semih Çakir*, Oguzhan Alkan*, Ruth Dassoneville)

“Mass Protests’ Effects on Party Position-Taking and Party Ambiguity” (with Mohamed Nasr)

Invited Talks, Lectures, and Conferences (last 10 years)

- Central European University, October 2021.
- Highschool AP Comparative Government program presentation, September 2021.
- ECPR Summer School on Political Parties, Aarhus University, August 2021.
- University of Liverpool, UK, February 2021.
- University of Montreal, October 2020.
- Yale University, September 2020.
- European Politics Online Workshop, Syracuse University, July 2020.
- University of Montreal, Winter School on Elections, March 2020.
- University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK, September 2019.
- University of Vienna, Austria, September 2019.
- University of Zurich, Switzerland, September 2019.
- Institute for Historical Studies Panel on “Brexit in Global and Historical Context,” April 2019.
- South by Southwest (SXSW) Panel on “Disinformation in the context of European elections,” March 2019.

- WZB Berlin Social Science Center, Berlin, Germany, March 2019.
- Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2018.
- Texas A&M University, November 2018.
- University of Montreal, Winter School on Elections, March 2018.
- Aarhus University, Workshop on Democratic Representation in Comparative Perspective, Aarhus, Denmark, November 2017.
- Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany, March 2017.
- University of Mannheim, Workshop on Comparative Campaign Dynamics Project, Mannheim, Germany, March 2017.
- Keynote Speech at *The Responsible Party Model in Times of Dealignment* conference, Leuven, Belgium, December 2016.
- University of Houston, October 2016.
- Center for the Study of Democratic Citizenship, McGill University, April 2016.
- Duke Frontiers of Political Science Workshop: Parties as Micro-Polities, May 2015.
- Cornell University, September 2014.
- Duke Frontiers of Political Science Workshop: Political Accountability, May 2014.
- Binghamton University, *Annual Dr. Han-Jyun Hou Conference*, May 2013.
- University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, April 2013.
- University of Gothenburg, Sweden, March 2013.
- Aarhus University, Denmark, February 2013.
- University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, February 2013.
- University of Mannheim, February 2013.
- Juan March Institute, Madrid, Spain. Conference on *Parties and Partisans: Explaining Continuity and Change in Party Systems*, February 2013.
- Temple University, Philadelphia, November 2012.
- Washington University, St. Louis, February 2012.

Conference Participation (last 10 years)

- American Political Science Association (APSA), 2018, 2017, 2016, 2013, 2011.
- Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), 2019, 2018, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012.
- European Political Science Association (EPSA), 2021, 2020, 2019, 2013.
- Southern Political Science Association (SPSA), 2022, 2019.
- Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (EPOP), 2012.
- Texas Circle of Comparative Politics (TXCCP) 2021, 2020, 2019.

Teaching Experience

Undergraduate:

Comparative Political Parties
European Union/ Regional Integration
Government & Politics of Western Europe

Graduate (PhD Level):

Comparative Political Parties
Scope and Methods (Research Design)
Statistics I
Comparative Representation and Accountability

Ph.D. Dissertation Committee Chair for:

Daniel Weitzel (2020, currently post-doctoral scholar at the University of Vienna)
Mehmet Semih Cakir (co-chair, in progress, University of Montreal)
Kendall Curtis (chair, in progress, UT-Austin)
Oguzhan Alkan (chair, in progress, UT-Austin)

Ph.D. Dissertation Committee Member for:

Jiseon Chang (in progress, UT-Austin)
Keith Chew (in progress, UT-Austin)
Joseph Cozza (in progress, UT-Austin)
Roman Hlatky (in progress, UT-Austin)
Vera Liu (in progress, UT-Austin, Department of Statistics)
Mollie Cohen (Vanderbilt, 2016)
Margarita Corral (Vanderbilt, 2013)
Brian Faughnan (Vanderbilt, 2013)

