

ARJOLA BALILAJ

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. August 2020

Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Dissertation (defended): Social Constructions and Narratives:
An Analysis of U.S. Refugee Policy from 1980-2018

M. A. January 2013

Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey

B. S. July 2011

Bachelor of Science in International Relations

Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Some courses completed at *Mari Curie- Skłodowska University*,
Lublin, Poland

WORK EXPERIENCE

**Associate Professor, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration,
August 2026-Present**

Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama, USA

MPA Program Director, September 2024-2026 Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville,
Alabama, USA

**Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration,
January 2021-August 2026**

Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama, USA

Graduate Assistant, August 2014- August- 2020

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, USA

Project Research Manager, January 2013- August 2014

Farplas Holding, Istanbul, Turkey

Graduate Assistant, September 2011- January 2013

Sabancı University, Istanbul Turkey

PUBLICATIONS

Balilaj, A., & Islam, T. (2026). *Designing a Survey to Evaluate Efforts on Vulnerable Populations by Government Agencies*. Sage Research Methods: Inclusive Research Methodologies.

<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036249786>

Balilaj, A., & Islam, T. (2025). *Assessment of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts in State and Local Emergency Management Agencies*. FEMA Higher Education Program Report. *Journal of Emergency Management*, 23 (2), 253-263.

Sapat, A., Balilaj, A. & Esnard, A. M. (2022). Social constructions of disaster survivors and displaced populations: Implications for policy design. In S. Kuo, J. T. Marshall, & R. M. Rowberry (Eds.). *The Cambridge handbook of disaster law: Risk, recovery, and redevelopment*. (Forthcoming Cambridge 2022).

Sapat, A., Mitsova, D., Balilaj, A., & Esnard, A-M. (2021). *Policy mandates and organizational compliance: A spatial analysis of the factors affecting the adoption and implementation of emergency power plans by nursing homes*. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 13(1), 64-93.

Balilaj, A. (2016). Ethics and international affairs: Extent and Limits, 2nd ed. [Review of book by J. M. Coicaud & D. Warner]. *Public Integrity* 18 (2), 229-232.

Farazmand, A. and Balilaj, A. (2015). Does Asia have a unique theory of public administration for all seasons? An exploratory essay. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, 37 (3), 143-160.

WORKING PAPERS

Lofaro R., Balilaj, A., Sapat, A., & Mansourian, G. (2025). *Narrators and Narratives in Times of Crisis: Analyzing Policy Identity Salience During the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

Lofaro R., Balilaj, A., & Sapat, A., & Mansourian, G. (2025). *Scientific Policy Advisors in Times of Crisis: Analyzing Narratives During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Lofaro R., Balilaj, A., Sapat, A., & Mansourian, G. (2025). *Scientific Policy Advisors in Times of Crisis: Analyzing Narratives During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Presented at the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration, Coral Springs, FL, 10-13 September 2025.

Balilaj, A., Lofaro, R., & Sapat, A. *Narrative Evolution in Times of Crisis: Analyzing Gubernatorial Narratives on Vaccines and Pharmaceutical Companies During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Conference on Policy Process Research, Syracuse, NY, 15-17 May 2024.

Lofaro, R., Balilaj, A., & Sapat, A. *Variation and Evolution in Social Constructions: Analyzing Temporal Changes in Beliefs on Experts and Expertise During the Covid-19 Pandemic*. Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, 4-7 April 2024.

Balilaj, A., Islam, T., *Assessment of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts in State and Local Emergency Management Agencies*. Presented at the FEMA Higher Education Symposium, Emmitsburg, MD, 5-7 June 2023.

Balilaj, A., Lofaro, R., & Sapat, A. *Crisis Leadership and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Using the Narrative Policy Framework to Analyze Gubernatorial Communications on Experts and Expertise*. Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, 13-16 April 2023.

Balilaj, A., Islam, T., *Assessment of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts in State and Local Emergency Management Agencies*. Presented at the American Society for Public Administration Annual Conference, Online, 20-24 March 2023.

