

Rachel Porter

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APPOINTMENTS

University of Notre Dame

Assistant Professor, Political Science

2022-Present

Faculty Fellow, Lucy Family Institute for Data & Society

EDUCATION

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ph.D., Political Science

2022

Fields: American Politics & Political Methodology

Dissertation: [Some Politics Are Still Local: Strategic Position Taking in Congress & Elections](#)

M.A., Political Science

2018

The University of Georgia

B.A., Political Science & International Affairs

2016

Distinctions: Phi Beta Kappa, Summa Cum Laude

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

1. **Porter, Rachel** and Sarah A. Treul. "Evaluating (in)experience in congressional elections." Online Ahead of Print at [The American Journal of Political Science](#).
- Featured on [Mischievous Faction-Vox](#), [FiveThirtyEight](#), [The Science of Politics](#) podcast, and [Politics in Question](#) podcast
2. **Porter, Rachel**, Sarah A. Treul, and Maura McDonald. "Changing the Dialogue: Descriptive Candidacies and Position Taking in Campaigns for the US House of Representatives." Online Ahead of Print at [The Journal of Politics](#).
3. **Porter, Rachel** and Tyler Steelman. 2023. "No Experience Required: Early Donations and Amateur Success in Congressional Primaries." [Legislative Studies Quarterly](#), 48(2): 455-466.
4. Ladam, Christina, Austin Bussing, Alexander C. Furnas, Josh McCrain, David R. Miller, and **Rachel Porter**. 2022. "The Junior Americanist Workshop Series (JAWS)." [PS: Political Science & Politics](#), 55(3), 552-553.
5. McDonald, Maura, **Rachel Porter** and Sarah A. Treul. 2020. "Running as a Woman? Gender and the 2018 Congressional Election." [Political Research Quarterly](#), 73(4): 967-987.

WORKING PAPERS

Candidate Positioning & Issue Polarization in Congressional Elections, with Colin R. Case

[Conceptualizing and Measuring Early Campaign Fundraising in Congressional Elections](#), with Colin R. Case (Invited to Revise and Resubmit at [Political Science Research & Methods](#))

Congressional Campaign Style and Bipartisan Tendencies, with Colin R. Case and Emily Cottle Ommundsen

Intra-Party Variation on Climate Change Positions in U.S. House Elections, with Ben Francis and Bill Kakenmaster

Policy Facts or Partisan Friction?: Elite Communication on America's Opioid Epidemic

The Impact of Small Dollar Donations and Donors in Congressional Campaigns, with Maggie MacDonald and Megan Brown

PAPERS IN PROGRESS

Small Dollars & Globalization: How Layoffs Translate to Costly Political Action, with Maggie MacDonald, Megan Brown, James Bisbee, and Patrick Y. Wu

The Consequences of Elite Rhetoric and Action Against Elections, with Abigail Hemmen, Emily Anderson, Emma Schroeder, Géssica de Freitas, and Jeffrey Harden

BOOK PROJECTS

The Amateur Advantage: Understanding the Rise of Inexperience in Congress & Congressional Elections, with Sarah A. Treul

Some Politics Are Still Local: Issue Attention in Congress & Elections

BOOK CHAPTERS

Carson, Jamie L., Jason M. Roberts, and **Rachel Porter**. 2020. "The Nationalization of Congressional Elections" in *New Directions in Congressional Politics*, 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*, Rowland & Little.

PUBLIC WRITING

Porter, Rachel and Sarah Treul. April 2024. "Evaluating (In)Experience in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science - Author Summaries*.

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*

GRANTS & AWARDS

Awards & Honors

E.E. Schattschneider Award-Best Dissertation in American Government, APSA	2023
Earle Wallace Award for Graduate Student Teaching, UNC Political Science	2019
Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society, University of Georgia	2016

External Funding

Unite America, Evaluating Partisan Primaries & Reform Solutions (\$21,745) Co-PI: Colin R. Case	2023
Center for Effective Lawmaking, Accountability Research Grant (\$1,000) Co-PIs: Colin R. Case and Emily Cottle Ommundsen	2023
American Political Science Association, Centennial Research Grant (\$10,000)	2022

Co-PIs: Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, Christina Ladam, Josh McCrain,
and David Miller

Social Science Research Council, Social Data Dissertation Fellowship (\$15,000) 2020

Internal Funding

Notre Dame ISLA, International Travel Grant (\$1,000) 2024

UNC Graudate School, Dissertation Completion Fellowship (\$20,500 *plus tuition*) 2021

