

RACHEL URBAN

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), USA 08/2021 – Current

Program: Doctor of Philosophy – Political Science

Disciplinary Study: Political Psychology, International Relations, & Natural Resources

Expected Graduation: May 2026 — *Prospectus Defended:* April 2025

Masters of Research, University of Exeter, UK 09/2018 – 12/2019

Program: Security, Conflict, & Human Rights

Bachelor of Arts, UNL, USA 01/2015 – 05/2017

Program: Psychology

Dean's List: 2017

Minors: National Security Studies; Global Studies; Political Science; English

Associate of Arts, Southeast Community College (Nebraska), USA 10/2012 – 09/2014

Program: General Studies/Academic Transfer

Dean's List: 2013-14

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGICAL INTERESTS

Research: Security theory & policy; Ecology & water policy; Foreign policy decision-making; Political psychology; Socio-political change.

Methods: Factorials, Time series, Maximum likelihood estimation, Measurement & dimensional scaling.

Tools: Experimental designs (e.g., surveys); Wargaming/Simulations; Event & policy tracking.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Forgotten Institutions: Indirect roles in drought & war. *Dissertation Prospectus*

Author: Quantitative analysis investigating how institutions condition violent interstate and intrastate conflict under drought using the *AfroGrid* dataset and the *Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database*.
Passed defense: April 2025.

Another Russia: Elite group attitudes as signals of divergence in autocratic politics.

Author: Quantitative analysis of differing Russian elite attitudes of the Ukraine, NATO, & EU using the *Survey of Russian Elites* (SRE) dataset. Project was accepted for conference presentations in 2023 & 2024.

From the Other Side of the Border: Mexican Public Attitudes of American Politics.

Co-authors: Sergio Wals & Kianna Moore. We ask if – and how – Mexican partisanship and institutions longitudinally frame public attitudes (e.g., migration) as American presidents are elected, using five nationally representative surveys from 2003-2024. Early stages of quantitative analysis & drafting manuscripts (in English & Spanish).

Nebraska Water Allocation Legislation: Narrative Policy Framework Analyses, 1971-2023.

Co-authors: Sarah Michaels & Taylor Gold. Seeking to trace how historical political narratives about water allocation in NE affected legislative outcomes. Early stages of quantitative and qualitative data collection.

RESEARCH LAB EXPERIENCE

Graduate Researcher: Political Attitudes & Cognition/Ekstrom Laboratories

Principal Investigators (PIs): Ingrid Haas & Pierce Eckstrom, *UNL* 08/2022 – Current
Provides weekly theoretical and quantitative revisions on lab projects.

Graduate Research Assistant: Australia Study Abroad 12/2024 – 03/2025

PI: Mark Burbach, *UNL*

Aided in writing and editing program book, and finalize details. Also helped organized program "Managing Diverse Ecosystems" activities (e.g., time management in meetings, minutes, to cooking and cleaning) in Australia and Tasmania.

Graduate Research Assistant: Nebraska Deterrence Laboratory 08/2021 – 07/2023

Direct PIs: Michelle Black & Tyler White, *UNL*

Researched for scenario and grant writing, methodological testing, and event planning.

Undergraduate Research Assistant: Psychology, Trauma & Abuse Lab 09/2016 – 05/2017

PIs: Annie Steele, *UNL*

Conducted qualitative data coding for four to six hours per week and attended weekly lab meetings.

Undergraduate Research Assistant: Law & Psychology Lab 06/2015 – 05/2016

PIs: *NA*, *UNL*

Conducted field data collection (e.g., interviews) and transcribed randomly assigned audio recordings.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

POLS362: Globalization: Diversity & Human Rights, *UNL* Spring 2025

Instructor of Record: Online asynchronous format (~28 undergraduates); taught the good, the bad, and the ugly of globalization and associated policy problems.

POLS338: Women & Politics, *UNL* Summer 2023, Autumn 2024

Instructor of Record: Online summer (~20 undergraduates) and in-person (~28 undergraduates) term formats; delved into women's political representation in comparative contexts.

POLS332: Climate Politics & Policy, *UNL* Summer 2024

Instructor of Record: Online summer class (~25 students); taught the introduction to interdisciplinary climate science, international and domestic climate political movements and processes, and wicked policy problems.

POLS160: Introduction to International Relations, *UNL* Autumn 2023, Spring 2024

Teaching Assistant: Recitation leader for three undergraduate in-person sections (~15-25 students each). Deep dives into conflict, international political economy, & climate change.

Graduate Mentor, *UNL Intelligence Community Scholars* 08/2022 – 12/2023

Mentored undergraduate students (~40) with various majors interested in the Intelligence Community, security, and academic fields.

