

Margaret M. Commins
Shelton Professor of Political Science
Queens University of Charlotte
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[Google Scholar profile](#)

EDUCATION

- Ph. D. 1993 Political Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Dissertation: "From Security to Trade in U.S.-Latin American Relations:
Explaining U.S. Support for Free Trade with Mexico"
- M.A. 1988 Political Science, Latin American Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- B.A. 1985 History and Political Science
Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA
Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Shelton Professor of Political Science
Queens University of Charlotte (October 2018 – present)
- Professor of Political Science
Queens University of Charlotte (August 2021 – present)
- Associate Professor, Political Science
Queens University of Charlotte (August 2015 - present)
Faculty Fellow, Academic Civic Engagement (2017 and 2019)
- Assistant Professor, Political Science
Queens University of Charlotte (Fall 2010 – May 2015)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed journals

Commins, M., Reyna, V., and Sydnor, E. (2021) Empowering and Engaging Students: Civically Engaged Research in the Classroom. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 54(4): 730-733.

Commins, M.M., & Wills, J.B. (2020). Restrictive Immigrant Policies in New South Legislatures: Understanding Regional Variations in State-Level Policymaking. *The Latin Americanist* 64(2), 200-222. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/757676>.

Wills, J.B., & Commins, M.M. (2018). Consequences of the American States' Legislative Action on Immigration. *Int. Migration & Integration* 19, 1137–1152. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-018-0588-7>.

Commins, M.M., & Wills, J.B. (2016). Reappraising and Extending the Predictors of States' Immigrant Policies: Industry Influences and the Moderating Effect of Political Ideology. *Social Science Quarterly* 98(1), 212-229. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12283>.

Commins, M. (2013). Teaching Immigration: Informing and Elevating the Debate. *Norteamérica, Revista Académica Del CISAN-UNAM*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.20999/nam.2013.c007>.

Commins, M.M. (2013). Understanding United States Foreign Policy Toward Latin America: Lessons from A Comparison of NAFTA and the Colombian Trade Promotion Agreement. *The Latin Americanist* 57(4), 73-95. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/705944>.

Commins, M.S. (1993). De la seguridad al comercio en las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y America Latina. *Estados Unidos : Informe Trimestral* 3(2), 5-30.

Book chapters

“Social justice in service-learning and community engagement: A conversation about meanings, practices, and possibilities” in Jewett, L.M., Calerson-Berumen, F., and Espinosa-Dulanto, M. (2019) *Critical intersections in contemporary curriculum and pedagogy*. Information Age Publishing, Inc. (with Dr. Patti Clayton, Leslie Garvin, Dr. Patricia Bricker, and Dr. Lane Perry)

Reviews and others

Commins, M. (2021). A review of *Citizenship Reimagined: A New Framework for State Rights in the United States*, by Allan Colbern and S. Karthick Ramakrishnan. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 51(3), e20-e22.

A review of Bruce M. Bagley and Jonathan D. Rosen’s *Colombia’s Political Economy at the Outset of the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Lexington Books, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group, 2015 for *Latin American Politics and Society* (December 2016).

“Teaching immigration: Integrating Pedagogical Best Practices” *Migration and Citizenship, Newsletter of the American Political Science Association’s Organization on Migration and Citizenship*, 1 (Summer 2013).

“Teaching research methods” 2012 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference Track Summaries *PS: Political Science and Politics* 45 (July 2012).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Commins, M. and J. Haynes, “Experiential learning framed by faith: A workshop on empowering students through a faith-based border mission” International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education conference (June 2022).

Commins, M. “Can Civically Engaged Research Improve Governance for Immigrant Integration?” presented at the American Political Science Association annual conference (September 2021).

Commins, M., Y. Clifton, and J. Marts, "Integrating deliberative dialogue into academic courses: Developing students' civic skills," presented at North Carolina Campus Compact's Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference (February 2020).

Commins, M. "Welcoming cities in unwelcoming states: The challenges of immigrant integration in North Carolina," presented at the Southeastern Immigration Studies Association (SEISA) annual meeting, Charleston, SC (February 22, 2020).

