

PAZ AVILA

Visiting Assistant Professor | The George Washington University

paza@gwu.edu • pazavila.com

EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin, *Ph.D. in Political Science*, Austin, TX, 2025

Subfields: Public Law and Comparative Politics

Advisor: Daniel Brinks

Honors: Graduate School Fellowship, Provost Priority Fellowship, and Government Department Fellowship

The University of Texas at Austin, *Master's in Political Science*, Austin, TX, 2021

New York University School of Law, *LL.M. (Legal Theory)*, New York, NY, 2016

Advisor: Jeremy Waldron

Honors: Dean's Award Merit Scholarship, 2015-2016

Graduate Editor of the *Journal of International Law and Politics*

Research Assistant: Professor Wojciech Sadurski

Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar, *LL.M. (Constitutional Law)*, Ecuador, 2011

Honors: Merit Scholarship, 2009-2010

Universidad del Azuay, *LL.B. / B.A. in Law*, Ecuador, 2008

Honors: Merit Scholarship. Ranking in the top 1%

PUBLICATIONS AND WORK IN PROGRESS

Book Project

A Theory of Constitutional Legitimacy: The Foundations of Constitutional Strength (in progress)

Working Papers & Works Under Review

- *The Performance Trap: A Novel Theory of Constitutional Legitimacy in Fragile Democracies* (under review for publication).
- *The Nuclear Option: Why Legislative Crises Drive Constitutional Mortality in Latin America* (under review for publication).
- *Why Some Constitutional Replacements Fail and Others Succeed: A Comparative Analysis from Latin America* (working paper).
- *Presidential Accountability and Prosecution: A Comparative Analysis of Latin America and the United States* (working paper for law review submission).

Shorter Articles & Book Reviews

- *The Dilemma Between Constitutional Change and Constitutional Veneration*, 34 DÍKAION (2025) (reviewing RICHARD ALBERT, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS: MAKING, BREAKING, AND CHANGING CONSTITUTIONS (2019)) [in Spanish]
- Mapping Constitutional Dismemberment, 33 NAT'L L. SCH. INDIA REV. (2021) (reviewing RICHARD ALBERT, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS: MAKING, BREAKING, AND CHANGING CONSTITUTIONS (2019))

Other Publications: (all in Spanish)

- *The Rights of Indigenous People: Between Diversity and International Human Rights*, 28 Am. U. Int'l L. Rev. 943 (2013) (in Spanish).
- M. Paz Avila & Ramiro Avila, *Freedom of Expression: Debates, Scope and New Challenges* (OHCHR & UNESCO 2011).
- Ramiro Avila, M. Paz Avila, *Criminal Code Proposal: The Constitutional Rights in the Criminal Law* (Ministry of Justice and Human Rights 2010).

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS AND LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Constitutional Court of Ecuador, Quito, Ecuador, 2010-2012

Clerk

Researched and wrote court opinions drafts for cases considered by the plenary of the Court

Inter-American Court of Human Rights, San Jose, Costa Rica, Fall 2012

Visiting Professional

Developed legal arguments for cases considered by the justices of the Court

Boston College Law School, Boston, MA. 2014 – 2015; 2016 – 2017

Visiting Scholar

Conducted research under the supervision of Professor Paulo Barrozo

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The George Washington University, Political Science Department 2025 - 2027

Visiting Assistant Professor

Courses taught: Constitutional Law and Politics I; Comparative Constitutionalism; Constitutional Principles: From Founding Ideals to Modern Democracy

The University of Texas at Austin, Government Department 2018 - 2025

Instructor

Constitutional Principles: Core Texts, Spring 2025

Teaching Assistant

Courses: Constitutional Interpretation; American Government; American Government and Elections; U.S. Foreign Policy; Foundations of International Relations and Global Studies; Urban Politics

