

# RACHEL URBAN

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## EDUCATION

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- Ph.D. Candidate, University of Nebraska** | **Lincoln, NE (USA)** *2021 - Current*  
*Program:* Political Science *Expected Graduation:* 2027  
*Disciplines:* Political Psychology, Political Ecology, International Relations, & Natural Resources
- Masters of Research, University of Exeter** | **England, (United Kingdom)** *2019*  
*Program:* Security, Conflict, & Human Rights
- Bachelor of Arts, University of Nebraska** | **Lincoln, NE (USA)** *2017*  
*Program:* Psychology | *Minors:* National Security Studies; Global Studies; Political Science; English
- Associate of Arts, Southeast Community College** | **Lincoln, Nebraska (USA)** *2014*  
*Program:* General Studies/Academic Transfer

## RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGICAL INTERESTS

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Research: Security & conflict theory; Political ecology & water policy; Foreign policy decision-making; Political psychology.

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

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

## SKILLS & LANGUAGES TOOLBOX

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| <b>Software</b>             | <b>RStudio:</b> Data visualization, Markdown, website coding (Quarto).<br><b>SPSS &amp; Stata:</b> Data analysis.<br><b>L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X:</b> Document rendering.<br><b>SQL:</b> Database management.<br><b>ArcGIS:</b> Software mapping.<br><b>Microsoft &amp; Google Suites:</b> (e.g., Excel/Sheets/Forms, PPT/Slides).<br><b>Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, Decipher/Forsta:</b> Survey creation.<br><b>YuJa:</b> Lecture recording software. |
| <b>Spoken Language</b>      | English ( <i>Native</i> ), Spanish ( <i>Elementary</i> ), Russian ( <i>1 summer term</i> )   |
| <b>Writing</b>              | Academic & Policy styles, Editor, & Brief-writer.  |
| <b>Briefing</b>             | Policy & Academic Panels, Instructor of Record.  |
| <b>Interpersonal Skills</b> | Build and maintain relationships in the US and abroad.   |

## RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

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### SQL Bootcamp

Offered by Udemy & Pierian Data. Learned how to apply SQL commands to business scenarios. [\[Link\]](#)

### **Maximum Likelihood Estimation II: Modeling Space & Time**

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM)-sponsored certification, verifying a minimum of an -A letter-grade in the ICPSR program (2025). Course covered advanced maximum likelihood estimation methodologies and models, including multi-level, historical events, and spatial-temporal models using *RStudio*. (See Competitive Scholarships Section, p.5.) [\[Link\]](#)

### **Maximum Likelihood Estimation I: Generalized Linear Models**

EITM-sponsored certification, verifying a minimum of an -A letter-grade in the ICPSR program (2025). Course covered maximum likelihood estimation mathematical and theoretical foundations. (See Competitive Scholarships Section, p.5.) [\[Link\]](#)

### **Foresight Analysis**

Offered by Pherson. Learned a “3D” qualitative intelligence method to think critically for future problem-solving. [\[Link NA\]](#)

### **Lean Six Sigma Certificate: Yellow Belt**

Demonstrates team membership, subject matter expertise, and project completion using the Define, Measure, Analyze, Design and Verify (DMAIC) methodology to identify and solve issues in business processes. [\[Link\]](#)

## **RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

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### **BY DESIGN: Institutions in drought & conflict.**

*Dissertation*

Author: Quantitative & qualitative analyses investigate how institutional designs condition violent interstate and intrastate conflict during drought using the *AfroGrid* dataset, *Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database* datasets, the *Correlates of War's* GIS-version of *Militarized Interstate Disputes*, and the *Water Conflict Chronology*.

### **The Niger Basin & the Paradox of Peace**

*Dissertation CH4*

Author: Structured case study using intelligence analysis techniques that studies how institutions, including the Niger Basin Authority, conditioned violent interstate and intrastate conflict under drought conditions over time.

### **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).

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

Author: Quantitative analysis of differing Russian elite attitudes of the Ukraine & the EU using the *Survey of Russian Elites* (SRE) dataset. Non-traditional methodological suggestions (e.g., nonparametrics) are considered.

### **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.

## NON-PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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Urban, R. (2025). A balancing act: Australia's water management and a looming economic crisis. In M. E. Burbach (Ed.), *Australia: Managing diverse ecosystems (A storybook of student research)* (pp. 80-85). University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Open-File Report 260. [Link TBD]

Urban, R., & David, K. (2025). Introduction. In M. E. Burbach (Ed.), *Australia: Managing diverse ecosystems (A storybook of student research)* (p. 1). University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Open-File Report 260. [Link TBD]

## RESEARCH & GRANT EXPERIENCE

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### **Graduate Researcher: Political Attitudes & Cognition (PAC)/Ekstrom Laboratory**

Principal Investigators (PIs): Ingrid Haas & Pierce Eckstrom, Aug 2022 - May 2025  
*University of Nebraska - Lincoln (UNL)*

Provided weekly theoretical and quantitative audits and revisions on lab projects presented by faculty and graduate researchers to ensure data integrity and actionable results.

