

Olivia R. David

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EDUCATION

Degrees

University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, School for Environment and Sustainability (UM SEAS)	PhD, Resource Policy & Behavior, Expected 2026;
<i>Dissertation Committee: Dr. Sara Hughes (Co-Chair), Dr. Tony Reames (Co-Chair), Dr. Shobita Parthasarathy, Dr. Perrin Selcer</i>	MS, Environmental Policy & Environmental Justice, 2022
University of Southern California	BS, Environmental Studies, 2017 Minor: Spanish

Additional Training & Academic Experience

Preparing Future Faculty Seminar, UM Rackham Graduate School & Center for Research on Learning and Teaching	2026
Graduate Certificate in Science, Technology, & Society (STS), UM	2026
Graduate Certificate in African Studies, UM International Institute	2026
Early Career Researcher “Transformations & Sustainability” Winter School, University of the Witwatersrand-Global Change Institute (South Africa)	2025
Institute for Social Change, UM Rackham Program in Public Scholarship	2023
Graduate Certificate in Science, Technology, & Public Policy (STPP), UM Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy	2022
University of Cape Town (South Africa) <i>Courses: Urban Challenges in South African Cities, Marine Systems, Conservation Biology</i>	Semester abroad, Fall 2015
University of Southern California field course: Integrated Ecosystem Management in Micronesia	Summer 2015

EXPERIENCE

Academic Positions

Graduate Research Associate, Great Lakes Integrated Science Assessment (GLISA), NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnership based at UM SEAS	Summer 2024
Graduate Research Associate, STPP Community Partnerships Initiative, University of Michigan, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy	2023-2026
Graduate Research Assistant, UM SEAS	2022; 2026

Teaching Positions

Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan	
EAS 575: Climate Economics and Policy (Prof. Samuel Stolper)	Winter 2023
PUBPOL 510: The Politics of Public Policy (Prof. Shobita Parthasarathy)	Fall 2022

Professional Positions

Research Intern, Eastside Community Network (Detroit, MI)	Summer 2023
Research Assistant, Earth Innovation Institute (San Francisco, CA)	2017-2020

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Works in Progress

- **David, O.**, *Intractability in Environmental Justice Policy Conflicts: The Epistemic Politics of Water Shutoffs in Detroit*. Under review for journal publication.
- **David, O.**, *Displacing Constituent Voice: Legitimacy, Accountability, and Distrust in Municipal Water Politics in Detroit and Cape Town*. In preparation & accepted for presentation at APSA 2026.
- **David, O.**, “*Let the DA Fix the Pipes*”: *Making and Contesting Water Affordability in Cape Town*. In preparation.
- **David, O.**, & Finn, B. *Governing Urban Infrastructure through Informality by Proxy*. In preparation.
- Hughes, S., Fletcher, S., Markey, G., & **David, O.** *Centering Affordability in Financing Municipal Water Infrastructure*. In preparation.
- Gordon, D., Hughes, S., and **David, O.** *An Examination of the Political Foundations of Global Urban Climate Governance: Tracking Transparency Practices across 341 Cities*. In preparation.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- **David, O.**, & Hughes, S. (2024). Ten Years Later: How Water Crises in Flint and Detroit Transformed the Politics of U.S. Water Policy. *The Forum*, 22(1), 161–175.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/for-2024-2013>
 - Media coverage: Van Deelen, G. (2024, December 23). “Flint, 10 Years Later.” *Eos*. <https://eos.org/articles/flint-10-years-later>.
- **David, O.**, & Hughes, S. (2023). Whose water crisis? How policy responses to acute environmental change widen inequality. *Policy Studies Journal*, 52(2), 425–450.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12524>

Other Publications

- **David, O.** (2026, May 11). Nice streets, mean streets: Mapping transportation accessibility in Southeast Michigan [Policy brief]. UM STPP Community Partnerships Initiative.
<https://stpp.fordschool.umich.edu/research/research-report/nice-streets-mean-streets-mapping-transportation-accessibility-southeast>.
- **David, O.** (2026, March 26). Guidance for recognizing artificial intelligence in case intakes [Policy brief]. UM STPP Community Partnerships Initiative.
<https://stpp.fordschool.umich.edu/research/policy-brief/guidance-recognizing-artificial-intelligence-case-intakes>.
- Van Zanen, A., **David, O.**, & Hughes, S. 2025. Supporting Local Flood Resilience: Next Steps for Great Lakes States. Available at: <https://glisa.umich.edu/project/supporting-flood-planning-in-the-great-lakes-and-intermountain-west/>.
 - Media coverage: Fornes, M. (2024, October 7): “Supporting flood resilience efforts in Great Lakes states.” *SEAS News*. <https://seas.umich.edu/news/supporting-flood-resilience-efforts-great-lakes-states>.
- **David, O.**, & Hughes, S. (2024, August 7). Whose Water Crisis? How Policy Responses to Acute Environmental Change Widen Inequality. *Policy Studies Journal Blog*.

