

Nico Ravanilla

CONTACT

School of Global Policy & Strategy
University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive, #0519
La Jolla, CA 92093-0519

Mobile: +1-619-806-2380
E-mail: nravanilla@ucsd.edu

PROFILE

Empirical political economist studying the political economy of development in Southeast Asia. More than a decade of experience designing and leading large-scale field experiments and quasi-experimental studies with novel data sources—administrative records, social network censuses, public procurement data, and original surveys—in partnership with governments, multilateral institutions, and civil society across the region. Publications in the *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, and *World Development*. Research translated into policy engagement with the World Bank, the U.S. State Department, and governments and embassies in the Asia-Pacific. Current work uses the Anthropic Economic Index to trace early labor-market effects of generative AI in the Global South.

ACADEMIC

APPOINTMENTS

University of California San Diego

Associate Professor, School of Global Policy & Strategy, 2023–present

University of California San Diego

Assistant Professor, School of Global Policy & Strategy, 2016–2023

Stanford University

Postdoctoral Fellow, Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2015–2016

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Joint Ph.D., Department of Political Science & Ford School of Public Policy, 2015

M.A., Department of Economics, *Fulbright Scholar*, 2010

University of the Philippines, Diliman, Philippines

M.A., School of Economics, *Phi Kappa Phi*, *Pi Gamma Mu*, 2007

B.S., School of Economics, *Cum Laude*, *GP Sicut Best Thesis* 2003

FIELDS & METHODS

Fields: Political economy of development; AI and labor markets in developing economies; labor and electoral behavior in clientelistic settings; governance, bureaucracy, and public service delivery; Southeast Asia.

Methods: Randomized controlled trials and large-scale field experiments; quasi-experimental causal inference; social network analysis; original survey design; large-scale administrative and procurement data.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

[18] Ravanilla, Nico. 2026. “The Philippines in 2025.” *Asian Survey* 66(2): 312–322.

[17] Sexton, Renard and Ravanilla, Nico. *Forthcoming*. “The Posturing Premium: How Empty Threats Can Benefit Leaders in Weak Countries.” *American Journal of Political Science*.

[16] Ravanilla, Nico, Dotan Haim, and Matthew Nanes. 2026. “How Street-Level Bureaucrats’ Traits Affect Community Leaders’ Assessments of the Government.” *Journal of Politics* 88(1).

- [15] Haim, Dotan, Matthew Nanes, and **Nico Ravanilla**. 2025. “How Does Community Policing Affect Police Attitudes? An Experimental Test and a Theory of Bureaucrat-Citizen Contact.” *American Political Science Review* 119(4): 1983–2001.
· Winner, 2023 APSA Southeast Asian Politics Group Best Paper Award (Open Category)
- [14] **Ravanilla, Nico**. 2024. “The Extraordinary Effect of Religious Sect Endorsements on Vote Choice: Evidence from Iglesia ni Cristo’s “Vote as One” Teaching.” *Comparative Political Studies* 58(13): 2755–2794.
- [13] **Ravanilla, Nico** and Allen Hicken. 2023. “Poverty, Social Networks, and Clientelism.” *World Development* 162(106128).
- [12] Nanes, Matthew, **Nico Ravanilla**, and Dotan Haim. 2023. “Fire Alarms for Police Patrols: Experimental Evidence on Co-Production of Public Safety.” *Journal of Politics* 85(3): 1017–1032.
- [11] **Ravanilla, Nico** and Allen Hicken. 2023. “When Legislators Don’t Bring Home the Pork: The Case of Philippine Senators.” *Political Science Research & Methods*. 11(4): 785–803.
- [10] **Ravanilla, Nico**, Michael Davidson and Allen Hicken. 2022. “Voting in Clientelistic Social Networks: Evidence from the Philippines.” *Comparative Political Studies*. 55(10): 1663–1697.
- [9] **Ravanilla, Nico**, Renard Sexton and Dotan Haim. 2022. “Deadly Populism: How Local Political Outsiders Drives Duterte’s War on Drugs in the Philippines.” *Journal of Politics*. 84(2): 1035–1056.
· Winner, 2019 APSA Southeast Asian Politics Group Best Paper Award (Open Category)
- [8] Haas, Nicholas, Katherine Haenschen, Tanu Kumar, Costas Panagopoulos, Kyle Peyton, **Nico Ravanilla**, and Michael Sierra-Arévalo. 2022. “Organizational Identity and Positionality in Randomized Control Trials: Considerations and Advice for Collaborative Research Teams.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 55(4): 749–753.
- [7] **Ravanilla, Nico**, Dotan Haim and Allen Hicken. 2022. “Brokers, Social Networks, Reciprocity, and Clientelism.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 66(4): 795–812.
- [6] Blair, Graeme, Jeremy M. Weinstein, Fotini Christia, Eric Arias, Emile Badran, Robert Blair, Ali Cheema, Ahsan Farooqui, Thimo Fetzer, Guy Grossman, Dotan Haim, Zulfiqar Hameed, Rebecca Hanson, Ali Hasanain, Dorothy Kronick, Benjamin Morse, Robert Mughah, Fatiq Nadeem, Lily Tsai, Matthew Nanes, Tara Slough, **Nico Ravanilla**, Jacob Shapiro, Barbara Silva, Pedro C.L. Souza, Anna Wilke. 2021. “Community policing does not build citizen trust in police or reduce crime in the Global South.” *Science* 374(6571):eabd3446.
- [5] Haim, Dotan, **Nico Ravanilla** and Renard Sexton. 2021. “Sustained government engagement improves subsequent pandemic risk reporting in conflict zones.” *American Political Science Review*. 115(2): 717–724.
- [4] **Ravanilla, Nico**. 2019. “The Philippine Elections: Has Politics Changed Under Duterte?” *Asian Politics & Policy*. 11(4): 674–678.

