

# 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

[1] Rachel Porter, Colin R. Case, and Sarah A. Treul. 2025. [CampaignView, a database of policy platforms and biographical narratives for congressional candidates](#). **Nature: Scientific Data**.

[2] Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. 2025. [Conceptualizing and measuring early campaign fundraising in congressional elections](#). Published Online with FirstView at **Political Science Research and Methods**.

[3] 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

[4] 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**.

[5] 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

[6] 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.](#)

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

## 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 and Rachel Porter. [Strategic Heterogeneity in Policy-Level Positioning: Evidence from Congressional Campaigns.](#)

Rachel Porter, Bill Kakenmaster\*, and Ben Francis\*. [Roads to Climate Compromise in the US Congress and Congressional Elections.](#)

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

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

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.**

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

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>

Early Fundraising in U.S. Congressional Elections (2008-2020)  
<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/FVLHCX>

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

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

[2] 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.<br><i>Co-PI with Colin R. Case</i> | 2024 |
| Total Award: <b>\$21,745</b>   |      |

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

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Social Science Research Council Social Data Dissertation Fellowship. | 2020 |
| Total Award: <b>\$15,000</b>   |      |

### 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

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| IU-Bloomington, American Politics Conference                      | Fall 2025   |
| 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><br>(organized by Emory University)   | 2025       |
| Program Committee, MPSA Primary Elections Mini-Conference<br>(organized with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong) | 2024, 2025 |
| Program Committee, <a href="#">Visions in Methodology (VIM) Conference</a><br>(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<br>(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**

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|--|--------------|
| 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)