

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## *Neil Carlson*

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### Contact Information

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### Formal Education

**Ph.D.** in Political Science, Duke University, March 2004. Dissertation work on quantitative estimates of effects of democratic associational governance practices on indicators of political and civic culture. Passed preliminary examination fields in both American and comparative politics.

**B.A.** Wheaton College, Wheaton IL, 1990. *Summa Cum Laude*; ranked first in class; double major in Political Science and Biblical Studies; six-month internship in development in Lima, Peru.

### Academic and Related Positions

**Director**, Calvin College Center for Social Research, Grand Rapids, Michigan; July 2011 to present (Assistant Director August 2004 to June 2011). Research design and management with deep expertise in technology for data collection, organization, analysis and visualization. Specialist in web-based and multiple-mode surveys. Add power, efficiency, sophistication and visual design to research projects. Provide research design and project management services, including cost estimation, human resource training and technology acquisition. Train and mentor junior staff and undergraduates.

**Geographic Information Systems Instructor**, Calvin College Department of Geology, Geography and Environmental Studies, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Spring 2005, 2006 and 2007.

**Pre-Doctoral Research Associate**, Kettering Foundation, Dayton, Ohio; Fall 2003 to Summer 2004.

**Graduate Instructor**, Department of Political Science, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, Summer and Fall 2001, Spring 2003.

**Teaching Assistant**, Institute of Statistics and Decision Sciences (ISDS), Duke University, Fall 2000 and Spring 2001.

**Graduate Fellow and Research Assistant**, Department of Political Science, Duke University, Fall 1996 to Spring 2003.

### Honors, Awards and Grants

**Research Stipend**, Center for the Study of Philanthropy and Voluntarism, Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, Duke University, Summer 2003.

**Teaching Fellowship**, Gerst Program in Political, Economic and Humanistic Studies, 2002-2003.

**National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship**, awarded for three years beginning summer 1997.

**James B. Duke Fellowship**, Duke University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, awarded for four years beginning fall 1996.

### Peer-reviewed Publications

Rahn, Wendy, John Brehm and Neil Carlson. 1999. "National elections as institutions for generating social capital," in Theda Skocpol and Morris Fiorina, eds., *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

## Dissertation

"The Institutional Design of Civil Society: Associational Political Institutions and Support for Democratic Government", completed March 2004. The project informs scholarship on voluntary associations and civil society by applying the tools of "new institutionalist" analysis to the thinking of Alexis de Tocqueville and his contemporary disciples. A web-based survey of leaders at over 65 large U.S. voluntary associations provides data on their institutional structure and practice. The association-level data is shown to indicate separable latent factors of democratic and constitutionalist practices. The contextual information is merged with public opinion data from associations' members from the American National Election Studies (NES); this data became publicly available in August 2003 as a supplement to the 1996 NES. Analysis shows that respondent exposure to associational democracy has little or no measurable effect on the broader democratic political culture, including behaviors such as voter turnout and campaigning, as well as attitudes such as satisfaction with democracy, political efficacy, and trust in government. The work was cited approvingly in *The Annual Review of Political Science* (2005).

## Conference Papers and Presentations

Carlson, Neil. 1999. "The Rationality of Political Culture: Voter Turnout and Social Capital," paper presented at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, Georgia, September 2-5, 1999.

Carlson, Neil. 2003. "Testing the Transmission Belt: Do Associational Institutions Affect National Political Attitudes and Behaviors?" Paper presented at the 2003 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 28-31, 2003.

Carlson, Neil. 2004. "Better Radar for Stealth Democracy: Respondent Ambivalence about Increased Ballot Initiatives." Paper presented at the 62nd Annual National Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 15-18, 2004.

Carlson, Neil. 2005. "Hybridization: Logistics and Statistics of a Mixed Online-and-Mail Survey of Congregations." Presentation to the 2005 Annual Meeting of the Religious Research Association, Rochester, NY, November 3-6, 2005.

Carlson, Neil and Edwin Hernandez. 2009. "Modeling congregational social service program counts from national and local surveys." Presentation to the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), Denver, CO, October 24, 2009.

