
MELLISSA MEISELS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Vanderbilt University
Department of Political Science
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Nashville, TN 37203

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS & AFFILIATIONS

Yale University

Assistant Professor of Political Science	2025 –
Faculty Affiliate, Institution for Social and Policy Studies	2025 –
Postdoctoral Associate, Center for the Study of American Politics	2024 – 2025

Vanderbilt University

Graduate Affiliate, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions	2019 – 2024
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University of Rochester

Visiting Scholar, Democracy Center	March 2023
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EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University

Ph.D. Political Science	2019 – 2024
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Fields: American Politics, Political Methodology

Dissertation: Essays on Congressional Campaign Agendas

Committee: Josh Clinton (chair), Larry Bartels, Alan Wiseman, Danielle Thomsen (UC Irvine)

M.A. Political Science	2019 – 2022
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University of California, Los Angeles

B.A. Political Science, <i>Magna Cum Laude</i>	2015 – 2018
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Advisor: John Zaller

PUBLICATIONS

Mellissa Meisels, Joshua D. Clinton, and Gregory A. Huber. 2023. “Giving to the Extreme? Experimental Evidence on Donor Response to Candidate and District Characteristics.” Forthcoming at *British Journal of Political Science*.

WORKING PAPERS

Mellissa Meisels. “Campaign Agendas and Issue Group Strategy in Congressional Primaries.”

Melissa Meisels. “Positioning in Congressional Primary Campaigns.”

- 2023 Outstanding Graduate Paper Award, Vanderbilt University Department of Political Science

Melissa Meisels. “Everything in Moderation? The Effect of Candidate Extremism on Individual and Corporate PAC Fundraising.”

Brenton Kenkel and **Melissa Meisels.** “Competition and Free-Riding in Electoral Campaigns with Outside Spending.”

AWARDS, GRANTS, & FELLOWSHIPS

Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Award Vanderbilt University Graduate School	2022 – 2024
Russell G. Hamilton Scholar Vanderbilt University Graduate School	2019 – 2024
Outstanding Graduate Research Paper Award Vanderbilt University Department of Political Science	2023
Virginia Gray Graduate Student Research Award APSA Political Organizations and Parties (POP) Section	2023
Conference Travel Grant American Political Science Association	2023
J. Leiper Freeman Memorial Award Vanderbilt University Department of Political Science	2021, 2023
National Science Foundation Travel and Participation Award Society for Political Methodology	2022, 2023
Travel Grant Vanderbilt University Graduate School	2022, 2023
University Graduate Fellowship Vanderbilt University Graduate School	2019 – 2022
Research Assistant Funding Vanderbilt Research on Conflict and Collective Action (ROCCA) Lab	2022
Lew and Edie Wasserman Grant UCLA Alumni Association	2016 – 2019
UCLA Alumni Scholarship UCLA Alumni Association	2015 – 2019

INVITED TALKS

Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin	2023
Department of Political Science, Syracuse University	2023
Department of Political Science, University of California, San Diego	2023
Department of Political Science, Yale University	2023
Department of Political Science, Stanford University	2023
Department of Government, American University	2023
Department of Political Science, University of Rochester	2023

SMALL CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Junior Americanist Workshop Series	2023
Virtual Formal Theory Workshop	2023
Vanderbilt Graduate Ideas Symposium	2023
Money in Politics Pre-Conference, American Political Science Association	2021, 2022, 2023

ANNUAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

Society for Political Methodology	2022, 2023
American Political Science Association	2021, 2022, 2023
Midwest Political Science Association	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024

TEACHING ASSISTANCE

PSCI 3893 — American Democracy and Dissent	2024
PSCI 3244 — The Legislative Process	2023
Guest Lecture: University of Rochester, PSCI 260 — Democratic Erosion	2023
PSCI 3260 — Introduction to American Law	2022
PSCI 2260 — Constitutional Law	2022
DSCI 1000 — Data Science: How Data Shape Our World	2021
PSCI 2300 — Introduction to Data Science for Politics	2021
PSCI 1150 — U.S. Elections	2020

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

“AAPOR Task Force on 2020 Pre-Election Polls.”	Research Assistant, 2020
<i>The Engagement</i> by Sasha Issenberg	Fact Checker, 2019
<i>Parties on the Ground</i> by John Zaller et al.	Research Assistant, 2017 – 2018
<i>Identity Crisis</i> by John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck	Research Assistant, 2016

SERVICE

Department	
Co-President, Vanderbilt Political Science Graduate Student Association	2021 – 2023
Panel Chair	
Women in Legislative Studies Conference	2022
Reviewer	
<i>Party Politics</i>	

REFERENCES

Joshua D. Clinton

Abby and Jon Winkelried Chair
Professor of Political Science
Vanderbilt University
josh.clinton@vanderbilt.edu

Larry M. Bartels

May Werthan Shayne Chair of Public Policy and Social Science
Professor of Political Science
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Alan E. Wiseman

Chair, Department of Political Science
Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Political Economy
Professor of Political Science and Law
Vanderbilt University
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Brenton Kenkel

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