Curriculum Vitae

Aaron A. Hitefield

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Mississippi State University - Department of Political Science & Public Administration
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Academic Appointments

Mississippi State University, Assistant Professor of Political Science, 2025-current.

Whitworth University, Assistant Professor of Political Science, 2022-2025.

Whitworth Political Science Department Chair, Spring 2025

Education

University of Georgia, August 2017—May 2022

Ph.D. in Political Science, School of Public and International Affairs

Dissertation Title: *United We Vote? Analyzing the Effects of Nationalization on Congressional Elections*

Dissertation Committee: Jamie Carson (Major Professor), Michael Lynch, Geoffrey Sheagley

King University, 2013-2017

B.S. in Mathematics; Double Major: Political Science; Minor: Security and Intelligence Studies

Magna Cum Laude, Sniders Honors Fellow

Research Interests

American Political Institutions and Methodology: Congress and the Presidency, Political Behavior, Parties and Elections, Representation, and American Political Development.

Peer Reviewed Publications

Byers, Jason S., Jamie L. Carson, and Aaron A. Hitefield. "Strategic Politicians in an Era of Nationalized Politics." **Accepted for Publication** at the Journal of Election Administration, Research & Practice

Carson, Jamie L., Aaron A. Hitefield, and Megan Wall. 2025. "The Trump Effect: Nationalized Narratives and Congressional Outcomes in the 2024 Elections" *The Forum*.

Dougherty, Keith L., and Aaron A. Hitefield. 2024. "The Effect of the Great Compromise on the Constitutional Convention of 1787." *American Politics Research. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X231220643.*

Carson, Jamie L., and Aaron A. Hitefield. 2023. "A Red Wave or a Ripple? Nationalized Politics and the 2022 Midterm Elections." *The Forum*.

Carson, Jamie L., Spencer Hardin, and Aaron A. Hitefield. 2021. "You're Fired! Donald Trump and the 2020 Congressional Elections." *The Forum*, 18(4), pp. 627-650.

Carson, Jamie L. & Aaron A. Hitefield. 2018. "Donald Trump, Nationalization, and the 2018 Midterm Elections." *The Forum*, 16(4), pp. 531-549.

Book Chapters

Hitefield, Aaron A. and M.V. Hood III. "The Primary that Wasn't: The 2024 Presidential Nomination Process." 2026. In *The 2024 Presidential Election in the South*, eds. Branwell DuBose Kapeluck and Mark Owens. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books**.**

Hitefield, Aaron A. and M.V. Hood III. "The 2020 Presidential Nomination Process." 2021. In *The 2020 Presidential Election in the South*, eds. Branwell DuBose Kapeluck and Scott E. Buchanan. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Under Review

"U.S. Congress and Human Rights: Connecting International Rights Ecosystems to the United States" with Matthew Rains ***Special Issue on Human Rights in the United States* at PS: Political Science & Politics**

"Citizen Preferences for their Legislative Body." with Neil S. Williams and Karlee Taylor. ***Revise & Resubmit*** Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties

Teaching Experience

Assistant Professor, Mississippi State University , PSPA Department

- Undergraduate Courses
  - PS 1113: American Government (Fall 2025)
  - PS 4293: Political Behavior (Fall 2025)
    - MA in Political Science Listing: PS 6293 (Fall 2025)
  - PS 4173: Legislative Process (Spring 2026)
    - MA in Political Science Listing: PS 6173 (Spring 2026)

Assistant Professor, Whitworth University, Political Science Department

- Undergraduate Courses
  - PO-396: Electoral Politics (Fall 2022, Fall 2024)
  - PO-396: The Politics of Income Inequality (Spring 2023)
  - PO-331: The American Presidency (Spring 2023)
  - PO-296: Legislative Process: Simulation (Jan Term 2023-24)
  - PO-102: American National Politics (Fall 2022-24, Spring 2023-24)
  - PO-342: American Political Parties (Fall 2023)
  - PO-204: Data in Politics (Fall 2023, Fall 2024)
  - PO-250: Environmental Politics (Spring 2024)
  - PO-332: Modern Congress (Spring 2024)

Instructor of Record, University of Georgia Department of Political Science

- Graduate Courses
  - POLS 7770: Graduate Teaching Seminar (Fall 2021)
- Undergraduate Courses
  - POLS 4530: American Political Parties (Spring 2021)
  - POLS 4605: The Politics of Congressional Elections (Spring 2020)

Guest Talk/Guest Lectures, Mississippi State University

- Fall 2025: Guest Lecture on UNFCCC, COP, and The Global Environment (in PS 1313)