[3] Hicken, Allen, Stephen Leider, **Nico Ravanilla** and Dean Yang. 2018. “Temptation in Vote Selling: Evidence from a Field Experiment in the Philippines” *Journal of Development Economics*. 131(–): 1–14.

[2] Hicken, Allen, Stephen Leider, **Nico Ravanilla** and Dean Yang. 2015. “Measuring Vote Selling: Field Evidence from the Philippines.” *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings*. 105(5): 352–56.

[1] **Ravanilla, Nico** and Eduard DP Robleza. 2005. “The Contribution of OFW Remittances to Income Inequality: A Decomposition Analysis.” *Philippine Review of Economics*. 42(2): 27–54.

· Winner, 2003 GP Sicat Award for Best Thesis; Winner, 2004 Anthony Aguirre Award for Best Thesis in Economics

BOOK CHAPTERS

[3] Haim, Dotan, Matthew Nanes and **Nico Ravanilla**. 2024. “Community Policing in the Philippines: Communication, Trust, and Service Provision.” In *Crime, Insecurity, and Community Policing: Experiments on Building Trust*, eds. Graeme Blair, Fotini Christia and Jeremy Weinstein. Cambridge University Press.

[2] **Ravanilla, Nico**. 2019. “The Multimember Plurality System in the Philippines & Its Implications.” In *Strong Patronage, Weak Parties: The Case for Electoral System Redesign in the Philippines*, ed. Paul Hutchcroft. Manila: Anvil, 162–181.

[1] Atkinson, James, Allen Hicken and **Nico Ravanilla**. 2015. “Pork & Typhoons: The Influence of Political Connections on Disaster Response.” In *Building Inclusive Democracies in ASEAN*, eds. Ronald Mendoza, Edsel Beja Jr., et al. Manila: Anvil, 74–96.

· Winner, 2016 Outstanding Book Award, Philippine National Academy of Science and Technology

WORKING PAPERS

[13] “Early Signs of the Generative AI Labor Market Shock in the Global South: Evidence from Philippine Business Process Outsourcing.”

[12] “Mitigating Adverse Political Selection: Experimental Evidence from a Leadership Training for Aspiring Politicians in the Philippines.” *Revise & Resubmit, American Political Science Review*.

[11] “Winning “hearts and minds” in moments of crisis? Evidence from the Philippines during Covid-19” With Dotan Haim and Renard Sexton. *Revise & Resubmit, Journal of Politics*.

[10] “The Value and Allocation of Ballot Position: Evidence from the Philippine Party-List Shift from an Alphabetical to a Randomized Ballot Grid.” With Lucas Zeng.

[9] “Clash of Ideologies: The Asymmetric Returns to US and Chinese Public Diplomacy in Southeast Asia.”

[8] “Patrons, Bosses, and Brokers: A Theory of Local Development in the Philippines’ Patronage Democracy.”

[7] “The Paradox of the Right-Wing Immigrant: Moral Salience and the Single-Issue Favorability Premium among Filipino Americans.” With Sharon Quinsaat.

[6] “Accountability and Compliance in Street-Level Bureaucracy.” With Dotan Haim and Matthew Nanes.

[5] “The Endurance and Erosion of Support for Mano Dura: Electoral Evidence from the War on Drugs in the Philippines.” With Enrico La Vina.

[4] “Patronage Politics As Usual: How Philippine Mayors Helped Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. Win the 2022 Presidential elections.” With Minh Nam Pham.