Commins, M. with COPIL, "So what are we afraid of? Let's Grow the Scholarship of Engagement in NC," presented at North Carolina Campus Compact's Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference (February 2019).

Commins, M. with J. Easterwood, S. Griffith, and P. Koplas, "Practical ideas for integrating civic learning outcomes across the curriculum, presented at North Carolina Campus Compact's Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference (February 2018).

Commins, M. and J. Wills, "Now that the legislatures are involved: Understanding the consequences of state-level immigrant policies for state residents", presented at the 6th Conference on Immigration to the Southeast (October 2016).

Commins, M. and M. Shaul, "Embedding experiential learning in courses on immigration: A roundtable discussion for students and faculty" (with Queens students, Alondra Garcia-Mendoza and Jamila Watson), William Wilson Brown Conference, UNC-Charlotte (March 2016).

Commins, M. and J. Wills, "Do industries matter? Analyzing competing theories of the determinants of state-level immigration policies", presented at the 4th Conference on Immigration to the Southeast (October 2014) and the 2015 North Carolina Political Science Association conference, February 2015. Winner, Oral Parks Memorial Award, Best Conference Paper, North Carolina Political Science Association.

"Service learning and civic engagement: Insights from an experience employing both to help students understand the politics of immigration, American Political Science Association Teaching and Learning Conference (February 2014)

"Understanding United States Policy Toward Latin America: Comparing the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Colombian Trade Promotion Agreement," International Studies Association South (October 2012)

"NAFTA vs. the U.S.-Colombian Free Trade Agreement: Explaining U.S. Policy toward Free Trade in Latin America," Latin American Studies Association 2012 International Congress, San Francisco, CA (May 2012)

"Approaching Undergraduate Methods Courses Through Skills-Based Learning: Integrating Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Effective Presentation into the Curriculum," American Political Science Association Teaching & Learning Conference (February 2012).

"The Academic Role in U.S. Foreign Policymaking: Linking Theory with Practice" (with Dr. Alexa Royden), International Studies Association South (October 2011)

“The New Regional Agenda of American Trade Politics: Explaining U.S. Support for the NAFTA,” Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association (April 1994)

“From Security to Trade in U.S.-Latin American Relations: Explaining U.S. Support for a Free Trade Agreement with Mexico” Annual Conference of the Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies (April 1992)

“Trading for Friendship: The Political Economy of United States Government Support for a Free Trade Agreement with Mexico,” XVII International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association (September 1992)

INVITED PANEL PARTICIPATION

Commins, M. “Understanding the human impact of U.S. immigration and border policies,” International Conference of Chaplains of Higher Education Conference, June 2022.

“Building democratic skills through deliberative dialogue”, Campus Compact webinar (January 30, 2020)

Commins, M. with Faculty Engaged Scholars, “The NCCC Engaged Scholars Program: Supporting the Integration of SLCE in Teaching, Research, and Service” North Carolina Campus Compact Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference (February 2019)

“Practical ideas for Integrating Civic Learning Outcomes Across the Curriculum” North Carolina Campus Compact’s Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference (February 2018)

“(Un)documented Latinidades,” Session organizer, International Congress, Latin American Studies Association, Chicago, IL (May 2014)

“Sectoral politics: Causes and Consequences,” Chair and Discussant, International Congress, Latin American Studies Association, Chicago, IL (May 2014)

“The Model Organization of American States: Improving Student Outcomes,” International Congress, Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C. (May 2013)

“US Foreign Policy Challenges Facing Obama: The Joseph M. Scolnick, Jr. Memorial Roundtable.” International Studies Association South (October 2012, October 2013)

“Teaching immigration: A cross-disciplinary discussion about challenges, resources, and best practices,” 4th Conference on Immigration to the Southeast, Kennesaw State University (October 2012)

SELECTED MEDIA

Historias podcast (Episode 104), September 15, 2020. Trump in Latin America.

