

# Jessica Persano

Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow  
Stanford Graduate School of Business  
E142B Faculty Building East  
Stanford, CA 94035

✉ [jpersano@stanford.edu](mailto:jpersano@stanford.edu)  
🌐 [jessicapersano.github.io](https://jessicapersano.github.io)  
in [jessica-persano](#)  
📺 [JessicaPersano](#)

## EDUCATION

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**Stanford University Graduate School of Business** Jul 2025 – Present  
Non-matriculated graduate student as a Predoctoral Research Fellow

**University of California, Los Angeles** Sept 2021 – Jun 2025  
B.A. in Political Science (Honors), B.A. in Geography/Environmental Studies

- GPA: 4.0 / 4.0
- Honors Thesis: *The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States*

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Election administration, political representation, public policy, data science

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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**Predoectional Research Fellow** July 2025 - Present  
*Stanford Graduate School of Business*  
Stanford, CA

- Support Professor Andrew Hall on multiple projects involving large-scale quantitative datasets related to American politics and political economy.

**Research Assistant** Oct 2022 – Present  
*UCLA Department of Political Science*  
Los Angeles, CA

- Assist Professor Daniel Thompson on projects analyzing local election administration using large-scale quantitative data.
- Contributed to a published study in *PNAS* on private election funding and partisan outcomes.

**Undergraduate Researcher** Mar 2024 – Jun 2025  
*UCLA Department of Political Science*  
Los Angeles, CA

- Designed and completed an honors thesis under Professor Julia Payson examining how policy type and political salience shape democratic responsiveness in U.S. states.

**Research Assistant** Jun 2023 – Jun 2025  
*UCLA Fielding School of Public Health*  
Los Angeles, CA

- Collaborated with a public health research team on a project examining accessibility of post-assault resources and institutional responses to sexual violence at UCLA.

**Undergraduate Researcher** Jun 2023 – Jun 2025  
*UCLA Fielding School of Public Health*  
Los Angeles, CA

- Led an independent qualitative study under Professor Jennifer Wagman investigating barriers to post-assault care for UCLA students with disabilities.

**Research Intern** Jun 2024 – Dec 2024  
*Center for American Progress*  
Washington, D.C.

- Conducted rapid-response research and supported policy development across a range of progressive issue areas for the CAP Research Team.

## PROJECTS

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**Police Chief Performance and Turnover** Mar 2024 – Present  
Working paper with Daniel Thompson

**From Office to Opportunity: Evaluating the Role of Descriptive Representation on Candidate Emergence in U.S. Swing States** Mar 2025 – Jun 2025

Co-authored class final paper with Jolie Anderson and Xuanting Fan (UCLA PS170A)

**The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States** Mar 2024 – Apr 2025  
Solo-authored senior honors thesis ([GitHub Repository](#))

**Survivors' Experiences with and Recommendations for Improving Responses to Sexual Violence at UCLA** Jun 2023 – Jun 2025  
Working paper with Jennifer Wagman, Georgia Lavery Van Parijs, and Julianne Lempert

**Exploring Sexual Assault Experiences and Access to Resources Among UCLA Students with Disabilities** Jun 2023 – Jun 2025  
Working solo-authored independent research project

**From Personnel to Policy: Project 2025 Is President Donald Trump's Agenda** Jun 2024 – Aug 2024  
Published [article](#) with Ryan Koronowski and Thomas Musgrave, Center for American Progress

## PRESENTATIONS

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**Investing in Political Expertise: The Remarkable Scale of Corporate Policy Teams** Nov 2025  
Paper presented at Stanford GSB RF Program Weekly Workshop (Stanford, CA)

**From Office to Opportunity: Evaluating the Role of Descriptive Representation on Candidate Emergence in U.S. Swing States** Jun 2025  
Poster presented at UCLA PS170A Poster Day (Los Angeles, CA)

**The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States** May 2025  
Paper presented at UCLA Undergraduate Research Week (Los Angeles, CA)

**Exploring Sexual Assault Experiences and Access to Resources Among UCLA Students with Disabilities** May 2024  
Paper presented at UCLA Undergraduate Research Week (Los Angeles, CA)

## PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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**Are Police Leaders Held Accountable for Performance?** Nov 2025  
Justice and Injustice Mini-Conference, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, MA)

## SELECTED COURSEWORK

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Course Title	University	Level	Grade
American Electorate in the Trump Era	Stanford	Graduate	TBD
Introduction to Probability Theory	Stanford	Undergraduate	TBD
Political Parties and Interest Groups	UCLA	Undergraduate	A
National Institutions: Congress	UCLA	Undergraduate	A+
Electoral Politics: Public Opinion & Voting Behavior	UCLA	Undergraduate	A
National Institutions: The Presidency	UCLA	Undergraduate	A+
Honors Research in Political Science	UCLA	Undergraduate	A+
Research Design Seminar for Honors Thesis	UCLA	Undergraduate	A+
Studies in Statistical Analysis of Political Data	UCLA	Undergraduate	A
Intermediate Geographic Information Systems	UCLA	Undergraduate	A
Introduction to Remote Sensing	UCLA	Undergraduate	A