[3] “How Political Connections Shape Corruption in Public Procurement.” With Felix Hartmann.

[2] “The Effects of a Non-Adversarial Social Accountability Initiative on Public Works Provision: Evidence from a Large-Scale Experiment in the Philippines.” With Eitan Paul, Allen Hicken and Ron Mendoza.

[1] “Motives in Pork Distribution: Partisan Bias or Patronage?”

REGIONAL &
POLICY
ENGAGEMENT

Consulting & advisory:

US State Department (Bureau of Intelligence & Research Unit) - Consultant	2021, 2022
US Indo-Pacific Command - Invited Speaker	2021
Aspen Institute (Congressional Program) - Invited Speaker	2021
Norwegian Embassy in Manila - Invited Speaker	2021
The World Bank in the Philippines - Consultant, tax policy mission	2011
The World Bank in the Philippines - Consultant, balanced growth	2007–2008

Policy writing & commentary:

[7] “Breaking the cycle of clientelism: How access to formal networks can empower the poor” UNU WIDER Blog, May 2023

[6] “Is this the end of Duterte’s politically-driven war on drugs?” East Asia Forum, May 2022

[5] “Winning the Fight Against COVID-19 in Conflict Zones” The Diplomat, March 2021

[4] “The Local Politics of Policing: The Case of Duterte’s Drug War” Political Violence at a Glance, March 2021

[3] “Debunking 4 myths about vote buying” apolitical.co, March 2020

[2] “The staying power of dynastic politicians in the Philippines” Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia (Issue 22), Young Academics Voice, September 2017

[1] “Politics and disaster aid in the Philippines” Washington Post (The Monkey Cage), November 2013

RESEARCH
GRANTS - MAJOR

Luce Grant, w/ E.Malesky, T.Pepinsky, K.Ostwald, R.Toha, J.Selway (\$261,000)	Fall 2023
Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant, w/ Sharon Quinsaat (\$30,000)	Summer 2023
UCSD Senate Seed Grant (\$10,350)	Summer 2023
Charles Koch Foundation Grant, w/ Renard Sexton (\$90,000)	Summer 2022
National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant, w/ Renard Sexton (\$278,439)	Summer 2020
Carnegie Corporation of New York Grant, w/ Renard Sexton (\$170,500)	Spring 2020
UCSD Senate Seed Grant, w/ Dotan Haim & Renard Sexton (\$15,000)	Fall 2018
DFAT Grant, w/ Eitan Paul, Allen Hicken & Ronald Mendoza (\$15,000)	Fall 2018
IPA P&R Program Grant, w/ Dotan Haim & Renard Sexton (\$10,000)	Spring 2018
EGAP Metaketa IV Grant, w/ Dotan Haim & Matthew Nanes (\$209,965)	Spring 2017
Policy Design and Evaluation Lab (PDEL) Grant (\$23,000)	Winter 2017
ANU Research Grant, w/ Allen Hicken (\$41,500)	Summer 2016
J-PAL Governance Initiative Pilot Study Grant (\$50,000)	Summer 2015
J-PAL Governance Initiative Proposal Development Grant (\$10,000)	Summer 2014
MCubed, w/ Allen Hicken, Stephen Leider & Dean Yang (\$60,000)	2013–2014

Plus twelve additional small research and travel grants, 2009–2017 (list available on request).

