

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

The University of Georgia

B.A., Political Science & International Affairs 2016
• Phi Beta Kappa, Summa Cum Laude

BOOKS

Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. *Scaling the Meaning of Text: A Word Embedding Approach*. **Cambridge University Press**, Elements in Quantitative and Computational Methods in Social Sciences (Under Contract)

ARTICLES

Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. ["Measuring Early Campaign Fundraising in Congressional Elections."](#) Forthcoming. **Political Science Research & Methods**.

Rachel Porter and Sarah A. Treul. 2025. ["Evaluating \(in\)experience in congressional elections."](#) **The American Journal of Political Science**.

- Featured on Mischief of Faction-Vox, FiveThirtyEight, The Science of Politics podcast, and Politics in Question podcast

Rachel Porter, 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**.

Rachel Porter and Tyler Steelman. 2023. ["No Experience Required: Early Donations and Amateur Success in Congressional Primaries."](#) **Legislative Studies Quarterly**.

- One of the top 10 most-cited papers published in LSQ for 2023-2024

Christina Ladam, Austin Bussing, Alexander C. Furnas, Josh McCrain, David R. Miller, and Rachel Porter. 2022. ["The Junior Americanist Workshop Series \(JAWS\)." PS: Political Science & Politics](#).

Maura McDonald, Rachel Porter, and Sarah A. Treul. 2020. ["Running as a Woman? Gender and the 2018 Congressional Election."](#) **Political Research Quarterly**.

UNDER REVIEW

Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. [Candidate Policy-Level Positioning in US House Elections](#).

Rachel Porter, Bill Kakenmaster*, and Ben Francis*. [Intra-Party Variation on Climate Change Positions in U.S. Elections](#).

Rachel Porter, Colin R. Case, and Sarah A. Treul. [CampaignView, a database of congressional candidate policy platforms and narratives](#). **R&R at Nature-Scientific Data**.

Rachel Porter, Jeffrey J. Harden, Emily Anderson*, Mackenzie Dobson*, Abigail Hemmen*, Géssica de Freitas*, and Emma Schroeder*. [The Consequences of Elite Action Against Elections](#). **R&R at The British Journal of Political Science**.

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

WORKS IN PROGRESS

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

Colin R. Case, Emily Cottle Ommundsen, and Rachel Porter. Bipartisan campaign messages are credible policymaking signals.

Rachel Porter. [Elite Framing of America's Opioid Epidemic in Congress & Elections](#).

Rachel Porter, Jeffrey J. Harden, and Mackenzie Dobson*. [Electing amateur politicians reduces cross-party collaboration](#).

Rachel Porter. *Some Politics Are Still Local: Representation in the Era of Nationalized Politics*. (Book manuscript in progress)

Rachel Porter, Maggie Macdonald, and Megan Brown*. Small Donor Matching Programs Do Not Amplify Average Americans' Voices.

Rachel Porter and Sarah A. Treul. *The Amateur Advantage: Unpacking the Rise of Political Inexperience in Congress & Elections* (Book manuscript in progress)

* = Graduate Student Coauthor

OPEN DATA

CampaignView: U.S. House Campaign Website Archive (2018-2022)
<https://campaignview.org>

U.S. House Candidate Biographical Data & Primary Election Outcomes (1980-2024)
<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/CYFIDH>

BOOK CHAPTERS

Jamie L. Carson, Jason M. Roberts, and Rachel Porter. 2020. "The Nationalization of Congressional Elections" in *New Directions in Congressional Politics*, Routledge.

Michael S. Lynch, 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.

PUBLIC WRITING

Rachel Porter and Sarah Treul. 22 April, 2024. "[Evaluating \(in\)experience in congressional elections](#)." *American Journal of Political Science* - Author Summaries.

Sarah Treul and Rachel Porter. 20 April, 2018. "[Inexperienced candidates are becoming more common, but only in one party](#)." *Mischiefs of Faction* - Vox

Rachel Surminsky and Michael S. Lynch. 20 November, 2014. "[When Congress sues the president, it's likely to fail](#)." *The Monkey Cage* - Washington Post

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

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| Unite America Elections Reform Grant. Measuring Issue Polarization. Co-PI with Colin R. Case | 2024 |
| Total Award: \$21,745 | |

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| Center for Effective Lawmaking Small Grant. Bipartisan Messaging in Elections. Co-PI with Colin R. Case and Emily Cottle Ommundsen | 2024 |
| Total Award: \$1,000 | |

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| APSA Centennial Research Grant. JAWS CwC at MPSA. Co-PI with Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, Christina Ladam, Josh McCrain, and David Miller | 2022 |
| Total Award: \$10,000 | |

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| Social Science Research Council Social Data Dissertation Fellowship. | 2020 |
| Total Award: \$15,000 | |

Internal Funding

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| Notre Dame ISLA International Travel Grant. \$1,000 | 2024 |
| UNC Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship. \$20,500 | 2021 |
| UNC Political Science Hughes Summer Research Award. \$2000 | 2020 |
| UNC Political Science Darlene Walker Summer Research Award. \$3000 | 2019 |
| 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