Guest Lecturer, *University of Exeter* 10/2021

Led a seminar discussing my research and my student experience for high-achieving final year/high school senior students (~25 students) interested in attending the University of Exeter.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

- Foresight Analysis Certification** 07/2022
Offered by Pherson. The course provides an intelligence method for thinking critically in a structured way about a future problem in a qualitative manner.
- Career Development Certificate** 04/2023
UNL College of Arts & Sciences workshop for professional graduate careers outside of academia.
- Lean Six Sigma Certificate: Yellow Belt** 10/2017
Demonstrates team membership, subject matter expertise, and project completion using the Define, Measure, Analyze, Design and Verify (DMAIC) methodology identifying issues in business processes.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- [Unpaid] Summer Intern** 05/2016 – 07/2016
U.S. Department of States — Washington, D.C.
Held a Secret-level security clearance to manage and update the Victims' Resource Advocacy Program's (VRAP) resource database. Researched advocacy resources (e.g., hostage situations), attended policy briefings, and interviewed ranking detectives, branch chiefs, military, and intelligence officers.

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Policy Support & Research Assistant** 12/2023–05/2024
Catalyst Public Affairs — Lincoln, Nebraska
Summarized bills introduced in the spring session of the Nebraska unicameral. Researched policy background on Midwestern states' renewable energy history.
- Research Grant Support** 03/2020–09/2020
University of Nebraska Medical Center — Online; Omaha, Nebraska (*US\$10 million*)
Virtually aided Epidemiology Graduate Director research, collected data, organized, and wrote the original Community Engagement section of the Buffett Cancer Center's P30 grant renewal application.
- Program Administrator** 12/2019–02/2020
University of Nebraska Medical Center — Omaha, Nebraska
Coordinated students and applicants for the Epidemiology Graduate Program Committee Director. Drafted, organized, and executed new Ph.D. and Masters of Public Health program procedures.
- Program Coordinator** 09/2017–08/2018
State of Nebraska (SOS Temp Program) — Lincoln, Nebraska
Organized program schedule for directors and contractors on Program FuzioN, a State of Nebraska implementation of Oracle cloud software. Tracked continuous records (e.g., program budget); attended administrator and director meetings and briefed on events; recorded minutes; drafted briefs, presentations, and communications.
- Private Tutor: SPSS & Data Analysis** 12/2016–05/2017
Self — Lincoln, Nebraska
Tutored undergraduates in introductory research methods and SPSS data analysis.

Landscaper

05/2025–Current

Krueger Development — Lincoln, Nebraska

Aides in fixing issues on company properties (e.g., drainage problems) and responsible for regular installation maintenance.

Detasseler & Checker

Summers 2006–2013, 2017

Glock Detasseling — Wahoo, Nebraska

Prepared equipment for labor and trained beginners on the job. Taught health and safety codes and seed company requirements. Completed self-regulated work, small group work, built morale, and was punctual every day.

SKILLS**Software & Tools****SPSS:** Data analysis. (*Expert, Since 2015*)

RStudio: Data analysis, visualization, website coding (Quarto).
(*Beginner, Since 01/2025*)

L^AT_EX: Document rendering. (*Beginner, Since 04/2025*)**Stata:** Data analysis. (*Beginner, Since 01/2022*)**Microsoft Suite:** (e.g.) Excel, Word, PPT. (*Expert, Since 2010*)**YuJa:** Lecture recording software. (*Intermediate, Since 2022*)**Languages**English (*Native*), Spanish (*Elementary*), Russian (*1 summer term*)**Writing & Briefing**

Instructor of Record, Panelist & Brief-writer.

Interpersonal Skills

Builds meaningful relationships in the US & abroad.

AWARDS**Larry D. Welch Deterrence Writing Award: Undergraduate Runner Up**

2018

Wrote & briefed *Perception, Deterrence & Behavioral Networks: Application of new frameworks to North Korea* for the US Strategic Command nuclear policy and analysis audience. An extensive literature review comparatively narrowed to the most optimal framework to study North Korea's behavior for a tailored deterrence strategy.

SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS**Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models: ICPSR Scholarship Recipient**

2025

National Science Foundation funds first- and second-session tuition fees for the University of Michigan's Interuniversity Consortium for Political & Social Research's quantitative statistics, mathematics, and computing summer program.

\$4,375.00**McKelvie Scholarship: Graduate Recipient**

2024-25 Academic Year

Fund to aid government- and public service-interested careers.

\$5,750.00**McKelvie Scholarship: Graduate Recipient**

2023-24 Academic Year

Fund to aid government- and public service-interested careers.

\$2,500.00**McKelvie Scholarship: Graduate Recipient**

2022-23 Academic Year

Fund to aid government- and public service-interested careers.

\$4,000.00**Kiechel Fellowship: Research Fellow**

06/2022 – 08/2022

Researched Russian elite perceptions of the Ukraine and Belarus using the SRE.

\$2,000.00

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Hendricks Symposium: Co-Planner & Organizer, UNL 2-4 November 2025
Co-planning event with Dr. Sergio Wals. Theme will highlight public opinion research.

