

Samantha Zuhlke

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA. August 2021 – Current.

Assistant Professor, School of Planning and Public Affairs.

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science (*by courtesy*).

Researcher Affiliate, Center for Social Science Innovation (*by courtesy*).

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Political Science, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. August 2016 - August 2021.

Dissertation: A Political Theory of Nonprofits: Partisanship, Policy, & the Rise of the Nonprofit Sector

» Awarded the 2023 *Gabriel G. Rudney Memorial Award for an Outstanding Dissertation in Nonprofit and Voluntary Action Research* by the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action

Committee: Manuel P. Teodoro (Chair), Guy D. Whitten (Co-Chair), Scott J. Cook, Laurie E. Paarlberg

B.A., Geography, Colgate University, Hamilton, NY. August 2006 - May 2010.

Honors Thesis: Invasive Species as Evolution: Implications for the Management of the Emerald Ash Borer in Upstate New York

BOOK

Teodoro, Manuel P., **Samantha Zuhlke**, and David Switzer. 2022. *The Profits of Distrust: Citizen-Consumers, Drinking Water, and the Crisis of Confidence in American Government*. Cambridge University Press.

» Awarded the 2024 *Lynton Keith Caldwell Prize*, given for the best book on environmental politics and policy published within the past three years, by the American Political Science Association

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

(* Graduate student co-author, ** Undergraduate student co-author)

Calderon Cervantes, M. A. and **Samantha Zuhlke**. 2025. Birds of a Feather, Flock Together: Examining Racial Identity and Giving During 2020. *Accepted at VOLUNTAS*.

Cook, Scott, **Samantha Zuhlke**, and Robin Saywitz. 2024. Potholes, 311 reports, and a theory of heterogeneous resident demand for city services. *Policy Studies Journal* 52(3): 647-669.

Zuhlke, Samantha. 2024. Presidents and Nonprofits: Illustrating Compositional Modeling of the U.S. Non-profit Sector. *Social Science Quarterly* 105(4): 1014-1028.

Zuhlke, Samantha, Juniper Katz, and Emani Brinkman*. 2024. Strike While the Iron is Hot: Land Trusts, Temperature Anomalies, and Agenda Setting for Local Open Space Referenda, *Nonprofit Policy Forum* 15(4): 315-347.

Perry, Brittany, **Samantha Zuhlke**, and Fernando Tormos-Aponte. 2023. Building Infrastructure to Enhance Diversity in Political Methodology. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 56(1): 178-182.

Zuhlke, Samantha. 2022. Acres for the Affluent: An Interactive Model of Nonprofit Resources and Demand Heterogeneity. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 32(3): 455-472.

Paarlberg, Laurie, and **Samantha Zuhlke**. 2019. Revisiting the Theory of Government Failure in the Face of Heterogeneous Demand. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance* 2(2): 103-124.

Cook, Scott J., John Niehaus, and **Samantha Zuhlke**. 2018. A Warning on Separation in Multinomial Logistic Models. *Research & Politics* 5(2): 1-5.

CHAPTERS IN EDITED VOLUMES

Zuhlke, Samantha. Forthcoming 2026. "Commercial Water and the Safe Drinking Water Act." In Teodoro, Manuel (ed.), *Safe Drinking Water Act: The Next 50 Years*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Paarlberg, Laurie and **Samantha Zuhlke**. 2023. "Government Failure." In Kearns, Kevin P. & Wen-Jiun Wang (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Nonprofit Management, Leadership, and Governance*. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Frumkin, Peter and **Samantha Zuhlke**. 2022. "Philanthropy and Politics" In List, R.A., Anheier, H. K., & Toepler, S. (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Civil Society*. Springer, Cham.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS

Zuhlke, Samantha, Melissa Walker, Ted Corrigan, and David M. Cwiertny. "In Tap we Dis(Trust): Understanding Why Customers Choose Bottled Water." Forthcoming 2025 at *Journal AWWA*.

Zuhlke, Samantha. August 2024. "Facilitated Community Discussion Groups: Immigrant and Refugee Communities in Polk County to Assess Tap Water Awareness and Test Messaging Strategies."

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Zuhlke, Samantha. 2024. "Book Review: Trust in Government Agencies in the Time of COVID-19", *The International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 42(2-3): 154-155.

