

# Rachel Porter

700 Market Street, Unit 212, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

✉ [rachs@live.unc.edu](mailto:rachs@live.unc.edu) 🌐 [rachelporter.org](http://rachelporter.org) 📱 [porter-rachel](https://porter-rachel.github.io)

## EDUCATION

### The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science

Expected: 2021

*Fields: American Politics and Political Methodology*

*Dissertation Fellowship: Social Science Research Council*

M.A., Political Science

2018

### The University of Georgia

B.A., Political Science & International Affairs

2016

*Distinctions: Phi Beta Kappa, Summa Cum Laude*

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

American Political Institutions | Campaigns & Elections | Congress | Media & Politics  
Natural Language Processing | Computational Social Science | Small Area Estimation

## PUBLICATIONS

McDonald, Maura, **Rachel Porter** and Sarah Treul. 2020. "[Running as a Woman? Gender and the 2018 Congressional Election](#)." Political Research Quarterly. Online First.

Carson, Jamie L., Jason M. Roberts, and **Rachel Porter**. 2020. "The Nationalization of Congressional Elections" in *New Directions in Congressional Politics*, 2nd Ed.: Routledge.

Lynch, Michael S., Anthony J. Madonna, and **Rachel Surminsky**. 2016. "Irregular Order: Examining the Changing Congressional Amending Process" in *Party and Procedure in the United States Congress*, 2nd Ed.: Rowland & Little.

## WORKING PAPERS

[Descriptive Candidacies & Position-Taking in Campaigns for the U.S. House of Representatives](#), with Sarah A. Treul and Maura McDonald (**Under Review**)

[Estimating the Ideology of Primary Electorates](#), (**Under Review**)

[No Experience Required: Early Donations and Amateur Success in Primary Elections](#), with Tyler Steelman (**Under Review**)

[Reevaluating Electoral Experience in Congressional Primary Elections](#), with Sarah A. Treul

## IN PROGRESS

Estimating Common Topics from Multiple Corpora using Keyword-Assisted Topic Models, with Kosuke Imai and Santiago Olivella (software and manuscript under development)

Setting the Narrative: Campaign Styles in Congressional Elections, with Sarah A. Treul (book manuscript under development, expected completion Summer 2021)

Partisan Rhetoric and Party Consistency: A Modern Look at Local Issues (manuscript under development; analysis from dissertation project)

Party Support and Candidate Communication in Elections for the U.S. House of Representatives with Hans J.G. Hassell (data collection underway)

**OTHER  
PUBLICATIONS**

Treul, Sarah and Rachel Porter. 20 April, 2018. "[Inexperienced candidates are becoming more common, but only in one party.](#)" *Mischiefs of Faction* - *Vox*

Surminsky, Rachel and Michael S. Lynch. 20 November, 2014. "[When Congress sues the president, it's likely to fail.](#)" *The Monkey Cage* - *Washington Post*

**FELLOWSHIPS &  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

Social Data Dissertation Fellowship, Social Science Research Council (\$14,250)	2020
Thomas M. Uhlman Fellowship, UNC Political Science (\$5000/year)	2016
Summer Research Fellowship, UNC Political Science, (\$3000/year)	
Zell Miller Scholarship, State of Georgia ( <i>full undergraduate tuition</i> )	2012

**GRANTS &  
AWARDS**

Darlene Walker Summer Research Award, UNC Political Science (\$3000)	2020
Prestage-Cook Travel Award, Southern Political Science Association	
Earle Wallace Award for Graduate Student Teaching, UNC Political Science	2019
Hughes Summer Research Award, UNC Political Science (\$2000)	
Travel Grant, Society for Political Methodology	
Thomas M. Uhlman Summer Research Award, UNC Political Science (\$3000)	2018
Travel Grant, Society for Political Methodology	
Travel Grant, UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School	2017

**TEACHING****University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill***Instructor of Record*

POLI 281: Data in Politics I	Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020
POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics	Spring 2019

*Teaching Assistant*

POLI 130: Introduction to Comparative Politics	Fall 2018
POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics	Fall 2017, Spring 2018

**Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, UNC - Chapel Hill***Short Course Instructor*

Collecting & Analyzing Text in R	Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021
----------------------------------	--

**CONFERENCE &  
WORKSHOP  
PRESENTATIONS**

American Political Science Association Annual Conference	2020
Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (Extended Poster Session)	
Southern Political Science Association Annual Conference	
American Political Science Association Annual Conference	2019
Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (Poster)	
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	
UNC-Chapel Hill Methods and Design Workshop	
Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (Poster)	2018
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	
UNC-Chapel Hill Methods and Design Workshop	
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2017

## INVITED TALKS

*Some Politics Are Still Local: Strategic Position Taking in Modern Campaigns for Congress*  
The University of Georgia, September 2020

*The Primary Decision: Emergence and Success in Congressional Elections*  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, February 2018

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

### **Co-PI & Research Assistant Supervisor (2018-Present)**

Chapel Hill American Primaries Project

- Collected novel data set of policy platforms and biographies from congressional candidate campaign websites (N ~ 4,000)
- Developed web-scraper capable of identifying and extracting text of interest
- Trained, recruited, and managed interdisciplinary team of over fifteen RAs
- Aided in collection of data on candidates' past political and professional experience for all primary candidates from 1980-2020 (N = 28,101)

### **Public Policy Fellow (2015-2016)**

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Athens, GA

- Conducted a comprehensive assessment of "Georgia Leadership Legislative Institute" training program for newly elected/appointed state officials

### **Congressional Intern, Office of Congressman Rob Woodall (2015)**

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC

- Produced reports about upcoming legislation; helped edit congressman's remarks

## VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

**Reviewer:** Journal of Politics, Electoral Studies

**Co-Founder & Co-Organizer,** [Junior Americanist Workshop Series](#) (2020-Present)

**Program Coordinator,** [American Politics Working Group](#) (2017-2019)

**Field Representative,** American Politics, UNC Department of Political (2018-2019)

**Executive Advisor,** [SWAB — 501\(c\)\(3\) Non-Profit](#) (2012-2017)

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

Statistical Computing in R, Python, and Stata | Survey Design in Qualtrics | High Performance Computing | Experience with git; Bash; HTML | Adobe Creative Suite

## REFERENCES

### **Sarah A. Treul**

Bowman & Gordon Gray Distinguished  
Term Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of North Carolina  
[streul@email.unc.edu](mailto:streul@email.unc.edu)

### **John Aldrich**

Pfizer-Pratt University Distinguished  
Professor of Political Science  
Department of Political Science  
Duke University  
[aldrich@duke.edu](mailto:aldrich@duke.edu)

### **Marc Hetherington**

Raymond Dawson Distinguished  
Bicentennial Professor of Political Science  
Department of Political Science  
University of North Carolina  
[marcj@email.unc.edu](mailto:marcj@email.unc.edu)

### **Santiago Olivella**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of North Carolina  
[olivella@unc.edu](mailto:olivella@unc.edu)