

# SARAH L. HARPER, PH.D.

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## EDUCATION

**2023**

**Ph.D. Criminology**

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

Dissertation: Dammed & Damned: Examining Hyperlitigation and the Vexatious Litigant Statute in Florida Courts

Chair: Dr. John K. Cochran

**2017**

**M.S. Criminal Justice**

University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL

Area Paper: Social Media Use and Perceptions of Youth Offending

Supervisor: Dr. Jamie Snyder

**2015**

**B.A. Criminal Justice**

University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

**2023**

**Assistant Professor of Criminology**

Texas A&M University—San Antonio, Department of Criminology & Political Science, College of Arts and Sciences

**2017**

**Internship Coordinator, Criminal Justice and Children & Society programs**

University of West Florida, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice, College of Professional Studies

Served until 2018

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Legal System Abuse; Non-Attorneys in Court; Access to Justice; Civic, Media, & Legal Literacy

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024

### **Project Coordinator and Research Team Leader**

Jaguars Researching Encounters Between Extremists, Law, Courts, & Officers (JAGREBELCO)  
Department of Criminology & Political Science, Texas A&M University—San Antonio  
(Present)

### **Participant Faculty, Summer Research Team Program for MSIs**

Host Center of Excellence: National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education (NCITE)  
Program Oversight: Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education (ORISE); Department of Homeland Security Science & Technology Directorate, Office of University Programs

2022

### **Project Coordinator and Research Team Leader**

Research Project on Access and Litigation Sanctions (RPALS)  
Department of Criminology & Political Science, Texas A&M University—San Antonio;  
Department of Criminology, University of South Florida—Tampa Campus (Present)

### **Research Assistant**

Reducing Revocation Project  
National Center for State Courts, Blacksburg, VA  
Served until 2023

2019

### **Research Assistant**

Understanding Prosecutorial Discretion in Florida Courts (NIJ-2018-14220; Principal Investigator: Ojmarrh Mitchell)  
National Institute of Justice W.E.B. DuBois Fellowship for Research on Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Justice System  
Served until 2020

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Refereed Journal Articles**

2019

Hough, R., McCorkle, K., & **Harper, S.** An examination of investigative practices of homicide units in Florida. *Homicide Studies*, 23 (2), 175-194.

### **Manuscripts in Submission**

**2026**

Davis, M., Lopez, E., Watts, G., **Harper, S.** Employment for students with intellectual/developmental disabilities: Lessons learned from a university-business partnership program. Submitted to *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*

**Manuscripts In Progress****2026**

**Harper, S.** Examining the paradox of imposing sanctions on self-represented parties: A dynamic model of judicial discernment (Anticipated submission: March 2026)

**Harper, S.** Florida's frequent filers: Assessing Florida's approach to the rise in difficult litigants in state courts (Monograph, proposal submission: March 2026)

**Data Collection**

**Harper, S.** 50 ways to stop the flood: Comparing statutes addressing hyperlitigation in United States state courts

Hough, R. & **Harper, S.** Officer injuries during foot pursuit: examining the role of departmental policy and circumstances of encounters

**GRANTS, FUNDING, & FELLOWSHIPS****2025****Follow-On Funding, Summer Research Team Program for Minority Serving Institutions**

- Funding entity: Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education and Department of Homeland Security Science & Technology Directorate, Office of University Programs
- Role: Principal Investigator
- Project: Exploring Frontline Interactions with Anti-Government/Anti-Authoritarian Believers--Insights into De-escalation and Procedural Justice
- Amount awarded: \$98,721 (Project Timeline: April 2025-October 2026)

**Cibolo Strategic Partnership Grant**

- Funding entity: City of Cibolo, TX
- Role: Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Danielle Fenimore
- Proposed project: Understanding and Supporting Civic Literacy in Cibolo, TX
- Amount requested: \$7,000 (Not funded)