The Profits of Distrust: Drinking Water and Democracy Comic Book. 2024.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Articles

Paper about Water Vending Machines (Revise and Resubmit at *Environmental Science & Technology*)

Citizens, governments, and nonprofits: A sustainable triumvirate? (invited chapter in *Understanding Philanthropy and Civil Society: The Role of the Nonprofit Sector in Creating Sustainable Societies*, under contract with Edward Elgar Publishing)

“Water” We Doing? Understanding Trust in Government Services

Using Google Street View to Collect and Validate Urban Policy Data (w/ S. Cook)

Small Town Iowa Policy Outcomes: Analyzing City-Level Public Services Using Google Street View (w/ L. Scott*, K. Beeman**, G. Koch**, A. Gantalamohini**, & A. McKeone**)

The Safe Drinking Water Act and Drinking Water Kiosks: An Illinois Investigation (w/ L. Scott*, K. Beeman**, G. Koch**, A. Gantalamohini**, & A. McKeone**)

The Third Way to Water: Public, Private, and Nonprofit Water Governance (w/ M. Teodoro & D. Konisky)

Polarization’s Impact on Government-Nonprofit Dynamics

Civic Engagement and Giving Patterns Among Racial/Ethnic Communities (w/ M. A. Calderon)

Revisiting the Donor Model of Giving (w/ M. A. Calderon)

Book Project

A Political Theory of Nonprofits

Sample Chapter: Rage Giving: How U.S. Electoral Outcomes Drive Nonprofit Donations

GRANTS

External

National Geographic Society, "Environmental Justice Research Project using Geographically Driven Research", PI: Samantha Zuhlke (\$4,995), 2024-2025

Polk County, Iowa, "Facilitated Community Discussion Groups: Immigrant and Refugee Communities in Polk County to Assess Tap Water Awareness and Test Messaging Strategies", PI: Samantha Zuhlke, Co-PI: Travis Kraus (\$38,195.72), 2024

National Science Foundation Civic Innovation Challenge Phase I (Award No. 2228457), "CIVIC-PG Track B: Reducing disparities in drinking water access by rebuilding consumer confidence in municipal tap water," PI: Samantha Zuhlke, Co-PI: David Cwiertyny (\$49,996) 2022-2023

American Political Science Association Travel Grant (\$200), 2019

Internal

University of Iowa, Investment in Strategic Priorities (\$5,000), 2025

Research Supply Grant, University of Iowa Office of Undergraduate Research, PI: Abby McKeone (Undergraduate Student), Faculty Advisor (Samantha Zuhlke) (\$1,000), 2023-2024.

University of Iowa, National Institute for Environmental Health through the Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, NIEHS/NIH P30 ES005605, "Contagious Distrust of Drinking Water: Investigating the Challenges and Opportunities for Drinking Water Providers" PI: Samantha Zuhlke (\$10,000) 2023-2024.

University of Iowa, Public Policy Center, Building Undergraduate Student Research Experiences, "Public Policy and Water Quality: A Multi-Disciplinary, Undergraduate Student Experience," PI: Samantha Zuhlke, Co-PI: David Cwiertyny (\$3,000) AY 2024.

University of Iowa, Investment in Strategic Priorities (\$5,000), 2022

Texas A&M University, Research and Presentation Grant (\$750), 2019

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

Student Supervisor of the Year Award Certificate of Distinction Winner, University of Iowa, 2025
 Lynton Keith Caldwell Prize, American Political Science Association (for *Profits of Distrust*), 2024
 Community Engagement and Research Translation (CERT) Fellowship, University of Iowa, 2023-2024
 Gabriel G. Rudney Memorial Award for an Outstanding Dissertation in Nonprofit and Voluntary Action Research, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, 2023
 Old Gold Summer Fellowship, University of Iowa (\$6,000), 2023
 Emerging Scholar, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, 2022
 Dissertation Fellowship, Texas A&M University (final year tuition and stipend), 2020-2021
 Summer Dissertation Fellowship, Texas A&M University (\$6,000), 2020
 Doctoral Fellow, The Center for Social Impact Strategy, University of Pennsylvania (\$3,000), 2019
 Research Bursary, Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University (\$1,000), 2019
 Tutor of the Week, Texas A&M Athletics Department, 2017
 Delta Sigma Upsilon Endowed Scholarship Fund Award, Colgate University, 2008-2010
 Gamma Theta Upsilon (International Geographic Honor Society), inducted Fall 2008

