Tara P. Buss, Ph.D.

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PROFILE

Dedicated researcher with a decade of experience answering important political and social questions using quantitative, qualitative, and experimental methodologies. Adept at leading projects from conceptualization to execution, analysis, and dissemination.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Collaborative | Remote

Research Director | Dec. 2022 - Present

- Developed and executed multi-million dollar annual research plans, including day-to-day project management, resulting in strategic data-driven insights for our partners.
- Authored and disseminated dozens of research reports, slide decks, and engaging visualizations, effectively communicating critical insights and recommendations to a diverse audience of researchers and decision-makers.
- Crafted precise, impactful, and methodologically rigorous questions for 30+ survey instruments, 150+ focus group guides, and 10+ online discussion board guides.
- Directed a research team of staff, core external pollsters, and consultants, providing mentorship and guidance to foster a culture of continuous learning and high performance.

Research Alignment Director | Oct. 2021 - Dec. 2022

- Created and implemented a comprehensive standardization protocol to ensure consistency across projects and research vendors.
- Orchestrated the end-to-end development of a subscription-based research portal, from inception to rollout. This encompassed vendor management, specification design, beta testing, and the successful launch of the portal, providing an invaluable on-demand resource for our partners and enhancing our research dissemination capabilities.
- Established and nurtured strategic partnerships with aligned organizations, amplifying the impact of our messaging and research findings.

University of California, Berkeley | Berkeley, CA

Doctoral Researcher | 2013 - 2020

Dissertation: "The Specter of Violence: Perceptions of Violence and Political Behavior in Mexico"

- Executed an original survey of 17,500 Mexican voters which combined traditional closed and open-ended questions with innovative experiments.
- Developed a theoretical framework for understanding patterns of misperceptions of violence grounded in sociology, evolutionary psychology, and behavioral economics.
- Presented key findings in engaging and accessible ways to technical and non-technical audiences via conference papers, public talks, reports, lectures, blog posts, workshops, and presentations.

Lecturer, Political Science | Summer 2016, Summer 2017

- Created course curricula for multiple courses, ensuring alignment with academic and pedagogical standards. Delivered engaging lectures and fostered student comprehension and inclusive participation while adapting content to suit diverse learning styles and backgrounds.
- Provided guidance, mentorship, and supervision to teaching assistants, fostering their professional growth and ensuring seamless course operations.

Independent Consultant | Mexico City, Mexico

Research Director | 2018

- Led the end-to-end process of designing, conducting, and analyzing dozens of national surveys and daily tracking polls for Mexican presidential, gubernatorial, and senatorial campaigns.
- Trained and supervised a diverse six-person team, multiple subcontractors, and 200+ field organizers. Developed the team performance indicators and oversaw a 1 million USD budget.
- Translated complex findings into user-friendly material for non-technical audiences, providing data-driven strategy recommendations via detailed written reports, compelling slide presentations, and vivid data visualizations.

EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley | Berkeley, CA

Doctor of Philosophy, Political Science
Master of Arts, Political Science

University of California, San Diego | La Jolla, CA

Batchelor of Arts, Political Science
Batchelor of Arts, Latin American Studies

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

AgLantis Sustainable Charity Farms | Martinez, CA

Board Secretary | 2021 - Present

University of California, San Diego | La Jolla, CA

Alumni Mentor to Political Science Undergraduates | 2018 - Present

Analyst Institute | Washington, DC

Advisor, Board of Advisors for Annual Report | 2022

Wizdem Civic-Tech Company | Mexico City, Mexico

Advisor, Board of Advisors | 2019 - 2020

RELEVANT SKILLS

STATA Statistical Software	■■■■■	Datawrapper Visualization	■■■■■
Qualtrics Survey Platform	■■■■■	Spanish Language	■■■■□