

MEHRNUSH GOLRIZ
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EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, CA
Ph.D. Geography (ABD December 2023) Expected 2027
Dissertation: *Law in Contest: Governance and Legal Activism in Chile's Atacama Salt Flats*
Committee: Helga Leitner (co-chair), Shaina Potts (co-chair), Kelly Kay, Javiera Barandiarán

University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, CA
M.A. Geography 2021
Thesis: *Dynamic Spaces of Refugee Governance: The Case of Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil*

Dartmouth College Hanover, NH
B.A. Geography modified with Portuguese, Hispanic Studies, *cum laude* 2015

PUBLICATIONS

Golriz, M. (2026). Mineral Spaces: A Legal Geographical Genealogy of Lithium in Chile.
Manuscript under review at *Political Geography*.

Wright, R., Ellis, M., Holloway, S., & **Golriz, M.** (2021). Mixed measures: Different definitions of racially diverse neighborhoods compared. *Urban Geography*, 42(8), 1147-1169.

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

External

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF-GRFP), 2019 – 2024
National Science Foundation (\$153,000)
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant #430719, 2024
Government of Canada, Project Title: In the Shadows of Climate Migration:
Lithium Extraction for a Just Energy Transition (\$12,000 CAD)
Energy and Environment Specialty Group Fieldwork Award, 2023
American Association of Geographers (\$500)
Ph.D. Field Study Grant, *Conference of Latin American Geographers* (\$1,500) 2023
Master's Field Study Grant, *Conference of Latin American Geographers* (\$1,000) 2021
Latin American Specialty Group Master's Field Study Award, 2021
American Association of Geographers (\$500)
Brazil Initiation Scholarship, *Brazilian Studies Association* (\$1,500) 2018

Internal

Department of Geography Summer Research Travel Grant, *UCLA* (\$2,300) 2025
Department of Geography Summer Research Travel Grant, *UCLA* (\$6,000) 2024
International Institute Fieldwork Fellowship, *UCLA International Institute* (\$1,100) 2024
Graduate Student Summer Research Grant, *UCLA Latin American Institute* (\$2,000) 2024
Foreign Language and Studies Fellowship Award in Advanced Spanish, 2023

<i>UCLA Latin American Institute</i> (\$8,500)	
Department of Geography Summer Research Travel Grant, <i>UCLA</i> (\$4,000)	2020 – 2022
Graduate Dean’s Scholarship, <i>UCLA</i> (\$14,500)	2019 – 2021
James B. Reynold’s Scholarship for Foreign Study, <i>Dartmouth College</i> (\$20,000)	2018 – 2019

HONORS & AWARDS

UC President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship (PPFP), Alternate	2026
New Energy Summer Summit, Selected Participant	2026
<i>Irving Institute for Energy and Society, Dartmouth College</i>	
Josephine De Karman Fellowship, Alternate	2025
Latin American Specialty Group Solidarity Award, <i>American Association of Geographers</i>	2025
Conference Travel Award, <i>Society of Women Geographers</i>	2023
Political Geography Specialty Group Student Travel Award, <i>American Association of Geographers</i>	2023
Student Travel Award, <i>Conference of Latin American Geographers</i>	2022
Robert J. Weber Hispanic Poetry Prize, <i>Dartmouth College Department of Spanish and Portuguese</i>	2015

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Lithium Frontiers Santiago, Chile
Researcher, SSHRC Grant, Government of Canada 2023 – Present

- Coordinated Chilean fieldwork for a multi-country comparative project on lithium frontiers– Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Canada and Australia.
- Co-lead (with Javiera Barandiarán) semi-structured interviews with industry, state, and local actors in Chile. (<https://www.lithiumfrontiers.com>)

TRACtion: Transportation, Sustainable LA Grand Challenge Los Angeles, CA
Working Group Notetaker, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies 2023

- Participated in focus group discussions and was designated notetaker for the Reimagining Transportation and Safe Transportation working groups.
- Compiled and analyzed working group notes, wrote summaries, and identified the overarching trends for each working group meeting.

Dartmouth College Hanover, NH
Research Assistant, Department of Geography 2017 – 2018

- Conducted research with Dr. Richard Wright on definitions of racially diverse neighborhoods, resulting in a co-authored article in *Urban Geography*.
- Operationalized literature-based definition into quantitative metrics using 1990, 2000, and 2010 U.S. Census tract data.

