Sean Christopher Rao

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Education:

University of Maryland, College Park, August 2015-current
-Doctoral candidate, Government and Politics, expected graduation May 2023
-Coursework completed, cumulative GPA 4.0, including coursework in intrastate and interstate conflict and cooperation, comparative institutions, political economy, public opinion, field methods, and quantitative methods
-Comprehensive exams passed in international relations (January 2017) and comparative politics (January 2018)
-Advanced to candidacy August 2020

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, September 2013-May 2015
-M.A., Political Science
-GPA 4.0, including coursework in ethnic conflict, interstate conflict, authoritarian institutions, political economy, and quantitative methods

University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 2007-May 2011
-Honors B.A. in international studies, emphasis in global security
-GPA: 3.866, Honors College of Letters and Science: Dean's List, 5 semesters
-Phi Beta Kappa member, inducted April 2010

Research Interests:

Religious rhetoric and mobilization, political Islam, violent and nonviolent contentious politics, spread of ideology through social media, identity and conflict, non-state conflict actors, Middle Eastern politics, public opinion on foreign policy

Works in Progress:

-"Praying Together and Staying Together: Faction Survival in Self-Determination Movements", Dissertation (First Article)
> Question: Why do some organizations persist in demanding autonomy or independence for decades while others cease after only a short time?
> Answer: Organizations with political claims from religion or religion-like ideologies have more committed members and, so, are more likely to persist.
> Evidence: Original cross-national dataset on ideology in autonomy-seeking political organizations

-"Mechanisms of Religious Rhetoric and Political Mobilization", Dissertation (Second Article)
> Question: Does religion serve as a commitment signal for electoral candidates, and does such commitment earn votes?
> Answer: Religious claims increase perceptions of a candidate's commitment to a goal but do not increase support for the candidate.
> Evidence: Survey experiment with 507 university undergraduates

-"True Believers in Politics: Ideational and Solidary Rewards among the Palestinian Arab Citizens of Israel", Dissertation (Third Article)

> Question: Why does the effectiveness of religious and ideological mobilization vary?
> Answer: State restriction on religion and ideological activity signal increased costs of participation which counteract the benefits for mobilization.
> Evidence: In-depth elite interviews in Israel in Summer 2021

-"Rebel Group Origins and Civilian Victimization", co-authored with Jessica Maves Braithwaite, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Margaret McWeeney

> Question: Which rebels attack and abuse civilians?
> Answer: Rebel groups with ties to local communities through nonviolent organizations are less likely to abuse civilians.
> Evidence: Cross-national quantitative data on rebel origins and civilian abuse

Fellowships and Awards:

"Exclusive and Inclusive Religious and National Values: The Case of American Views on Israel", presented at the Midwest Political Science Conference, April 2021

> Question: Why do Americans hoping to preserve a traditional definition of national identity sympathize with Israel?
> Answer: These Americans favor Israel due to its alliance with the United States and their own anti-Islamic and pro-Jewish sentiments.
> Evidence: Nationally representative survey with original questions on American identity and views of Israel

Teaching Experience:

-Fulbright One-Semester Ph.D. Research Award, Summer 2021, Israel
-Humane Studies Fellowship, Institute for Humane Studies, Spring 2022
-UMD Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference, 3rd Place Presentation, Spring 2022
-UMD Flagship Fellow, 2015
-UWM Chancellor's Graduate Student Award, 2013

Instructor, Government and Politics, University of Maryland, August 2020-January 2021
-Independently taught introduction to international relations for 38 freshmen students
-Applied online tools to provide learning outcomes in the online pandemic environment, balancing recorded lectures with synchronous class discussions and small group activities, a multi-stage written project, and a virtual role-playing simulation

Teaching Assistant, Government and Politics, University of Maryland, August 2018-June 2020; January-April 2021
-Led discussion sections in both international relations and political theory (ethics)
-Advised students on research questions, formulating arguments, and organizing evidence in written work
-Advised undergraduate students in semester practicum research projects for the College Park Scholars International Studies program (Spring 2019)

Other Academic Employment:	<u>Program Assistant, Wisconsin Universities United Nations Summer Seminar, January 2014-July 2015</u> -Scheduled briefings for undergraduates at the missions of around 40 UN member states in New York -Advised undergraduates on finding research topics <u>Teaching Assistant, UW-Milwaukee Department of Political Science, August 2013-May 2015</u> -Monitored online course discussion boards -Assisted with courses on international relations, American politics, and political theory <u>Research Assistant to Professor Shibley Telhami, August 2017-June 2018</u> -Analyzed, interpreted, and presented results of biennial, US public opinion polls -Designed poll questions to identify the sources of US public opinion on foreign policy -Conducted background research on the ties between the Trump campaign and Evangelical Christians <u>Research Assistant to Professor Kathleen Cunningham, August 2015-August 2017</u> -Retrieved facts on rebel group formation in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East for faculty from media and academic databases, including Lexis Nexis and Factiva -Interpreted regression models and transformed time series datasets using R software <u>Research Assistant to Professor Ora John Reuter, August 2014-May 2015</u> -Coded dataset on elections in non-democracies since 1972 -Coded dataset classifying regime transitions in non-democracies since 1972
Professional Associations:	-Midwest Political Science Association, member since 2014 -American Political Science Association, member since 2015 -Philadelphia Society, member since 2020 -Society of Catholic Social Scientists, member since 2021
Data Skills:	-Multinomial MLE, multilevel modeling, survey weighting, R software
Languages:	-Advanced high Arabic speaking and reading (Modern Standard and Levantine); intermediate writing -Advanced French reading; intermediate speaking and writing
University Service:	-Government and Politics Graduate Student Association, co-chair, 2016-2017 -Graduate Faculty Mentor Award Committee, student member, Spring 2019