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| POLS 30005: The United States Congress | FA 2023; SP 2024; SP 2025 |
| POLS 40811: Quantitative Political Analysis | SP 2023; SP 2024; SP 2025 |
| POLS 60040: American Political Institutions (Graduate Seminar) | FA 2022, FA 2024 |

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Instructor of Record

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| POLI 281: Data in Politics I | FA 2019, SP 2020, FA 2020, SSII 2021 |
| POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics | SP 2019 |

Teaching Assistant

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| POLI 130: Introduction to Comparative Politics | FA 2018 |
| POLI 100: Introduction to American Politics | FA 2017, SP 2018 |

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Presentations

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|---|-------------|
| UChicago Harris, Center for Effective Governance Conference | Summer 2025 |
| Ole Miss, Barbour Study of American Politics Conference | Summer 2025 |
| UNC Chapel Hill, American Politics Research Group | Spring 2025 |
| University of Michigan, American Institutions Group Workshop | Spring 2025 |
| UK Martin School of Public Policy, Workshop Series | Spring 2025 |
| Wesleyan University, Wesleyan Media Project Election Conference | Winter 2024 |
| University of Virginia, Center for Effective Lawmaking Conference | Summer 2024 |
| UCSD, American Politics Workshop | Spring 2024 |
| UC Berkeley, Winter American Politics Research Meeting | Spring 2024 |
| WashU, Stories that Win Symposium | Spring 2024 |
| Georgetown University, American Government Seminar Series | Fall 2023 |
| Women in Legislative Studies (WiLS) Seminar Series | Fall 2023 |
| University of Chicago, American Politics Workshop | Spring 2023 |
| Purdue University, Political Science Workshop | Fall 2022 |
| University of Oklahoma, Carl Albert Center Conference | Summer 2022 |
| University of Notre Dame, Rooney Workshop Series | Spring 2021 |
| Bowling Green State University, Speaker Series | Fall 2020 |
| WashU, Political Science Speaker Series | Fall 2020 |
| UGA, Emerging Issues in Political Science Speaker Series | Spring 2020 |

Annual Conference Presentations

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| MPSA | 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024, 2025 |
| APSA | 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 |
| PolMeth | 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025 |
| Women in Legislative Studies Conference | 2023, 2025 |
| State Politics & Policy Annual Conference | 2024 |
| CBS-Princeton Money in Politics Conference | 2024 |
| Visions in Methodology Conference | 2024 |
| Frontiers in Money and Politics APSA Pre-Conference | 2021, 2023 |
| Southern Political Science Association Annual Conference | 2020 |

VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

Discipline Service

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| Program Committee, PolMeth Annual Conference (organized by Emory University) | 2025 |
| Program Committee, MPSA Primary Elections Mini-Conference (organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong) | 2025 |
| Program Committee, Visions in Methodology (VIM) Conference (organized by Washington University in St. Louis) | 2024 |
| Program Committee, MPSA Primary Elections Mini-Conference (organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong) | 2024 |
| Co-Founder & Organizer, Junior Americanist Workshop Series | 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 |
| Program Committee, MPSA JAWS Mini-Conference (organized with David Miller, Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas) | 2023 |

Referee: American Journal of Political Science; American Political Science Review; British Journal of Political Science; Electoral Studies; Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties; Political Research Quarterly; Journal of Politics; Journal of Women, Politics & Policy; Legislative Studies Quarterly); National Science Foundation; Policy Studies Journal; Per-

spectives on Politics, 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

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| Co-Director, Representation and Politics in Legislatures Lab | 2023-Present |
| Field Chair, Methods | 2024-2025 |
| Member, Committee on Inclusive Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship | 2023-2024 |
| Co-Chair, Undergraduate Thesis Awards Committee | 2024 |
| Admission Committee Member, Lucy Institute Graduate Fellows Program | 2023 |
| Member, Graduate Policy Council | 2022-2023 |

Departmental Service at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

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| Graduate Student President, Department of Political Science | 2021-2022 |
| Program Coordinator, American Politics Working Group | 2018-2020 |
| American Field Representative, Department of Political Science | 2018-2019 |

Undergraduate and Doctoral Student Advising

Dissertation Committee Member

Abigail Hemmen (Notre Dame; In progress)
Emma Schroeder (Notre Dame; In progress)
Haley Cohen (Columbia University; Defended May 2025)

Methods Paper Committee Member

Géssica de Freitas (In progress)
Adriana Pilar Ferreira Albanus (In progress)

Undergraduate Mentoring

Senior Thesis Advisor, Elizabeth Borowiak (In progress)
Senior Thesis Advisor, Thomas Musgrave (Defended 2025)
Senior Thesis Advisor, Erik Johansen (Defended 2025)
Senior Thesis Co-Advisor, Julia Thomalla (Defended 2024, Best Thesis Award Winner)