Hendricks Symposium: Co-Planner & Organizer, UNL 01–06/2023
Co-planned Hendricks’s Symposium first annual event in 6/2023 post-pandemic with Dr. Tyler White & Ms. Elsbeth Magilton (J.D.). Theme featured presentations on multi-actor deterrence in various domains by security academics and military attendees from US Strategic Command. Coordinated guest hotel stays and transportation.

CONFERENCE PANELS & OTHER PARTICIPATION

Conference Session Speaker: Nebraska Water Leaders Academy,
Valentine, Nebraska, USA 09/2024
Led a practical session introducing state practitioners to the importance of future water planning scenarios to consider under what conditions conflict might occur regarding water issues at the local and state levels. \$1,000.00.

Graduate Participant: International Association For Intelligence Education (IAFIE),
Treviso, Italy 05/2022
Discussed how to best approach teaching intelligence and security studies with an international approach. Hosted by IAFIE and the École Universitaire Internationale in Treviso, Italy.

Panelist: Deterrence & Assurance Academic Alliance, Portsmouth, England 11/2020
Presented a psychology & wargaming experiment, including current question & project goals, at the online Deterrence & Assurance Academic Alliance (DAAA) conference, sponsored by the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defence’s Science & Technology Laboratory and the University of Portsmouth.

Undergraduate Panelist: DAAA, US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) 03/2018
Presented “Perception, deterrence & behavioral economics: Application of new frameworks” at UNL Law College, sponsored by UNL and US Strategic Command in Omaha, Nebraska. Project found that emotions may play a larger role in decision-making in deterrence scenarios.

Undergraduate Panelist: DAAA, London, England 02/2018
Presented “The Future of the South China Sea: Balancing the US & China in 2040,” representing the research team, at King’s College London, sponsored by the UK Ministry of Defence’s DSTL & King’s College London.

Undergraduate Panelist: Deterrence Symposium, USSTRATCOM 07/2017
Presented “The Future of the South China Sea” representing the research team in Omaha, NE to leading deterrence and nuclear issues academics and experts, military generals and personnel, and representatives of foreign governments and leadership. Annual symposium sponsored by USSTRATCOM.

Undergraduate Presenter: Great Plains Students’ Psychology Convention 03/2017
Presented “The effects of teacher training and student involvement on violence in schools: A path analysis” at Fort Hayes State University in Hayes, Kansas.

Undergraduate Panelist: DAAA, USSTRATCOM 03/2017
Presented “The Future of the South China Sea” with an IC Scholars undergraduate team at the DA3, sponsored by USSTRATCOM and Creighton University.

Undergraduate Volunteer: Hendrick’s Symposium, Lincoln, Nebraska 03/2017

Volunteered as an aid to UNL’s Political Science Department hosting leading scholars and military experts researching nuclear latency and the importance of deterrence in an increasingly multipolar system and current research projects.

Undergraduate Presenter: NPS/PERK Conference, Overland Park, Kansas 03/2017

Presented “Relationships between attorney type, biological evidence, and crime type in case outcomes” at the National Psychology for Society/Psychological & Educational Research in Kansas, hosted by Bellevue University.

ACADEMIC SERVICE & ACTIVITIES

Graduate Events Coordinator, Political Science Student Government, *UNL* 05/2023 – 02/2024

Organized social gatherings for students and occasionally faculty.

Co-Organizer, Women in Political Science (WIPS), *UNL* 09/2022 – Current

Co-organized monthly meetings with other graduate student women in the department to discuss relevant research topics.

Participant, Center for Brain, Biology & Behavior Club, *UNL* 10/2022 – Current

Sub-disciplines in psychology meet weekly for lecture series, discuss research difficulties, and professional development.

Participant, Research in Political Science (RIPS), *UNL* 09/2021 – Current

Participates and presents in weekly discussions about presenters in-progress research regarding methodological approaches and designs, theoretical arguments, and conclusions.

Member, Young Leaders Program, *Pacific Forum, Hawaii, USA* 12/2019 – Current

Member of program at the international independent research institute. Applying for conference sponsorship funding and research project participation in Asia-Pacific.

Postgraduate Researchers Liaison, Student Guild, *University of Exeter* 11/2020 – 05/2021

Represented all Politics postgraduates at department meetings and the Student Guild meetings, communicating questions and concerns from students that messaged through social media groups or email. Initiated virtual social contact amongst postgraduates.

Postgraduate Liaison, Conflict, Security & Peace Society, *University of Exeter* 09/2018 – 05/2019

Liaison between society’s undergraduate and postgraduate leadership at the University of Exeter. Generated foreign policy discussions for bi-weekly meetings and recruited professionals for speaking events.

Research Team Leader, Intelligence Community Scholars, *UNL* 08/2016 – 05/2018

Led two six-person teams conducting deterrence research for U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) on decision-making and emerging capabilities. Responsible for briefing, research & writing, assigning project tasks, and additional administrative tasks.

Member, Great Plains National Security Education Community, *UNL* 09/2015 – 05/2017

Discussed national security and foreign policy issues while learning about the US national security establishment through guest speakers, intelligence simulations, research opportunities, tradecraft workshops, and panels.