# Melina Much

Postdoctoral Fellow · Political Science

*NYU Center for Social Media, AI, and Politics*

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## Current Appointment

**New York University** — *New York, NY*

Postdoctoral Fellow - Center for Social Media, AI, and Politics — *2024 - present*

- PI(s): Jonathan Nagler and Joshua A. Tucker

## Education

**University of California at Irvine** — *Irvine, CA*

PhD Political Science — *2018 - 2024*

- Advisors: Dr. Michael Tesler and Dr. Inés Levin
- Dissertation Committee: Dr. Danielle Thomsen, and Dr. R. Michael Alvarez (Caltech)

**University of California at Irvine** — *Irvine, CA*

MA Math and Behavioral Science — *2018 - 2021*

- Completed separately during Ph.D. program.

**Francis Marion University** — *Florence, SC*

Dual BA Undergraduate Degree — *2014 - 2018*

- Political Science and Economics
- Honors thesis/undergrad research advisor: Dr. William T. Daniel and Dr. David White

## Visiting Appointments

**California Institute of Technology** — *Irvine, CA*

Visiting Graduate Student Researcher — *2023 - 2024*

- Advisor: Dr. R. Michael Alvarez

## Publications

### Published

**Much, Melina**, Daniel Ebanks, Sara Kangaslahti; Jean Kossaifi; R. Michael Alvarez; Anqi Liu; and Anima Anandkumar. 2026. "Activating Identity and Political Action in the #MeToo Era." ***Computational Communication Research***.

**Much, Melina**, 2025. "Bayesian Multilevel Modeling for Intersections of Race, Gender and Class." ***Political Research Quarterly***. Winner of the Empirical Study of Gender Network Annual Prize.

**Much, Melina**, 2024. "Intersectional Quantitative Methods." ***The Oxford Handbook of Engaged Methodological Pluralism in Political Science***.

### Advance Contracts

**Much, Melina**. Claudia Kann. *Using Multilevel Models for Quantitative Intersectional Research.* Element: Quantitative and Computational Methods for the Social Sciences. Cambridge University Press. Editor: Nathaniel Beck.

### Revise and Resubmit & Under Review

**Much, Melina**, Kylan Rutherford, Joshua Tucker, and Jonathan Nagler. "Data Donations and Political Blind Spots: Examining Bias in Combined Survey and Social Media Trace Data." Revise and resubmit at ***Political Analysis***.

**Much, Melina**, and Jonathan Nagler. "Divergences in Perceptions of Inequality during the COVID-19 Pandemic." Revise and Resubmit at ***American Politics Research***.

Kann, Claudia and **Melina Much**. "Incorporating Latent Class Identities in Intersectional Quantitative Work." Revise and resubmit at ***Social Science Research***.

**Much, Melina**, Kylan Rutherford, Jason Greenfield, Joshua Tucker, and Jonathan Nagler. "Did Podcasts Help Trump Win Young Men? Gendered Media Spaces and Gender Gaps." Submitted for review.

McWagner, Kyle and **Melina Much**. "Misidentified Independents: Understanding Independents through Affective Polarization." Submitted for review.

### Working Papers and Works in Progress

**Much, Melina**. *Sorted by Gender and the Politics of the Online Age.* Book project; proposal in preparation.

**Much, Melina**, Daniel Ebanks; R. Michael Alvarez. "Tracing Narrative Co-optation on Social Media: A Tensor Based Joint Stance-Topic Method for Studying Contested Language."

Zhong, Wei, **Melina Much**, Jonathan Nagler. "From Tweets to Beliefs: Examining the Role of Online Political Environments in Shaping Immigration Attitudes."

## Teaching Experience

### Instructor of Record

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| Spring 2024 | **Identity Politics - AAAS 159A**, African and African American Studies Department | *Brandeis University* |
| Spring 2024 | **Advanced Research Methods - PLS 3055A & 3055B**, Political Science Department | *Cal Poly Pomona* |
| Fall 2023 | **Advanced Research Methods - PLS 3055A & 3055B**, Political Science Department | *Cal Poly Pomona* |
| Spring 2023 | **Introduction to American Government - PS 21A**, Political Science Department | *UC Irvine* |
| Fall 2022 | **Identity Politics - AAAS 159A**, African and African American Studies Department | *Brandeis University* |

### Methods Workshop Instructor

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| 2021-2023 | **Introduction to R Methods Bootcamp**, A week-long intensive program for first-year Political Science PhD students that I founded and co-run. | *UC Irvine PS* |

### Teaching Assistant

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| 2018-2024 | **Introduction to Chicano and Latino Studies**, Chicano and Latino Studies | *UC Irvine* |
| | **American Presidency**, Political Science | *UC Irvine* |
| | **Introduction to American Government**, Political Science | *UC Irvine* |
| | **Research Methods**, Sociology | *UC Irvine* |
| | **Computer Based Research Methods in Social Science**, Social Science | *UC Irvine* |
| | **Law and Markets**, Political Science | *UC Irvine* |

