

Pia Deshpande

University of California, Berkeley

Political Science PhD Candidate

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EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, California

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

Expected May 2027

Masters of Political Science

May 2023

Columbia University

New York, New York

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

May 2020

The University of Texas at Austin

Austin, Texas

Plan II Honors Program; transferred to Columbia after one year.

August 2016—May 2017

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Deshpande, Pia, et al. "[Critical Race Theory and Asymmetric Mobilization](#)." *Political Behavior* (2023): 1-23.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Deshpande, Pia, and Aaron Pope, "Swipe to Learn More? A Field Experiment on TikTok and Political Attitudes."

Pope, Aaron and Pia Deshpande, "Deactivating TikTok Improves Well-Being."

Deshpande, Pia. "Policy Diffusion and Educational Capture in the Internet Age: the Case of PragerU."

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Danish Data Science Academy, 2026—**\$2,318** (equivalent to DKK 15,000)

Silicon Valley Community Foundation (Co-Investigator with Aaron Pope), 2025 — **\$275,000**

Tideline Foundation (Co-Investigator with Aaron Pope), 2025 — **\$24,000**

Institute for Humane Studies (Co-Investigator with Aaron Pope), 2025 — **\$2,000**

Berkeley Center for American Democracy (Co-Investigator with Aaron Pope), 2025 — **\$5,000**

Computational Research for Equity in the Legal System Training Program (CRELS), 2024 — **\$34,000**

This award bought me out of one year of teaching. Instead, I worked on a CRELS defined project. In 2024-2025, I worked with researchers Kasey Zapatka and Tim Thomas on evictions during the pandemic and emergency rental assistance.

VISITING POSITIONS

Copenhagen Center for Social Data Science (SODAS) at the University of Copenhagen

Visiting Researcher, August 2026

Sponsored by a grant from the Danish Data Science Academy, I worked with a collaborator on analyzing watch history data gathered during the TikTok deactivation experiment. Gave two talks on the project, attended SODAS meetings and gave research feedback to PhD candidates.

NYU Center for Social Media and Politics (CSMaP)

Visiting PhD Candidate, Fall 2025

Attended CSMaP workshops, worked on planning the launch of the TikTok deactivation experiment. Planned future collaborations with CSMaP. Supervised by Josh Tucker.

Aarhus - Berkeley Exchange

Fellow, Summer 2024

Was one of three Berkeley Political Science PhD students to go on a fully funded research exchange to Aarhus University in Denmark for two months. Once there, I regularly presented work, attended lab meetings, and conferences in political behavior and media studies.

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research done as part of a lab or as a research assistant as opposed to authored projects.

The Possibility Lab

Researcher, Summer 2023

Worked with Amy Lerman, Sam Trachtman, and other scholars on policy-relevant research with government and nonprofit partners. Conducted analysis for the state of California on asking individuals about their marginalized identities. At the end of the analysis I could tell the state what questions yielded a higher response rate, how individuals identified their own disabilities, and what predicted a nonresponder. Importantly, I also tracked what reasons the state of California had to ask these questions and asked respondents if they would feel comfortable volunteering the information for each reason. Also conducted a wide-reaching literature review and data collection on the following issue topics in California: access to clean water, access to clean energy, access to healthy food, and access to housing.

The Cooperative Election Study

Researcher and Teacher, Summer 2021—Summer 2022

Worked with Brian Schaffner on the Cooperative Election Study. Fielded an independent survey experiment on the CES, served as a liaison to journalists and community members interested in accessing the survey or answering specific analysis questions, and produced public-facing reports on CES data quality and usage. Wrote open-source educational materials on coding using CES data.

MIT Election Lab/The Healthy Elections Project

Writer and Researcher, Spring 2020—Fall 2020 and Spring 2021—Summer 2021

Wrote data-driven articles for the MIT Election Data and Science Lab on topics like vote-by-mail and election administration on county, state, and federal levels. Contributed to the Healthy Elections Project, a joint venture between MIT and Stanford, which catalogs the trials of voting during a pandemic and offers potential solutions that could be used by legislators.

PRESENTATIONS

Deshpande, Pia, and Aaron Pope, "Swipe to Learn More: Understanding How TikTok Affects Users' Beliefs." APSA 2026. (talk)

Deshpande, Pia, and Aaron Pope, "Pre-Analysis Plan — Swipe to Learn More: Understanding How TikTok Affects Users' Beliefs." APSA 2025. (talk)

Deshpande, Pia. "Changing demographics or beliefs? U.S. Union Members." PolMeth XL 2023. (poster)

Deshpande, Pia and Brian Schaffner. "Risk and racial animosity: white public opinion on growing Asian and Hispanic populations." Midwest Political Science Association Meeting 2022. (talk)

Deshpande, Pia. "Perceptions of Minority Candidates' Need Moderated by Partisanship in College Diversity Scholarships" Midwest Political Science Association Meeting 2022. (talk)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Introduction to Empirical Analysis and Quantitative Methods, UC Berkeley

Graduate Student Instructor, Spring 2026

Instructor: Thad Dunning

Held two weekly sections for a total of two hours of instruction time, with an additional two hours of office hours. Helped students complete in-class coding and conceptual assignments. Graded research proposals and provided resources on research designs (e.g. regression discontinuity, differences-in-differences, experiments, and descriptive hypothesis testing). Course topics ranged from basic coding to multivariate regression.

