SAFA H. AL-SAEEDI

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Political Communication; Research Methodology; Comparative Politics; Authoritarian Regimes; Media; Conflict; Religion and Politics; Ideology; Social Change; Middle East; Arabian Peninsula

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Marist University (2023 – present)
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2022 – 2023)
Postdoctoral Research Associate, Department of Political Science

Harvard University (2021 – 2022)
Predoctoral Research Fellow, John F. Kennedy School of Government

EDUCATION

Northwestern University (Fall 2016 – Fall 2022)
Ph.D., Political Science
Committee: Wendy Pearlman (Chair), James Mahoney, Sirus Bouchat, Rachel Riedl (Cornell University), Timur Kuran (Duke University)

Northwestern University (Fall 2018)
MA, Political Science

University of Michigan (Summer 2017)
Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)

Duke University (Spring 2015)
B.A., *with distinction*, Political Science, Economics, & Philosophy

RESEARCH

Book

Quiet Wars: Media and Societal Factions under Authoritarianism
Manuscript in preparation.

Articles

Appeals of the Saudi Populace in Petitions at King's Doorsteps (1990 – 2012)
British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 50(4) (2026): 1-27.

A New Balance of Power in Red Sea: How Saudi Miscalculations Empowered the Houthis
(with Christina Bouri) *Middle East Policy Council*, September 22, 2026.

Governance Fragmentation and Collapsing Health in Wartime Yemen
(with Christina Bouri) *Lawfare*, July 19, 2026.

The Arab Spring: Why Did the Uprisings Miss the Monarchies?
Contemporary Politics, 28(5) (2022): 491-516.

Power in the Margins: Media and Intra-Societal Conflict in Saudi Arabia
Under review (available upon request).

Avoiding Past Failures: Why Yemen Needs a Bottom-Up Political Vision
Under review (available upon request).

Works in Progress

How the Internet and Sectarianism Can Cause Decline in Religiosity
(with Richard Nielsen, MIT). *Draft article* (available upon request).

Media and Inter-Group Relations under Authoritarianism
Ongoing research.

Anonymous Dissidence in Authoritarian Politics
(with Alexandra Siegel, University of Colorado at Boulder). *Ongoing research*.

Free Spheres in Unfree Landscapes
Ongoing research.

RESEARCH GRANTS AND AWARDS

Marist University
Provost and Academic Affairs Office, Research Grant (Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring 2026)
Dean's Office, School of Liberal Arts, Research Travel Grant (Spring 2026)

The Middle East Initiative Program, Harvard University
Research Grant, Spring 2022

American Political Science Association
APSA Dissertation Research Improvement Grant Conference Expense Funds, 2021
American Political Science Association Travel Grant, 2019

The National Science Foundation
Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, 2020

Institute for Humane Studies
Humane Studies Graduate Fellowship, 2019

Northwestern University
Northwestern University Graduate Fellowship, 2020–2021
Kellogg School of Management, Dispute Resolution Research Center Grant, 2020
Data Acquisition Research Grant, Northwestern University Library, 2020
Graduate Research Grant, Graduate School, 2020
Graduate Research Fund, Department of Political Science, 2018–2019
Minar Memorial Summer Award, Department of Political Science, 2017
Mellon Foundation Fellowship, Northwestern Middle East and North Africa Program, 2016–2017
Northwestern University Graduate Fellowship, 2016–2017

Duke University
Political Science Faculty Award for Outstanding Thesis Poster Presentation, 2015
Holsti Prize in Political Science and Public Policy (nominated), 2015
Research Support Office, Dean's Summer Research Fellowship, 2014
International Studies Research Award, Center of International Studies, 2014
Middle Eastern Studies Research Award, Center of Middle Eastern Studies, 2014

