Shreyas Meher

Postdoctoral Scholar at Erasmus University Rotterdam

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Employment

Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands	June 2025 - December 2027
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]**

Publications

Brandt, P. T., Alsarra, S., D'Orazio, V., Heintze, D., Khan, L., Meher, S., Osorio, J., & Sianan, M. (2025). Introducing the ConfliBERT Family of Language Models for Political Science. *Political Analysis*, Forthcoming. https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.15060

Meher, S., & Brandt, P. T. (2025). ConflLlama: Domain-Specific Adaptation of Large Language Models for Political Violence Classification. *Research & Politics*, Forthcoming.

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

Democracy and Internet Control (with Pengfei Zhang) – Examining content control in democracies, revealing a unique approach compared to authoritarian regimes.

Two Types of Censorship? An Assessment of the Informational Autocracy Thesis in the Online Space – Classifying autocratic internet filtering practices into distinct regimes and their implications.

Working Papers

Expanding the Horizons – Investigating the dynamics of international organizations through the lens of network structures.

Populism and the Price of Abandonment: Analyzing the Exit Dynamics from Bilateral Investment Treaties (With Clint Peinhardt) – Exploring the interplay between populist policies and the economic implications of withdrawing from international investment treaties.

Event Horizon: Revolutionizing Data Annotation with Reinforcement Learning – Presenting an innovative framework that fuses political science insights with cutting-edge computer science techniques to produce structured, transparent annotations for complex events.

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 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)
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, LATEX, ARCGIS, C++

References

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Professor of Public Policy, Political Economy, and Political Science
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
University of Texas at Dallas
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Clint Peinhardt
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School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
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School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
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