Lofaro, R., Balilaj, A., & Sapat, A. *Experts, Expertise, and Policy Problems: Analyzing Gubernatorial Communications During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Conference on Policy Process Research, Boulder, CO, 12-14 January 2023.

Balilaj, A. The Covid- 19 Response and Policy Inequity: The Case of Resettled Refugees. Presented at the American Society for Public Administration Annual Conference, Jacksonville, FL, 17-22 March 2022.

Balilaj, A. *Social Constructions and Narratives in the US Refugee Policy: An Analysis of the Annual Refugee Ceilings Determination Process 1980-2017*. Presented at 77th Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, 4-7 April 2019.

Balilaj, A. *Who is the Enemy? Competing Narratives of Iran, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the United States in the Syrian Conflict*. Presented at the British International Studies Association's Narrating Russian and Eurasian Security Workshop, London, 18-19 June 2018.

Balilaj, A. *Social Construction of Refugees: An analysis of U.S. Refugee Policy from 1980-2017*. Presented at the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration, Birmingham, AL, 20-23 September 2018.

Balilaj, A. *The Refugee Act of 1980: A narrative policy framework*. Presented at the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration, Fort Lauderdale, FL, 4-7 October 2017.

Balilaj, A. *Establishing good governance in post- conflict societies: From peace agreements to government institutions*. Presented at the Annual Ph.D. Colloquium organized by the Association of Doctoral Students in Public Administration at FAU, Boca Raton, FL, 14 April 2016.

Balilaj, A. *Exploring the place of organizational development in the process of privatization in post- communist countries: The case of Albania*. Presented at the Annual Ph.D. Colloquium organized by the Association of Doctoral Students in Public Administration at FAU, Boca Raton, FL, 13 April 2015.

Balilaj, A. *Mediation as a conflict resolution tool in the Cyprus Peace Talks: Simulation*. Simulation exercise conducted at the Istanbul Conference on Mediation: Enhancing Peace through Mediation, Istanbul, Turkey, 24-25 February 2012.

TEACHING

Assistant Professor, Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama

- **Diversity in the Workplace**, PA 546, Spring 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Summer 2023, Fall 2023, Summer 2024, Fall 2024 (online),
- **Public Policy Process and Analysis**, PA 501-01, Spring 2021 (online), Fall 2021 (hybrid), Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025, Fall 2026 (online and hybrid)

- **Research Methods for Public Administration**, PA502-01, Spring 2021 & Spring 2022 (online), Fall 2021(hybrid), Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025 (online & hybrid)
- **Foundations of Public Administration**, PA 5100, Fall 2026 (online & hybrid)
- **Comparative Politics**, PSC 431, Spring 2021 (hybrid), Spring 2022 (online)
- **Introduction to Public Policy**, PSC 310, Fall 2021, Spring 2022 (hybrid), Spring 2023(online)
- **Governments of Asia**, PSC 431, Fall 2022(in-person)
- **Human Resource Management in Public Safety Communications**, PST 323, Summer 2022 & Summer 2023 (online)
- **Research in Disaster and Emergency Management**, EM 481, Spring 2024, Spring 2025 (online)
- **Integrative Seminar II**, EM 8744, Fall 2025, Fall 2026 (online)
- **Integrative Seminar III**, EM 8746, Fall 2025, Fall 2026 (online)
- **Program Evaluation**, EM 866, Summer 2025 (online)
- **Qualitative Research**, EM 8764, Summer 2026 (online)

Instructor, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida

- Public Budgeting and Finance, PAD 4223, Summer 2020 (Co-instructor with Dr. Clifford McCue)
- Public Management and Administration, PAD 3003-02, Fall 2019
- Public Management and Administration, PAD 3003, Summer 2019 (online)
- Program Evaluation in Public Management, PAD 4320, Fall 2017
- Program Evaluation in Public Management, PAD 4320, Fall 2016
- Organization Communications and Administrative Behavior, PAD 3104, Fall 2015

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida

Public Budgeting and Finance, PAD 4223, Spring 2019 (undergraduate, online)

- Assisted in the teaching of the course online during Spring 2019.
- Graded student test and discussion assignments to measure knowledge acquisition.