Hughes Summer Research Award, UNC Political Science (\$2000) 2020

UNC Political Science, Darlene Walker Summer Research Award (\$3000) 2019

Thomas M. Uhlman Summer Research Award, UNC Political Science (\$3000) 2018

UNC Political Science, Thomas M. Uhlman Fellowship (\$5000/year) 2016-2021

UNC Political Science, Summer Research Fellowship (\$3000/year) 2016-2021

TEACHING

University of Notre Dame

Instructor of Record

POLS 30005: The United States Congress FA 2023; SP 2024

POLS 40811: Quantitative Political Analysis SP 2023; SP 2024

POLS 60040: American Political Institutions (Graduate Seminar) FA 2022, FA 2024

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Instructor of Record

[POLI 281: Data in Politics I](#) FA 2019, SP 2020, FA 2020, SSII 2021

[POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics](#) SP 2019

Teaching Assistant

POLI 130: Introduction to Comparative Politics FA 2018

POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics FA 2017, SP 2018

Odum Institute for Research in Social Science

Short Course Instructor

[Collecting & Analyzing Text in R](#) SP 2019, FA 2019, SP 2020, FA 2020, SP 2021

INVITED TALKS

2024: UC San Diego, American Politics Workshop

2023: University of Chicago, American Politics Workshop; Women in Legislative Studies (WiLS) Seminar; Georgetown University, American Government Seminar Series

2022: Purdue University, Political Science Workshop

2021: The University of Notre Dame, Rooney Center Workshop Series; Junior Americanist Workshop Series (JAWS) Seminar; Bowling Green State University, Speaker Series; Washington University in St. Louis, Political Science Speaker Series

2020: University of Georgia, Emerging Issues in Political Science

SMALL CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

2024: UC Berkeley, Winter American Politics Research Meeting; Washington University in St. Louis, Stories that Win Symposium; Unite America Research Symposium, Washington D.C. (scheduled); University of Notre Dame, Keeping the Republic Conference (scheduled); Washington University in St. Louis, Visions in Methodology Conference (scheduled); University of Virginia, Center for Effective Lawmaking Conference (scheduled); Copenhagen Business School, Money in Politics Conference (scheduled)

2023: University of Notre Dame, Keeping the Republic Conference; American Political Science Association, Frontiers in Money and Politics Pre-Conference; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, American Politics Research Group 25th Anniversary Conference; Brown University, Women in Legislative Studies Conference

2022: The University of Oklahoma, Carl Albert Center Legislative Studies Conference

2021: American Political Science Association, Political Communication Pre-Conference; American Political Science Association, Frontiers in Money and Politics Pre-Conference

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference	2017-2019, 2021, 2023, 2024
American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2019-2024
Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting	2018-2023
Southern Political Science Association Annual Conference	2020
State Politics & Policy Annual Conference	2024

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Featured Guest on the [Niskanen Center's *The Science of Politics* Podcast](#)
Episode Title: [How primary elections enable polarized amateurs](#)

Featured Guest on the [Politics in Question Podcast](#)
Episode Title: [Amateur Hour in the U.S. House](#)

VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

Co-Founder & Co-Organizer, Junior Americanist Workshop Series	2020-2024
Program Committee, Visions in Methodology (VIM) Conference	2024
Program Chair, MPSA Primary Elections Conference within a Conference (organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong)	2024
Program Committee, MPSA JAWS Conference within a Conference (organized with David Miller, Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, and Christina Ladam)	2023

Referee: American Journal of Political Science; American Political Science Review; Electoral Studies; Journal of Elections, Policy Studies Quarterly; Policy Studies Journal; Public Opinion & Parties; Journal of Politics; Journal of Women, Politics & Policy; Legislative Studies Quarterly; National Science Foundation; Political Behavior; Political Science Research & Methods; Politics & Gender; Research & Politics; Social Science Quarterly

Discussant & Panelist: American Political Science Association Annual Meeting; Frontiers of Money & Politics Pre-Conference; Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting; Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting; Women in Legislative Studies Professional Development Seminar

Departmental Service at the University of Notre Dame

Advisor, Representation and Politics in Legislatures Lab	AY 23/24
Member, Undergraduate Thesis Awards Committee	AY 23/24
Member, Committee on Inclusive Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship	AY 23/24
Member, Graduate Policy Council	AY 22/23
Admission Committee Member, Lucy Institute Graduate Fellows Program	SP 2023
PhD Advising:	
- Abigail Hemmen (Methods Paper Committee; Dissertation Committee Member, 2024)	
Undergraduate Advising	
- Julia Thomalla (Thesis Co-Chair, 2024)	

Departmental Service at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Graduate Student President, Department of Political Science	AY 21/22
Program Coordinator, American Politics Working Group	AY 18/19; 19/20
American Field Representative, Department of Political Science	AY 18/19

REFERENCES

John Aldrich, Duke University
aldrich@duke.edu

Betsy Sinclair, Washington University in St. Louis
bsinclair@wustl.edu

Jeff Harden, University of Notre Dame
jeff.harden@nd.edu