Undergraduate Theses, UT-Austin

Jacob Hyoungwoo Cho, European Studies, 2017 (first reader).
Neda Koprcina, European Studies, 2017 (second reader).
Johnny Goodwin, Liberal Arts Honors, 2018-2019 (first reader).
Sparkle Dennis, European Studies, 2018 (first reader).
Michael Graham, European Studies, 2019 (first reader)
April Cavin, IRG thesis, 2019-2020 (second reader)
Eric Hines, European Studies, 2020 (first reader)
Hana Arriaga, IRG thesis, 2020-2021 (second reader)
Sarah Hudson, Government Honors, 2021-2022 (first reader)
Mariana Gonzalez, European Studies, 2022 (first reader)

Service

University of Texas at Austin:

Director of Graduate Studies, 2020-
Member of the Executive Committee, Department of Government, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2021-2022.
Member of the Executive Committee, Center for European Studies, 2017-2021.
Member of the Diversity Task Force, 2020-2021
Co-organizer, Consequences of Partisanship for Public Opinion Workshop, May 2019.
Member of the International Relations Search Committee, 2018-2019.
Member of the Graduate Fellowship Committee, Spring 2018.
Member of the Undergraduate Teaching Committee, Fall 2017.
Member of the Public Policy Search Committee, Spring 2017.
Organizer, Voter Perceptions of Party Positions Workshop, April 2017.

Vanderbilt University:

- Member of the Executive Committee, Max Kade Center for European and German Studies (2013-2015)
- Organizer of the Comparative Politics Field Workshops (2013-2015)
- Member of the American-Comparative Search Committee (Fall 2013)
- Member of the Graduate Committee (Fall 2010, 2011-2012)
- Member of the Future Hiring Strategies Committee (2010-2011)
- Member of the Speakers Committee (2010-2011)

Profession (last 10 years):

- Member of the Diversity Committee, European Political Science Association, 2021-2022
- Member of the 2022 APSA-IPSA Theodore J. Lowi First Book Award
- Member of the Advisory Board for Henrik Bech Seeberg's (Aarhus University) Project, Political Parties and Problems: Which Indicators Get Attention? Funded by the Aarhus University Research Fund.
- Member of the Editorial Board, *British Journal of Political Science* 2014-
- Member of the Editorial Board, *Party Politics* 2015-
- Member of the Editorial Board, *Political Research Quarterly* 2018-
- Member of the Editorial Board, *West European Politics* 2019-
- Member of the Editorial Board, *Journal of Politics* 2018-2020.
- Member of the Executive Committee of the APSA Political Organizations and Parties Section, 2014-2016.
- Member of the Executive Council of the APSA Representation and Electoral Systems Section, 2013-2018.
- Section Chair of the Political Parties Section at the Southern Political Science Association Conference, 2019.
- Division Co-Chair of the Comparative Politics of Advanced Industrial Nations division at the Annual American Political Science Association Conference, 2017.
- Member of the Kellogg/Notre Dame Award Committee for the best paper in comparative politics presented at the previous year's MPSA conference, 2017.
- Member of the Best Article in *Political Behavior* Committee of the APSA Elections, Public Opinion, and Voting Behavior Section, 2016.
- Member of the GESIS Klingemann Prize for the Best CSES Scholarship committee, 2015.
- Chair of the Best Paper Award Committee of the APSA Elections, Public Opinion, and Voting Behavior Section, 2014.
- Chair of the Lawrence Longley Award Committee of the APSA Representation and Electoral Systems Section, 2013.
- Member of the Leon D. Epstein Outstanding Book Award Committee of the APSA Political Organizations and Parties Section, 2012.
- Section Chair of the Comparative Political Institutions section at the Annual Midwest Political Science Conference, 2012.

Peer-Reviewer (ad hoc since 2008):

Acta Politica, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, Comparative Politics, Electoral Studies, European Journal of Political Research, International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Politics, Journal of Public Policy, Party Politics, Political Behavior, Political Research Quarterly, Political Science Research and Methods, Political Studies, Public Choice, Scandinavian Studies, West European Politics, National Science Foundation, the Israel Science Foundation, the Dutch Science Foundation, the French Science Foundation, the Swiss Science Foundation, the European Research Council, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press.

Membership

American Political Science Association
Midwest Political Science Association
European Political Science Association
Southern Political Science Association

Languages:

Turkish (native speaker), English (bilingual proficiency), German (limited working proficiency), Spanish (beginner proficiency)

Citizenship:

American and Turkish