Public Budgeting and Finance, PAD 4223, Fall 2018 (undergraduate, online)

- Assisted in the design of the Public Budgeting and Finance course as an online course in compliance with Quality Matters standards to be offered during Spring 2019.
- Assisted in the creation of the course Blueprint.
- Assisted in the collection of course reading materials in compliance with course objectives.
- Assisted in the creation of course assignments in compliance with course objectives.
- Participated in the weekly meetings in cooperation with the Center for E-learning.

Introduction to Public Safety Administration, PAD 3820, Fall 2018 (undergraduate, online)

- Assisted in grading different course assignments and providing feedback to facilitate student understanding of the material.

Quantitative Inquiry for Public Managers, PAD 4702, Summer 2017 (undergraduate, online)

- Assisted in importing the course to Canvas from Blackboard.
- Assisted in grading different course assignments.
- Mentored students on SPSS

Research Methods for Public Management, PAD 4704, Spring, 2016 (undergraduate, online)

- Assisted in importing the course to Canvas from Blackboard.
- Assisted in grading different course assignments.

Labor Relations in Government, PAD 6427, Spring 2015 (graduate)

- Participate in lectures to assist the main instructor.
- Evaluated student papers.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey

Political Psychology, POLS 403, Fall 2011 (undergraduate)

- Assisted with creating and delivering course lectures, delivered in a lecture hall.
- Created and graded student tests and assignments.

SERVICE

Emergency Management DSc. Doctoral Seminar Planning Committee, Member, Jacksonville State University, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2025.

Emergency Management DSc. Doctoral Seminar Planning Committee, Co-chair, Jacksonville State University, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2023.

Faculty Search Committee, Chair, Jacksonville State University, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2026

Faculty Search Committee, Member, Jacksonville State University, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2025

Faculty Search Committee, Member, Jacksonville State University, Department of Political Science, 2023

Faculty Search Committee, Member, Jacksonville State University, Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2023

Faculty Senate, Alternate Representative for the Department of Emergency Management and Public Administration, 2023-2026

Dean Selection Student Committee, Florida Atlantic University, College for Design and Social Inquiry, 2017.

Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award Student Interview Committee, Florida Atlantic University, 2015.

Faculty Hiring Student Interview Committee, Sabanci University, 2012.

GRANTS, AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES

MIT Professional Education, Professional Certificate in Data Science and Analytics, December 2024

FEMA Higher Education Program Research Grant, Co-PI with Dr. Tanveer Islam, \$10,000, August 2022.

Graduate Assistant Award, Florida Atlantic University, August 2014- Present.

Inducted as Member, Public Administration Honors Society Pi Alpha Alpha, 2017.

Adriana Castellano Memorial Scholarship, Florida Atlantic University, 2016.

E- certification for Designer/Facilitator Training Workshop, Florida Atlantic University, 2015.

Seminar for International Teaching Assistants Certificate, Florida Atlantic University, 2014.

Graduate Assistant Award, Sabanci University, 2011-2013.

Rotary Club Istanbul Field Research Scholarship, Istanbul, Turkey, 2012.

Dialogue Facilitation Workshop Certificate, Sabanci University, 2012.

The Baltic Sea Region Culture, Politics, and Economy Certificate, Mari Curie- Sklodowska University, Lublin, Poland, 2011.

Erasmus Exchange Program Scholarship, Middle East Technical Univeristy, Ankara, Turkey, 2010.

Introduction to Polish Society, Culture, and Language Certificate, Lublin, Poland, 2010.

RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

General Software: MS Office, Skype for Business, WebEx.

Research Software: R, Jupyter Notebooks, SPSS, STATA, Qualtrics, Nvivo, Python

Online Teaching Platforms: Blackboard, Canvas.

LANGUAGES

Albanian: Native

English: Read, Write, Speak (Advanced)

Turkish: Read, Write, Speak (Advanced)

Italian: Read, Write, Speak (Advanced)