

# Rachel Porter

✉ [rachel.porter@nd.edu](mailto:rachel.porter@nd.edu) 🌐 [rachelporter.org](http://rachelporter.org) 📱 [porterrachel](https://porterrachel.com)

## 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

Unite America Elections Reform Grant. Measuring Issue Polarization. Co-PI with Colin R. Case Total Award: <b>\$21,745</b>	2024
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Center for Effective Lawmaking Small Grant. Bipartisan Messaging in Elections. Co-PI with Colin R. Case and Emily Cottle Ommundsen Total Award: <b>\$1,000</b>	2024
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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 Total Award: <b>\$10,000</b>	2022
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Social Science Research Council Social Data Dissertation Fellowship. Total Award: <b>\$15,000</b>	2020
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### Internal Funding

Notre Dame ISLA International Travel Grant. <b>\$1,000</b>	2024
UNC Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship. <b>\$20,500</b>	2021
UNC Political Science Hughes Summer Research Award. <b>\$2000</b>	2020
UNC Political Science Darlene Walker Summer Research Award. <b>\$3000</b>	2019
UNC Political Science, Thomas M. Uhlman Fellowship. <b>\$5000/year</b>	2016-2021
UNC Political Science, Summer Research Fellowship. <b>\$3000/year</b>	2016-2021

## TEACHING

### University of Notre Dame

#### Instructor of Record

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

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

## PRESENTATIONS

### Invited Presentations

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

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

Program Committee, <a href="#">PolMeth Annual Conference</a> (organized by Emory University)	2025
Program Committee, MPSA Primary Elections Mini-Conference (organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong)	2024, 2025
Program Committee, <a href="#">Visions in Methodology (VIM) Conference</a> (organized by Washington University in St. Louis)	2024
Co-Founder & Organizer, <a href="#">Junior Americanist Workshop Series</a>	2020-2024
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; Perspectives 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**

Co-Director, <a href="#">Representation and Politics in Legislatures Lab</a>	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**

Graduate Student President, Department of Political Science	2021-2022
Program Coordinator, <a href="#">American Politics Working Group</a>	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)