LAURA PROKIĆ

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EDUCATION

University of Washington — Seattle, Washington
PhD in Public Policy and Management (in progress) — August 2024-present
Advisor: Assistant Professor Ines Jurcevic

Portland State University — Portland, Oregon
Master of Public Administration, specialization in global leadership and management — August 2018
Advisor: Professor Kevin Kecskes

Willamette University — Salem, Oregon
Bachelor of Arts, Cultural Anthropology, minors in philosophy and psychology — May 2010
Advisor: Professor Peter Wogan

PUBLICATIONS AND WORKS IN PROGRESS

Prokic, L. and Jurcevic, I. (2026). *The Behavioral Assumptions of DEI Policy Tools*.

Prokic, L., Toole, R., and Broaddus, B. (2026). *The Effect of Diversity*, *Equity*, *and Inclusion Institutionalization on State Government Workforce Composition*.

Prokic, L., Paturyan, Y., Simonyan, L., & Geghamyan, G. (2025). Taking Advice or "Sticking to Their Guns?": Future Policy Makers' Consideration of Expert Advice in Policy Scenario Exercises. *ETICA: Yearbook of Ethics & Public Affairs*, *1*(1), 93–110. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17009203

Lyons, L. (2018). The "Necessary Evil: State and Non-State Sector Interactions in Cuba and Effects on Public Services. *Hatfield Graduate Journal of Public Affairs, 3*(1), Article 3. 10.15760/hgjpa.2018.3.1.3

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant — **August 2024-Present**
University of Washington, Evans School of Public Policy and Management — Seattle, Washington
Supervisor: Assistant Professor Ines Jurcevic
• Conducted 49 semi-structured qualitative interviews with public sector DEI professionals
• Co-designed data collection tools and research protocol
• Analyzed interviews in the framework of Schneider and Ingram's Behavioral Assumptions of Policy Tools
• Executed content analysis of public organizations' DEI statements using LIWK
• Completed comprehensive literature review and synthesis on the influence of identity on DEI work
• Translated academic work from a National Science Foundation grant on equitable technologies in childcare work into high-impact, one-page resources for practitioners, policymakers, and the public

Lecturer; Chair of Open Center of Excellence for Leadership and Governance; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator — **August 2021-August 2024**
American University of Armenia — Yerevan, Armenia
• Conducted an analysis of pay equity for the university's faculty and staff using administrative data; prepared and delivered reports for both the university community and academic audiences
• Led a team of faculty and student researchers in a study of future policy makers' willingness to engage expert advice in public decision making using a novel scenario-based survey experiment and focus groups
• Collaborated with international partners from Sweden, Georgia, and Poland on a two-year project testing tools for workplace gender equality in higher education
• Led a participatory process to assess the DEI climate for accreditation assessment; conducted and analyzed eight focus groups, reviewed survey and administrative data, held town halls; shared results in multiple formats

Research Assistant **June 2016-August 2018**
Portland State University Portland, Oregon
Supervisor: Professor Kevin Kecskes
• Analyzed seven years of pre- and post-program survey data using quantitative and grounded theory techniques to understand participants' perception of the program and the development of their concept of servant leadership
• Completed on-the-ground field research and qualitative interviews on public sector reform in Cuba
• Assisted in analysis and reporting of case study data from a long-term community based participatory research project with a local community garden

East County Pathways Outreach Coordinator **April 2016-July 2017**
Mt. Hood Community College Gresham, Oregon
• Conducted a quantitative analysis of education goal attainment by race and gender using R, presented results to the college leadership and community
• Organized and analyzed three focus groups with English language learners to understand their unique needs

Peace Corps Volunteer **June 2013-September 2015**
United States Peace Corps Yallal Tankonjala, The Gambia
Identified community needs and assets using participatory action research and asset-based community development frameworks and partnered with village youth to address them

Field Practicum, Master's Degree **September 2009- May 2010**
Portland State University Portland, Oregon
Advisor: Professor Kevin Kecskes
Created a manual for the management of a youth leadership exchange program focused on civic engagement and servant leadership

Senior Thesis, Bachelor's Degree **September 2009- May 2010**
Willamette University Salem, Oregon
Advisor: Professor Peter Wogan
An exploration of social media usage by American adolescents in the context of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality; thesis was selected by the department to be required reading for freshmen seminar instructors

TEACHING

University of Washington **Seattle, Washington**
Instructor of Record, Teaching Assistant *September 2025-Present*
• Delivered a re-organized and updated version of Introduction to Public Policy and Governance (PUBPOL 201), the gateway course for the undergraduate major and minor in public service and policy
• Served as teaching assistant for three different instructors of PUBPOL 201
• Advised and mentored undergraduate students, cultivated interest in public service as a career path
• Supervised and collaborated with teaching assistants
• Upheld University of Washington's academic standards, provided accessibility support for an inclusive classroom