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS, INVITED TALKS, AND WORKSHOPS

Conference Presentations ([†]*Canceled due to COVID-19*, * *Non-presenting co-author*)

American Geophysical Union Annual Meeting, 2023
 American Political Science Association, 2019-2020, 2022, 2025*
 Association for Research on Nonprofits and Voluntary Action Annual Conference, 2019-2022, 2024
 Environmental Politics and Governance Annual Conference, 2025*
 Environmental Politics and Governance Online Seminar Series, 2020
 Public Management Research Conference, 2024
 Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, 2018, 2020[†], 2022-2024
 Texas Methods Annual Meeting, 2018-2020[†]
 Visions in Methodology, 2019

Invited Talks

Political Science Speaker Series, University of Iowa, February 2025. Invited presentation titled "Polarization's Impact on Government-Nonprofit Dynamics."
 Clyde Kohn Colloquium Speaker Series, University of Iowa, March 2024. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust: Confidence in American institutions and the rise of commercial drinking water."
 O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University-Bloomington, March 2024. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust: Confidence in American institutions and the rise of commercial drinking water."
 Philanthropy Research Workshop, Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, IUPUI, February 2023. Invited presentation titled "A Political Theory of Nonprofits."

Bookmarked: Conversations about Civic Leadership, University of Southern California, Price School of Public Policy, January 2023. Invited online presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust." Recording available [here](#).

Doctoral Fellowship Program, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), November 2022. Invited presentation titled "Using Theory in Your Dissertation."

Water & the Environment Seminar Series, University of Iowa, December 2021. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust: Confidence in American institutions and the rise of commercial drinking water."

Geography and Public Policy Colloquium Series, University of Northern Iowa, November 2021. Invited inaugural lecture in the colloquium series titled "The Profits of Distrust: Confidence in American institutions and the rise of commercial drinking water."

Political Science Speaker Series, University of Iowa, October 2021. Invited presentation titled "Rage Giving: How U.S. Electoral Outcomes Drive Nonprofit Donations."

Aggie Research Week, Texas A&M University, Spring 2019. Panelist, "Individual vs. Team Based Research."

Invited Conferences and Workshops

Institute for Public Leadership, University of Maryland, upcoming April 2026. Invited participant.

Political Polarization and its Policy Consequences Conference, University of Maryland, March 2025. Invited presentation titled "Polarization's Impact on Government-Nonprofit Dynamics."

Safe Drinking Water Act 50th Anniversary Event, University of Wisconsin-Madison, December 2024. Invited presentation titled "Commercial Water and the Safe Drinking Water Act."

Civil Society and Sustainability Conference, Stanford University, June 2024. Invited presentation titled "The Third Way to Water."

Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Working Group, University of Iowa, 2024 - Current. Working group participant in "Water, Society, and Global Change."

Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Working Group, University of Iowa, 2023 - 2024. Working group participant in "Research on and with Nonprofit Organizations."

Civil Society and Sustainability Conference, Stanford University, May 2023. Invited presentation titled "Strike While The Iron is Hot: Land Trusts, Temperature Anomalies, and Agenda Setting for Local Open Space Referenda."

Climate Change and the Voluntary Sector Conference, August 2021. Invited presentation titled "Climate Change Politics: Nonprofit and Government Dynamics on Polarizing Issues."

Dissertation Fellowship Workshop, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action. November 2020. Invited online participant.

Public Administration & Policy Dissertation Workshop, American Political Science Association, Summer 2020. Invited online participant.

6th Annual Duck Family Graduate Workshop in Environmental Politics and Governance, Center for Environmental Politics, University of Washington, May 2020. Invited online presentation titled "Acres for the Affluent: How Government and Nonprofits Conserve Land."

Doctoral Fellows Program, The Center for Social Impact Strategy, University of Pennsylvania, Summer 2019. Invited participant.

PUBLIC & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Iowa City Noon Kiwanis Club, June 2025. Invited presentation titled "Nonprofits and Government and Business, Oh My!"