<https://psijblog.net/2024/08/07/whose-water-crisis-how-policy-responses-to-acute-environmental-change-widen-inequality/>.

- **David, O.R.** (2022). *Whose water crisis? How government drought responses widen inequality*. [Master's thesis, University of Michigan]. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7302/4306>.

Invited Presentations

- Presenter and panelist for We the People of Detroit's Community Teach-In: "Water Reparations in Detroit, Michigan: Critical Aspects of Water Affordability, Public Health, and More," April 2025.
- Guest lecturer for EAS 537: Urban Sustainability (Prof. Brandon Finn), University of Michigan, November 2024.
- **David, O.**, Van Zanen, A., and Hughes, S. (2024, September 9). *Supporting Local Flood Resilience: Next Steps for Great Lakes States*. Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus, Task Force on Climate Resiliency Workshop, Duluth, MN, USA.

Conference Presentations

- **David, O.** (2026, March 19). *Model City, Unmet Rights: Water Affordability and the Limits of Local Governance in Cape Town* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers (AAG), San Francisco, CA, USA.
- **David, O.** (2025, August 21). *The Politics and Technicalities of Water Justice Advocacy in Detroit, Michigan* [Paper presentation]. Transformations Community/Earth System Governance (TC/ESG25) Conference: Navigating Sustainability Transitions Towards Justice and Equity. Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **David, O.** (2025, March 26). *Are Detroit's water shutoffs a form of racialized surveillance?* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers (AAG), Detroit, MI, USA.
- **David, O.** & Hughes, S. (2024, September 7). *Policy Conflicts, Framing, and Advocacy: Water Shutoff Politics in Detroit* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA), Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- **David, O.** (2024, July 18). *Detroit, dehydrated: The infrastructural politics of water shutoff policy* [Paper presentation]. Joint meeting of the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST) and Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), Amsterdam, NL.
- **David, O.** (2023, December 11-15). *Debating dehydration, arguing affordability: The politics of water shutoffs in Detroit* [Poster presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), Session on Integrating Social, Scientific, and Engineering Approaches to Identify and Address Gaps in Water Infrastructure and Household Water Security, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Gordon, D., Hughes, S., & **David, O.** (2022, September 17). *One City, Many Audiences: Local to Global Accountability in Urban Climate Policy* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA), Montréal, Québec, Canada.

GRANTS AND PROPOSALS

Internal (University of Michigan)

Rackham One-Term Dissertation Fellowship (tuition + stipend)	2026
International Institute: Yolles Graduate Fund for Research on Humanitarianism (\$5000)	2025

Poverty Solutions Doctoral Graduate Student Research Award (tuition + stipend)	2024
SEAS Conference Travel Funding (\$250; \$200)	2024; 2025
STPP Student Career Development Grant (\$1000)	2024
Candidate Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant (\$3000)	2025
Pre-Candidate Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant (\$1500)	2024
Rackham Conference Travel Grant (\$900; \$1400)	2023-25
Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop (\$5000)	2023
Summer Research Grant, UM SEAS Detroit Sustainability Clinic (\$10,000)	2023
Master's Thesis Grant, UM SEAS (\$1,000)	2021

External

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program (NSF GRFP)	2020-2025
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SERVICE

University Service (University of Michigan)

PhD Student Representative, SEAS Specializations Council	2024
Speaker Event Chair, SEAS Doctoral Organizing Committee	2024
PhD Student Representative, SEAS Faculty Search Committee: Open Rank Tenure-Track Position in Environmental Policy and Behavior	2023-2024
Co-Coordinator, Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop: Interdisciplinary Science and Policy Initiative for Research Engagement (InSPIRE)	2023-2024
Ad-hoc Journal Reviewer: <i>Society & Natural Resources</i> ; <i>Urban Climate</i> ; <i>Humanities & Social Science Communications</i> ; <i>Public Works Management & Policy</i> ; <i>International Journal of Urban & Regional Research</i>	

Public Service

Graduate Employees' Organization 3550 (GEO)	
SEAS Department Steward	2022-2024
Contract Committee	2022-2023

AWARDS AND HONORS

University of Michigan

Jonathan Bulkley Water Prize (\$3,000)	2022
Incoming Student Merit Scholarship (\$15,000)	2020

University of Southern California

Renaissance Scholar & Global Scholar Honors Distinctions	2017
Anita Brown Wilson Scholarship for Environmental Studies	2016

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Citizenship: USA & South Africa
 Research experience in/about South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Indonesia, Micronesia

MEMBERSHIPS

Association of American Geographers (AAG); Society for Social Studies of Science (4S); American Political Science Association (APSA)