Haney, Becky, Neil Carlson and Jeff Schiman. 2010. "The generous congregation in context: spatial and social patterns of local giving in a metropolitan county." Presentation to the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Western Economic Association International, Portland, OR, June 30 to July 2, 2010.

Penning, James M. and Neil Carlson. 2009. "Clergy Participation in Local Politics: Evidence from the Kent County Congregations Study." Presentation to the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 2009.

Penning, James M. and Neil Carlson. 2010. "Practicing what they preach? Political norms and behavior of Protestant clergy in 2008." Presentation to the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 22-24, 2010.

VanAntwerp, J.J., R.E. Reed, C.N. Bruxvoort, & N. Carlson. 2008. "Engineering student retention: development of a validated, quantitative instrument for exploring the role of personal and institutional context." Presentation to the 2008 Annual Conference of the American Society of Electrical Engineers, Pittsburgh, PA, June, 2008.

## Research Reports

Carlson, Neil. 2010. "Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Project Evaluation Survey: Third Wave Report." Available from <http://www.calvin.edu/weblogs/csr/report-on-2009-spe-survey/>. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Center for Social Research.

Carlson, Neil. 2009. "Cultivating STEM: Why West Michigan college students select majors in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics." Available from <http://www.calvin.edu/weblogs/csr/cultivating-stem/>. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Center for Social Research.

Hernandez, Edwin, Neil Carlson, Nathan Medeiros-Ward, Amanda Stek and Lori Verspoor. 2008. "Gatherings of hope: how religious congregations contribute to the quality of life in Kent County." Available from <http://www.calvin.edu/weblogs/csr/gatherings-of-hope/>. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Center for Social Research.

Rice, Rodger, Neil Carlson and Christina Vanden Bosch. 2009. Spiritual and Social Trends and Patterns in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Available from <http://www.calvin.edu/weblogs/csr/crcsurvey2007/>. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Center for Social Research.

## Recent Research Projects

**Co-principal investigator** for the Believe 2 Become Initiative Evaluation, 2010 to present. Helping to build broad collaborative team with the Douglas & Maria DeVos Foundation, GVSU Community Research Institute, Grand Rapids Public Schools, nFocus Software, and multiple Initiative partners. Designer and project manager for the Hope Zone Household Survey, which will enable LINC Community Revitalization, Inc. to collect a rolling geographic sample from four large inner-city neighborhoods in Grand Rapids.

**Research methodologist** for the Spectrum Health Computerized Provider Order Entry (CPOE) Implementation Evaluation, January 2010 to present. Consulting on design of 14 sub-studies, including a pre- and post-CPOE web survey of Spectrum Health personnel and application of Heckman selection models to adverse drug events. Train and support the study's database administrator.

**Survey designer and project manager** of the web-based West Michigan College Student Major Selection Survey in Fall 2008, conducted on behalf of the Van Andel Education Institute. Author of the report Cultivating STEM: selection of science, technology, engineering and mathematics majors by West Michigan college students (May 2009).

**Co-principal investigator and project manager** of the Kent County Congregations Study, 2006-present; designer of PHP web application for management of congregational directory; co-author and graphic design principal of the resulting 96-page full-color report, Gatherings of Hope: How Religious Congregations Contribute to the Quality of Life in Kent County (November 2008).

**Project manager** of dozens of successful online, mail and hybrid-mode surveys and data collection projects, including national, multid denominational surveys of clergy such as the 2009 Clergy & Public Affairs Survey for the Paul B. Henry Institute and the 2010 Faith Communities Today (FACT) survey for the Hartford Institute for Religion Research (HIRR).