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS	Faculty Recognition Award for Excellence in Teaching	<i>AY 2022-23</i>
	Faculty Career Development Program (FCDP) Grant Recipient	<i>Spring 2020</i>
	APSA Southeast Asian Politics Related Group Best Paper Award	<i>Fall 2019</i>
	Oxford's Harris Manchester Summer Research Institute Fellow	<i>Summer 2017</i>
	Best Reviewer Award – Australian Economic History Review	<i>2016 - 2017</i>
	SEAREG Young Southeast Asia Fellow	<i>2015 - 2016</i>
	Rackham Predoctoral Fellow (university-wide competition)	<i>Summer 2015</i>
	Rackham International Student Fellow (university-wide competition)	<i>Summer 2013</i>
	Fulbright Scholar	<i>2008 - 2010</i>
	Phi Kappa Phi	<i>June 2008</i>
	Pi Gamma Mu	<i>June 2008</i>
	G.P. Sicat Fellow	<i>2006 - 2007</i>
	United Financial Japan Fellow	<i>2005 - 2006</i>
	A. Aguirre Medal for Best Thesis in Economics (national competition)	<i>January 2004</i>
	G.P. Sicat Award for Best Undergraduate Thesis	<i>April 2003</i>
	Graduated <i>Cum Laude</i>	<i>April 2003</i>
AFFILIATIONS	UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) - Affiliate	<i>2023 -</i>
	Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG) - Council Member	<i>2022 -</i>
	Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) - Faculty Affiliate	<i>2021 -</i>
	Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) - Academic Member	<i>2020 -</i>
	Governance Initiative, Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) - Invited Researcher	<i>2019 -</i>
	California Workshop in Empirical Political Science (CaliWEPS) - Co-organizer	<i>2018 -</i>
	Center for Commerce and Diplomacy (CCD) - Affiliated Faculty	<i>2018 -</i>
	Political Violence Lab - Affiliated Scholar	<i>2018 -</i>
	Policy Design and Evaluation Lab (PDEL) - Affiliated Researcher	<i>2016 -</i>
	Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) - Affiliated Researcher	<i>2016 -</i>
	Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG) Advisory Board - Senior Member	<i>2015 -</i>
PRESENTATIONS	Invited Presentations:	
	New York University	<i>January 25, 2023</i>
	University of the Philippines - Diliman	<i>March 11, 2021</i>
	University of Gothenburg	<i>May 27, 2020</i>
	Claremont Graduate University	<i>January 29, 2019</i>
	Cornell University	<i>October 11, 2018</i>
	Singapore Management University	<i>September 8, 2017</i>
	Northern Illinois University	<i>April 7, 2017</i>
	Workshops:	
	National Chengchi University, Taiwan	<i>June, 2017</i>
	Electoral System Redesign and Development Workshop – Philippines	<i>July, 2016</i>
	Money & Politics in Southeast Asia Workshop IV – Philippines	<i>July, 2016</i>
	Money & Politics in Southeast Asia Workshop II – Indonesia	<i>June, 2012</i>
	Annual Meetings:	
	American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	<i>2014, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2023</i>
	Southeast Asia Research Group Annual Meeting	<i>2015 - 2023</i>
	Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	<i>2012, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018</i>
	Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting	<i>2016, 2017</i>
	Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting	<i>2018</i>
	Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting	<i>2019</i>

TEACHING	University of California San Diego – Associate Professor	
	GPSS 456 - Evaluating Social Programs	<i>S17, S18, F18, S22, F22, F23, S26</i>
	GPCO 454 - Quantitative Methods II	<i>W25, W26</i>
	GPGN 490 - Governance, Public Admin & Development	<i>F16, F17, F19, F21, W23</i>
	GPSS 463 - Politics of Southeast Asia	<i>F16, F17, W19, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, S26</i>
	INTL 190 - Political Economy of Southeast Asia	<i>F19, F20, F21, W23</i>
	IRGN 490 - Distributive Politics of Public Policy	<i>W17</i>
	University of Michigan – Graduate Student Instructor	
	POLSCI 140 - Introduction to Comparative Politics	<i>F12</i>
	ECON 101 - Principles of Microeconomics	<i>F09, W10, F10</i>
OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE	University of the Philippines – Teaching Fellow	
	Refresher Course in Math and Microeconomics (Graduate course)	<i>Summer 2008</i>
	ECON 202 - Microeconomic Theory I (Graduate course)	<i>1st Semester 2007</i>
	University of Michigan	
	Research Assistant for Allen Hicken	<i>Fall 2014, Summer 2012</i>
	Research Assistant for Dean Yang	<i>January 2013 - April 2014, Summer 2009</i>
	Philippine Institute for Development Studies	
	Research Assistant for Cristina David	<i>May 2003 - May 2005</i>
	SELECTED SERVICE	
	Southeast Asia Research Group (SEAREG) Council	<i>2022 -</i>
SKILLS	EGAP Crime Reduction & Police Accountability Steering Committee	<i>2022</i>
	Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - Invited Lecturer	<i>2016 - 2023</i>
	San Diego World Affairs Council - Invited Lecturer	<i>2016</i>
	Referee:	
	<i>The American Economic Review</i>	
	<i>American Political Science Review</i>	
	<i>American Journal of Political Science</i>	
	<i>Review of Economic Studies</i>	
	<i>Journal of Development Economics</i>	
	<i>World Development</i>	
CV LAST UPDATED:	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	
	<i>Comparative Politics</i>	
	<i>British Journal of Political Science</i>	
	<i>Perspectives on Politics</i>	
	<i>Australian Economic History Review</i>	
	<i>SAGE Open</i>	
	<i>World Politics</i>	
	<i>Journal of East Asian Studies</i>	
	<i>Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization</i>	
	Softwares: R, Stata, L ^A T _E X, Git, QGIS	
	Programming: Javascript, React.JS, CSS	
	Languages: Filipino, Bicolano, English	