

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, 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 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

POLS338: Women & Politics, *UNL*

Summer 2023, Autumn 2024 & 2025

Instructor of Record: In-person (~28 undergraduates) and asynchronous online summer (~20 undergraduates) term formats; delved into women's political representation in comparative contexts & (Autumn 2025) required applying to one internship/job of interest.

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.

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

Maximum Likelihood Estimation II: Modeling Space & Time Certificate ETA: 10/2025
Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM)-sponsored certification, verifying a minimum of an -A letter-grade in the ICPSR program (07/2025). The course covered the methodological foundations of multi-level modeling through maximum likelihood estimation, historical event analyses, and spatial-temporal data analysis. (See Competitive Scholarships Section, p.5.)

Maximum Likelihood Estimation I: Generalized Linear Models Certificate ETA: 10/2025
EITM-sponsored certification, verifying a minimum of an -A letter-grade in the ICPSR program (06/2025). The course covered the mathematical foundations of maximum likelihood estimation, simultaneously emphasizing the theoretical complexity. (See Competitive Scholarships Section, p.5.)

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 05–06/2025

Krueger Development — Lincoln, Nebraska

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

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. (<i>Expert, Since 2015</i>)
	RStudio: Data analysis, visualization, website coding (Quarto). (<i>Beginner, Since 01/2025</i>)
	LaTeX: Document rendering. (<i>Beginner, Since 04/2025</i>)
	Stata: Data analysis. (<i>Beginner, Since 01/2022</i>)
	Microsoft Suite: (e.g.) Excel, Word, PPT. (<i>Expert, Since 2010</i>)
	YuJa: Lecture recording software. (<i>Intermediate, Since 2022</i>)
Languages	English (<i>Native</i>), Spanish (<i>Elementary</i>), Russian (<i>1 summer term</i>)
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.

COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

McKelvie Scholarship: Graduate Recipient 2025-26 Academic Year

Fund to aid government- and public service-interested careers. \$3,745.00

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models: ICPSR Scholarship Recipient 05/2025
 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. Earned two competitive course certifications & networked with peers and career academics. \$4,375.00

Political Science Summer Research Fellowship: Research Fellow 06/2022 – 08/2022
 Researched data & studied at ICPSR to directly support the quantitative chapter of my dissertation. \$2,000.00

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 11/2025
 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.