

# Mellissa Meisels

EMAIL: [mellissa.meisels@yale.edu](mailto:mellissa.meisels@yale.edu)

WEBSITE: [www.mellissameisels.com](http://www.mellissameisels.com)

## Appointments & Affiliations

### YALE UNIVERSITY

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science 2025 –

Faculty Affiliate, Institution for Social and Policy Studies

Postdoctoral Associate, Center for the Study of American Politics 2024 – 2025

### UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Visiting Scholar, Democracy Center 03/2023

## Education

### VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Ph.D. Political Science 2019 – 2024

FIELDS: American Politics, Political Methodology

COMMITTEE: Josh Clinton (chair), Larry Bartels, Alan Wiseman, Danielle Thomsen (UCI)

Graduate Affiliate, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

M.A. Political Science 2019 – 2022

### UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

B.A. Political Science, *magna cum laude* 2015 – 2018

ADVISOR: John Zaller

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

Meisels, Mellissa. 2025. "Strategic Campaign Attention to Abortion Before and After *Dobbs*." Conditionally accepted, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Meisels, Mellissa. 2025. "Everything in Moderation? The Effect of Extremist Nominations on Individual and Corporate PAC Fundraising." FirstView, *Political Science Research and Methods*.

Meisels, Mellissa, Joshua D. Clinton, and Gregory A. Huber. 2024. "Giving to the Extreme? Experimental Evidence on Donor Response to Candidate and District Characteristics." *British Journal of Political Science* 54(3): 851–873.

## Working Papers

Candidate Positions, Responsiveness, and Returns to Extremism (*R&R, Journal of Politics*)

— 2023 Vanderbilt Political Science Outstanding Graduate Paper Award

PRESENTATIONS: MPSA 2023, PolMeth 2023

Campaign Agendas and Issue Group Strategy in Congressional Primaries

— 2023 Political Organizations and Parties Best APSA Paper Award

PRESENTATIONS: APSA MIP Pre-Conference 2023, APSA 2023, JAWS Fall 2023, MPSA 2024, UChicago Harris CEG American Politics Conference 2024

Competition and Free-Riding in Electoral Campaigns with Outside Spending (*with Brenton Kenkel*)

PRESENTATIONS: MPSA 2022, APSA MIP Pre-Conference 2022, APSA 2022, VFT 2023

## Other Publications

Mellissa Meisels. 2024. "Political Donors Prefer Extreme Candidates, but the Competitiveness of the Election and their Opponent's Views Matter Too." *LSE United States Politics & Policy Blog*.

## Awards, Grants, & Fellowships

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Founder's Medal for First Honors, Vanderbilt University                       | 2025        |
| Best APSA 2023 Paper Award, Political Organizations and Parties Section       | 2024        |
| Provost's Pathbreaking Discovery Award, Vanderbilt University Graduate School | 2024        |
| Outstanding Doctoral Student Award, Vanderbilt University Graduate School     | 2024        |
| Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Award, Vanderbilt University Graduate School       | 2022 – 2024 |
| Russell G. Hamilton Scholar, Vanderbilt University Graduate School            | 2019 – 2024 |
| Outstanding Graduate Research Paper Award, Vanderbilt Political Science       | 2023        |
| Virginia Gray Graduate Student Research Award, APSA POP Section               | 2023        |
| Conference Travel Grant, American Political Science Association               | 2023        |
| J. Leiper Freeman Memorial Award, Vanderbilt Political Science                | 2021, 2023  |
| NSF Travel and Participation Award, Society for Political Methodology         | 2022, 2023  |
| Travel Grant, Vanderbilt University Graduate School                           | 2022, 2023  |
| University Graduate Fellowship, Vanderbilt University Graduate School         | 2019 – 2022 |
| Research Assistant Funding, Vanderbilt ROCCA Lab                              | 2022        |
| Lew and Edie Wasserman Grant, UCLA Alumni Association                         | 2016 – 2019 |
| UCLA Alumni Scholarship, UCLA Alumni Association                              | 2015 – 2019 |

## **Presentations**

### INVITED TALKS

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton University             | 03/2025 |
| Center for Effective Government American Politics Conference, UChicago Harris | 06/2024 |
| Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin                       | 11/2023 |
| Department of Political Science, Syracuse University                          | 11/2023 |
| Department of Political Science, University of California, San Diego          | 11/2023 |
| Department of Political Science, Yale University                              | 11/2023 |
| Department of Political Science, Stanford University                          | 11/2023 |
| Department of Government, American University                                 | 10/2023 |
| Department of Political Science, University of Rochester                      | 03/2023 |

### OTHER SMALL CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Junior Americanist Workshop Series                                       | 2023        |
| Virtual Formal Theory Workshop   | 2023        |
| Vanderbilt University Graduate Ideas Symposium                           | 2023        |
| Money in Politics Pre-Conference, American Political Science Association | 2021 – 2023 |

### ANNUAL MEETINGS

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Society for Political Methodology      | 2022 – 2023 |
| American Political Science Association | 2021 – 2025 |
| Midwest Political Science Association  | 2021 – 2024 |

## **Teaching**

### INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD, YALE UNIVERSITY

|  |      |
|--|------|
| PLSC 2255 — Special Interest Politics in the US      | 2025 |
| PLSC TBD — Elite Behavior in Congressional Elections | 2026 |

### TEACHING ASSISTANT, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

|   |      |
|---|------|
| PSCI 3893 — American Democracy and Dissent            | 2024 |
| PSCI 3244 — The Legislative Process                   | 2023 |
| PSCI 3260 — Introduction to American Law              | 2022 |
| PSCI 2260 — Constitutional Law                        | 2022 |
| DSCI 1000 — Data Science: How Data Shape Our World    | 2021 |
| PSCI 2300 — Introduction to Data Science for Politics | 2021 |
| PSCI 1150 — U.S. Elections                            | 2020 |

## Service

Graduate Admissions Committee, Yale Department of Political Science 2026  
Coordinator, Yale American Politics and Policy Workshop 2025 – 2026  
Co-President, Vanderbilt Political Science Graduate Student Association 2021 – 2023  
Panel Chair, Women in Legislative Studies Conference 2022  
Reviewer: *Party Politics, Electoral Studies, Journal of Politics, American Journal of Political Science, Legislative Studies Quarterly, Political Behavior, American Political Science Review*