### **Graduate Research Assistant: Australia Study Abroad**

PIs: Mark Burbach & Becky Schuerman, *UNL* Dec 2024 - Mar 2025

Assisted faculty leaders in managing on-site schedule continuity and student participant support for the study abroad program ("Managing Diverse Ecosystems," in *Australia & Tasmania*). Co-authored Introduction, authored a chapter, and assisted chapter editing for the program book.

### **Graduate Research Assistant: Nebraska Deterrence Laboratory**

Direct PIs: Michelle Black & Tyler White, *UNL* Aug 2021 - Jul 2023

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

### **Grant Research Assistant**

PI: Shinobu Watanabe, Mar 2020 - Sept 2020  
*University of Nebraska-Omaha with the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center*

Virtual contract position aided Epidemiology Graduate Director (now [Associate Director](#)) research, collected data, drafted, and edited the original section to create the [Community Outreach & Engagement Office](#) for the Buffett Cancer Center's P30 grant renewal application. [ *US\$10 million* ]

**Research Team Leader**, Intelligence Community Scholars, *UNL* Aug 2016 - May 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.

### **Undergraduate Research Assistant: Psychology, Trauma, & Abuse Lab**

PI: Annie Steele, *UNL* 09/2016 - 05/2017

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

### **Undergraduate Research Assistant: Law & Psychology Lab**

PI: NA, *UNL* Jun 2015 - May 2016

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

## TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

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*Sample materials available upon request and on my personal website.*

**Undergraduate Thesis Advisor, UNL** Autumn 2025 & Current  
Advising on two senior thesis Environmental Science committees. Providing theoretical, methodological, writing, and editing guidance.

**POLS332: Climate Politics & Policy, UNL** Spring 2026 & Summer 2024  
Instructor of Record: In-person & asynchronous online summer (~20 undergraduates) term formats; taught the introduction to interdisciplinary climate science, the policy process, international and domestic climate politics, and wicked policy problems.

**POLS338: Women & Politics, UNL** Summer 2023, Autumn 2024 & 2025  
Instructor of Record: In-person (~28 undergraduates) & asynchronous online summer (~20 undergraduates) term formats; studied women's political representation in comparative contexts, class politics, & (Autumn 2025) required one submitted internship/job application & professional growth reflection.

**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.

**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** Aug 2022 - Dec 2023  
Mentored undergraduate students (~40) with various majors interested in the Intelligence Community, security, and academic fields.

**Guest Lecturer, University of Exeter** Oct 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.

## RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

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**Policy Support & Research Assistant** Dec 2023 - May 2024  
*Catalyst Public Affairs | Lincoln, Nebraska (NE)*  
Summarized bills introduced in the spring session of the Nebraska unicameral. Researched policy background on Midwestern states' renewable energy history.

**Program Administrator** Dec 2019 - Feb 2020  
*University of Nebraska Medical Center | Omaha, NE*  
Contract position coordinating 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** Sept 2017 - Aug 2018  
*State of Nebraska (SOS Temp Program) | Lincoln, NE*  
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, minutes); attended director meetings and briefed on events; drafted briefs, presentations, and communications.

**Private Tutor: SPSS, Stata, & Data Analysis**

*Self | Lincoln, Nebraska*

Jan 2022 - May 2022

Informally tutored graduate students in introductory research methods and Stata data analysis.

*Self | Lincoln, Nebraska*

Dec 2016 - May 2017

Tutored undergraduates in introductory research methods and SPSS data analysis.

**[Unpaid] Summer Intern**

Summer 2016

*U.S. Department of State | Washington, D.C.*

Performed classified work, updating 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.

**AWARDS**

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

2018

Drafted & briefed a US Strategic Command nuclear policy audience, recommending an optimal framework to tailor an updated North Korean deterrence strategy.

**COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS**

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**McKelvie Scholarship: Graduate Recipient**

Fund to aid government- and public service-interested careers. Award subject to available funds.