American University of Armenia **Yerevan, Armenia**
Lecturer *August 2021- August 2024*
• Independently developed and taught the following undergraduate- and graduate-level courses: Introduction to Political Inquiry, Methods of Political Inquiry, Research Design, Research Methods for Public Affairs, Cultural Anthropology, Gender Perspectives, Political Sociology
• Supervised four master's capstone projects and served as primary advisor for seven undergraduate students
• Led a program to support graduate students' writing skills in the field of public affairs

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

American University of Armenia **Yerevan, Armenia**
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator *December 2023- August 2024*
• Led the execution of the university's DEI plan
• Developed policies and policy briefs on DEI-related matters, including a sexual misconduct, discrimination, faculty workload, pay transparency, and parental leave
• Chaired the DEI committee, comprised of students, faculty, and staff
• Served as gender and human rights expert advisor to a national-level waste sector reform project
• Organized 13 trainings and workshops for faculty, staff, and students on various DEI-related topics

Chair, Open Center of Excellence for Leadership and Governance *January 2022-June 2023*
• Facilitated transdisciplinary research and dialogue on leadership and governance issues in Armenia and the region
• Encouraged, Curated, and showcased leadership and governance-related initiatives within the university
• Directed the university's efforts to develop partnerships with community, university, government, civil society, and international organizations in the realm of leadership and governance

WorldOregon **Portland, Oregon**
Youth Leadership Coordinator *August 2017- July 2019*
• Managed the organization's portfolio of US State Department-sponsored international youth exchange programs
• Developed educational and cultural training programming for a range of program themes, including civil rights, entrepreneurship, civic engagement, dialogue and reconciliation, and environmental leadership
• Created and delivered a yearlong, youth-led community leadership program for local high school students

Middle East Partnership Initiative **Portland, Oregon**
Program Coordinator *May 2016- August 2018*
• Coordinated logistics for a six-week international exchange program focused on youth leadership and civic engagement for university student leaders from the Middle East and North Africa
• Supported participants' development of a civic engagement project to be implemented in their home communities
• Designed a one-week community volunteer experience focused on developing the concept of servant leadership
• Lead writer for a portion of a consortium grant worth $2.5 million in federal funding

United States Peace Corps **Yallal Tankonjala, The Gambia**
Primary Teacher Trainer *June 2013- September 2015*
• Increased capacity of a rural primary school by training ten teachers in improved teaching methods and classroom management techniques through a series of professional development workshops
• Trained incoming Peace Corps Volunteers in best practices for working with teachers and community
• Received two grants from an educational charity and oversaw implementation of the grant-funded projects
• Co-wrote and delivered a curriculum for a weeklong gender development camp for 80 high school-aged youth

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND VOLUNTEER WORK

Equity and Inclusion Council, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, September 2025- July 2026
Student representative

Faculty Senate, American University of Armenia, October 2023-August 2024
Chair

Graduate Employees Union (AAUP/AFT), Portland State University, January 2016-August 2018
Vice President for Communications, *Member of Constitution and Bylaws Committee*, *Representative to AAUP*

Access & Diversity Council, Mt Hood Community College, July 2016-June 2017
Action Team Leader for English Language Learner Subcommittee

United States Peace Corps, Yallal Tankonjala, The Gambia, June 2013-September 2015
Gender and Development Committee representative for North Bank Region

AWARDS

- Teaching Excellence Award, American University of Armenia, 2023
- Dean's University Service Award, Portland State University, 2018
- Judith A. Ramaley Community Engaged Scholar Award, Portland State University, 2017
- Highest GPA Award, Portland State University, 2018
- Departmental honors, Portland State University, 2018
- Undergraduate Research Award, Willamette University, 2010

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"The Behavioral Assumptions of DEI Policy Tools." Public Management Research Conference, June 2026 (oral presentation).

"Bridging Equity Values and Organizational Implementation: Insights from Public Management, Contracting, and Nonprofit Organizations." Association of Public Policy and Management, November 2025 (non-presenting author).

"Taking Advice or "Sticking to Their Guns?": Future Policy Makers' Consideration of Expert Advice in Policy Scenario Exercises." Rethinking Policy, Expertise and Trust. Dublin, Ireland, March 2023 (oral presentation).

"Taking Advice or "Sticking to Their Guns?": Future Policy Makers' Consideration of Expert Advice in Policy Scenario Exercises." The Ethics of Trust and Expertise. Yerevan, Armenia, May 2022 (oral presentation).

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), student member

Public Management Research Association (PMRA), student member