

EDUCATION**Florida International University, Miami, FL***Master of Arts in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, April 2024*

Research: *Understanding Spiritual Abuse: Incentives to Preserve Spiritual Power & Reducing Abusive Experiences*. Conducted the largest qualitative and quantitative data collection of Latinx survivors of spiritual abuse.

Leadership: MALOKA (Latinx graduate student organization), President (2021-2022), Board Member (2020-2021).

Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA*Master of Arts in Theological Studies, July 2019***Florida International University, Miami, FL***Bachelor Of Arts in Anthropology, May 2015*

Scholarship: Academic Competitiveness Grant.

EMPLOYMENT/ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS/LEGAL EXPERIENCE**Florida International University, Miami, FL****August 2025-Present***Assistant Teaching Professor, Undergraduate Committee Chair, Christian Studies Chair, Undergraduate Program**Director: Religious Studies*

- Generated first new majors in years (3, up from 0), alongside 10 new minors and 16 Christian Studies certificate enrollments, by refocusing recruitment around career outcomes. I was tasked with recruitment to remove our department from the state's low-productivity list.
- Built a new recruitment pipeline by placing REL 2149 and REL 2300 into the Miami-Dade County Public Schools dual enrollment catalog, expanding access across regional high schools, supporting program recovery from low-productivity status, and positioning the program for sustained enrollment growth through early pipeline development.
- Direct the Religious Studies undergraduate degree, serve as undergraduate program chair, and oversee curriculum design, course creation, faculty hiring, and training.
- Provide faculty academic leadership as Christian Studies Chair, advancing scholarship, and developing curriculum.
- Design and implement program assessments and faculty evaluations for university credentialing.
- Mentor undergraduate and graduate students in academic research and professional development.
- Serve on the Honors College Curriculum Committee; continue leadership in the Honors Pre-Law program.

Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, Miami, FL**July 2025-September 2025***Judicial Intern to the Honorable Veronica Diaz*

- Conducted case law and statutory analysis under the supervision of Judge Diaz, understanding judicial decision-making and application of legal reasoning.
- Observed hearings, trials, and courtroom procedures, engaging with chambers staff to analyze rulings and strategy.
- Analyzed the judicial selection process by observing proceedings of the 11th Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission, examining the legal, procedural, and political dynamics shaping judicial appointments.

Florida International University, Miami, FL**August 2024-December 2025***Honors College Pre-Law Faculty, Honors College Teaching Fellow*

- Designed and instructed required foundation courses for the Honors College and the Honors Pre-Law Pathway.
- Created the first undergraduate law course on spiritual abuse, *Spiritual Abuse: A Novel Topic in Public Interest Law*.
- Created a new LSAT prep course, raising the Honors Pre-Law LSAT median by 9 points (150-159).
- Mentored pre-law students in Phi Alpha Delta; coordinated and hosted admissions deans and officers from high-ranked schools (Harvard, Yale, Boston University, Boston College, UF, FSU, etc.).

Florida International University, Miami, FL**January 2020-December 2024***Adjunct Professor; Faculty Director (Scotland, Japan); COIL Faculty; Religious Studies & College of Arts and Sciences*

- Built, scaled, and delivered interdisciplinary curriculum across the Honors College, School of International & Public Affairs, and College of Arts & Sciences, teaching and scaling courses across multiple colleges.
- Created the first officially cataloged course at a U.S. public university on spiritual abuse, establishing and legitimizing a new field of academic study.
- Built and led four international study abroad programs (3 in Scotland, 1 in Japan) examining religious power, political violence, and spiritual abuse; grew Scotland to 22 students (largest in SIPA history), then exceeded it with a 23-student Japan program.

- Developed and taught COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) programs with ULACIT (Costa Rica) and Kansai University, which included a Japan-based program that bridged virtual collaboration with in-country study abroad.
- Founded the Certificate in Christian Studies, creating a new academic credential and institutional pathway for students.
- Established the Juliana Isaac Fund for the Study of Christianity and Spiritual Abuse, securing institutional infrastructure for research, programming, and student support.
- Mentored undergraduate, graduate, and Honors College researchers, advising theses and advancing student publication and professional outcomes.
- Recipient, **2024 Excellence in Teaching Incentive Award**: selected from 70 nominees (~1,400 faculty) through a two-stage double blind review recognizing excellence in inclusive, evidence-based instruction.