- 2025-26 Academic Year \$4,070.00
- 2024-25 Academic Year \$5,750.00
- 2023-24 Academic Year \$2,500.00
- 2022-23 Academic Year \$4,000.00

**Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models: ICPSR Recipient**

Summer 2025

National Science Foundation funds first- and second-session tuition fees for the University of Michigan's Interuniversity Consortium for Political & Social Research's (ICPSR) 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**

Summer 2025

Researched data & studied at ICPSR to directly support the quantitative chapter of my dissertation (See Research in Progress, p.2).

\$2,000.00

**Kiechel Fellowship: Research Fellow**

Summer 2022

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

\$2,000.00

**CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION**

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**Hendricks Symposium: Co-Planner & Organizer, UNL**

2023 & 2025

2023: Co-managed the event with Dr. Sergio Wals. Theme featured presentations of domestic and cross-national political psychology research regarding democracy and immigration at UNL by national and international scholars. Coordinated event logistics, guided guests, and provided airport transportation.

2025: Co-planned Hendricks's Symposium first annual post-pandemic event 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 accommodations and transportation.

## CONFERENCE PANELS & OTHER PARTICIPATION

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### 2024 - 2025

#### **[Invited] Conference Session Speaker: Nebraska Water Leaders Academy**

*Valentine, Nebraska* | Hosted by Middle Niobrara Resources District

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.

### 2020 - 2022

#### **Graduate Participant: International Association For Intelligence Education (IAFIE)**

*Treviso, Italy* | Hosted by IAFIE & École Universitaire Internationale.

Workshopped & discussed how to best approach teaching international intelligence and security studies.

#### **Panelist: Ministry of Defence (MOD) Deterrence & Assurance Academic Alliance (DAAA)**

*Portsmouth, England* | Hosted by the Defence Science & Technology Lab & the University of Portsmouth. Presented a psychology & wargaming experiment, including current question & project goals, at the virtual DAAA conference.

### 2018

#### **Panelist: US Strategic Command's (USSTRATCOM) DAAA**

*Lincoln, Nebraska* | Hosted by UNL Law College, sponsored by UNL & US Strategic Command.

Presented "Perception, deterrence & behavioral economics: Application of new frameworks." Project found that emotions may play a larger role in decision-making in deterrence scenarios.

#### **Panelist: DAAA**

*London, England* | Hosted by King's College London, sponsored by the UK Ministry of Defence's DSTL & King's College London.

Presented "The Future of the South China Sea: Balancing the US & China in 2040," representing the research team.

### 2017

#### **Undergraduate Panelist: Deterrence Symposium**

*Omaha, Nebraska* | Hosted & sponsored by USSTRATCOM.

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.

#### **Undergraduate Presenter: Great Plains Students' Psychology Convention**

*Fort Hayes, Kansas* | Hosted by Fort Hayes State University.

Poster presentation titled, "The effects of teacher training and student involvement on violence in schools: A path analysis."

#### **Undergraduate Panelist: DAAA**

*Omaha, Nebraska* | Hosted & sponsored by USSTRATCOM & Creighton University.

Presented "The Future of the South China Sea" with an IC Scholars undergraduate team at the DA3.

### **Undergraduate Volunteer: Hendrick’s Symposium**

*Lincoln, Nebraska* | Hosted & sponsored by UNL’s Department of Political Science

Volunteered to aid and host leading scholars and military experts researching nuclear latency and the importance of deterrence in an increasingly multipolar system.

### **Undergraduate Presenter: National Psychology for Society/Psychological & Educational Research in Kansas (NPS/PERK)**

*Overland Park, Kansas* | Hosted by Bellevue University & sponsored by NPS/PERK.

Presented poster titled, “Relationships between attorney type, biological evidence, and crime type in case outcomes.”

## **ACADEMIC SERVICE & ACTIVITIES**

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### **2020 - Current**

**Participant**, Research in Political Science (RIPS), *UNL* Sept 2021 - Current  
Provides weekly theoretical and methodological audits for presenter research. Presents occasionally throughout each year.

**Member**, Young Leaders Program, *Pacific Forum, Hawaii, USA* Dec 2019 - Current  
Member of program at the international independent research institute. Applying for conference sponsorship funding and research project participation in Asia-Pacific.

**Graduate Events Coordinator**, Political Science Student Government, *UNL* May 2023 - Feb 2024  
Organized social gatherings for students and occasionally faculty.

**Co-Organizer**, Women in Political Science (WIPS), *UNL* Sept 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* Oct 2022 - May 2024  
Sub-disciplines in psychology meet weekly for lecture series, discuss research difficulties, and professional development.

**Postgraduate Researchers Liaison**, Student Guild, *University of Exeter* Nov 2020 - May 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* Sept 2018 - May 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.

**Member**, Great Plains National Security Education Community, *UNL* Sept 2015 - May 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.