**2023****Dissertation Completion Fellowship**

- Funding entity: Graduate Studies, University of South Florida
- Role: Doctoral candidate fellow
- Project: Examining Vexatious Litigation in Florida State Courts

- Amount awarded: \$9,000

## 2022

### **Doctoral Summit Fellowship**

- Funding entity: Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
- Role: Doctoral candidate fellow/participant

### **College of Behavioral and Community Sciences Research Grant**

- Funding entity: College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, University of South Florida
- Role: Project coordinator
- Project: Research Project on Access and Litigation Sanctions
- Amount awarded: \$6,841

## 2021

### **Student Government Association Travel Grant**

University of South Florida

## 2019

### **Student Government Association Travel Grant**

University of South Florida

## 2018

### **Student Government Association Travel Grant**

University of South Florida

### **Graduate Student Travel Grant**

University of West Florida

## 2017

### **Graduate Student Travel Grant**

University of West Florida

## **HONORS, AWARDS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

## 2025

### **Most Influential Faculty Award**

Texas A&M University, San Antonio

Nominated by Distinguished Senior Award winner, Alex St. John

## 2022

### **Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award**

College of Behavior and Community Sciences, University of South Florida

Nominated by Dr. Elizabeth Cass

**Graduate Teaching Assistantship**

Department of Criminology, University of South Florida

Also awarded 2021, 2020, 2018

**2019**

**Graduate Research Assistantship**

Department of Criminology, University of South Florida

**2017**

**Graduate Teaching Assistantship**

Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of West Florida

Also awarded 2016

**John C. Pace Graduate Scholarship**

University of West Florida

Also awarded 2016

**2015**

**Dean's List (Undergraduate)**

University of West Florida

**2014**

**President's List (Undergraduate)**

University of West Florida

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**2026**

**Harper, S.** Examining the Paradox of Imposing Sanctions on Difficult Litigants: A Dynamic Model of Judicial Discernment. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, Philadelphia, PA.

**Harper, S.**, St. John, A., Villarreal, J., Diaz, S. I Won't Do What You Tell Me: Attempting Procedurally Just Interactions with Anti-Government/Anti-Authoritarian (AGAA) Believers. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Summers, M., Nielson, K., Oramas Mora, D., Mitchell, M., **Harper, S.** Tips for Junior Faculty. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference Doctoral Summit, Philadelphia, PA (Invited talk).

**2025**

**Harper, S.** & St. John, A. Examining Procedural Justice in Courtroom Interactions with Anti-Government/Anti-Authoritarian (AGAA) Believers. American Society of Criminology annual conference, Washington, DC.

Diaz, S. & **Harper, S.** In Theory & Practice: Developing Training for Law Enforcement Interactions with Sovereign Citizens (Poster). Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Charleston, SC.

Villarreal, J. & **Harper, S.** Is All Conflict Resolution Created Equal?: Examining Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Tailored to Specific Populations (Poster). Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Charleston, SC.

**Harper, S.**, Diaz, S., St. John, A. "You're Not My Real Judge!": Identifying Elements of Procedural Justice in Federal Court Hearings Involving Defendants with Anti-Government and Anti-Authoritarian Beliefs. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual meeting, Charleston, SC.

**Harper, S.** & Martinez, M. Florida's Frequent Filers: Examining Applications of the Vexatious Litigant Statute Following Judicial Education and Awareness. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Charleston, SC.

## 2024

Hough, R. & **Harper, S.** Injuries and Conditions During Police Foot Pursuits. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Greenville, SC.

**Harper, S.** & Saunders, E. Ability Check: What Stats are Nominating Committees and Voters Assessing in Applications for State Judgeships? Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, Chicago, IL.

## 2023

**Harper, S.** Incorporating Civic and Information Literacy into Undergraduate Criminology Courses. Division of Cybercrime Teaching Workshop at the American Society of Criminology annual conference, Philadelphia, PA (Invited talk).

**Harper, S.** Take Your Ball and Go: Examining Barred Filers in Florida Courts. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Mobile, AL.

