

Akhil Rajan

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EDUCATION

Master of Arts, Political Science

- Subfields: Political Economy, Quantitative Methods, American Politics

Yale University
Expected May 2021

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science

- GPA: 3.99 / 4.0
- Multidisciplinary Academic Program in Human Rights at Yale Law School and Brady-Johnson Program in Grand Strategy.
- Extracurricular activities: Branford College Council (*President*), Outdoor Orientation Leader, Legal Aid Association (*President*), Center for Public Service (*Volunteer Coordinator, Executive Committee*), LGBTQ Co-op (*Pride Committee*).

Yale University

POLICY WORK EXPERIENCE

The Kerry Initiative

Fellow

Remote (due to COVID-19)

Nov 2020 – present

- Author briefing memos on current events, assist with op-eds, and conduct research for former Secretary of State John Kerry.

Biden-Harris Transition Team

Economic Policy Cluster Personnel Assistant

Remote (due to COVID-19)

Nov 2020 – present

- Assist in the incoming Biden-Harris Administration's appointments process for economic agencies.

Jaime Harrison for US Senate

Lead Policy Advisor

Columbia, SC

Sep 2019 – Nov 2020

- In charge of policy for "toss-up" (according to Cook Political Report) Senate campaign. Lead author on all policy plans and white papers, and responsible for candidate briefings on issues affecting South Carolina and bills before the Senate.
- Lead author for policy speeches and op-eds for candidate, and advised on general messaging and positioning.
- Ran debate and editorial board policy preparation for the candidate.
- Managed a 36 member policy committee comprised of local and national experts.

Cory 2020

Policy Fellow

Newark, NJ

June 2019 – September 2019

- Assisted in preparation for issue briefings for then-presidential candidate Senator Cory Booker.
- Wrote language and conducted research for speeches, website issue pages, press releases, and debate preparation.
- Drafted sections for immigration, criminal justice, housing, rural affairs, small business, and democracy reform plans.
- Drafted memos on policy proposals, candidate positions, and a range of issues for senior staff and the candidate.

College Democrats of America

National Finance Director, National Council Member

Remote

Aug 2018 – Aug 2019

- Responsible for fundraising, budgeting, and compliance for College Democrats of America.
- Member of the National Council, which oversaw the national consortium of College Democrats campus chapters.
- Member of the Constitutional Committee to review and revise founding charter.

The Hub Project

Policy Intern

Washington, D.C.

May 2018 – Aug 2018

- Summarized and analyzed economic patterns, polling data, and voter sentiment using machine learning techniques.
- Drafted reports, memos, and fact sheets on issues including health care, taxes and the Supreme Court.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

The MacMillan Center at Yale University

Research Manager to Prof. Ian Shapiro and Prof. Frances Rosenbluth

New Haven, CT

Aug 2017 – Present

- Co-authored and presented an academic article and a book manuscript on institutional determinants of economic policy.
- Supervised team of eight Research Assistants working on a project examining the evolution of infrastructure, health care, and welfare spending in the United States and other OECD countries.
- Spearheaded project in partnership with a leading hedge fund using machine learning and newspaper archives to predict geopolitical instability.

Institution for Social and Policy Studies (ISPS)

Director's Fellow, and Research Assistant to Prof. Josh Kalla and Prof. Fredrik Savje

New Haven, CT

May 2018 – Oct 2020

- Received funding to study the effect of campaign policy agendas on candidate support in 2018 midterms.
- Selected for an in-depth weekly training in policymaking and analysis.
- Ran original experiment on methodological flaws in public polling on vice presidential candidates.
- Authored pieces in academic outlets and popular outlets, including *The Washington Post*.

Society for Political Methodology

AERoPUP Fellow

Remote

Feb 2019- July 2019

- Youngest recipient of national award for research in quantitative methods funded by the National Science Foundation.
- Received research support to use machine learning to study the impact of racial gerrymandering on congressional policy.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS, WORKING PAPERS, AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Who Has Room for Error? (with Christina Pao). 8/20. <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/swckv>.

- Summary published in *The Washington Post*: <http://wapo.st/2YPyVoG>.

Estimating the Impact of Vice-Presidential Candidates on the 2020 Election. *SocArXiv*. 7/20. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/pwx7j>.

Weak Parties, the Rise of Safe Seats, and Dysfunction in the U.S. Congress (with Alexander Kustov, Maikol Cerda, Frances Rosenbluth and Ian Shapiro). *Manuscript*.

- Selected to present at the American Political Science Association (2020).

Salad or Soup? Examining the Role of Constituents, Interest Groups, and Institutions in Campaign Policymaking. *Thesis Project*.

- Awarded Dahl Scholarship at the Institution for Social and Policy Studies.
- Invited to present at Institution for Social and Policy Studies (2019) and Society for Political Methodology (2019).

Majority-Minority Districts: The Cat in the Hat Problem (with Frances Rosenbluth and Ian Shapiro). *Working Paper*.

- Invited to present at the Yale Workshop on Redistricting (2019).

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Scholarships and Fellowships: Kerry Fellowship (2020), Levy Fellowship (2019), Kirby Simon Fellowship (2019), Dahl Scholarship (2019), Society for Political Methodology Fellowship (2019), Director's Fellowship (2019)

Additional Research Grants: FLAGS Fund for LGBT Studies Recipient (2020), Bruce L. Cohen Fund Recipient (2020), the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership Award (2020)

Competitions & Awards: Adams Cup Debate Champion (2018), Yale International Policy Challenge Finalist (2018), World Individual Speech and Debate Championship Qualifier (2017)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Languages & Skills: Advanced Proficiency in Spanish, R, Stata, Python

Hobbies & Interests: Creative writing (b) (6), debate