Neighborhood Church Miami, Miami, FL**August 2018-April 2025***Founding Pastor, Church Planter, Lead Pastor*

- Founded and led a nonprofit faith community serving survivors of spiritual abuse, creating a recovery-centered environment for individuals exiting coercive religious systems.
- Built the organization from inception, overseeing all operations, programming, teaching, and community development.
- Implemented full financial transparency practices and directed 50% of organizational revenue to direct survivor aid.
- Navigated and responded to sustained institutional pressure following the exposure of abuse and cover-up within prior religious leadership contexts.
- Contributed to broader advocacy and awareness efforts around spiritual abuse, informing subsequent academic, nonprofit, and legal interests.

RESEARCH AGENDA**Spiritual Abuse, Institutional Power, and Accountability**

Developed an interdisciplinary framework for understanding spiritual abuse as coercive institutional power. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative research on Latinx survivors, this project analyzes how religious authority is constructed, maintained, and protected, and how these dynamics intersect with emerging forms of public and legal accountability.

Institutional Preservation and Systemic Harm

Advances a theory of how institutions maintain authority in the face of internal harm. Identifies mechanisms, (organizational structure, ideology, and reputational control) that suppress reporting and sustain abusive systems across religious traditions.

Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Examines how religious ideas and institutions shape political, cultural, and social systems across historical and global contexts, with attention to law, governance, and institutional conflict.

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Institutional Power

Integrates religious studies, sociology, and public-facing scholarship to analyze how systems of authority produce harm and resist accountability across institutional settings.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**1/2020-4/2024: Primary Investigator: Spiritual Abuse in Latiné Protestantism**

Data collection and analysis of Spiritual Abuse survivors within South Florida Latiné Protestantism. Florida International University, Miami, FL.

Responsibilities: Designed research instruments, sought and obtained Institutional Review Board approval to conduct research, recruited subjects for qualitative and quantitative analysis, interviewed subjects, compiled and analyzed data, and produced a thesis and university courses presenting findings.

Committee: Jose Miguel Cruz, PhD, Erik Larson, PhD, and Ana Maria Bidegain, PhD

8/2023-Present: Co-Investigator: Study on Latin Youth Civic Engagement (SLYCE)

Study to understand how Latiné youth take action to address social issues and how that action is supported or hindered by their relationships, religious identity, and other factors. University of Michigan/Florida International University.

Responsibilities: Subject recruitment, data analysis.

Project Lead: Wendy De Los Reyes, PhD

PUBLICATIONS/APPEARANCES

Isaac E., Holbrook, J.W. (2026). The Boom of Pentecostalism in Latin America. In *Religions in Contemporary Latin America and the Caribbean*. London: Routledge.

CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

Isaac E. (2024, June). *Towards a Non-Eurocentric Definition of Spiritual Abuse*. Latin American Studies Association, Religión, Colonialismo y Resistencia.

Isaac E. (2023, March). *Spiritual Abuse in Early Caribbean History*. American Academy of Religion, WR.

Isaac E. (2022, March). *Women and Spiritual Abuse in Protestantism*. Tri-University Conference of Latin America & the Caribbean.

Isaac E. (2021, March). *Spiritual Abuse & Latinx Identity in South Florida*. Tri-University Conference of Latin America & the Caribbean.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/APPEARANCES

Isaac E. (2026, May). *The Plastic Detox Webinar*. Beyond Plastics.

Participated in a national webinar alongside Louie Psihoyos, Dr. Shanna Swan, and Judith Enck, translating scientific evidence on endocrine disruption into a direct critique of regulatory gaps and advocating for systemic U.S. environmental policy reform.

Isaac E. (2026, April). *Talking Rubbish Podcast*.

Discussed environmental health policy and regulatory failures in the United States with host Robbie Staniforth, a member of the UK Government's Advisory Committee on Packaging, and author James Piper, using personal experience from *The Plastic Detox* to advocate for legislative intervention on toxic exposure and circular economic reform.

