

Political Science Speaker Series presents:

# GET OUT: HOW AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS DECIDE WHO EMIGRATES

Presented by

## Margaret Peters

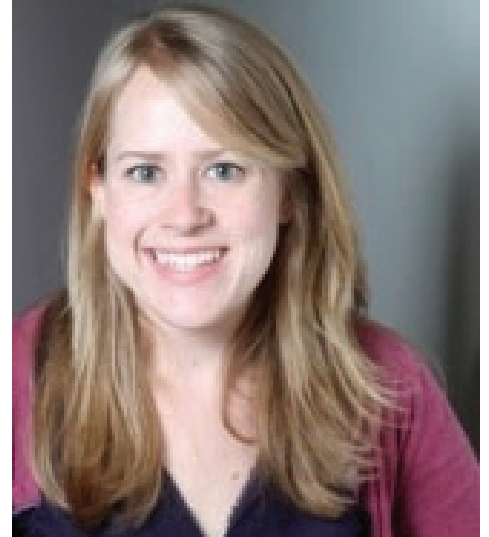
Associate Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of California, Los Angeles

---

**Abstract:** Even the most authoritarian governments allow some citizens to leave. How do they decide who can leave? In this paper, we argue that authoritarian leaders face trade-offs when deciding which individuals should be allowed to leave. On the plus side, autocrats can rid their state of potential challengers and opposition group supporters. Further, there may be economic benefits due to expropriation of emigrants' property and/or no longer needing to provide social welfare benefits to them, remittances, and, in some cases payment, by democratic governments for the release of some citizens. On the negative side, emigrants may represent a loss of human capital; signal the level of opposition to others; and spread norms of democracy back through social remittances. We propose to examine how autocrats balance these trade-offs using archival data from the German Democratic Republic.

---

**Margaret Peters** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at UCLA. Her research focuses broadly on the international economy with a special focus on the politics of migration. Her award-winning book, "Trading Barriers: Immigration and the Remaking of Globalization," argues that the increased ability of firms to produce anywhere in the world combined with growing international competition due to lowered trade barriers has led to greater limits on immigration, as businesses no longer see a need to support open immigration at home. Her work also examines how dictators control emigration and how refugees make their decisions of when, where, and if to move from their home countries. Prior to coming to UCLA, she was a faculty member at Yale University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She received her PhD from Stanford University and her BA from the University of Michigan.



**DATE:**  
Friday,  
May 3, 2019

**TALK TIME:**  
12:30PM - 2:00PM

**LOCATION:**  
Kerr 693