Potomac River Basin Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership, November 2024. Invited online presentation titled "Public Perceptions of Drinking Water."

Iowa American Water Works Association Annual Meeting, October 2024. Invited presentation titled "Understanding Water Drinkers: Responding to Distrust."

Citizen Water Academy, Des Moines Water Works, October 2024. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Science Cafe, Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, University of Iowa, April 2024. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Book Matters: Scholars in Conversation, University of Iowa, October 2023. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Iowa American Water Works Association Annual Meeting, October 2023. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Citizen Water Academy, Des Moines Water Works, October 2023. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Wide Lens: Water, University of Iowa, December 2022. Invited presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust."

Virtual Workshop: Climate Justice & Environmental Racism, Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources, November 2022. Invited online presentation titled "The Profits of Distrust: Drinking Water, Trust, and Environmental Justice."

National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) Annual Meeting, November 2022. Invited presentation titled "Water Panel – Discussion of Book - The Profits of Distrust: Citizen-Consumers, Drinking Water, and the Crisis of Confidence in American Government."

Wisconsin Public Utility Institute (WPUI) Water - Impact of Public Confidence on Infrastructure, October 2022. Invited online presentation titled "Customer Perceptions on Tap Water Quality."

The Utility Management Conference, American Water Works Association, February 2018. Presentation titled "Water Kiosks and the Trust Deficit in Water Utilities."

American Water Works Association Annual Meeting, June 2017. Presentation titled "Water Kiosks: A Canary in the Coalmine for Trust in Utilities?"

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record, University of Iowa

Graduate Courses

PBAF 5120: Public Policy Process. Fall 2022, 2023, 2024.

Core course in the Master of Public Affairs

PBAF / POLI 5117: Bureaucratic Politics & Public Administration. Fall 2021, Spring 2023, 2024.

Core course in the Master of Public Affairs

PBAF 6210: Public Affairs Capstone II. Spring 2022, 2023, 2024.

Project based capstone course

*Community Engaged Course designation*Undergraduate Courses

PBAF / URP 2020: Environment and Society: Sustainability, Policy, and Politics. Spring 2022, Fall 2022, 2023, 2024.

General Education (GE) CLAS Core status in Sustainability and Social Science

Meets requirement for the Certificate in Sustainability.

PBAF / POLI 3117: Bureaucratic Politics & Public Administration. Fall 2021, Spring 2023, 2024.

Teaching AssistantGraduate Courses

Spatial Econometrics, University of Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis, 2018-2020.

Advanced Time Series and Spatial Statistics, Texas A&M University. Spring 2019.

Undergraduate Courses

Polimetrics, Texas A&M University. Fall 2018.

Intro to Political Science Research Methods, Texas A&M University. Fall 2017.

Experiential Learning Instructor

Undergraduate Research Team Leader, Aggie Research Scholars, Texas A&M University.

"Virtual Canvassing with Google Street View", Spring 2020

"Mapping the Geography of Urban Drinking Water", Spring 2017

Lab Assistant, "Stata Data Lab @TAMUPOLS", Texas A&M University. January 2020.

Trip Leader/Director, National Geographic Student Expeditions.

"Hawai'i Middle School Expedition", Summer 2019

"Impact Storytelling at Georgetown University", Summer 2018

"Technology & Innovation in Silicon Valley at UC Berkeley", Summer 2018

"Engineering & Robotics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology," Summer 2017, 2016.

Trip Leader, New York Times Student Journeys

"Energy and Climate Change at the Arctic Circle", Summer 2017

Select Education Publications

Conquest of the Skies Educator Guide. 2017. *Atlantic Productions*.

Amazing Mighty Micro Monsters Educator Guide. 2016. *Atlantic*

Museum Alive! Educator Guide. 2016. *Atlantic Productions*

Robots Education Collection. 2015. *National Geographic Education*.

Jerusalem Education Collection. 2013. *National Geographic Education*.

Remembering JFK. 2013. *National Geographic Education*.

The 80's: The Decade that Made Us. 2013. *National Geographic Education*.

James Cameron's DEEPSEA CHALLENGE. 2012. *National Geographic Education*.

ADVISING & MENTORING

Advisor, Master of Public Affairs, University of Iowa: 24 students, 2021 - Current.

