Lorcan McLaren

PHD RESEARCHER IN QUANTITATIVE & COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Connected_Politics Lab · UCD School of Politics & International Relations

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Education

University College Dublin

PHD QUANTITATIVE & COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE   *September 2023 - Present*
- **Thesis:** Taking the green pill – Moral language, emotion, and persuasion in the climate crisis
- **Advisor:** Dr. James P. Cross

University College Dublin

MSC POLITICS & DATA SCIENCE   *2021 - 2022*
- **Thesis:** Polarising rhetoric and Twitter rage
- **Advisor:** Dr. James P. Cross

Trinity College Dublin

BA COMPUTER SCIENCE, LINGUISTICS & FRENCH   *2016 - 2020*
- **Thesis:** Dominance is relative - Automatic gaze annotation and conversational dominance in the MULTISIMO corpus
- **Advisor:** Dr. Carl Vogel

Research Experience

University College Dublin, with Swiss National Science Foundation

RESEARCH ASSISTANT   *July 2023 - Present*

Trinity College Dublin

RESEARCH ASSISTANT   *May - August 2020*

Industry Experience

Dataminr

DATA ANALYST, R&D   *2022 - 2023*
- Built ingests to exploit new data sources via APIs and web scraping
- Developed automated workflows for data extraction, transformation, and quality assurance in consultation with subject matter experts
- Built, maintained, and updated visualisation dashboards and tools to monitor data health
- Developed protocols to systematise processes for future work

EDITOR, DOMAIN EXPERT   *2021 - 2022*
- Monitored streams of potentially newsworthy content from around the globe and alerted clients on breaking news
- Developed new techniques for discovering breaking news events using social media and other publicly available data
- Tracked misinformation related to COVID-19 and election integrity across multiple jurisdictions in a variety of languages

Peer-Reviewed Publications

McLaren, L., Koutsombogera, M. and Vogel, C. (2020) 'A Heuristic Method for Automatic Gaze Detection in Constrained Multi- Modal Dialogue Corpora', in 2020 11th IEEE International Conference on Cognitive Infocommunications, pp. 55–60.

McLaren, L., Koutsombogera, M. and Vogel, C. (2020) 'Gaze, Dominance and Dialogue Role in the MULTISIMO Corpus', in 2020 11th IEEE International Conference on Cognitive Infocommunications, pp. 83–88.

Presentations

McLaren, L. October 2024. Taking the green pill: Moral language, psychological distance and the climate crisis in the European Parliament. Oral presentation: PSAI general conference, Trinity College Dublin Ireland.

McLaren, L. May 2024. Psychological distance and the climate crisis in the European Parliament. Oral presentation: COMPTEXT conference, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Netherlands.

McLaren, L. December 2023. Measuring, mapping, and assessing the impact of emotional appeals in European politics. Oral presentation: Connected_Politics Lab, University College Dublin, Ireland.

Teaching

Spring 2025	**AI and Large Language Models**, Postgraduate, Module Instructor
Autumn 2023, 2024	**Introduction to EU Politics**, Undergraduate, Teaching Assistant
Spring 2024	**Research Methods in Political Science**, Undergraduate, Teaching Assistant

Scholarships & Grants

2024-2025	**Climate Fellowship**, UCD Earth Institute	*€ 1,000*
2023-2025	**SPIRe Research Committee Funding**, UCD School of Politics & International Relations	*€ 2,250*
2023-2027	**Iseult Honohan Scholarship**, UCD School of Politics & International Relations	*€ 124,190*
2020	**Erasmus Mundus Scholarship**, European Commission	*€ 17,250*

Awards

2020	**Best Paper Award**, IEEE International Conference on Cognitive Infocommunications

Leadership & Professional Development

Leadership

2024-2025	**PSAI Computational Methods Specialist Group**, Convenor
2017-2018	**TCD School of Computer Science & Statistics**, Student Convenor
	TCD Students' Union Lobby Group, Deputy Chair
2016-2017	**TCD School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences**, Student Convenor

Professional Memberships

Political Studies Association of Ireland