

Democracy Program | Graduate Assistantship

The Carter Center's Democracy Program is seeking a qualified graduate student to conduct research and analysis related to one or both of the following research projects.

Indicators of Election Integrity and Democratic Governance

This project focuses on indicators and measures for assessing the integrity of elections, both as a whole and via subvariables related to election quality. The research aims to develop consistent sets of indicators and measures used by election missions to assess electoral integrity and democratic governance more broadly. Working with the Democracy Program director and data scientist, the graduate assistant is expected to expand on the research conducted to date and prepare one or two working papers summarizing key issues. Depending on the GA's bandwidth and ambition, they may propose and pursue additional projects contributing to this research area.

Social Media and Digital Information Environment

The second project is to conduct research and analysis to support the program's efforts to develop methods and tools to assess the role and impact of social media and other aspects of the digital information environment on elections and related political processes, including key issues identified by the academic and practitioner communities. Working with the program director and data scientist, the GA is expected to expand on the research conducted to date and prepare one or two working papers summarizing key issues. Depending on the GA's bandwidth and ambition, they may propose and pursue additional projects contributing to this research area.

The graduate assistant will be expected to:

Produce one or two research papers on key topics and issues, related either to measures and indicators of election integrity and democratic governance and/or social media and the digital information environment around elections. At least one of the papers should be of sufficient quality to deliver at an academic conference, possibly in connection with the Electoral Integrity Project.

Key benchmarks for review include the following tangible deliverables:

- Annotated bibliography and literature review updating the research projects with the state of the art in the scientific literature
- Draft research proposal, including research design, data collection plan, and high-level work plan articulating when the project is expected to move through its various stages
- Annotated outline for each proposed paper assessed through weekly meetings with Democracy Program mentors
- Deliver one invited talk each semester sharing current research findings with Democracy Program and other peace program staff. These talks are similar to an academic



conference presentation and generally include a 20- to 40-minute presentation followed by Q&A

Qualifications:

- Currently enrolled graduate who has completed at least two semesters of academic coursework
- A weekly commitment, between 10 to 20 hours, for a period of 9-12 months
- Strong research, writing, communication, and analytical skills
- Selected candidate will need to be a self-starter and should be able to work independently
- Strong quantitative skills (e.g., R and/or Stata or similar) and experience with various ICT tools
- May be called on to train or mentor interns on issues/skills that intersect the GA's expertise and the program's ongoing initiatives
- Demonstrated interest in democratic elections, democracy, governance, and/or democratic transitions and awareness of the current literature and key issues
- Familiarity with public debate and scholarship on the impact of social media and the internet on democratic governance is preferred
- Ideal candidates should have completed at least one graduate course focused on democracy and elections, or democracy promotion, and be familiar with key literature of democracy and elections
- Experience with public international law is a plus, as is practical experience in international democracy assistance and/or election observation