(<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/historias-104-trump-in-latin-america/id1499751225?i=1000491346373>)

Two Weeks Notice podcast (Episode 75), June 11, 2020. Restrictive immigration policies in the Southeast. (<https://pages.uncc.edu/gregory-weeks/category/podcast/>).

WalletHub, January 29, 2020. Economic impact of immigration by states: Ask the experts. (<https://wallethub.com/edu/economic-impact-of-immigration-by-state/32248/#>)

Vox News, October 19, 2018 (<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/10/19/17996718/latino-voters-midterms>)

WFAE, June 18, 2018 (<https://www.wfae.org/post/how-287g-mobilized-latino-vote-primary-will-momentum-continue>)

Charlotte Talks, May 14, 2018 (<https://www.wfae.org/post/charlotte-talks-voter-backlash-287g-mlks-final-days-play-out-rb-opera#stream/0>)

Spectrum News, May 10, 2018)
(<http://spectrumlocalnews.com/nc/charlotte/news/2018/05/10/fate-of-287a>)

Charlotte Talks, “A Public Conversation on Immigration Policy in the Queens City” (February 28, 2017)

Charlotte Talks, “Immigration policy and the 2016 elections” (April 20, 2016)

SELECTED COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

“U.S. relations with the Northern Triangle” University of North Carolina-Charlotte’s *Great Decisions in U.S. Foreign Policy* series (January 2020)

“What does it mean to be a nation of immigrants?” Senior Scholars (April 2018)

Política de Inmigración de Estados Unidos bajo la Administración Trump: Qué sabemos y qué podemos esperar? CEDEPCA, Guatemala City, Guatemala (March 2017)

“Latin America’s Political Pendulum”, Senior Scholars (February 2017)

“Cuba and the U.S.: Is it Time to ‘Bury the Cold War’”, Senior Scholars (April 2016); Lifelong Learners (June 2016)

“Brazil’s Metamorphosis” Senior Scholars, Charlotte, NC (February 2015)

“Promoting Democracy: A U.S. Foreign Policy Imperative?” Senior Scholars, Charlotte, NC (May 2012)

“Mexico’s Drug War: How Should the U.S. Respond?” Global Speaker Series, Providence Day School, Charlotte, NC (October 2011)

“Calderon’s Militarization of the Drug War: Shrewd Strategy or Recipe for Disaster?” Senior Scholars, Charlotte, NC (May 2010)

“How Do We Prepare Students for the World They Live in? Insights from the Other Side”
Charlotte Catholic High School faculty, Charlotte, NC (August 2011)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COLLABORATIONS

2018 – present Member, Community of Practice, Inquiry, and Learning, North Carolina
Campus Compact-sponsored collaboration of practitioner-scholars in
North Carolina

2016 North Carolina Campus Compact Faculty Engaged Scholar Fellowship

SUPPORT AND HONORS

2020 Hunter-Hamilton Love of Teaching Award

2020 Engaged Faculty Member of the Year, Wells Fargo Center for Community
Engagement

2019 Advisor of the year – Pi Sigma Alpha

2018 Queens University of Charlotte Shelton Professor of Political Science

2016 North Carolina Campus Compact Faculty Engaged Scholar Fellowship

2015 Oral Parks Memorial Award, Best Conference Paper, North Carolina Political
Science Association.

2011 Invited to participate in the 57th Annual National Security Seminar at
the Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania (June)

1992-1993 Institute for the Study of World Politics, Dissertation Fellowship

1992 Graduate School of the University of North Carolina, Off-Campus
Dissertation Fellowship

1990 University of North Carolina, Pre-Dissertation Travel Grant

1991 Tinker Foundation Grant for Graduate Research

1989 Tinker Foundation Grant for Graduate Research Summer Research Grant

HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

Phi Beta Kappa

Phi Alpha Theta (History)

Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science)

Sigma Delta Pi (Spanish)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

United States policy toward Latin America

United States immigration policy

Municipal immigrant integration

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Civic engagement