

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. *Latent Measurement from Text Data: Principles and Practices for Unsupervised and Weakly-Supervised Methods*. **Cambridge University Press**, Elements in Quantitative and Computational Methods in Social Sciences (Under Contract)

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

* = GRADUATE
STUDENT
COAUTHOR

[1] Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. 2026. [Strategic Heterogeneity in Issue Positioning: Evidence from Congressional Campaigns](#). Conditionally Accepted at **The American Journal of Political Science**.

[2] Rachel Porter, Jeffrey J. Harden, and Mackenzie R. Dobson*. 2025. [Electing amateur politicians reduces cross-party collaboration](#). **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences**.

- Coverage from [The New York Times](#)

[3] Colin R. Case and Rachel Porter. 2025. [Conceptualizing and measuring early campaign fundraising in U.S. elections](#). **Political Science Research & Methods**.

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

[5] Rachel Porter, Jeffrey J. Harden, Emily Anderson*, Mackenzie R. Dobson*, Abigail Hemmen*, Géssica de Freitas*, and Emma Schroeder*. 2025. [The Consequences of Elite Action Against Elections](#). **The British Journal of Political Science**.

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

- Coverage from [Brookings](#), [Vox](#), [FiveThirtyEight](#), [ABC News](#), [Politics in Question](#) podcast

[7] 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**.

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

[9] Christina Ladam, Austin Bussing, Alexander Furnas, Josh McCrain, David Miller, and Rachel Porter. 2022. [Junior Americanist Workshop Series](#). **PS: Political Science & Politics**.

[10] 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

Pamela Ban, Jaclyn Kaslovsky, and Rachel Porter. Elitism and Legislative Interaction.

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 C. Ommundsen, and Rachel Porter. [Bipartisan Campaign Messages are Credible Signals of Bipartisan Lawmaking](#).

Jeffrey J. Harden and Rachel Porter. [Information Limits in Quantitative Research](#).

Rachel Porter. *Some Politics are Still Local: How District Representation Persists in Nationalized Politics*. (Book manuscript)

Rachel Porter, Ben Francis* and William Kakenmaster*. [When Climate Hits Home: Local Pressures and Pro-Environmentalism](#)

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

OPEN DATA

CampaignView: U.S. House Campaign Website Archive (2018-2024)
<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 Jeffrey J. Harden. 3 November, 2025. ["Amateur hour in Congress: How political newcomers fuel gridlock and government shutdowns."](#) *The Conversation*.

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."](#) *Mischief 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

Recognition for a top 10 most-cited article, American Journal of Political Science	2026
Recognition for a top 10 most-cited article, Legislative Studies Quarterly	2025
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. Expanding CampaignView for 2026. Total Award: \$36,407	2025
Center for Effective Lawmaking Small Grant. Bipartisan Messaging in Elections. <i>Co-PI with Colin R. Case and Emily Cottle Ommundsen</i> Total Award: \$1,000	2024
Unite America Elections Reform Grant. Measuring Issue Polarization. <i>Co-PI with Colin R. Case</i> Total Award: \$21,745	2024
APSA Centennial Research Grant. JAWS CwC at MPSA. <i>Co-PI with Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, Christina Ladam, Josh McCrain, and David Miller</i> Total Award: \$10,000	2022
Social Science Research Council Social Data Dissertation Fellowship. Total Award: \$15,000	2020

Internal Funding

Notre Dame Franco Institute Small Grant. \$4,000	2026
Notre Dame Democracy Initiative Grant \$25,000 <i>Co-PI with James M. Curry and Jeffrey J. Harden</i>	2025
Notre Dame ISLA International Travel Grant. \$1,000	2024
UNC Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship. \$20,500	2021
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

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)	FA 2022, FA 2024, FA 2026

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Instructor of Record

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

Odum Institute for Research in Social Science

Short Course Instructor

Collecting & Analyzing Text in R	SP 2019, FA 2019, SP 2020, FA 2020, SP 2021
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PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks & Conferences

2026: University of Rochester (Summer Conference in Applied Methods), University of Notre Dame (KTR Conference), Michigan State University (MARGIE Conference), University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Toronto

2025: Georgetown McCourt School of Public Policy, Indiana University (Center for American Politics Conference), UChicago Harris School of Public Policy (Effective Governance Conference), University of Michigan, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Kentucky Martin School of Public Policy, University of Mississippi (Barbour Study of American Politics Conference)

2024: Wesleyan University (WMP Election Conference), University of Virginia (CEL Conference), Harvard University, Princeton University, Stanford University, UVA Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, Texas A&M, American University, University of Notre Dame (KTR Conference), UC San Diego, UC Berkeley (Winter American Politics Research Meeting), Washington University in St. Louis (Stories that Win Symposium)

2023: Georgetown University, Women in Legislative Studies Seminar, University of Chicago

2022: Purdue University, University of Oklahoma (Carl Albert Center Conference)

2021: University of Notre Dame, University of Utah

2020: Washington University in St. Louis, Bowling Green State University, University of Georgia, University of Notre Dame

Annual Conference Presentations

MPSA	2017-2019, 2021, 2023-2026
APSA	2019-2024, 2026
PolMeth	(poster) 2018-2023; (presentation) 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

Co-Organizer, Notre Dame Chambers of Democracy Conference (with James M. Curry and Jeffrey J. Harden)	2026
Co-Organizer, Shambaugh Conference on Congressional Elections (with Colin R. Case and Sarah A. Treul)	2026
Co-Organizer, MPSA Primary Elections Mini-Conference (with Sarah Anderson, Dan Butler, Colin Case, and Laurel Harbridge-Yong)	2023-2026
Program Committee, PolMeth Annual Conference (organized by Emory University)	2025
Program Committee, Visions in Methodology (VIM) Conference (organized by Washington University in St. Louis)	2024
Co-Founder & Organizer, Junior Americanist Workshop Series	2020-2024

Co-Organizer, MPSA JAWS Mini-Conference 2023
(with Austin Bussing, Leah Christiani, Zander Furnas, David Miller, Josh McCrain)

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; JAMA Health Forum; Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy; 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; Quarterly Journal of Political Science; 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, 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

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

Emma Schroeder (Notre Dame; Defended April 2026)
 Abigail Hemmen (Notre Dame; Defended April 2026)
 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, Thomas Musgrave (Defended 2025)
 Senior Thesis Advisor, Erik Johansen (Defended 2025)
 Senior Thesis Co-Advisor, Julia Thomalla (Defended 2024, Best Thesis Award Winner)