Isaac E. (2026, March). *The Coolest Show* (Oceanic Preservation Society; Hip Hop Caucus).

Examined the intersection of environmental justice, public health, and policy, translating scientific findings into effective calls for regulatory reform and accountability using personal, relatable narratives.

Isaac E. (2026, March). *The Plastic Detox*. Netflix. Directed by Louie Psihoyos; featuring Dr. Shanna Swan.

Featured subject in a global documentary on endocrine disruption and plastic toxicity, contributing to the public discourse on environmental health and regulatory policy.

Isaac E. (2025, Sept.). *Plastics, Human Health, and Solutions Symposium*. New York University, NYC Climate Week.

Advised Environmental Health Sciences organizers on bridging communication between scientific experts and rural religious audiences that are resistant to environmental health research.

Isaac E. (2025, July). *Debriefing the Stone's Statement*. Bodies Behind the Bus Podcast.

Analyzed legal and ethical dimensions of a megachurch's response to allegations of spiritual and sexual abuse, focusing on institutional accountability.

Isaac E. (2025, March). *Fundamentalist Beliefs Going Mainstream*. Bodies Behind the Bus Podcast.

Conducted an early interview with a survivor of a fundamentalist religious group, analyzing institutional power, public figures, and broader cultural implications.

Isaac E. (2024, Oct.). *ATBS: Spiritual Abuse: Defining It and Reducing It*. Bodies Behind the Bus Podcast.

Presented research defining spiritual abuse and proposed institutional and legal strategies for prevention and accountability.

Isaac E. (2023, Sept.). *Interfaith Experiences of Spiritual Abuse*. Theta Alpha Kappa, Florida International University. Presented research on cross-religious patterns of spiritual abuse, emphasizing comparative and institutional analysis.

Isaac E. (2023, Jan.). *Spiritual Abuse and Modern Evangelicalism*. Florida International University. A guest lecture analyzing the relationship between theology, institutional authority, and abuse within contemporary evangelical movements.

Isaac E. (2022, Nov.). *God Forbid: The Sex Scandal that Brought Down a Dynasty*. Florida International University. Invited panelist providing subject-matter expertise on spiritual abuse alongside the film's director and executive producer.

Isaac E. (2022, Aug.). *FIU Professor and Pastor Eric Isaac on Christianity and Spiritual Abuse*. Pan Con Podcast. Discussed the theological, cultural, and institutional dynamics of spiritual abuse for a general audience.

Isaac E. (2022, Jan.). *Religious Violence and the Holocaust*. Somerset Academy. Delivered a lecture examining the role of religious ideas in legitimizing violence and genocide.

Isaac E. (2021, Jan.). *Effectiveness in the Four Ways of Instruction*. Florida International University Faculty Town Hall. Selected by the Provost to present the COVID streaming hybrid teaching methodology I pioneered to the university faculty, focusing on evidence-based and student-centered instruction.

ADVOCACY, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, NON-PROFIT LEADERSHIP

Environmental Health Sciences Advisor – Rural Religious Education and Engagement July 2025–Present
Translate scientific research on fertility and endocrine disruption for rural evangelical populations resistant to mainstream scientific messaging, contributing to national outreach strategies that bridge scientific evidence and hard-to-reach communities and support broader public health advocacy and policy engagement.

Sacred Wilderness Board Member January 2024–Present
Advise a national nonprofit providing funding and licensed mental health care for survivors of spiritual abuse, contributing academic expertise to a multidisciplinary board of legal, psychological, and advocacy professionals. Connected to *Bodies Behind the Bus*, a top-ranked religion podcast platform amplifying survivor narratives and shaping national discourse on institutional accountability, survivor advocacy, and emerging legal frameworks addressing spiritual abuse.

Founding Faculty and Board Member, Certificate in Christian Studies – FIU 2022–Present
Co-founded an interdisciplinary academic certificate examining Christianity's influence on law, politics, and society; designed curriculum, built course offerings, and led student recruitment, contributing to sustained enrollment growth and the successful launch of a new academic credential.

