

# Shreyas Meher

PhD in Public Policy & Political Economy

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## Employment

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<b>Erasmus University Rotterdam</b> , Rotterdam, Netherlands	2025
Postdoctoral Researcher	
<b>National Science Foundation (NSF)</b> , UTD	2023 - 2025
Research Assistant	
Project: Frameworks: Infrastructure for Political and Social Event Data Using Machine Learning	
Principal Investigator: Patrick T. Brandt	
<b>The University of Texas at Dallas</b> , Richardson, TX	2020 - 2023
Teaching Assistant	

## Education

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<b>The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD)</b> , Richardson, Texas	2020 - 2025
Ph.D. Public Policy and Political Economy	
Chair: Clint Peinhardt	
Committee: Pengfei Zhang (Co-Chair), Patrick Brandt	
Dissertation: The Intersection of Politics, Economics, and Digital Space: A Trilogy of Investigations	
<b>The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD)</b> , Richardson, Texas	2020
M.S. Management	
<b>St. Xavier's College</b> , Mumbai, India	2018
M.S. Public Policy	
<b>Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS)</b> , Mumbai, India	2016
B.S. Economics	

## Research

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### Research Fields

Comparative Politics, Computational Social Science, International Political Economy,

### Research Topics

Internet Censorship, Political Conflict and Violence, Large Language Models, Treaty Enforcement

### NSF Funded Research

Frameworks: Infrastructure for Political and Social Event Data Using Machine Learning

**Principal Investigator: Patrick T. Brandt**

**Grant Amount: \$1,589,016 - National Science Foundation [2023/08–2026/07]**

## Publications

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Meher, S., & Brandt, P. T. (2025). ConflLlama: Domain-Specific Adaptation of Large Language Models for Political Violence Classification. *Research & Politics*, Forthcoming.

Kumar, S., Meher, S., & Zhang, P. (2025). Public Health Advocacy in Times of Pandemic: An Analysis of the Medicare-For-All Debate on Twitter During COVID-19. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(2), 223. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15020223>

Brandt, P. T., Alsarra, S., D’Orazio, V., Heintze, D., Khan, L., Meher, S., Osorio, J., & Sianan, M. (2025). Introducing the ConflBERT Family of Language Models for Political Science. *Political Analysis* (R&R). <https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.15060>

## Under Review

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**Democracy and Internet Control** (with Pengfei Zhang) – Examining content control in democracies, revealing a unique approach compared to authoritarian regimes.

**Two Types of Censorship? An Assessment of the Informational Autocracy Thesis in the Online Space** – Classifying autocratic internet filtering practices into distinct regimes and their implications.

## Working Papers

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**Expanding the Horizons** – Investigating the dynamics of international organizations through the lens of network structures.

**Populism and the Price of Abandonment: Analyzing the Exit Dynamics from Bilateral Investment Treaties** (With Clint Peinhardt) – Exploring the interplay between populist policies and the economic implications of withdrawing from international investment treaties.

**Event Horizon: Revolutionizing Data Annotation with Reinforcement Learning** – Presenting an innovative framework that fuses political science insights with cutting-edge computer science techniques to produce structured, transparent annotations for complex events.

## Dissertation

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**Democracy and Internet Control: Theory and Evidence from Transparency Reports** – Analyzes democratic approaches to internet censorship using data from Google and Twitter, revealing subtle yet significant content moderation strategies.

**Two Types of Censorship? An Assessment of the Informational Autocracy Thesis in the Online Space** – Testing how Guriev & Triesman’s IA theory holds in the realm of internet filtering practices in autocratic nations.

**The Politics of Internet Blackouts: Investigating Digital Repression during the 2021 Farmer Protests in India** – Focuses on India’s use of internet blackouts as a control mechanism during the 2021 Farmer Protests, highlighting the tactics of digital repression in a democratic context.

## Teaching Experience

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**Instructor** for [EPPS Math & Coding Camp](#) August 2024

- Taught coding section for incoming PhD students over a 5-day intensive program
- Covered topics including R programming, data manipulation, visualization, and linear regression
- Designed and delivered hands-on sessions on RStudio, ggplot2, and dplyr
- Developed and maintained an open source website for course modules and materials

**Teaching Assistant** for

**EPPS 2301** - Research Design in the Social and Policy Sciences Fall 2020

**SOC 4302** - Class, Status, and Power Fall 2020

**IPEC 4301** - Political Economy of Industrialized Countries Spring 2021

**PSCI 4396** - Selected Topics in Government and Politics (Afghanistan) Fall 2021

**EPPS 6316** - Applied Regression Spring 2022

**PPPE 6302/PSCI 6302** - Political Violence and Conflict in Cyberspace Fall 2022

**EPPS 6313** - Introduction to Quantitative Methods Fall 2022

**IPEC/PSCI 4318** - Foreign Aid and Development Spring 2023

## Conference Presentations

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International Studies Association (ISA) (2025)

Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM) (2024)

Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics (SIOE) (2024)

American Political Science Association (APSA) (2024, 2025)

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) (2024, 2025)

UTD PPPE Working Paper Series (2023)

NAPE, Houston (2020)

## Honors & Awards

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**University of Texas at Dallas (UTD)**, Richardson, Texas

The Colloquium for the Advancement of Free-Enterprise Education (CAFÉ) research scholar 2020

Dean's Excellence Scholarship 2020

## Book Contributions

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*Cognella Publishing*, American Government & State and Local Government 2021

## Skills and Languages

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**Skills:** R, STATA, PYTHON, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, ARCGIS, C++

**Languages:** English (Fluent), Marathi (Fluent in reading and writing), Hindi (Fluent in reading and writing), French (Beginner)

## References

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### **Patrick T. Brandt**

Professor of Public Policy, Political Economy,  
and Political Science

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: [pbrandt@utdallas.edu](mailto:pbrandt@utdallas.edu)

### **Clint Peinhardt**

UT System Regents' Outstanding Teacher

Professor of Political Science, Public Policy and  
Political Economy

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: [clint.peinhardt@utdallas.edu](mailto:clint.peinhardt@utdallas.edu)

### **Pengfei Zhang**

Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Political  
Economy

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: [pengfei.zhang@utdallas.edu](mailto:pengfei.zhang@utdallas.edu)

### **Karl Ho**

Professor of Instruction

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: [kyho@utdallas.edu](mailto:kyho@utdallas.edu)