Committee Member, Political Science PhD, University of Iowa.

Samuel Harper, 2025, University of Tampa.

Mentor, Professional Growth and Mentorship Program, University of Iowa, 2024-2025.

Faculty Advisor, Undergraduate Research Poster Presentations, University of Iowa.

Spring Undergraduate Research Festival 2024, 2025.

Research in the Capital, 2024.

Summer Research Fair, 2023, 2024.

Mentor, Undergraduate Summer Research Opportunities Program, University of Iowa, Summer 2023.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. 2016-2020.

Research Assistant, Department of Political Science, Fall 2016 - Spring 2020.

Academic Tutor, Texas A&M University Athletics Department, Spring 2017 - Fall 2018.

National Geographic Society, Washington, DC. 2010 - 2016.

Program Manager, November 2014 - April 2016.

Managed budget, marketing, operations, and staff of national and international mission-oriented programs.

Project Manager, January 2013 - October 2014.

Managed production of online and print multi-media educational materials for classrooms and museums to support films, television programming, and magazine content.

Program Specialist, June 2011 - January 2013.

Wrote, edited, produced, and published educational content for K-12 classrooms.

Ocean Education Contractor, January 2011 - May 2011.

Staff member on a \$2 million education grant to promote ocean conservation.

Geography Intern, September 2010 - December 2010.

Participant in nationally competitive internship program.

Lake George Association, *Education Intern*, Lake George, NY. Summer 2007, 2008.

SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIPS

Service to the Discipline

At-large Executive Committee Member, Theories, Boundaries, and Issues Section (TIBS), Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), 2025 - Current.

Organizer, Climate Change and Civil Society Common Interest Group, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), 2025 - Current.

Organizer and Founding Member, Climate Change and the Voluntary Sector Virtual Seminar Series, August 2021 - Current.

Conference Session Chair and/or Discussant: MPSA (2023, 2024), ARNOVA (2021, 2023)

Reviewer: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Policy Studies Journal, Public Administration Review, Policy & Politics, Administration & Society, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs, Social Science Quarterly, Nature Water, American Water Works Association Water Science, Conservation Science and Practice, Ethnicity and Disease, Journal of Planning Education and Research

Service to the University of Iowa

Advisor, SPPA Student Association, 2024 - Current

Facilitate annual student participation in NASPAA Policy Simulation Competition

Search Committee Member, School of Planning and Public Affairs, Visiting Assistant Professor (2023), Department Head (2023), Open Faculty Search (2023, 2024)

Member, Student Research Teams Faculty Learning Community (2022 - 2023)

Committee Member, School of Planning and Public Affairs: Admissions (2022 - 2024), Awards (2021-Current), Marketing and Promotions (2021-2023), MPA Program Oversight (2021-Current), Speakers and Seminars (2021-2023)

Service to Texas A&M University

President, Texas A&M Political Science Graduate Student Association. (2018 - 2020)

Recipient of Mini-Grant for Innovative Programming, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, Texas A&M University. Spring 2020. (\$2,000)

Student Senator, Texas A&M Graduate & Professional Student Government. (2017 - 2020)

Invited Presentations: "Graduate Student Research at TAMU Political Science" for recruitment event (2020), "Graduate Student Perspective: Being a TA" for graduate student TA training (2020, 2019), "Advice for Graduate School" for new graduate students (2019, 2018)

Memberships

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), American Political Science Association (APSA), Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), Public Management Research Association (PMRA), Gamma Theta Upsilon

Other Service

Deputy Project Leader, COMPASS Pro Bono Business Consulting for Nonprofit Organizations. Fundraising Strategy Project, Washington, DC (Sept 2014 - June 2015)

Team Member, COMPASS Pro Bono Business Consulting for Nonprofit Organizations. Board Development Project, Washington, DC (Jan 2014 - June 2014)

Alumni Mentor, Colgate University Sophomore Connections. Hamilton, NY (2016, 2014)

SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Certifications

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL), Texas A&M University, Level I (Associate)

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL), Texas A&M University, Level II (Practitioner)

Technical Skills

ArcGIS (ArcMap, ArcPro, ArcGIS Online), Stata, R, Latex

REFERENCES

Available on request.

Last updated: October 2025