Founder, Juliana Isaac Fund for the Study of Christianity – FIU January 2023–Present
Established and administer a university foundation account funding research, teaching, and student support related to spiritual abuse; developed and executed fundraising strategy, allocated funds for academic programming and student assistance, and created a sustained institutional funding stream supporting an emerging field at the intersection of religion, law, and public interest.

Neighborhood Church Miami Mercy Fund Distribution December 2018–2025
Directed allocation of approximately \$35,000–\$45,000 annually in direct aid (over \$200,000 total), primarily supporting survivors of spiritual abuse; approved funding requests and built referral networks connecting recipients with mental health providers and legal resources, creating a sustained community-based support infrastructure.

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Faculty

October 2023–December 2024

ULACIT (Costa Rica) and Kansai University (Japan)

Built and managed international academic partnerships integrating FIU students with peers in Costa Rica and Japan; developed joint curricula and collaborative research projects examining spiritual abuse and its legal and political implications, expanding cross-border academic programming and comparative legal analysis.

Study Abroad Program Director – Scotland and Japan

January 2022–2025

Designed and executed international study abroad programs examining religion, power, and abuse across legal and political contexts; developed curriculum, managed budgets and logistics, recruited students, and led in-country instruction, scaling participation to 22 students (Scotland) and 24 students (Japan), including the largest and second-largest programs in departmental history.

City Network Leader Miami, Made to Flourish

October 2021–October 2022

Led regional initiatives equipping faith leaders to integrate theology, work, and economic practice for community development; designed and taught preventative curriculum on spiritual abuse and consulted organizational leaders on power, governance, and institutional risk within religious systems.

Global First-Year Cohort Instructor (International Students), FIU

January 2022–2025

Selected to teach cohorts of international (F1/J1) students, delivering coursework in religion and communication while mentoring students through academic and cultural transition, supporting retention and successful integration into U.S. higher education.

International Coaching Federation (ICF) – FIU Partnership Liaison

January 2022–2023

Created and managed a university partnership providing international students with individualized coaching from certified professionals; recruited and matched students with coaches and represented FIU in strategic planning, expanding institutional support services through external partnerships.

Tri-University Conference Organizer

January 2021–2022

(University of Miami, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University)

Led coordination of a multi-institution academic conference, organizing programming and facilitating collaboration across three universities, strengthening interdisciplinary scholarly exchange.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

School of International and Public Affairs, The Honors College, & College of Arts and Sciences.
Florida International University, Miami, FL.

Courses:IDH 3034 Spiritual Abuse: A Novel Topic in Public Interest Law (Honors College)

Created and taught a first-of-its-kind interdisciplinary course examining spiritual abuse through legal, sociological, and theological frameworks, with emphasis on civil rights, institutional accountability, and regulatory gaps. Students analyze case law, develop legal arguments, and draft hypothetical legal briefs addressing spiritual abuse in public-interest contexts.

REL 4150 Spiritual Power and Spiritual Abuse

Created and taught the first course at a U.S. public university dedicated to spiritual abuse and power; integrates original research, survivor testimony, and engagement with professionals across law, psychology, and advocacy. Serves as the capstone for the Christian Studies Certificate.

REL 3530 Protestantism and Religious Abuse (Study Abroad: Scotland)

Designed and led a study abroad course examining spiritual abuse in the Protestant Reformation across theological, legal, and political contexts; included field-based instruction in Scotland.

REL 3583 World Christianity (Study Abroad: Japan; COIL – Kansai University)

Designed and led a hybrid international course combining Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) with Kansai University (Osaka, Japan) and in-country study abroad. Examines Christianity's legal and political influence in Japan from the Tokugawa period to the present, with emphasis on law, religion, and state power.

REL 3066 Race, Slavery, Christianity, and the Caribbean (Undergraduate) / REL 5937 (Graduate) (Both COIL-ULACIT)
Co-developed and taught a cross-listed undergraduate and graduate course in partnership with ULACIT (San José, Costa Rica) through COIL. Examines Christianity's role in slavery, colonialism, and liberation movements; students collaborate internationally to produce research analyzing ongoing legal and political implications of religious power.