United World College–USA
Shelby Davis Scholarship, 2011–2015

WORKSHOPS AND TALKS

Research Workshops

Arabian Peninsula Interdisciplinary Workshop (virtual) (2026)
Department of Political Science, Brigham Young University (2024)
Department of Political Science, University of Utah (2024)
Arabian Peninsula Interdisciplinary Workshop (virtual) (2023)
Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (2022)
Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2022)
Department of Political Science, Boston College (2022)
Department of Political Science, Marist University (2022)
Department of Political Science, Western Washington University (2022)
Department of Political Science, Chapman University (2022)
Department of Political Science, Northwestern University (2022)
APSA–Middle East and North Africa Research Methods Seminar (2021)
Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (2021)
Middle East and North Africa Program, Northwestern University (2021)
Department of Political Science, Northwestern University (2020)
Applied Quantitative Methods Workshop, Northwestern University (2020)
Graduate Teaching Committee Workshop, Northwestern University (2019)
Buffett Institute, Northwestern University (2018)
Department of Political Science, Northwestern University (2017)
Middle East and North Africa Program, Northwestern University (2017)

Invited Public Talks

NYU Abu Dhabi Institute in New York, NYU (2024)
Kennedy Center, Brigham Young University (2024)
Idaho Society of Fellows Speaker Series, University of Idaho (2024)
Middle East Research and Information Project, Chicago (2019)
International and Global Studies, Duke University (2019)
American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Chicago (2018)
Durham Rotary Club Annual Meeting (2015)

CONFERENCES

Midwest Political Science Association (2026, 2022, 2020, 2019)
Gulf Studies Symposium, Georgetown University (2025)
American Political Science Association (2024, 2021, 2019)
Economic Sociology Summer Conference, Columbia University (2019)
Association for Analytic Learning about Islam & Muslim Societies, Princeton University (2022)
Comparative and Historical Social Sciences Conference, Chicago (2020, 2019)
Duke–UNC Annual Middle East Studies Conference, Duke University (2014)

TEACHING AND ADVISING

Courses, Marist University
POSC 235: Research Methods
POSC 391: Technology & Politics
POSC 292: Religion & World Politics
POSC 355: History & Politics of the Modern Middle East
POSC 111: Introduction to Comparative Politics
First Year Seminar 101L: The X (Twitter) Republic

Guest Lectures
Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Spring 2022
Department of Government, Harvard University, Spring 2022
Department of Political Science, Northwestern University (Spring 2019, Winter 2019)

Teaching Assistance
Available on request.

Advising
Six honors and independent research projects
Nominated, Academic Advising Award, Marist University

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Journal Referee
Perspectives on Politics; *Contemporary Politics*; *Democratization*; *Middle East Policy*

American Political Science Association
Selection Committee, Centennial Center Research Grants (CCRG), Spring 2026

American Institute for Yemeni Studies
Board Member (2023 – present)

Marist University
Founder and Coordinator, Conflict and Ideas Workshop (2026 – present)
Marist 100 Implementation Committee (2026 – present)
Institutional Review Board (IRB) (2024 – present)
Global Studies Program Committee (2024 – present)
United World College–Marist University Liaison (2026 – present)
Political Science Job Search Committee, 2024 & 2026

SKILLS

Fieldwork Experience: Chicago (2017); Lebanon (2014); Turkey (2012); Yemen (2012)
Statistical Programming / Markup Languages: R; LaTeX
Languages: Arabic (native); French (reading); Musnad [Ancient Yemeni script] (beginner)

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Teaching Training Certificate, Graduate School, Northwestern University, 2019
Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Certificate, University of Michigan, 2017

AFFILIATIONS

Faculty Fellow, Association for Analytic Learning about Islam and Muslim Societies (AALIMS)

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Non-Resident Researcher, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore, Summer 2016
Visiting Scholar, Anthropology and History Departments, Duke University,2015-2016

MEDIA

Podcast, Partial Hegemony, The Arab Spring, and Lebanon's Ongoing Political Crisis (S. 11, Ep.19), Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS), January 2022

REFERENCES

Wendy Pearlman
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Northwestern University
pearlman@northwestern.edu

James Mahoney
Professor, Sociology and Political Science
Northwestern University
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Rachel Beatty Riedl
Professor, Government
Cornell University
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Tarek Masoud
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Harvard University
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