

UCHENNA HILLPRIESTON OKWARA

School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs (SPSIA)

4297 Andromeda Loop N, Howard Philips Hall

University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL 32816, U.S.A

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EDUCATION

University of Central Florida (UCF), Orlando, FL

PhD Candidate, Security Studies (on track to graduate in Summer 2026)

Methods Training: Advanced Quantitative Methods, Survey Experiment Design, Political Network Analysis, Advanced Qualitative Methods, Machine Learning for Social Science (KiND Institute).

- **GPA: 4.0** (final coursework); Recipient, UCF Trustee Doctoral Fellowship.
- Research Focus: Civil-Military Relations, Military–Humanitarian Antagonism, War Economy, Security Governance, and Institutional Competition in Conflict Environments

Ohio University, Athens, OH

MA, International Development Studies (2019 – 2021)

- Concentration: Development and Conflict - Capstone: *Military/NGO Tension* (Advisor: Dr. Brandon Kendhammer) - **GPA: 4.0**

Nigerian Defence Academy (2015)

- Academic, Strategic, and Tactical Military Training: Commissioned Army Officer

University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

BSc, Geography (2008 – 2012)

- Concentration: Human & Physical Geography - Capstone: *GIS and Efficiency of Power Supply in Umuahia Urban*
 - **Best Graduating Student**, Geography Department Class of 2012
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PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATION

- Okwara, U. H. (2025). Shooting Saviors? Military Relations with Humanitarians. *Armed Forces & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X251334628>

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

- Okwara, U. H. Event Dominance and Humanitarian Risk in Civil Wars. (Under review at *European Journal of International Security*).

- Okwara, U. H. From Sovereignty to Solidarity: National Identity and the Moral Foundations of Military–Humanitarian Relations. (Under review at *International Peacekeeping*).
 - Baggio, J. A., & Okwara, U. H. The Evolution of Online Fraud: How Techniques Persist, Diffuse, and Recombine. (Under review at *Crime, Law and Social Change*).
 - Powell, J., Chacha, M., & Okwara, U. H. A Critical Assessment of the Origins and Leadership of Military Coups. (Under review at *Civil Wars*).
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DATASETS & RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

- Okwara, U. H. (2025). *Dataset on Belligerent–Humanitarian Relations during the Nigerian Civil War (1967–70)*. Harvard Dataverse. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/LV0Y6S>
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AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

- UCF Trustee Doctoral Fellowship (Full funding, 2022 – Present)
 - UCF College of Graduate Studies Presentation Fellowship (\$500; 2025)
 - UCF Doctoral Research Support Award (\$2,500; 2025)
 - Margaret W. Moore & John M. Moore Research Fellowship (\$1,300; 2025)
 - SPSA Prestage-Cook Travel Award (\$300; 2025)
 - UCF College of Graduate Studies Presentation Fellowship (\$500; 2024)
 - UCF Student Government Travel & Presentation Award (\$1,000; 2024)
 - Academic Achievement Awards, Ohio University (2019 – 2021)
 - Best Graduating Student, University of Nigeria (2012)
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CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

- International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Convention, Invited Research Presentation (March 2026)
- Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) Annual Conference, Invited Research Presentation (January 2026)
- Peace Science Society (International) Annual Meeting, Invited Research Presentation (November 2025)
- Inaugural SPSIA Research Symposium, University of Central Florida (2025)
- Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Conference (2025)
- Southern Political Science Association, Research Presentation (2025)
- UCF Brown Bag Seminar Series (2022)

- Florida Political Science Association Annual Conference, Research Presentation & Panelist (2023)
 - UCF Scholar Symposium, Research Presentation (2023)
 - Ohio University, Book Review Panel on Boko Haram (2019)
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lieutenant, Nigerian Army (2015 – 2019)

- Commissioned officer with operational and administrative responsibilities in internal security and counterinsurgency contexts.

Graduate Assistant, Ohio University (2019 – 2021)

- Conducted data collection and literature reviews on terrorism in Africa.
- Supported teaching and research, enhancing faculty productivity and student engagement.

University of Central Florida (2022 – Present)

- Planning Committee Member, inaugural SPSIA Research Symposium, UCF (2025)
 - Undergraduate and MA research mentorship in Political Science (2024–25)
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Central Florida (School of Politics, Security & International Affairs)

Instructor of Record / Lead Instructor

- POS 2041: *American National Government* (2025 & 2026). Designed syllabus, delivered lectures, led discussions, and evaluated student work.
- INR2002: *International Relations Theory & Practice* (2026). Designed syllabus, delivered lectures, led discussions, and evaluated student work.
- First-Year Ph.D. Summer Workshop: *Advanced Statistical Methods* – SPSIA (2024 & 2025). Independently designed and taught applied sections on bivariate and multivariate regression for incoming doctoral students in a workshop organized by the school.

Graduate Teaching Assistant

- POT 3302: *Modern Political Ideologies* (2024).
- POS 3703: *Scope & Methods of Political Science* (2024).
- POS 3273: *Voting & Elections* (2023).
- INR 4008: *Global Perspectives* (2023).

As a GTA, I assisted faculty with course delivery, graded assignments, held office hours, and supported student learning.

Graduate/Undergraduate Mentorship (Ohio University)

- Graduate Assistant, Center for International Studies, Ohio University (2019 – 2021) ○ Supported research and teaching on Nigerian politics, political Islam, and ethnic politics.
 - Conducted literature reviews, coding, and data analysis (400+ research hours).
 - Co-facilitated 5+ community engagement events for 100+ students and faculty.

Applied Teaching/Training (Nigerian Army)

- Lieutenant, Nigerian Army (2015 – 2019) ○ Designed and delivered curriculum on conduct of ballistic fire missions, civil–military relations, and regimental codes of conduct to 100+ new soldiers quarterly. ○ Coordinated humanitarian relief operations with NGOs during counterinsurgency deployment in northeastern Nigeria.
 - Developed leadership, training, and logistics management skills applicable to academic teaching and advising.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Volunteer, Registration Committee, Peace Science Society (International) Annual Meeting, Orlando (November 2025)
- Member, Organizing Committee, Inaugural SPSIA Research Symposium, University of Central Florida (2025)
- Volunteer Reviewer, *Armed Forces & Society* (Opted-in Reviewer Pool, 2025–present)
- Graduate Student Representative, SPSIA Colloquium Series (2024–2025)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- Peace Science Society (International) (Active)
- International Studies Association (Active)
- American Political Science Association (Active)
- Southern Political Science Association (Active)
- Florida Political Science Association (2023 – 2024)

SKILLS & METHODS

- **Causal & Statistical Methods:** Multivariate regression, interaction models, causal inference, survey experiments, large-N event data analysis, PCA, network analysis, large-scale archival coding.

- **Programming & Software:** Stata, RStudio, Python (network and text analysis), SPSS
 - **Data & Research Infrastructure:** Dataset construction, replication workflows, archival digitization, reproducible research design.
 - **Substantive Areas:** Security governance, conflict institutions, military ethics, norms in irregular and hybrid warfare environments.
 - **Communication:** Academic & Professional Writing, Public Speaking
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LANGUAGES

- English (Fluent)
- Igbo (Fluent)