

Preston R. Johnston

PhD Candidate
MIT Department of Political Science
Building E53-420

prhj@mit.edu
+1 (615) 574-4820
prestonjohnston.com

Research interests

American political economy; climate politics; climate adaptation; money in politics; firm strategic behavior; insurance

Education

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2021-)

PhD Candidate, Political Science
Primary field: Political Economy. *Secondary field:* Quantitative Methods.
Grade: 4.0/4.0

Princeton University (2017-2021)

A.B. in Politics (*magna cum laude*)
Certificate in Statistics and Machine Learning
Grade: 3.83/4.0

Dissertation project

Working title: *Paying for Climate Change: The Politics of Insurance in a Warming World*

Dissertation committee:

Kathleen Thelen (Chair; MIT), Evan Lieberman (MIT), Leah Stokes (UCSB), Devin Caughey (MIT)

Working papers

- **The Electoral Effects of Outside Positions: Evidence from the US House**
- **Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Attitudes about Climate Change in Africa** (with Evan Lieberman and Devin Caughey)

Works in progress

- **Pulling the Fire Alarm? Insurer Fossil Fuel Investment and Climate Policy Support**
- **Ideology and Individual-Level Climate Adaptation in Brazil** (with Clemente T. Sanchez)
- **Company Towns? Labor Market Concentration, Antitrust Opinion, and Political Behavior** (with Alejandro Frydman, Joseph Loffredo, and Gabrielle Peloquin-Skulski)

Conferences and workshop presentations

2025:

- MIT Center for International Studies Global Climate Adaptation Workshop. April 2024 in Cambridge, MA. Invited participant in panel titled “Climate Negotiations and the Most Vulnerable: Toward COP 30 in Brazil” for “Ideology and Individual-Level Climate Adaptation in Brazil.”

2024:

- Seminar on State and Capitalism Since 1800. December 2024 at Harvard University. Invited discussant for Charnysh et al. “Place Not Race: Identities, Social Proximity and the Global Climate Emergency.”
- American Political Science Association (APSA). September 2024 in Philadelphia, PA. For “Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Attitudes about Climate Change in Africa” and “The Electoral Effects of Private Sector Positions: Evidence from the US House.”
- Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA). April 2024 in Chicago, IL. For “Company Towns? Labor Market Concentration, Antitrust Opinion, and Political Behavior.”
- Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE). March 2024 in Accra, Ghana. For “Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Attitudes about Climate Change in Africa.”

Teaching

2025:

- Teaching assistant for 17.802 Quantitative Research Methods II: Causal Inference (graduate; Prof. Daniel Hidalgo)

2024:

- Teaching assistant for 17.20 Introduction to American Politics (undergraduate; Prof. Devin Caughey)
- Global Diversity Lab (GDL) Pathways Program Summer Workshop: “How to read a quantitative social science paper.” July 2024.

Service

- Co-organizer, Comparative Politics Work-in-Progress Workshop (CPWIP). Grad student CP and PE workshop. 2024-2025
- Graduate student council (GSC) department social chair 2022-2024

Research experience

- RA for Prof. Evan Lieberman (MIT) Summer 2022; Summer 2023 - Spring 2024
- RA for Prof. Chenzi Xu (Stanford) Summer 2020 - Summer 2021
- RA for Prof. Leonard Wantchekon (Princeton) Summer 2021
- RA for Prof. Matias Iaryczower (Princeton) Summer 2019; Fall 2020

Skills

R, GIS, LaTeX, Python

Updated March 7, 2025