Guest Talk/Guest Lectures, Whitworth University

- Fall 2024: 2024 Election Talk
- Spring 2024: Gonzaga University: "Election '24 Crash Course: What to Know and What to Ask"
- Spring 2024: Gonzaga University: "From Spokane to Dubai: Field Notes from COP 28" - https://www.gonzaga.edu/news-events/events/2024/2/28/from-spokane-to-dubai--field-notes-from-cop-28
- Spring 2023: Environmental Politics
- Fall 2022: 2022 Election Talk

Guest Talk/Guest Lectures, University of Georgia Department of Political Science

- Fall 2020: The Politics of Congressional Elections (Honors)
- Fall 2019: American Political Development
- Fall 2019: American Political Development (Honors)
- Fall 2019: Introduction to American Politics

Teaching Assistant, University of Georgia Department of Political Science

- Dr. Alexa Bankert (Spring 2022)
  - POLS 1101: American Government
- Dr. Audrey Haynes (Fall 2021)

    - POLS 1101: American Government
- Dr. Keith T. Poole (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)
    - POLS 4635: Politics of Income Inequality
    - POLS 4555: Railroads and American Politics

Teaching Assistant, POLS 7012, Introduction to Political Methodology (Graduate), University of Georgia, Department of Political Science

- Dr. Robert Grafstein and Dr. Michael Lynch (Fall 2019)

Research Experience

Research Assistant, University of Georgia Department of Political Science

- Dr. Jamie L. Carson (Fall 2020-Spring 2021)
- Dr. M.V. Trey Hood (Fall 2020-Spring 2021)
- Dr. Keith L. Dougherty (Summer 2020)
- Dr. Jamie L. Carson (Fall 2018-Spring 2019)
- Dr. Jason Anastasopoulos (Fall 2018-Spring 2019)
- Dr. Charles S. Bullock III (Fall 2017-Spring 2018)
- Dr. Keith L. Dougherty (Fall 2017-Spring 2018)

Selected Working Papers

"It's a Challenge! The Electoral Consequences of District Offices" with Jason S. Byers and Laine Shay

"Nationalized Politics and the 2020 Elections." with Jamie L. Carson and Spencer Hardin

"The Effects of Discrimination on Support for the Black Lives Matter Movement." with Neil S. Williams and Karlee Taylor.

"*Smith v. Allwright*: Examining External Reform and the Electoral Connection." With Adam G. Rutkwoski and Ryan D. Williamson

"Context Matters: Examining Restrictive Rules and Machine Learning Classifiers." with Michael Lynch and Anthony J. Madonna

"Strategic Presidential Candidacy Announcements in the Invisible Primary." with Jason S. Byers.

"Does Quality Still Matter? Reexamining Nationalization's Effect on Primary and General Elections." with Jason S. Byers, and Jamie L. Carson

"Unpacking Quality: Examining Voter Perceptions of Previous Electoral Experience." with Jason S. Byers and Matthew E. Kopp

Conference Presentations

2026

"Electoral Experience in Senate Primary Elections; 1956 – 2024" Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, with Jason S. Byers (2026).

2025

"The Incumbency Advantage in U.S. Senate Primary Elections" Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jason S. Byers (2025).

2024

"It's a Challenge! The Electoral Consequences of District Offices" Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jason S. Byers and Laine P. Shay (2024).

2023

"Quality Challengers and Competition in U.S. Senate Primary Elections." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jason S. Byers (2023).

"The Effects of Discrimination on Support for the Black Lives Matter Movement." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Neil S. Williams and Karlee Taylor (2023).

2022

"Money, Nationalization, and the Vote: Campaign Finance in U.S. Congressional Elections." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jamie L. Carson and Joel Sievert (2022).

"Citizen Preferences for their Legislative Body." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Neil S. Williams and Karlee Taylor (2022).

"The Effects of the Great Compromise on the Constitutional Convention of 1787." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Keith L. Dougherty (2022).

2021

"Money and Nationalization: Campaign Finance in Congressional Elections." Paper accepted for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, with Jamie L. Carson and Joel Sievert.

"*Smith v. Allwright*: Examining External Reform and the Electoral Connection" Paper to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Ryan D. Williamson and Adam G. Rutkowski.

"Holding the President Accountable: Analyzing the 2020 Presidential and Congressional Elections." Paper to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Spencer Hardin and Jamie L. Carson.