Senior Honors Thesis, UC Berkeley

Statistics and Methods Tutor, Fall 2024 and Spring 2025

Instructors: Terri Bimes and Amy Gurowitz

I supervised students' independent honor theses, providing advice on design, analysis and coding. Each week I had three hours of office hours. Supervised projects using qualitative interviews, text analysis, spatial analysis using geocoding, and survey analysis.

Intro to American Politics, UC Berkeley

Graduate Student Instructor, Spring 2024

Instructor: Paul Pierson

Held two weekly sections for a total of three hours of instruction time with an additional two hours of office hours. Graded important assignments and taught students fundamental concepts in American politics. Topics included collective action problems, legislative entrenchment, the history of slavery in the United States, and information asymmetry among voters.

Public Opinion Lab, Tufts University

Teaching Assistant, Fall 2021 and Spring 2022

Instructor: Brian Schaffner

Supervised student research, theses, and independent projects on the matter of public opinion. In the spring, lead a collaborative lab project on asymmetric polarization and weaponization of the term "critical race theory."

Political Science Research Methods, Tufts University

Teaching Assistant, Spring 2022

Instructor: Brian Schaffner

Held office hours and review sessions to support students learning R and statistics for political science. Topics included descriptive statistics, regression, experimental design, types of statistical tests, and replication. Led one lecture on the use of RMarkdown, project coding structure, and basic inferential statistics in R.

LEADERSHIP/SERVICE

Research Workshop in American Politics

Coordinator, August 2023—May 2024

Assisted curating a list of presenters. Managed speaker lodging and transportation, and handled day-of logistics.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

The Associated Press

Data Fellow, Summer 2020—Winter 2020

Pitched, researched, and produced data analysis stories and built visualizations in React with the Associated Press Newsroom. Projects include post-election demographic analysis, postal service performance, turnout and registration rates on reservations, and COVID. Coding was done in R, Python, and JavaScript.

POLITICO

Editorial Intern, Summer 2017

Wrote breaking, long-form, and data-driven stories on America's political landscape. Topics reported on include: pre-K funding nationwide, immigrant detention centers, 2020 Democratic candidates, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

CNN Hong Kong

Newsroom Intern, Summer 2018

Wrote, reported, produced packages and news gathered for CNN, CNN Style and CNN Money on events in Asia including the Thai cave rescue, the Singapore Summit, the Rohingya refugee crisis, and the return of military remains from North Korea to the United States.

MEMBERSHIP

American Political Science Association (March 2021—current)

Society for Political Methodology (March 2023—current)

Midwest Political Science Association (December 2023—current)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Coding: R, Python, Git, Claude Code

Publishing: LaTeX, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, INews, CMS, Mediasource

Mapping: Google API, Leaflet, Mapbox

Languages: English, Spanish (intermediate)

OTHER RELEVANT ARTICLES

Selected authored articles are below. A full list of authored articles will be sent upon request.

Brumback, Kate, and Pia Deshpande. "[Record Avalanche of Early Votes Transforms the 2020 Election](#)." AP News, 1 May 2021.

Cao, Diana, et al. "[Election Administration Challenges in Pennsylvania](#)." Lawfare Blog, 9 Oct. 2020.

Cao, Diana, et al. "[Pennsylvania Election Analysis](#)." Healthy Elections Project, 20 Aug. 2020.

Deshpande, Pia, et al. "[Analysis | Many College Republicans Didn't Vote for Trump in 2020. His Racist Rhetoric May Be Why](#)." The Washington Post, 1 Feb. 2022.

Deshpande, Pia. "[Election Administration Challenges in Ohio](#)." Lawfare Blog, 30 Sept. 2020.

Deshpande, Pia. "[How the 2020 Candidates Break down in the Polls so Far](#)." POLITICO, 21 Aug. 2019.

Deshpande, Pia. "[How Was DC's Primary Different This Year?](#)" MIT Election Data + Science Lab, 12 June 2020.

Deshpande, Pia. "[Ohio's 2020 Presidential Primary and Comparisons to 2016](#)." Healthy Elections Project, 27 July 2020.

Deshpande P, Cha J. "[The 2020 CES: Duplicate Respondents and Handling Asian and Hispanic Subsamples](#)." The Cooperative Election Study; Working Paper.

Deshpande, Pia. "[What Do We Know about Vote-by-Mail?](#)" MIT Election Data + Science Lab , 5 May 2020.

Deshpande, Pia. "[What the Elections Performance Index Can-and Can't-Tell Us about Vote-by-Mail](#)." Elections Performance Index, 31 July 2020.

Groves, Stephen, and Pia Deshpande. "[Voting by Mail Isn't so Easy on Native American Reservations](#)." NBC, 27 Oct. 2020.

Johnson, et al. "[Counties with Worst Virus Surges Overwhelmingly Voted Trump](#)." AP News, 1 May 2021.