

SHEKINAH N. LIGHTNER

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6556 Haven Hall
505 South State Street, Ann Arbor, MI

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Political Science and Public Policy 2026
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Department of Political Science and Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
Major field of study: American Politics

Bachelor of Arts, Politics and Economics, Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa May 2020
Furman University, Greenville, SC

Study Away Experience

Slow Food Italy, Assisi, Sora, and Rome, Italy May 2018
The Washington Center, Washington, DC January-May 2019

American Economic Association Summer Program (AEASP) May-July 2019
Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Associate May 2021-Present
The Riley Institute at Furman, Center for Education Policy and Leadership

- Assist PI in developing outcome measurement plans with community organizations participating in a Pay for Success project in a South Carolina county
- Conduct quarterly validation analysis of reported organization outcomes within Pay for Success project
- Collaborate with team of researchers to develop surveys
- Write survey results reports to be shared with district and school leadership

Undergraduate Research Assistant | Dr. Brooke Culclasure Aug. 2018-May 2020
The Riley Institute at Furman, Center for Education Policy and Leadership

- Performed analysis of teacher survey data
- Wrote and edited literature reviews on teach satisfaction and retention and project-based learning curriculum
- Developed survey to measure teacher satisfaction in South Carolina Montessori teachers administered in Spring 2020

Summer Research Fellow | Dr. David Fleming June-Aug. 2018
Furman University, Department of Politics and International Affairs

- Expanded research skills by working closely with professor in study of public South Carolina Montessori programs in partnership with the Riley Institute
- Employed qualitative analysis to evaluate Montessori student interview data
- Created data visualizations and data reports

PRESENTATIONS

Johnson, C. & **Lightner, S.** (2019, July). Minority student enrollment in advanced high school courses: A comparative study of traditional and charter schools. *AEA Summer Mentoring Pipeline Conference*. Poster presented at the 2019 AEA Summer Mentoring Pipeline Conference, East Lansing, MI.

Lightner, S. & Culclasure, B. (2019, February). Montessori Teacher Experiences: Factors influencing Montessori teacher satisfaction and retention in SC. *American Montessori Society Conference*. Poster presented at the 2019 American Montessori Society Conference, Washington, DC.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)

Aug. 2021-Present

University of Michigan, Department of Political Science

- Courses taught: Intro to American Politics, American Political Processes

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Advance Team Lead

Aug. 2019-May 2020

The Riley Institute at Furman, Center for Critical Issues

- Supervised a group of 35 students that support the Riley Institute in executing a variety of events and programs
- Facilitated training sessions for team members
- Coordinated local travel arrangements and schedules of guest speakers
- Organized work schedule and assigned duties for team members

Legislative Assistant

January-May 2019

NAACP Washington Bureau

- Performed comparative analysis of proposed policy solutions and legislation
- Evaluated the constitutional guarantees and case law precedents in relation to policy issues
- Drafted research report on monetary bail reform to be used in lobbying
- Contacted NAACP national board members, congressional offices, and presidential campaign offices in regard to meetings and events

CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

Co-President

May 2021-Present

Political Scientist of Color (PSOC)

University of Michigan, Department of Political Science

- Represent and advocate for the interests of students of color in the department in regularly scheduled meetings with department administration
- Plan meetings and events to promote community amongst students of color
- Organize research workshops with other regional universities

Student Facilitator

Aug. 2018-May 2020

Furman University Dins Dialogue

- Promoted inclusive campus culture by facilitating workshops on identity, privilege, and community engagement
- Cultivated new facilitation techniques and workshops with team of student facilitators

Student Representative

Aug. 2017-May 2020

Furman University Task Force on Slavery and Justice

- Represented student body in Furman's exploration of the school's historical connections with slavery
- Crafted recommendations with other task force members on actions to be taken by the university in light of history
- Assisted in implementing recommendations approved by the Board of Trustees and administration

President*Furman University Chapter of the NAACP*

Aug. 2017-May 2018

FELLOWSHIPS

Causal Inference in Education Policy Research (CIEPR) Predoctoral Fellowship	2022
University of Michigan Rackham Merit Fellow	2020
American Political Science Association Diversity Fellow	2020-2021

MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association (APSA)	2021
Phi Beta Kappa	2020
Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society	2020
Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society	2018
Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society	2017

HONORS AND AWARDS

Furman University President's Award	2020
Furman University S. Sidney Ulmer Political Science Medal	2020
Furman University Faculty Scholarship Recipient	2019-2020
AEASP Best Research Project (Foundations Level)	2019
Furman University Summer Research Fellow	2018
Furman University Hollingsworth Scholar	2016-2020
Teamsters James R. Hoffa Scholarship Recipient	2016-2020
UPS James E. Casey Scholarship Recipient	2016-2020
SC Palmetto Fellow	2016-2020
Furman University Dean's List	2016-2020