Evelyn Simoni

Department of Political Science · University of California, Los Angeles
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Education

University of California, Los Angeles Expected Spring 2028
Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science
Advanced to candidacy Aug 2025.
Fields: Comparative Politics; International Relations; Formal Theory and Quantitative Methods.
Dissertation: *Rents, Rhetoric, and Regime Legitimation: Material and Discursive Strategies of Political Rule*
Committee: Michael Ross (chair), Michelle Torres, Eric Min, and Daniel Treisman.

Georgetown University · McCourt School of Public Policy May 2020
Master of Public Policy

Universidad de Buenos Aires Dec 2015
Licenciatura en Economía
Cum Laude (Diploma de Honor)

Research Interests

Comparative politics; political economy; populism and political rhetoric; climate politics; computational text analysis.

Publications

Mahdavi, Paasha, Michael L. Ross, and **Evelyn Simoni**. 2025. "Fossil fuel subsidy reforms have become more fragile." *Nature Climate Change* 15(5): 569–574. doi:10.1038/s41558-025-02283-4

Cover article · May 2025.

Mahdavi, Paasha, Michael L. Ross, and **Evelyn Simoni**. 2025. "Government efforts to reduce fossil fuel subsidies have failed at a very high rate." Policy brief. *Nature Climate Change* 15(5): 471–472. doi:10.1038/s41558-025-02304-2

Working Papers

"Deconstructing Populist Evolution: A Temporal Word Embedding Approach."

Traces changes in Hugo Chávez's anti-elitist rhetoric using temporal word embeddings of *Aló Presidente* (1999–2012). Current revisions examine how definitions of "the people" and claims to represent them justify policy.

UCLA Field Paper Distinction, 2024. Presented at WPSA 2024 and APSA 2024 (Emerging Scholars Lightning Round).

"Populism at the Podium: UNGA Speeches and the Semantics of International Cooperation."

Compares populism and ideology as explanations for how leaders frame sovereignty and multilateralism in UN General Assembly speeches, 1994–2022, and examines associations with subsequent voting. Working paper in progress.

Teaching Experience

University of California, Los Angeles

Instructor of Record

Political Economy of Climate Change (PS M152) — Summer 2025

Led undergraduate instruction, lectures, and assessment.

Political Economy of Development (PS M167C) — Summer 2024

Designed the syllabus, course materials, and assessments; independently taught the online undergraduate course.

Teaching Fellow / Teaching Assistant

Political Economy of Climate Change (PS M152) — Spring 2025, Fall 2022

Foreign Relations of the United States (PS 120A) — Winter 2025

Statistical Analysis of Political Data (PS 170A) — Spring 2024

Statistical Studies in Social Sciences — Winter 2024, Fall 2023

International Relations of the Middle East (PS 132A) — Spring 2023

Randomized Trials for Social Change (PS 170) — Spring 2022

Led discussion sections and taught R programming and quantitative analysis in methods courses.

Georgetown University

Teaching Assistant · Market Failures and Public Finance — 2019

Graduate-level course.

Universidad de Buenos Aires

Teaching Assistant · Microeconomics II — 2014–2015

Undergraduate-level course.

Research Experience

University of California, Los Angeles · Political Science — Jul 2022–Jul 2023

Collected and verified historical data on Latin American political institutions; analyzed data and developed theoretical arguments and empirical tests.

Child Development and Social Policy Lab — Oct 2020–Aug 2021

Oversaw data collection for the Tulsa School Experiences and Early Development study; conducted quantitative analyses of pre-K funding for low-income families.

Georgetown University · Edunomics — Jun 2020–Sep 2020

Built and analyzed public-school funding data in Stata for Colorado, Florida, and Illinois to assess the progressivity of funding allocations.

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars — Jun 2019–May 2020

Supported Argentina Pulse survey analysis and published research on South American energy markets, non-conventional oil and gas, and the lithium triangle.

Fellowships and Honors

Summer Mentored Research Fellowship · UCLA — 2022, 2023

Fund for Student Excellence · Georgetown University — 2019

Merit-Based Scholarship · Georgetown University — 2018

Conference and Research Presentations

"Deconstructing Populist Evolution: A Temporal Word Embedding Approach."
American Political Science Association · Emerging Scholars Lightning Round 2024

"Populist Discourse in Flux: A Study of Hugo Chávez's Anti-Elitism Evolution."
Western Political Science Association · Paper presentation 2024

"When, How, and Why Do Oil Rich Countries Reduce Fossil Fuel Subsidies?"
American Political Science Association · With Paasha Mahdavi and Michael L. Ross 2023

International Political Science Association World Congress · Paper presentation 2023

"What Drives China's Presence in LATAM? An Empirical Analysis of Chinese FDI in Latin America."
APPAM · Student Research Online Seminar Series 2020

Other Professional Experience

Government of the City of Buenos Aires Jan 2016–May 2018

Project Manager · Undersecretary of Science and Technology

Drafted the 2016–2019 policy plan; coordinated 10–12 project leaders and oversaw budget, legal, and performance-monitoring functions.

Nix Valores S.A. · Buenos Aires Jan 2015–Dec 2015

Investment Banking Analyst

Financial analysis, M&A valuation, and structuring of SME and sub-sovereign financing.

Professional Service

Ad hoc reviewer · *Computational Communication Research*

Methods, Software, and Languages

Research methods: Computational text analysis; temporal word embeddings; semi-supervised dictionary methods; quantitative data analysis.

Software: R, Python, Stata, LaTeX.

Languages: Spanish (native); English (full professional proficiency); Portuguese and French (limited working proficiency).

References

Michael L. Ross
Professor of Political Science · University of California, Los Angeles
Dissertation chair · mlross@polisci.ucla.edu

Michelle Torres
Associate Professor of Political Science · University of California, Los Angeles
Dissertation committee member · smtorres@ucla.edu