

THOMAS S. BENSON

tsbenson@udel.com
linkedin.com/in/thomasbenson2

334 East Main Street
Newark, DE 19711

EDUCATION

PhD	University of Delaware, Political Science & International Relations	May 2022
MA	University of Delaware, Political Science & International Relations	May 2019
LLB	University of Leeds (UK), LLB Law (BA-equivalent)	May 2016

AREAS OF INTEREST

Primary Field: Comparative Politics.
Second Field: International Relations.
Specialty Field: Environmental Politics & Policy.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Environmental Justice, Ecological Justice, and Species Justice; Environmental and Ecological Sustainability; Smart Cities; Environmental Politics & Policy; Regionalisms; Governance.

UNDER REVIEW

Benson, Thomas. 2019. "Eco Framework: An Environmental and Ecological Justice, and Sustainability Framework for Smart Cities." *Under Review at the International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*.

Koren, Ore., Bagozzi, Benjamin E., and Benson, Thomas. 2019. "Food and Water Insecurity as Causes of Social Unrest: Evidence from Geolocated Twitter Data." *Under Review at the Journal of Peace Research*.

WORKING PAPERS

Benson, Thomas. 2019. "Eco Framework: Insights into Singapore and Mexico City as Smart Cities."

Benson, Thomas. 2019. "Smart City Governance, Initiatives and Sustainability: Tokyo."

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Delaware, Newark, DE (USA)
Introduction to Law (POSC380)

Feb 2020 – May 2020

University of Delaware, Newark, DE (USA)

Sep 2019 – Oct 2019

Introduction to Comparative Politics (POSC270)

- Led class discussion twice per week for 15-20 minutes to discuss current events to tie these to Area Studies and Comparative Politics, as well as address student questions;
- Organised seven group meeting with students to assist in their preparation of an Area Study to present on and write about collectively and independently;
- Coordinated efforts with one other teaching assistant;
- Moderated and graded weekly discussion posts of class material online;
- Updated gradebooks weekly with attendance, extra credit, and discussion posts;
- Hosted weekly office hours to check-in with students and host Q&A sessions;
- Posted weekly announcements, and articles relevant to class material online.

University of Delaware, Newark, DE (USA)

Sep 2017 – May 2019

Introduction to American Politics (POSC150) (x4)

- Assisted the management and operation of an undergraduate course averaging 120-180 students in numerous ways:
 - Planned and executed discussion sections twice per week (average of 30 students per section) (Sep 2018 – May 2019);
 - Held weekly office hours (2-4 hours);
 - Graded a total of 6 film reviews (approx. 310 papers), 12 exams (approx. 680 papers), and four assignments for a political project (approx. 240 papers);
 - Coordinated efforts with others teaching assistants (1-2); and
 - Operated InQuizitive (online quiz software: features approx. 13 quizzes per semester) for a total of 240 students (Feb 2018 – May 2019).

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Delaware, Newark, DE (USA)

Oct 2019 – Dec 2019

Research Assistantship for POSC Department

- Coordinated with Department Chair regarding departmental changes;
- Acted as a liaison between graduate students and the Department Chair.

Research Assistantship, University of Delaware, DE (USA)

May 2019 – Aug 2019

NSF DMS Grant 1737865

PI: Dr. Benjamin Bagozzi

- Conducted research pertaining to food and water (in)security, the climate-conflict relationship, and institutions and governance in Kenya in the form of three comprehensive literature reviews;
- Helped in the development and summary of a human coding scheme for food and water security-related Kenyan tweets;
- Independently hand-coded 5,000 tweets;
- Wrote an extensive synthesis of extant literature that used Twitter data;
- Provided a rich written account of qualitative and anecdotal evidence supporting Twitter and Kenya-based food and water insecurity accounts; and
- Reviewed and edited drafts of the paper and the supplemental appendix.

HONORS AND AWARDS

University of Delaware Tuition Waiver
Tuition waiver 2017-2022

2017

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Grow to Sell Horticultural Certificate

University of Leeds, Leeds (UK), 2016

- Active engagement with professional gardeners to enhance knowledge of horticulture and business, developing unique pots that were successfully sold to the wider public.

Tribunal Victory

Wetherby (UK), 2015

- Handled, independently, a tribunal case against a former employer and won.

Nightline Specialist Training

University of Leeds, Leeds (UK), 2015

- Engaged in voluntary, crisis training in both teams and in an individual capacity to effectively care for students and members of the public in moments of distress.

BPP Commercial Awareness Certificate

BPP University, Leeds (UK), 2014

- Demonstrated a sound awareness of commercial issues applicable to businesses in a contemporary environment, and inspired creativity and innovation in business through team- and character-building exercises.

Westlaw Advanced Training

University of Leeds, Leeds (UK), 2013

- Participated in learning advanced Westlaw database software, which subsequently enhanced my research skills, and proficiency in IT.

Pathways to Law Graduation

University of Leeds, Leeds (UK), 2013

- Completion of a two-year programme, alongside my academic studies, which involved attending courts (of varying natures), participating in group activities, formulating and carrying out presentations, and keeping up to date on current affairs.

Eversheds Success Programme Certificate

Eversheds (Sutherland), Leeds (UK), 2012

- Developed an understanding of success on an individual level and at a business level through presentations, teamwork, individual work, research, and assisting staff.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, 2017-Present

- See *Teaching Experience*.

