

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

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

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

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

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

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

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).