## Teaching

**Course designer and instructor**, Geography 222A, *Geographic Information Systems*, Calvin College, Spring 2005. Created completely new curriculum applying scientific research method perspective to practical geographic analysis. Please see web site: [http://www.calvin.edu/admin/csr/gis/geog222/2005\\_spring/syllabus.htm](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/csr/gis/geog222/2005_spring/syllabus.htm)

**Course creator and instructor**, Political Science 199C.27, *Civil Society, Social Capital and Voluntary Association*, Duke University, Spring 2003. Sponsored by the Gerst Program in Political, Economic and Humanist Studies. Provided undergraduates with a broad theoretical and empirical perspective on the debate surrounding the political roles of nongovernmental organizational forms and cultural values, considering both normative political theory and empirical research methods. Please see <http://www.duke.edu/~nec/ps/ps199c-27/syllabus.htm>.

**Course instructor**, Political Science 129S, *Internet and Politics*, Duke University, Fall 2001. Course examined the political effects of emerging digital communications and decision-support technologies. Students learned political science theory and research methods, hands-on web design skills in Dreamweaver, and the powerful implications of the combination of the two for future campaigns, elections, and governance. Developed a stand-alone database-driven website for the course (now offline due to a server change), including a working election system using actual student votes to compare different decision rules (plurality, Borda count, and approval voting), a peer review system, and the basis for a web-based collaborative class project. Please see [http://www.duke.edu/~nec/ps/ps129\\_fall\\_2001/syllabus.htm](http://www.duke.edu/~nec/ps/ps129_fall_2001/syllabus.htm).

**Course instructor**, Political Science 91, *American Political System*, Summer 2001 Term 1. Course emphasized the theme of self-government, focusing on civil society, interest groups, federalism and the American institutional political culture. During this intensive session, students wrote weekly posts to an online course discussion group and took weekly current-events quizzes; these formed the basis for discussion applying course materials to present-day politics. Please see [http://www.duke.edu/~nec/ps/ps91\\_ss1\\_2001/syllabus.htm](http://www.duke.edu/~nec/ps/ps91_ss1_2001/syllabus.htm).

**Teaching Assistant** to Prof. Sandra McBride, Statistics 242, *Applied Regression Analysis*, Spring 2001. Taught two computer lab sections to Master's students using S-Plus 2000 software. Nominated by students for best TA of Nicholas School of the Environment.

**Teaching Assistant** to Prof. Dalene Stangl, Statistics 101, *Data Analysis and Statistical Inference*, Fall 2000. Taught two computer lab sections with 55 total students, staffed help sessions for all 10x-level statistics students, participated in grading and materials preparation. Course used JMP-IN software.

## Additional Experience and Skills

**Languages:** Working Spanish with experience in Peru and Mexico. Rudimentary Portuguese and Russian; residual biblical Greek. Participated in Duke in Russia program, summer 1998, for seven weeks of language training in St. Petersburg.

**Business administration and consulting:** six years' experience in non-profit business administration with Young Life in Southern California, 1990-1996; Young Life national data analyst and decision-support staff 1999-2002 (20-30 hours weekly). Experience since 1994 as an independent computer consultant under "Efficiency by Design" and "Exelexa.com" monikers. Summer 2000 internship in management consulting with McKinsey & Company, Cleveland, Ohio. Online survey engineer for Stratallys Research, 2002-2003.

**Geographic Information Systems:** Current co-manager of Calvin's ArcGIS Server 10.x ([gis.calvin.edu](http://gis.calvin.edu)). ESRI Advanced Analysis with ArcGIS seminar, Denver, Colorado, January 2005. CSISS conference, Boulder, Colorado, March 2000. ICPSR one-week seminar on spatial statistics, Ann Arbor, Michigan, August 1999.

**Digital Information and Design:** mastery of Windows 7 and XP, basic Windows 2008 Server administration. Web-based surveys with Allegiance Engage 7 (formerly Inquisite) and others. Statistical analysis and data presentation in Stata, SPSS, and other packages. Data modeling and management expertise in Microsoft Access, MySQL, Intuit QuickBase, and others. Presentation and advanced automation skills in Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint, Microsoft Word and Corel WordPerfect, CorelDraw. Data visualization with Tableau Desktop and Server. Efficient, clean web design in Adobe Creative Suite, including Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Dreamweaver and Acrobat; web applications with PHP, ASP, and other platforms. Extensive experience in data preparation and conversion, one-on-one user training, problem solving and system planning.