

# Jessica Persano

Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow  
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## Education

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<b>Stanford University Graduate School of Business</b>	Jul 2025 – Present
Non-matriculated graduate student as a Predoctoral Research Fellow	
<b>University of California, Los Angeles</b>	Sept 2021 – Jun 2025
B.A. in Political Science (Honors), B.A. in Geography/Environmental Studies	
– GPA: 4.0 / 4.0	
– Honors Thesis: <i>The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States</i>	

## Research Interests

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Election administration, political representation, public policy, data science

## Research Experience

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Predoctoral Research Fellow, <i>Stanford Graduate School of Business</i>	Jul 2025 – Present
– PI: <i>Andrew B. Hall</i>	
– Assist on multiple projects involving large-scale quantitative datasets related to American politics, political economy, and AI usage in academia.	
Research Assistant, <i>UCLA Department of Political Science</i>	Oct 2022 – Present
– PI: <i>Daniel M. Thompson</i>	
– Assist on projects analyzing local election administration using large-scale quantitative data.	
– Contributed to a published study in <i>PNAS</i> on private election funding and partisan outcomes.	
Independent Undergraduate Researcher, <i>UCLA Department of Political Science</i>	Mar 2024 – Jun 2025
– Advisor: <i>Julia Payson</i>	
– Designed and completed an honors thesis examining how policy type and political salience shape democratic responsiveness in U.S. states.	
Research Assistant, <i>UCLA Fielding School of Public Health</i>	Jun 2023 – Jun 2025
– PI: <i>Jennifer Wagman</i>	
– Led an independent qualitative study under investigating barriers to post-assault care for UCLA students with disabilities.	
– Collaborated with a public health research team on a project examining accessibility of post-assault resources and institutional responses to sexual violence at UCLA.	
Research Intern, <i>Center for American Progress</i>	Jun 2024 – Dec 2024
– Supervisor: <i>Will Ragland</i>	
– Conducted rapid-response research and supported policy development across a range of progressive issue areas for the CAP Research Team.	

## Research Output

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### Completed Papers

2. "From Office to Opportunity: Evaluating the Role of Descriptive Representation on Candidate Emergence in U.S. Swing States." [\[GitHub\]](#)  
– *UCLA PS170A final paper; joint with Jolie Anderson, Xuanting Fan. June 2025.*
1. "The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States." [\[GitHub\]](#)  
– *Solo-authored senior honors thesis, UCLA Political Science Department. April 2025.*

## Working Papers

2. "Do Claude Code and Codex P-Hack? Sycophancy and Statistical Analysis in Large Language Models." [\[GitHub\]](#)  
– *Joint with Samuel G.Z. Asher, Janet Malzahn, Elliot Paschal, Andrew C.W. Myers, Andrew B. Hall. February 2026.*
1. "Police Chief Performance and Turnover."  
– *Joint with Daniel M. Thompson. November 2025.*

## Works in Progress

2. "Sexual Assault Experiences and Access to Resources Among UCLA Students with Disabilities."  
– *Solo-authored independent research project.*
1. "Survivors' Experiences and Recommendations for Improving Responses to Sexual Violence at UCLA."  
– *Joint with Jennifer Wagman, Taylor Thomas, Natalie Saham, Wafa Khan, Georgia Lavery Van Parijs, Julianne Lempert.*

## Non-Academic Works

1. "From Personnel to Policy: Project 2025 Is President Donald Trump's Agenda." [\[Article\]](#)  
– *Joint with Ryan Koronowski and Thomas Musgrave, Center for American Progress. August 2024.*

## Presentations

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### Professional Conference Presentations

1. "Are Police Leaders Held Accountable for Performance?"  
– *Justice and Injustice Mini-Conference, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. November 2025.*

### Seminars & Workshops

4. "Investing in Political Expertise: The Remarkable Scale of Corporate Policy Teams."  
– *Stanford GSB RF Program Weekly Workshop. November 2025.*
3. "From Office to Opportunity: Evaluating the Role of Descriptive Representation on Candidate Emergence in U.S. Swing States."  
– *UCLA PS170A Poster Day. June 2025.*
2. "The Determinants of Policy Representation: Evaluating the Role of Policy Type in the U.S. States."  
– *UCLA Undergraduate Research Week. May 2025.*
1. "Sexual Assault Experiences and Access to Resources Among UCLA Students with Disabilities."  
– *UCLA Undergraduate Research Week. May 2024.*

## Selected Coursework

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Course	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 and Fellowships

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Stanford GSB Research Fellowship, <i>Stanford Graduate School of Business</i>	Jul 2025
Departmental Highest Honors, <i>UCLA Department of Political Science</i>	Jun 2025
Distinguished Undergraduate Scholar Award, <i>UCLA Department of Political Science</i>	Jun 2025
Blackman Family Award, <i>UCLA Department of Geography</i>	Jun 2025
Summa Cum Laude, <i>UCLA College of Letters and Science</i>	Jun 2025
Keck Humanistic Inquiry Research Award (\$10,000), <i>UCLA Undergraduate Research Center</i>	Sept 2024
Departmental Honors Program, <i>UCLA Department of Political Science</i>	Apr 2024
Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (\$6,000), <i>UCLA Undergraduate Research Center</i>	Sept 2023
Dean's Honors List (all eligible quarters), <i>UCLA College of Letters and Science</i>	2021 – 2025

## Leadership and Service

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Peer Mentor, <i>UCLA Political Science Undergraduate Council</i>	Mar 2025 – Present
Co-Director, <i>SWC Planned Parenthood Chapter at UCLA</i>	Sept 2024 – Jun 2025
President, <i>IGNITE at UCLA</i>	Mar 2024 – Jun 2025
Membership Director, <i>Westside Young Democrats</i>	Jun 2023 – Jun 2025

## 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*

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### Professor Daniel Thompson

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

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**Professor Julia Payson**

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

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