## AWARDS

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**Stanford GSB Research Fellowship** Jul 2025  
Awarded by the Stanford Graduate School of Business to predoctoral fellows conducting full-time research under faculty mentorship

**Blackman Family Award** Jun 2025  
Awarded by UCLA Department of Geography to the top 10 graduating seniors based on major GPA

<b>Departmental Highest Honors</b>	Jun 2025
Awarded by UCLA Political Science Department for completing a senior honors thesis with an A+ and GPA of at least 3.95	
<b>Distinguished Undergraduate Scholar Award</b>	Jun 2025
Awarded by UCLA Political Science Department to three students with the most outstanding honors theses	
<b>Summa Cum Laude</b>	Jun 2025
Conferred by the UCLA College of Letters and Science to students graduating in the top 5% of their class (GPA of 3.994 or higher)	
<b>Keck Humanistic Inquiry Undergraduate Research Award</b>	Sept 2024
Awarded by UCLA Undergraduate Research Center; \$10,000 to support faculty-mentored honors thesis in political science	
<b>UCLA Political Science Departmental Honors Program</b>	Apr 2024
Selected by UCLA Political Science Department as one of 12 students to complete a faculty-mentored senior honors thesis	
<b>Undergraduate Research Scholars Program Scholarship</b>	Sept 2023
Awarded by UCLA Undergraduate Research Center; \$6,000 to support yearlong independent research under faculty mentorship	
<b>Dean's Honors List</b>	2021 - 2025
Awarded by UCLA to students earning a GPA of 3.915+ with 12 graded units; received all eligible quarters	

## LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

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<b>Peer Mentor</b>	Mar 2025 – Present
<i>UCLA Political Science Undergraduate Council</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide individualized academic and professional guidance to a first-year political science student, offering mentorship on course planning, research opportunities, and campus involvement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Co-Director</b>	Sept 2024 – Jun 2025
<i>SWC Planned Parenthood Chapter at UCLA</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led a 50+ member reproductive justice organization by coordinating volunteer onboarding, facilitating biweekly meetings and educational programming, and managing leadership transitions in collaboration with Planned Parenthood Los Angeles.</li> </ul>	
<b>President</b>	Mar 2024 – Jun 2025
<i>IGNITE at UCLA</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversaw weekly meetings for 90+ members, led a UC-wide advocacy campaign for sexual assault forensic exam access, and coordinated statewide partnerships and media outreach to advance reproductive justice policy goals.</li> </ul>	
<b>Membership Director</b>	Jun 2023 – Jun 2025
<i>Westside Young Democrats</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained membership records for 100+ members, managed communications and renewals via ActBlue and Google Sheets, and increased engagement through strategic email outreach and event coordination.</li> </ul>	

## SKILLS

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- **Programming & Statistical Analysis:** R, Stata, Python, SQL
- **Data Tools & Platforms:** Redivis, Qualtrics, Git/GitHub, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X
- **Geospatial Analysis:** QGIS, ArcGIS Pro, ENVI
- **Research & Communication:** Quantitative and qualitative research, regression analysis, survey data analysis, literature reviews, academic writing, policy research, public speaking, project management, IRB applications

## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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**Professor Andrew Hall**  
*Davies Family Professor of Political Economy, Stanford Graduate School of Business; Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution; Se-*

*nior Fellow, Stanford Institute for Economy Policy Research; Professor of Political Science (by courtesy), Stanford University*

E-mail: [andyhall@stanford.edu](mailto:andyhall@stanford.edu)

Scholar Profiles: [Personal Page](#) — [Google Scholar](#)

**Professor Daniel Thompson**

*Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles*

E-mail: [dthompson@polisci.ucla.edu](mailto:dthompson@polisci.ucla.edu)

Scholar Profiles: [Personal Page](#) — [Google Scholar](#)

**Professor Julia Payson**

*Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles*

E-mail: [jpayson@ucla.edu](mailto:jpayson@ucla.edu)

Scholar Profiles: [Personal Page](#) — [Google Scholar](#)

**Professor Jennifer Wagman**

*Associate Professor of Community Health Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles Fielding School of Public Health*

E-mail: [jennwagman@ucla.edu](mailto:jennwagman@ucla.edu)

Scholar Profiles: [Lab Website](#) — [Google Scholar](#)