REL 4937 Special Topics: Religious Violence and Abuse

Designed a course analyzing the intersection of religious ideas, political authority, and legal systems in producing violence; applies theoretical frameworks of spiritual power to global and comparative legal contexts.

RLG 5911 Independent Research (Graduate)

Directed graduate-level independent research projects, mentoring students in methodology, interdisciplinary theory, and publication-level writing.

REL 4910 Independent Research (Undergraduate)

Supervised undergraduate research projects, guiding students through proposal development, analysis, and academic writing.

ARCH Advanced Research and Creativity in Honors (Honors College)

Directed student research from proposal through publication, including data analysis, academic writing, and formal presentation.

IDH 1001 The Borders of Knowledge and the Knowledge of Borders (Honors College)

Taught an interdisciplinary course on epistemology, formal logic, and legal reasoning, connecting philosophical frameworks to legal, cultural, and ideological boundaries.

IDH 1002 The Origin of Ideas and the Idea of Origins (Honors College)

Advanced application of logic and epistemology to contemporary legal and cultural debates, emphasizing structured argumentation and interdisciplinary analysis.

REL 2011 Introduction to Religion

Surveyed major theories of religion and their influence on political, cultural, and legal systems.

REL 3308 Studies in World Religion

Comparative study of global religious traditions, emphasizing historical development and contemporary legal and social implications.

REL 3505 Introduction to Christianity

Historical and interdisciplinary analysis of Christianity, with emphasis on its influence on law, politics, and public life.

SPC 2608 Public Speaking

Taught rhetoric, argument construction, and persuasive communication, emphasizing public-facing advocacy and professional presentation.

TEACHING EVALUATIONS**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Eric Isaac, Adjunct Professor, Religious Studies
 FROM: Erik Larson, Chair, Religious Studies
 DATE: July 26, 2023
 RE: Evaluation by Chair

This evaluation is based upon your self-evaluation and report of activities and student teaching evaluations from the 2022-23 academic year.

Teaching:

In the fall you taught two sections of REL 2011, one section of REL 3308 and REL 4937 Special Topics: Spiritual Authority/ Spiritual Abuse. In the spring you taught two sections of REL 2011, one of REL 3308, and REL 3066 Caribbean Christianity. Your classes continue to be extremely well enrolled, and it is clear that you have a reputation as an outstanding professor. It is phenomenal that in six of the eight classes, 100% of the students rated you as excellent or very good. Both the other classes were above 90%. I appreciate the fact that you added the class on Spiritual Authority/ Spiritual Abuse which is different from anything we have ever offered in the department before. In Caribbean Christianity, which was also another new course for you, you worked with Joseph Holbrook and reported in your self-evaluation that you learned much from him. You also have worked closely with Jeanette Smith, our undergraduate program director, to improve your exams by making them a more meaningful learning experience for the students. The chair notes with satisfaction that you have also been very helpful to her in supplying data for our departmental reports. Finally, you worked with other professors, through the CAT inquiry institutes to review both SPOTS and Gateway data for the introductory courses you teach. You are clearly not resting on your laurels.

In addition to all of this work, you continued to teach sections of REL 2011 for the Global First-Year Program. You also started to work with the Office for Education Abroad to plan a study trip to Scotland this summer and enrolled 15-20 students for the trip. This will be another great experience for our students. Your energy and dedication are impressive.

You are one of our most outstanding adjuncts ever. Congratulations on another amazing year! Your teaching is outstanding (5).

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eric Isaac, Adjunct Professor, Religious Studies
 FROM: Erik Larson, Chair, Religious Studies
 DATE: July 14, 2022
 RE: Evaluation by Chair

This evaluation is based upon your self-evaluation and report of activities and student teaching evaluations from the 2021-22 academic year.