2020

"Evaluating the Roots of Careerism in the U.S. House of Representatives." Paper Accepted for the American Political Science Association, with Jamie L. Carson [Panel Canceled: COVID-19]

"Money, Nationalization, and the Vote: Campaign Finance in U.S. Congressional Elections." Paper Accepted for the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jamie L. Carson [Canceled: COVID-19]

2019

"A Referendum on Trump: Analyzing the 2018 Midterm Elections." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, with Jason S. Byers, Jamie L. Carson, and Jordan McKissick

"Success at the Constitutional Convention." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, with Keith L. Dougherty

Grants, Fellowships, and Awards

Provost's Junior Faculty Award (Whitworth – 2024)

Young Alumni Achievement Award (King University - 2024)

Pi Sigma Alpha Chapter Grant (2024)

Dornsife Faculty Fellow (2023-2024)

Faculty Research and Development Fellowship Award (2023)

The Dirksen Center Congressional Research Grant (2021)

The University of Georgia Graduate School Dean's Award (2021)

IA Graduate Student Small Research Grant (2021) (with Neil S. Williams & Karlee Taylor)

Prestage-Cook Travel Award (2020 SPSA) (Canceled attendance: Earthquakes)

Reed Fellowship, University of Georgia (2018-2019)

Excellence in Research Award, University of Georgia (2018-19)

Thomas P. Lauth Fellowship, University of Georgia (2017-2018)

Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, King University (2017)

Student Leadership Award, Student Affairs (2017)

Skills

LATEX, R, R Studio, STATA, WinBUGS/JAGS, Microsoft Excel

Volunteer and Service

Political Science Internship Coordinator – Whitworth University 2024-2025.

Co-Chair of university-wide *Democracy and Discourse Coordinating Committee* 2024-2025 at Whitworth University

Member of Organizing Committee for the 2024 Spokane Intercollegiate Research Conference

Head Delegate of Whitworth to COP28, United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2023; Dubai, UAE.

Journal Referee—*Political Behavior, American Politics Research, Political Research Quarterly, Party Politics, Journal of Political Marketing, Journal of Cyber Policy*

Chair & Discussant – The 2024 Elections – Midwest Political Science Association (2025)

Discussant – Recent Developments in American Politics - SPIA Undergraduate Research Colloquium (2022)

Discussant – Women's Rights and Representation - SPIA Undergraduate Research Colloquium (2019)

Student Government President (SGA) – King University (2016-2017)

Congressional Intern (D.C. Capitol Office) – Congressman Phil Roe (TN-01) (2017)

Campaign Manager for Tennessee State House of Representatives Election (2016)

Media Interviews and/or Media References

April 22, 2025. Liz Cheney to Speak at Whitworth's Leadership Forum April 23. https://favs.news/liz-cheney-speak-whitworths-leadership-forum-april-23/

Feb 10, 2025. Whitworth trio talk about attending COP29 world climate conference. https://www.spokanepublicradio.org/regional-news/2025-02-10/whitworth-trio-talk-about-attending-cop29-world-climate-conference

November 5, 2024. "Political expert Dr. Aaron Hitefield, Whitworth University." https://www.kxly.com/video/political-expert-dr-aaron-hitefield-whitworth-university/video_8b79df57-5363-584d-a64f-f237256ee159.html

November 2, 2024. "Local elections may matter more than presidential, say political science experts." https://www.kxly.com/news/politics/4thepeople-elections-

coverage/local-elections-may-matter-more-than-presidential-say-political-science-experts/article_6b9cc7aa-98a1-11ef-91a5-33bcdd65b651.html

Sept. 25, 2024. "Blue city, red county: Spokane voter divide reflects population shifts and political preferences." https://www.kxly.com/news/politics/4thepeople-elections-coverage/blue-city-red-county-spokane-voter-divide-reflects-population-shifts-and-political-preferences/article_7edaa184-7abf-11ef-a844-e77baf390c1f.html

Sept. 13, 2024. "New candidates vie for Eastern Washington district seat in upcoming congressional election." https://www.kxly.com/news/politics/4thepeople-elections-coverage/new-candidates-vie-for-eastern-washington-district-seat-in-upcoming-congressional-election/article_1c2be660-7222-11ef-a686-b382eff9fe84.html

April 9, 2024: "GU faculty host election crash course for 2024 presidential election." https://www.gonzagabulletin.com/news/gu-faculty-host-election-crash-course-for-2024-presidential-election/article_d061d054-f6da-11ee-b15b-af76415f1119.html

See also: https://youtu.be/3T5VC1Q22d0?si=lIK1JuA6h9OFGmQz

February 2024: PBS Civics Bowl Guest Questioner – Guest KSPS PBS; sponsored by the League of Women Voters and KSPS. *April 8th.*

November 22, 2023: "Whitworth professor, 2 students attend United Nations Climate Change Conference"

November 21, 2023: Whitworth Professor and Two Students to Attend United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 28

November 9, 2022: "How Democrats stifled the 'red wave' despite high inflation, low approval ratings."

November 8, 2022: "Election analysts break down early results from local general election races."

November 3, 2022: "#4ThePeople: Murray, Smiley collectively spent over $36 million during campaign."

October 9, 2020: Poll conducted by M.V. Hood III, Aaron A. Hitefield, and Jake S. Truscott referenced in Wall Street Journal article entitled "Georgia Poll: Trump, Biden Virtually Tied, Open Senate Race Tight."

References

Available Upon Request