

Rachel Porter

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APPOINTMENTS

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame du Lac Assistant Professor of Political Science 2024 –
Assistant Professor, Political Science 2022 –
Computational Social Science Fellow, Lucy Institute for Data & Society 2022 –

EDUCATION

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ph.D., Political Science 2022
Dissertation: [Some Politics Are Still Local: Strategic Position Taking in Congress & Elections](#)
• Winner of the 2023 APSA E.E. Schattschneider Award

The University of Georgia

B.A., Political Science & International Affairs 2016
• 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. 2024. ["Changing the Dialogue: Descriptive Candidacies and Position Taking in Campaigns for the US House of Representatives."](#) *The Journal of Politics*, 86(2): 458-474.
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.
• One of the top 10 most-cited papers published in LSQ for 2023-2024
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

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

Do Small Donors Make a Big Difference in U.S. Elections?: Evidence from 50 Million Campaign Contributions, with Maggie Macdonald and Megan Brown

[Fact or Friction?: Elite Framing of America's Opioid Epidemic](#)

[Intra-Party Variation on Climate Change Positions in U.S. House Elections](#), with Ben Francis and Bill Kakenmaster (Under Review)

Scaling Elite Policy Positions in U.S. Elections, with Colin R. Case

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Money Talks: Candidate Wealth & Communications, with Jaclyn Kaslovsky

Rallying Support: Exploring the Influence of Political Rallies on Small Dollar Contributions to Candidates, with Maggie Macdonald. Megan Brown, and James Bisbee

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

The Amateur Advantage: Understanding the Rise of Political Inexperience in the US Congress & Elections, with Sarah A. Treul (Book manuscript in progress)

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

- Collaborative project for the [Representation in Politics and Legislatures Lab](#)

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.

GRANTS & AWARDS

Awards & Honors

- E.E. Schattschneider Award for best dissertation in American politics, 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 Primary Elections Reform Grant. "Measuring Issue Polarization."
Total Award: **\$21,745**. (2023-2024; Co-PI with Colin R. Case)
- APSA Centennial Research Grant. "Junior Americanist Workshop Series CwC at MPSA."
Total Award: **\$10,000**. (2022, Co-PI with Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, Christina Ladam, Josh McCrain, and David Miller)
- Social Science Research Council Social Data Dissertation Fellowship. "Some Politics Are Still Local." Total Award: **\$15,000**. (2020)

Internal Funding

- Notre Dame ISLA International Travel Grant. **\$1,000.** (2024)
- UNC Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship. **\$20,500 plus tuition.** (2021)
- 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 & SMALL CONFERENCES

2025: University of Kentucky (Public Policy Workshop Series; scheduled); University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (American Politics Research Group; scheduled)

2024: University of California-San Diego (American Politics Workshop); UC Berkeley Winter American Politics Research Meeting; Stories that Win Symposium at Washington University in St. Louis; Unite America Research Symposium on Primary Elections; Keeping the Republic Conference at the University of Notre Dame; Visions in Methodology Conference at Washington University in St. Louis; Center for Effective Lawmaking Conference at the University of Virginia; Money in Politics Conference at Copenhagen Business School

2023: University of Chicago (American Politics Workshop); Frontiers in Money and Politics Pre-Conference at APSA; Women in Legislative Studies (WiLS) Seminar Series; Georgetown University (American Government Seminar Series); Women in Legislative Studies Conference at Brown University

2022: Carl Albert Center Legislative Studies Conference at the University of Oklahoma; Purdue University (Political Science Workshop)

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

2020: University of Georgia (Emerging Issues in Political Science Speaker Series)

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, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023
Southern Political Science Association Annual Conference	2020
State Politics & Policy Annual Conference	2024

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 2024
(*organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong*)

Program Committee, MPSA JAWS Conference within a Conference 2023
(*organized with David Miller, Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, and Christina Ladam*)

Referee: American Journal of Political Science (x2); American Political Science Review (x3); British Journal of Political Science; Electoral Studies; Journal of Elections, Political Research Quarterly; Public Opinion & Parties; Journal of Politics (x3); Journal of Women, Politics & Policy; Legislative Studies Quarterly (x4); National Science Foundation; Policy Studies Journal; 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 at APSA; Copenhagen Business School Money in Politics Conference; Junior Americanist Workshop Series; 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

Co-Director, [Representation and Politics in Legislatures Lab](#) AY 23/24, 24/25

Field Chair, Methods AY 24/25

Member, Committee on Inclusive Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship AY 23/24

Co-Chair, Undergraduate Thesis Awards Committee SP 2024

Admission Committee Member, Lucy Institute Graduate Fellows Program SP 2023

Student Advising at the University of Notre Dame

Dissertation Committee Member

- Abigail Hemmen (2024-)
- Emma Schroeder (2024-)

Methods Paper Committee Member

- Abigail Hemmen (2023-)

Senior Thesis Advisor

- Thomas Musgrave (2024-)
- Erik Johansen (2024-)
- Julia Thomalla (Co-Chair, 2023-2024 — Winner of Best Thesis Award)

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

Laurel Harbridge-Yong, Northwestern University
l-harbridge@northwestern.edu

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

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