**Harper, S.**, Gray, O., Moreno, A., Isleim, H., Craig, H., Hubner, E., Saunders, E. Experiences with Difficult Self-Represented Litigants in Florida Civil Courtroom Workgroups. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, National Harbor, MD.

## 2022

**Harper, S.**, Gray, O., Shue, S.H., Toca, A., Moreno, A., Isleim, H. 50 Ways to Stop the Flood: Examining State Court Strategies for Mitigating Hyperlitigation in the United States. American Society of Criminology annual conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Harper, S.** Not a Monolith, Not a Case Study: Vexatious Litigants in Florida. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, Las Vegas, NV.

## 2021

**Harper, S.** Weaponizing Relief: Legal System Abuse in Florida. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, Daytona Beach, FL.

## 2020

**Harper, S.** Vexatious Litigation Statutes and Costs in Florida. University of South Florida Department of Criminology Graduate Student Research Symposium.

## 2019

**Harper, S.**, Mitchell, O., Sticco, T., Oramas-Mora, D. Understanding Prosecutorial Discretion in Florida Criminal Courts (Full panel presentation). American Society of Criminology annual conference, San Francisco, CA.

**Harper, S.** Pre-trial Release Terms in Florida Counties. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual conference, Baltimore, MD.

## 2017

**Harper, S.** & Edwards, V. Hidden gaps: Accounting for informal civic engagement behaviors in criminology and social control studies. Association for Research on Nonprofit and Voluntary Associations (ARNOVA) annual conference, Grand Rapids, MI.

**Harper, S.** & Snyder, J. Digital natives' social media use and perceptions of youth offending. Southern Criminal Justice Association annual conference, New Orleans, LA.

## 2016

Edwards, V., Bacot, H., Ledet, R. & **Harper S.** Beyond counting hours: A new approach to studying civic engagement and volunteerism. Midwest Public Affairs Conference (MPAC) annual meeting, Columbus, OH.

Edwards, V. & **Harper, S.** A spectrum approach to the study of civic engagement and volunteerism. Association for Research on Nonprofit and Voluntary Associations (ARNOVA) annual conference, Washington, D.C.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Graduate Student Research Supervision

#### Texas A&M—San Antonio

Thesis Co-Chair, Jaidyn Barrera (MS): *Coded Disadvantage: A Historical Analysis of Legal Language and Its Impact on Marginalized Communities.* (2024-present)

Thesis Chair, Ashlynn Cruz (MS): *Ethical True Crime Content: Motivations and Preferences of Content Creators and Gen Z Consumers.* (2025-present)

## **Honors Course Contract Research Supervision**

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### **Texas A&M—San Antonio**

Clara Rodriguez (2025): *Examining Youth Awareness of Juvenile Justice Processes* (1st place poster, Great Plains Regional Collegiate Honors Conference).

Cody Garcia (2024): *Legal Consciousness, Perceptions of Courts, and Voting Behaviors* (1st place poster SA Honors Symposium; 2nd place National Collegiate Honors Conference).

Jazmine Villarreal (2024): *Drip Check: Examining Formality and Informality in Speech and Attire in Court Settings* (Presented at National Collegiate Honors Conference).

### **Instructor of Record**

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### **Texas A&M—San Antonio**

CRIM3335 Crime & Justice in Popular Culture (Face-to-face)

CRIM3388 Courts & Criminal Procedure (Face-to-face; Online)

CRIM5312 Media, Crime, and Policy (Graduate; Online synchronous)

)CRIM2330 Theories of Crime Causation (Online)

### **University of South Florida**

CCJ4934 Senior Seminar: Crime & Justice in Pop Media (Face-to-face; Online)

CCJ4910 Directed Research (Face-to-face)

IDS4914 Advanced Undergraduate Research Experience (Face-to-face)

CCJ3117 Theories of Criminal Behavior (Online)

CCJ3701 Research Methods in Criminology (Online)

CCJ3502 Courts & Judicial Process (Online)