Teaching:

In the fall you taught four sections of REL 2011, and in the spring you taught three sections of REL 2011 and one of REL 3308. Your classes are extremely well enrolled, and it is clear that you have a reputation as an outstanding professor. I appreciate the fact that you added REL 3308 to your repertoire of classes this past year. Indeed, my confidence in your abilities is so great that when I was asked by FIU's Global First Year (G1Y) program for an instructor to succeed our previous representative who left to enter a Ph.D. program, I nominated you. G1Y has since indicated their agreement with my choice and are very happy for the work you are doing with their students. Your student evaluations are among the highest I have ever seen as chair of our department. In some of your classes, 100% of students rated you as excellent or very good which is almost unheard of in introductory classes. In the spring, your students were so enthusiastic about your teaching that they wrote a petition for you to teach more classes beyond the introductory courses, mentioning specifically a course on Spiritual Power/Spiritual Abuse. That is high praise, indeed, and we will work on make that happen this coming year. You have also worked with Jeanette Smith to be part of FIU's Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program. You are one of our most outstanding adjuncts. Congratulations on an outstanding year! Your teaching is outstanding (5).

Edward Duran
 To: Eric Isaac

Fr 9/19/2025 7:57 PM

Eric,

It was a pleasure to observe your REL4150 "Spiritual Abuse" course last week. I was incredibly impressed by the intellectually vibrant and engaging learning environment you have cultivated. Your session was a masterclass in human-centered, dialogic pedagogy that is both timeless in its approach and strikingly relevant in our current high-tech educational landscape.

This note summarizes the key pedagogical strengths I observed during the session.

Key Strengths and Observations

Your instruction was animated by several powerful, research-aligned principles that worked in concert to create a rigorous and supportive learning space.

- **Masterful Facilitation of Dialogue:** You expertly employed a dialogic approach, positioning students as co-contributors in a conversation that you gently steered. By creating a space where ideas were built upon, supported, and evaluated in real-time, you fostered a deep sense of joint meaning-making. This was powerfully supported by the intentionally low-tech environment, which kept all attention focused on the human dialogue.
- **Strategic Scaffolding with Analogies and Humor:** Your use of pop-culture references, such as Marvel's Multiverse and Deadpool, was a brilliant application of cognitive load theory. These analogies served as familiar schemas, allowing students to map complex and sensitive concepts onto known story worlds, thereby easing the constraints on their working memory. The humor inherent in these examples also served to lower the "affective filter," reducing student anxiety and making difficult content more accessible.
- **Cultivating a Climate of Psychological Safety:** Throughout the session, you acted as a "more knowledgeable other," skillfully keeping learners within their optimal challenge zone. You called on every student, looped them into examples, and praised their efforts, which created a strong sense of inclusion and safety. Your willingness to use simple, low-stakes tools - like the comically improvised hierarchy pyramid in Microsoft Paint - perfectly captured this approach, signaling to students that intellectual risk-taking was encouraged.

Contemporary Relevance in the Age of AI

I want to particularly commend your teaching model for its relevance in the age of generative AI. In an era where students can easily offload cognitive work to a machine, your classroom champions an approach that makes learning a socially accountable, real-time activity that cannot be outsourced. By prioritizing human-centered discourse, you are actively cultivating the skills that are most resistant to AI-driven shortcuts: active listening, collaborative reasoning, and the critical evaluation of ideas.

Your class serves as a powerful example of how a low-tech first approach can create a rigorous learning space that curbs AI reliance while deepening the understanding of complex content.

Conclusion

Overall, your instruction was exemplary. You have designed a thoughtful, engaging, and deeply effective learning experience that is grounded in best practices and remarkably well-suited to the challenges and opportunities of modern education. Thank you for allowing me to observe your excellent work.

Onward,

Edward Duran

Assistant Teaching Professor
 Co-Chair AI 360 Teaching Forum

Information Systems and Business Analytics

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AFFILIATIONS, VOLUNTEERING, AND TRAININGS**TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

Certification of Completion: *Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course*. Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (2020-Present)

Fundamentals of Collaborative International Online Learning Design and Facilitation for FIU Faculty and Partners 6 Week Training and supervision by Stephanie Doscher Ed. D. (2023, November)

OFFICES AND SERVICES IN STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

MALOKA (Latin American Studies Graduate Student Organization), Florida International University.
President (2021-2022); *Member* (2020-2021)

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES/COMMUNITY SERVICE

AP Research Mentor, City of Hialeah Educational Academy Serves as a discipline-specific ‘expert adviser’ to underserved high school seniors as they conduct original research on a topic of their choice using qualitative or quantitative social science methods. (2022-present)