

Shreyas Meher

Postdoctoral Researcher at Erasmus University Rotterdam

(+1) 972-571-8290 — meher@essb.eur.nl — www.shreyasmeher.com — x: @shreyasmhr

Employment

Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands June 2025

Postdoctoral Researcher

National Science Foundation (NSF), Richardson, Texas August 2023 - May 2025

Research Assistant

Project: Frameworks: Infrastructure for Political and Social Event Data Using Machine Learning

The University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas August 2020 - July 2023

Teaching Assistant

Education

The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), Richardson, Texas August 2020 - May 2025

Ph.D. Public Policy and Political Economy

Chair: Clint Peinhardt

Committee: Pengfei Zhang (Co-Chair), Patrick Brandt

Dissertation: The Intersection of Politics, Economics, and Digital Space: A Trilogy of Investigations

The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), Richardson, Texas August 2018 - May 2020

M.S. Management

St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, India June 2016 - April 2018

M.S. Public Policy

Sarla Anil Modi School, NMIMS, Mumbai, India July 2013 - April 2016

B.S. Economics

Research

Research Fields

Comparative Politics, Computational Social Science, International Political Economy

Research Topics

Internet Censorship, Democratic Backsliding, Political Conflict, Large Language Models

Funded Research Projects

TWIN4DEM: Strengthening Democratic Resilience Through Digital Twins (Postdoctoral Researcher; PI: Clara Egger, Asya Zhelyazkova). **Horizon Europe [2025–2027]**

Frameworks: Infrastructure for Political and Social Event Data (Graduate Research Assistant; PI: Patrick T. Brandt). **NSF [2023–2026]**

Software

ConflBERT GUI – Browser-based NLP toolkit for conflict and political violence text analysis. Supports named entity recognition, binary and multilabel classification, question answering, and fine-tuning custom models with LoRA/QLoRA.

conflibertR – R package wrapping ConflBERT for inference, fine-tuning, benchmarking, and model comparison.

Publications

Brandt, P. T., Alsarra, S., D’Orazio, V., Heintze, D., Khan, L., **Meher, S.**, Osorio, J., & Sianan, M. (2025). Extractive versus Generative Language Models for Political Conflict Text Classification. *Political Analysis*, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pan.2025.10027>

Meher, S., & Brandt, P. T. (2025). ConflLlama: Domain-specific adaptation of large language models for conflict event classification. *Research & Politics*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20531680251356282>

Kumar, S., **Meher, S.**, & Zhang, P. (2025). Public Health Advocacy in Times of Pandemic: An Analysis of the Medicare-For-All Debate on Twitter During COVID-19. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(2), 223. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15020223>

Under Review

Strategic Anticipation and Expert Review: The Determinants of Critical Advisory Opinions from the Dutch Council of State (with Clara Egger & Asya Zhelyazkova)

Framework Laws and Fading Oversight: How the Dutch Executive Expanded Its Law-making Authority (with Clara Egger & Asya Zhelyazkova)

Democracy and Internet Control: Theory and Evidence from Transparency Reports (with Pengfei Zhang)

Two Types of Censorship? An Assessment of the Informational Autocracy Thesis (with Pengfei Zhang)

Build, Borrow, or Just Fine-Tune? A Political Scientist’s Guide to Choosing NLP Models

Working Papers

Populism and the Price of Abandonment: Analyzing the Exit Dynamics from Bilateral Investment Treaties (with Clint Peinhardt)

IGO Withdrawal Networks – Examining network effects in international organization withdrawals.

Media Polarization in International News Coverage (with Arslan Khalid & Kiwan Park)

Event Horizon: Revolutionizing Data Annotation with Reinforcement Learning

Dissertation

Democracy and Internet Control: Theory and Evidence from Transparency Reports – Analyzes democratic approaches to internet censorship using data from Google and Twitter, revealing subtle yet significant content moderation strategies.

Two Types of Censorship? An Assessment of the Informational Autocracy Thesis in the Online Space – Testing how Guriev & Triesman’s IA theory holds in the realm of internet filtering practices in autocratic nations.

The Politics of Internet Blackouts: Investigating Digital Repression during the 2021 Farmer Protests in India – Focuses on India’s use of internet blackouts as a control mechanism during the 2021 Farmer Protests, highlighting the tactics of digital repression in a democratic context.

Teaching Experience

Instructor for Research Design for Public Policy (ESSB-C2045), Erasmus University Rotterdam 2025–2026

- Taught quantitative research design for policy evaluation, including causal inference and panel data estimation
- Led R programming labs with hands-on analysis using real policy datasets

Instructor for EPPS Math & Coding Camp August 2024

- Taught coding section for incoming PhD students over a 5-day intensive program
- Covered topics including R programming, data manipulation, visualization, and linear regression
- Designed and delivered hands-on sessions on RStudio, ggplot2, and dplyr
- Developed and maintained an open source website for course modules and materials

Teaching Assistant for

EPPS 2301 - Research Design in the Social and Policy Sciences	Fall 2020
SOC 4302 - Class, Status, and Power	Fall 2020
IPEC 4301 - Political Economy of Industrialized Countries	Spring 2021
PSCI 4396 - Selected Topics in Government and Politics (Afghanistan)	Fall 2021
EPPS 6316 - Applied Regression	Spring 2022
PPPE 6302/PSCI 6302 - Political Violence and Conflict in Cyberspace	Fall 2022
EPPS 6313 - Introduction to Quantitative Methods	Fall 2022
IPEC/PSCI 4318 - Foreign Aid and Development	Spring 2023

Conference Presentations

International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC ² S ²)	(2025)
International Studies Association (ISA)	(2025)
Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM)	(2024)
Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics (SIOE)	(2024)
American Political Science Association (APSA)	(2024, 2025)
Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)	(2024, 2025, 2026)
UTD PPPE Working Paper Series	(2023)
NAPE, Houston	(2020)

Honors & Awards

University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), Richardson, Texas

The Colloquium for the Advancement of Free-Enterprise Education (CAFÉ) research scholar 2020
Dean's Excellence Scholarship 2020

Book Contributions

Cognella Publishing, American Government & State and Local Government 2021

Skills and Languages

Skills: R, STATA, PYTHON, L^AT_EX, ARCGIS, C++

References

Patrick T. Brandt

Professor of Public Policy, Political Economy,
and Political Science

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: pbrandt@utdallas.edu

Clint Peinhardt

UT System Regents' Outstanding Teacher

Professor of Political Science, Public Policy and
Political Economy

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: clint.peinhardt@utdallas.edu

Pengfei Zhang

Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Political
Economy

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: pengfei.zhang@utdallas.edu

Karl Ho

Professor of Instruction

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

University of Texas at Dallas

Email: kyho@utdallas.edu