Miah Solicitors, Wetherby (UK), Nov 2016

- Assisted 2 solicitors and 1 paralegal with client meetings, providing much-needed time and effort in managing clients of the law firm;
- Overhauled the outdated wills and probate system to assist all solicitors within the wills and probate specialty in the firm; and
- Enhanced understanding of will and probate law, land law, family law, and personal injury law, thus developing communication skills and a capacity to work independently in an effective manner.

Cowling, Swift & Kitchen Ltd, York & Boroughbridge (UK), Jul 2016

- Liaised between solicitors, senior partners, and administrative staff to assist in communication efforts;
- Managed client contacts and details, and attended client meetings with a senior partner, alongside shadowing them in their day-to-day duties;
- Drafted, edited, fact-checked, and proof-read written material, including memos, legal correspondence, and case material; and
- Handled, read, and analysed legal documents and an abundance of legal material and cases in areas such as workplace injuries, speeding offences, divorces, division of land and assets, and death (wills).

Posh Pad Lettings Ltd, Hull (UK), Jun – Aug 2015

- Assisted the Director in a personal assistant capacity in a multitude of ways, including general administrative assistance, provision of business, legal, and social knowledge;
- Developed a vast amount of business experience, all of which coincided with extensive self-taught knowledge of business, accounting, company structures, and properties (primarily rented), thus enhancing commercial awareness;
- Organised meetings with advertising companies to bolster brand development;
- Provided website development assistance, and search engine optimisation (SEO) support;
- Advised management and other employees on the significance of social media in brand development;
- Created advertisements and company promotional offers; and
- Improved knowledge of conveyancing, property, business management.

Member of Parliament (MP) Alec Shelbrooke, Wetherby (UK), Feb 2015

- Oversaw surgeries with general public in numerous different locations within the MP's local constituency;
- Assisted in distribution of political information to the wider public with the local MP;
- Developed a deeper awareness local and national politics, including extensive questioning with the MP to unveil further political understandings; and
- Attended political meetings, including the MP, administrative staff, and volunteers, to assist in providing electoral structure, and perspective on campaigning and policies.

WGC Ltd, Wetherby (UK), Jun – Sep 2014

- Ensured compliance with cleaning standards;
- Utilised a friendly, caring, flexible, and conscientious approach in engaging effectively with members of staff and the general public; and
- Enhanced communication skills in dealing with customer inquiries and in ensuring client satisfaction.

Ware & Kay Ltd, Wetherby & York (UK), Jul 2009

- Maintained client confidentiality, and utilised meticulous nature to ensure that case information was fully documented and processed both promptly and accurately;
- Assisted 2 solicitors, 2 senior partners, and 2 administrative staff with legal documents, and co-facilitated many client meetings, primarily within family and employment law;
- Reviewed and assessed legal material for solicitors to ensure legal compliance; and
- Provided legal assistance and advice to solicitors.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Bardon Grange Allotment

Volunteer Gardener, Leeds (UK), Aug 2016 – May 2017

- Participated in weeding, planting, and maintenance of the communal allotment in both teams and at an independent level;
- Taught 5 newcomers in an informal capacity about plants, and general maintenance of the allotment; and
- Actively liaised between staff and volunteers to improve the allotment in terms of management, aesthetic, funding, and general cleanliness.

The Great Vegan Feast

Volunteer Kitchen Assistant, Leeds (UK), Aug – Nov 2016

- Advocated for greater mental health awareness with other volunteers;
- Engaged with homeless individuals to combat issues such as loneliness, and develop a greater understanding of both public and private services available to them; and
- Prepared and served food, and liaised between volunteers, managers, and homeless people.

Pathways to Law

Ambassador & E-Mentor, Leeds (UK), Sep 2013 – Jul 2016

- Supported the running of approx. 12 student activities and exercises at events held at the University of Leeds, and attended such events to actively assist in younger student participation;
- Encouraged and inspired, as an ambassador, approx. 60 younger students from disadvantaged backgrounds to maintain motivation and focus in the two-year programme; and
- Answered students' queries via email and via an online forum as an e-mentor to increase student awareness of opportunities and support available.

Nightline

Volunteer Crisis Manager, Leeds (UK), Feb 2015 – May 2016

- Completed specialist crisis training to assist individuals in distress and attempt to resolve their issue(s); and
- Volunteered on multiple occasions, often overnight (8pm-8am) to aid those who needed it during those hours, via telephone and online chat support.

University of Leeds Student Union

LGBT+ Communications & Promotions Officer, Leeds (UK), Feb 2015 – Feb 2016

- Developed an extensive use of e-mail functions to frequently contact businesses, the university administration staff, welfare services, and students on an array of issues (primarily updates regarding Committee meetings and changes);
- Coordinated the establishment of connections with 5 external businesses and companies to enhance support within the LGBT+ community;
- Networked with 8 external businesses to boost promotional offers available to students, and to manifest support within the community; and
- Designed (computer graphics) membership cards which were subsequently distributed to over 300 students.

Save the Children

Volunteer Cashier & Sorter, Leeds (UK), Oct 2012 – Jan 2013

- Handled cash in a professional capacity, and dealt with managers, volunteers, and the general public;
- Managed public queries and expectations;
- Maintained and improved the shop to encourage greater public interest; and
- Sorted 100s of donations in a quick and effective manner.

LANGUAGES

English: Native Language.

Spanish: Novice Listener, Novice Speaker, Novice Reading and Writing.

COMPUTER SKILLS

MS Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher.

Statistical Software: Stata; SPSS.