CONFERENCES

Sessions Organized	
Legal Geographies of Extraction I and II	2026
<i>American Association of Geographers, San Francisco, CA</i>	
Lithium Extraction: Research Directions and Needs in Latin America,	2025

Pre-Conference, Latin American Studies Association, San Francisco, CA

Roundtable Discussions

Critical Approaches to So-Called Critical Minerals: The Materiality of Criticality 2026

Panelist, American Association of Geographers, San Francisco, CA

Decarbonization, Mining, and Struggle in Latin America 2025

Discussant, Latin American Studies Association, San Francisco, CA

Papers Presented

Navigating Idiosyncratic Brines: Scale, Applicability and Innovation in Lithium Extraction 2026
Latin American Studies Association, Paris, France (Accepted)

Mineral Spaces: A Legal Geographical Genealogy of Lithium in Chile 2026

American Association of Geographers, San Francisco, CA

Chile's Lithium Lawscapes: Environmental Governance and Extraction 2025

American Association of Geographers, Detroit, MI

Lithium Lawscapes in Chile's Atacama Salt Flats, 2025

Energy Geography Conference, Virtual

Putting Neo-Extractivism and Critical Resource Geographies into Conversation, 2024

Latin American Studies Association, Virtual/ Bogotá, CO

Lithium Lawscapes in Chile's Atacama Salt Flats, 2023

American Association of Geographers, Denver, CO

Boa Vista's Dynamic Spaces of Refugee Governance, 2022

American Association of Geographers, Virtual

Managing Difference: Inequalities in Boa Vista's Migrant Shelters, 2021

American Association of Geographers, Virtual

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, CA

Teaching Fellow, Department of Geography 2025 – Present

- People and Earth's Ecosystems (Summer 2026 Session A)- *Sole Instructor*
- Intro to GIS (Fall 2025)
- People and Earth's Ecosystems (Summer 2025 Sessions A and C)- *Sole Instructor*

Teaching Associate, Department of Geography 2024 – 2025

- Border Studies: Globalization (Spring 2025)
- World Regions: Concepts and Contemporary Issues (Winter 2025)
- People and Earth's Ecosystems (Fall 2024)

Teaching Assistant, Luskin School of Public Affairs 2023

- Qualitative Methods (Fall 2023)

Teaching Assistant, Department of Geography 2020 – 2021

- World Regions: Concepts and Contemporary Issues (Spring 2021)
- Introduction to Cultural Geography (Fall 2020)
- Ethnicity in U.S. Cities (Spring 2020)

Dartmouth College Hanover, NH

Teaching Assistant, Department of Geography 2017 – 2018

- Introduction to Human Geography (Spring 2018)
- Introduction to International Development (Fall 2017, Winter, 2018)
- Global Health and Society (Fall 2017)

INVITED LECTURES & TALKS

Colloquium Job Talk, “Mineral Spaces: Legal Geographies of Lithium in Chile,” Department of Geography, UNR, Reno, NV	Spring 2026
Guest Lecturer, “Resource and Conservation Geopolitics,” Dr. Mahsa Sadeghpour’s Conservation of Natural Resources, UNR, Reno, NV	Spring 2026
Guest Lecturer, “Migration and Borders,” Dr. Ben Gerlofs’ Introduction to Human Geography, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH	Spring 2018

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Community Activities Committee Chair, UCLA Graduate Student Association	2024 – Present
Legal Geography Specialty Group Student Board Member, <i>Legal Geography Specialty Group, American Association of Geographers</i>	2023 – Present
Community Activities Committee Member, UCLA Graduate Student Association	2021 – 2022
Graduate Student Faculty Representative, UCLA Geography <i>Graduate Student Association</i>	2020 – 2023

LEADERSHIP & OUTREACH

Graduate Student Mentor, UCLA Geography Graduate Student Association	2021 – Present
Graduate Student Mentor, Grad Strive, UCLA Graduate Division	2021 – 2023

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Latin American Studies Association (LASA)	2023 – Present
Society of Women Geographers (SWG)	2023 – Present
Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG)	2020 – Present
American Association of Geographers (AAG)	2019 – Present
Brazilian Studies Association (BRASA)	2017 – 2019

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brooklyn Defender Services	Brooklyn, NY
<i>Criminal Defense Investigator, Investigation Unit</i>	2015 – 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigated crimes ranging from petit larceny to attempted murder for the public defender’s office.• Conducted interviews in English and Spanish, found eyewitnesses, acquired video surveillance, and formulated defense theories for over 1,000 criminal defense cases.	

LANGUAGES

English, Farsi	Native
Spanish, Portuguese	Full Professional Fluency

QUANTITATIVE SKILLS

QGIS/ ArcGIS	Intermediate Professional Knowledge
ENVI/ Remote Sensing	Intermediate Professional Knowledge