## Awards, Fellowships, & Grants

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| 2025 | **Siegel Research Fellow**, Siegel Family Endowment |
| | **NYU Catalyst Grant**, New York University |
| 2023 | **UCI Dissertation Completion Grant**, UC Irvine Graduate Division |

2022 **Empirical Study of Gender Annual Prize**, Empirical Study of Gender Network
**Centennial Research Grant**, American Political Science Association
**CSD Seed Grant**, Center for the Study of Democracy at UC Irvine
**UCI Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation Summer Fellowship**, UC Irvine Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation
**Associate Dean Fellowship Winter**, UC Irvine School of Social Sciences
**Associate Dean Fellowship Spring**, UC Irvine School of Social Sciences
**APSA Travel Grant - Montreal**, American Political Science Association

2021 **Janet Box-Steffensmeier ICPSR Fellowship**, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research
**Associate Dean Fellowship Winter**, UC Irvine School of Social Sciences
**APSA Travel Grant - Seattle**, American Political Science Association

2020 **Ford Pre-Dissertation Fellowship Honorable Mention**, Ford Foundation

2019 **CSD Podlich Fellow**, UC Irvine Center for the Study of Democracy
**DECADE Travel Grant**, Ford Foundation

2018-2022 **UCI Provost Fellowship**, UC Irvine Office of the Provost

## Presentations

### Plenary Session Paper

Fall 2022. *Bayesian Multilevel Modeling for the Intersections of Race and Gender*. Empirical Study of Gender Network 2022 Fall Conference, Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

### Invited Talks

Fall 2025. *Francis Marion University*. Invited talk for Francis Marion Department of Political Science and School of Business.

Fall 2021. *Intersectional Quantitative Methods*. Invited Roundtable Participant for Oxford Handbook of Engaged Methodological Pluralism in Political Science.

### Conference Presentations

September 2026. American Political Science Association. Presenter.

April 2026. Midwestern Political Science Association. Presenter.

April 2026. Western Political Science Association. Presenter.

September 2025. American Political Science Association. Presenter.

August 2025. PolNet and PACSS Conference at Harvard University. Presenter.

April 2025. Midwestern Political Science Association. Presenter.

October 2023. Empirical Study of Gender Network Annual Conference. Cornell University. Presenter.

September 2022. American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Presenter and Discussant.

September 2021. American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Presenter.

Summer 2021. Political Methodology Summer Meeting. Poster Presenter.

October 2020. Gender and Political Psychology Conference. Presenter.

September 2020. American Political Science Association Annual Conference. Presenter.

April 2020. Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Conference. Presenter. Cancelled due to COVID-19.

April 2018. Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Conference. Undergraduate Poster Presenter.

## Service & Mentoring

### Reviewer

2022, 2023, and 2026. *American Political Science Review* 2026. *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*

### Departmental Service

2020-2023 **Methods and Coding Group Lead Organizer**, UC Irvine Political Science
2020-2022 **Women's Caucus Lead Organizer**, UC Irvine Political Science

### Schoolwide Service

2022 **SURF Undergraduate Writing Mentor**, UC Irvine Graduate Division SURF Program
2020-2021 **Competitive Edge Peer Mentor**, UC Irvine Graduate Division
2019 **Mentoring Excellence Program Certificate**, UC Irvine Graduate Division

## Software Skills

**R Programming**. Advanced knowledge of the use of R programming for statistical modeling and data visualization. Skills in data manipulation for modeling conventional linear, logistic, multinomial, multilevel/hierarchical, longitudinal models, and machine learning. I also have R skills in making functions, packages, and Shiny apps, websites, and presentation building.

**Python Programming**. Knowledge of Python for data management, web scraping, and API use.

**LLM-Assisted Research Pipelines**. Fluent in agentic coding best practices with frontier tools including Claude Code and Codex, used to produce reproducible and innovative scientific research at scale.

**Stata Programming**. Fluent knowledge of Stata statistical programming.

## References

**Dr. Michael Tesler** *Professor of Political Science, UC Irvine.* Co-Advisor PhD.

**Dr. Jonathan Nagler** *Professor of Politics, New York University, and co-director of the NYU Center for Social Media, AI, and Politics.* Postdoctoral fellow advisor.

**Dr. R. Michael Alvarez** *Professor of Political and Computational Social Science, Caltech.* Dissertation Committee Member and Visiting Scholar Advisor.

**Dr. Joshua A. Tucker** *Professor of Politics, New York University, and co-director of the NYU Center for Social Media, AI, and Politics.* Postdoctoral fellow advisor.

**Dr. Amber Spry** *Professor of African and African American Studies, Brandeis University.* RA Advisor.