University of San Francisco de Quito, School of Law, 2013

Lecturer

Courses taught: Constitutional Law; State and Politics

INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCES

- **Guest Lecturer**, Course Constitutionalism in the U.S. and the World, UT Austin, School of Law, 2024, 2025
- **Guest Speaker**, Professional Panel for Hispanic and Latino Students, Cisneros Institute, George Washington University, 2025
- **Discussant of the Keynote Speaker**, Global Summit on Constitutionalism, UT Austin School of Law, 2023
- **Invited speaker** at the Colloquium of Comparative Constitutional Law and Politics, UT Austin, School of Law, 2023
- **Discussant** at the Conference Ditching a President: Constitutional Design of the Executive Branch in Latin America, UT Austin School of Law, 2022
- **Guest Lecturer** at the Public Law Workshop, Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Dominican Republic 2020

Selected Conference Presentations

- **American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting**: Boston (2026); Philadelphia (2024).
- **International Society of Public Law (ICON-S) Annual Conference**: Ireland (2026); Madrid (2024).
- **Global Summit on Constitutionalism**: Austin, TX (2023–2025).
- **Graduate Conference on Constitutional Change**: UT Austin Law School (2023–2024).
- **Junior Law and Politics Research Community**: Austin, TX (2023).

LEADERSHIP AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

George Washington University

- **Pre-Law Advisor / Mentor**: Mentored undergraduate students interested in pursuing law school, 2025–Present

University of Texas at Austin

- **Member**, Public Law Search Committee, Fall 2024
- **Organizer**, Public Law Lunches Series, 2023–2024
- **Co-Organizer**, Women in Political Science (WIPS), 2019–2022

- **Co-Organizer**, Public Law Conference, 2019–2022
- **Mentor**, First-Year Ph.D. Students, 2020–2022

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- **Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR)**, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY (2020).
- **Moral Foundations of Law Seminar**, Witherspoon Institute, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ (2019).
- **Advanced Program in Human Rights and Humanitarian Law**, American University Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C. (2012).
Awards: Best Paper Award & Fully Funded Merit Scholarship.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

- **Interviewed**, [The GW Hatchet](#) (On the DOJ Probes and Potential Fiscal Settlements)
- **Featured**, [The Leaf](#) (Curated newsletter on Constitutionalism by Richard Albert, 2025)
- **Interviewed**, [Houston Chronicle](#) (On the representation of women of color in politics, 2023).
- **Interviewed**, [Ecuavisa](#) (Ecuador TV Network commentary on Constitutional Court ruling regarding abortion in cases of rape, 2021)

LANGUAGES & IMMIGRATION STATUS

- **Languages**: Spanish (Native), English (Near Native), Quechua (Basic).
- **Immigration Status**: U.S. Permanent Resident (Green Card Holder).

REFERENCES

Richard Albert

Hines H. Baker and Thelma Kelley Baker Chair in Law,
Professor of Government, and Director of Constitutional Studies
The University of Texas at Austin Law School
617.213.0316
richard.albert@law.utexas.edu

Daniel Brinks

H. Malcolm Macdonald Chair in Comparative and Constitutional Law
Professor of Government and of Law
The University of Texas at Austin
512-232-7252
danbrinks@austin.utexas.edu

Zachary Elkins

Professor of Government
The University of Texas at Austin
512.232.7250
zelkins@austin.utexas.edu

Paulo Barrozo

Professor
John C. Ford S.J. Distinguished Scholar and Associate Dean of Faculty and Global Programs
Boston College Law School
617-552-4388
paulo.barrozo@bc.edu

Eric Lawrence

Chair and Associate Professor of Political Science
The George Washington University
(202) 994-4826
edl@gwu.edu

Sanford Levinson

W. St. John Garwood and W. St. John Garwood, Jr. Centennial Chair in Law
Professor of Law and of Government
The University of Texas Law School
slevinson@law.utexas.edu

H. W. Perry Jr

Associate Professor of Law and Government
The University of Texas Law School
512-232-1852
hwperry@mail.utexas.edu