

Ryan Mundy

PhD Candidate
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EDUCATION

University of California, Irvine

PhD Political Science, expected May 2026

- Major Fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics
- Dissertation: “Wealth, Power, and Legacy: Strategies of Elite Influence in U.S. Campaign Finance”

M.A. Political Science, 2024

California Lutheran University

B.A. Political Science, 2019 (Summa Cum Laude)

B.S. Environmental Science, 2019 (Summa Cum Laude)

PUBLICATIONS

Mundy, R. (2025). A Bigger Tent? Nonwhite Republican Candidates and Their Uphill Paths to Office. *Political Research Quarterly* 78(2): 738-752.

Mundy, R. (2019). “Julian Castro,” In *Latinos in the American Political System*, 1st ed. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC- CLIO).

WORK IN PROGRESS

“The Advantage of Candidate Wealth in American Elections.” With Danielle Thomsen. Under Review.

“Grads Teach Grads: Student-Led Workshops to Complement Department Graduate Methods Offerings.” With Jacob Sutherland, Alisson Rowland, and Elane Westfaul. Under Review.

“Inherited Influence: The Political Giving of Billionaire Heirs.” Working Paper.

“How are Primary Nominees Decided? The Role of Large-Dollar Donors.” With Danielle Thomsen. Working Paper.

TEACHING

Teaching Assistant, University of California, Irvine: Intro to American Government & Politics, Political Theory, Voting & Political Manipulation, Game Theory, Public Policy, Gender & American Politics

Writing Pedagogy Certificate, UC Irvine Campus Writing and Communication, 2024

Justice-Impacted Ally, UC Irvine Student Success Initiatives, 2024

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- UCI Political Science Department Harry Eckstein Scholar Award, 2025
- Selected to Attend the Consortium of American Political Economy Summer Workshop at UC Berkeley, 2025
- Center for Study of Democracy Seed Research Grant, 2024, 2025
- UCI DECADE Professional Development Award, 2024, 2025
- UCI Political Science Department Conference Funding Award, 2025
- UCI Associated Graduate Students Conference Stipend, 2024, 2025
- New Perspectives in Studies of American Governance Award, American University (with Danielle Thomsen and Savannah Plaskon), 2024
- Center for the Study of Democracy Research Grant, 2022-23, 2023-24
- American Political Science Association Travel Grant, 2023
- Academic Achievement Award: highest undergraduate GPA, 2017, 2018, 2019
- Sarah W. Heath Center for Equality and Justice Research Fellow, 2018
- Culver Research Fellow, 2017

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Representation, Democracy, and the Economic Backgrounds of Politicians Conference, Vanderbilt University, 2025
Midwest Political Science Association, 2023, 2024, 2025
American Political Science Association, 2023, 2024
Political Networks Conference, 2017

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Danielle Thomsen, 2022-25
Supervisor to Graduate and Undergraduate Research Assistants, 2024-25

INVITED TALKS

University of California, Irvine, “How to Get Students Reading,” 2025
University of California, Irvine, “Econometrics and Causal Inference Basics,” 2024
California Lutheran University, “Navigating Graduate School,” 2023

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Discussant, Representation, Democracy, and the Economic Backgrounds of Politicians Conference, Vanderbilt University, 2025
Discussant, Midwest Political Science Association, 2025
Leader of UCI Quantitative Methods Summer Bootcamp, 2024
Graduate Student Representative, UCI Political Science Department, 2023-24

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Political Science Association
Midwest Political Science Association
UC Irvine Center for the Study of Democracy
Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honors Society