### **University of West Florida**

CCJ4940 Criminal Justice Internship

## **SERVICE**

### **University Service**

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**2026**

**Digital Accessibility Faculty Fellow**

Center for Academic Innovation

Texas A&M University—San Antonio

**2025**

**Member**

Honors Program Advisory Council  
Texas A&M—San Antonio (Present)

**2024**

**Member**

University Library Committee  
Texas A&M—San Antonio (Committee dissolved, 2025)

## College Service

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**2025**

**Faculty Address Speaker**

Graduate Student Hooding Ceremony  
College of Arts & Sciences, Texas A&M—San Antonio

**2024**

**Faculty Marshal**

Graduate Student Hooding Ceremony  
College of Arts & Sciences, Texas A&M—San Antonio

**2023**

**Member**

Unity, Belonging, and Engagement Committee  
College of Arts & Sciences, Texas A&M—San Antonio (Committee dissolved, 2024)

## Departmental Service

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**2025**

**Moderator**

Death Penalty in Texas panel

**Grader**

Comprehensive Exam Committee (MSCCJ)

**Member**

SACSOC Program Review Committee (BA, BS, BAAS CCJ)

**2024**

**Member**

Faculty Development Leave Application Review Committee

**Organizer**

Faculty Social Mixer for Spring Semester

**Host**

Faculty Brown Bag: Incorporating Information & Civic Literacy in Criminology & Political Science Courses

**2023**

**Member**

Institutional Effectiveness Plan & Report Committee (MSCCJ) (Served until 2025)

**Faculty Representative**

JagX New Student Orientation Mixer

**Member**

Tenure Track Faculty Search Committee

**2022**

**Chair**

50th Anniversary Homecoming Student Committee  
Department of Criminology, University of South Florida

**Graduate Student Representative**

Graduate Committee  
Department of Criminology, University of South Florida

**2021**

**Social Media Co-Coordinator**

Department of Criminology, University of South Florida (Served until 2023)

**2020**

**Graduate Student Representative**

Undergraduate Committee  
Department of Criminology, University of South Florida

**Doctoral Student Mentor**

Department of Criminology, University of South Florida (Served until 2022)

**Community & Field Service**

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**2024**

**Director-at-Large (Elected)**

Executive Board  
Southern Criminal Justice Association (Term 2024-2027)

**Editor**

*Crime & Grits* newsletter  
Southern Criminal Justice Association (Present)

**Chair**  
Records & Communication Committee  
Southern Criminal Justice Association (present)

**Chair**  
Student Poster Award Committee  
Southern Criminal Justice Association

**Adult Advisor**  
Cibolo Youth Advisory Council  
City of Cibolo, TX (Present)

**Participant**  
Citizen Police Academy (Bravo Class) & Alumni Association  
Cibolo Police Department

**2023**

**Social Media Coordinator**  
Membership Committee, Southern Criminal Justice Association

**2021**

**President**  
Criminology Graduate Student Organization  
University of South Florida (Served until 2022)

**2020**

**Speaker**  
Great American Teach-In  
Liberty Middle School and Tampa Palms Elementary School (Also 2018)

**2016**

**Historian and Activities Coordinator**  
Criminal Justice Graduate Student Association  
University of West Florida

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

**Apps & Software**  
Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator, InDesign, PhotoShop); Microsoft Office Suite; GSuite; Canva;  
AI LLMs (Gemini, GPT-5, Co-Pilot).

**LMS & Pedagogy**

eLearning (D2L), Canvas, ANGEL, Blackboard, Banner 9.

**Statistical Software**

SPSS, STATA 16, ArcMap GIS, Tableau, nVivo 13, 14, 15.

**Languages**

Spanish (Conversational, written, reading).

**Certifications & Training**

CITI Human Subjects & RCR Certification (Current through 2028);  
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI, Inc - 12 hours, 2014);  
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion in Academia workshops (7.5 hours, 2022);  
Grant Writing workshop (7 hours, 2024).