

KASSADI T. SMITH, M.A.

561-523-6123 | kassadismith23@gmail.com | Florida, USA | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kassadismith/>

EDUCATION

Security Studies Ph.D. | University of Central Florida **08/24 - 12/27 (expected)**

- Research Area: Digital Infrastructure, Decision Science, and State Behaviors
- UCF Graduate Fellow
- CITI Program Certification in Human Research (Social/ Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel)
- Candidacy Entered: **Spring 2026**
 - Methods Comprehensive Exam: **Passed**; Security Comprehensive Exam: **Passed**; Field Area Exam: **Passed**

Political Science M.A. | Florida Atlantic University **Graduated 05/22**

- Research Area: Sociotechnology, Cyberspace, and Political Behavior
- Served as Student Liaison to the Graduate Dean for FAU Graduate College

Political Science B.A. | Florida Atlantic University **Graduated 05/20**

- Thesis: Technology and Conflict: An Unexplored Link
- Minor in Business Law
- Certificate in Ethics, Law, and Society

CAREER AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Research Security Analyst | University of Miami, Miami, FL **05/26 - Present**

- Support university-wide research security initiatives focused on cybersecurity, export controls, foreign travel security, and research security awareness and training.
- Collaborate with stakeholders across the research enterprise to develop policies, conduct risk assessments, and implement strategies that strengthen institutional resilience and regulatory compliance.
- Provide guidance on federal research security requirements and emerging threats affecting academic research environments. Apply frameworks and policies, including NSPM-33, the CHIPS and Science Act, NIST SP 800-171, and Executive Order 14117, to safeguard research activities and protect sensitive information.
- Engage faculty, staff, and institutional partners through outreach and training initiatives that promote a culture of research security and responsible international collaboration.

Graduate Teaching Assistant | University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL **08/24 - Present**

- Previous Classes: American National Government; Environmental Politics; Modern Political Ideologies; Public Opinions; Global Perspectives; Women, Gender, and Globalization; Scope & Methods
- Providing support for over 350 students. Duties include student support, grading, and Yellow Dig monitoring. Supported Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) module, developed in partnership with the Institute of International and Security Studies, University of Wroclaw.

Student Affairs Specialist | Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL **10/22 - 07/24**

- Designed and implemented mixed-method research initiatives, utilizing surveys and qualitative assessments to evaluate student engagement and program effectiveness.
- Collaborated with senior leadership, overseeing 10 departments, to develop research-driven strategies aimed at enhancing student experiences beyond the classroom.
- Conducted comprehensive data analysis, interpreting institutional survey results to inform policy decisions and improve student services.

- Developed and led the Lynn Leadership Institute, creating a curriculum that resulted in 40 students earning leadership certifications through a structured, outcome-based program.

GPSA Director | Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

09/19 - 05/22

- Served as university-wide Director and liaison between the Graduate College and the Division of Student Activities and Involvement.
- Provided funding and administrative support for graduate and professional student organizations while implementing policies and procedures that best served the GPSA membership and the university.
- Led the development and execution of assessments to identify and address graduate student needs, employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Managed a \$250,000 annual budget, utilizing data-driven analyses to guide funding decisions and optimize resource allocation for campus initiatives.
- Authored and disseminated detailed reports and documentation, streamlining administrative processes and enhancing communication within graduate and professional student organizations.

PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

State's Quest for Cyber Power

Trust and Safety Research Conference, October 2026, Accepted and to be presented

UCF Student Scholar Symposium, March 2026

Florida Conference of Graduate Schools, April 2026

- Addressing the coevolution challenge, this paper asks: under what conditions does a state's cyber power change? The study advances a theoretical framework that views cyber power as contingent on both hard infrastructures, captured by technical capacity, and soft infrastructure, captured by digital governance, with alliance membership and risk shaping these relationships. Drawing on cross-national data, the analysis applies ordinary least squares regression to examine how differences in digital infrastructure and international alignment influence state cyber power.

Logic of Diffusion: Structural Drivers of Digital Authoritarianism

Trust and Safety Research Conference, September 2025

SPSIA Research Symposium, September 2025

- Using a quantitative mixed-methods approach that combines network analysis and fixed-effects regression, the study analyzes panel data from 18 Asia-Pacific countries spanning 2018 to 2023. The study highlights that digital authoritarianism is significantly shaped by the interactions among mechanisms within digital infrastructure and that it proliferates through shared digital systems, offering a socio-technical perspective on this phenomenon.

Complexities of Political Violence through the Cyber Domain

Peace Science Society, November 2025

UCF Student Scholar Symposium, March 2025

FPSA Symposium, March 2025, Comparative Politics and Political Theory

- Utilizing quantitative analysis in STATA, this project explores factors influencing individuals' likelihood of engaging in political violence, focusing on the role of digital infrastructure within the framework of contentious dynamics.

Technology and Conflict: An Unexplored Link

Graduate Research Day, Spring 2021, Oral Presentation

FAU Wilkes Honors College Research Symposium, Spring 2020

- Focusing on violent international conflicts (and, secondarily, cyber threats), this paper examines the influence of technological development on interstate conflict. Using SPSS logit regression, this paper assesses the likelihood of conflict between nations when technological development is present.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Cybersecurity | Contentious Dynamics | Network Theory | Digital Infrastructure | Political Violence | Alliances

AWARDS

Judges' Choice Award | Student Scholar Symposium | 2026 | University of Central Florida

Finalist | Knights in Focus Research Competition | 2026 | University of Central Florida

3rd Place & Finalist | Impact of Research Competition | 2025 | University of Central Florida

College of Science Dean's Doctoral Fellow | 2024 | University of Central Florida

College of Graduate Studies Dean's Doctoral Fellow | 2024 | University of Central Florida

Field Experience Scholar | 2019 | Florida Atlantic University

Humanitarian Award | 2018 | EmpowHer of the Palm Beaches

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member | Pi Sigma Alpha: National Political Science Honor Society

Member and Alumna | EmpowHer of the Palm Beaches

Member | Florida Political Science Association

Member | Peace Science Society (International)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Stata | Quantitative Analysis | Qualitative Analysis | Qualtrics | Microsoft & Google Suite | Python | Network Analysis

References available upon request