Kayla Kahn

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Education

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and Social Data Analytics *Expected* May 2025
Dissertation: "Relationships that Kill: Terrorist Networks, Lethality, and Survival"
Master of Arts in Political Science August 2021
Master's Thesis: "Signaling and Success: Does Terrorist Group Lethality Affect Success?"

The University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science December 2017
Minor in Global and International Studies GPA: 3.97

Experience

Research Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University, *Dr. Marie Hojnacki* January 2024 – Present

- Wrote code to extract 2.7 million scraped tweets and metadata from nested JSON files
- Assessed classification accuracy of pre-trained transformer models and selected best model to classify 2.7 million tweets as political or not political
- Created topic models for 430,000 political tweets after classification
- Composed SQL queries to create tables and to insert and clean millions of rows of data

R Workshop Instructor, The Pennsylvania State University, *Department of Political Science* August 2024

- Taught R to incoming Political Science doctoral students
- Developed tutorials that cover data manipulation in base R and tidyverse, visualization in base R and ggplot2, simulations, loops, and user-defined functions

Research Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University, *Drs. Glenn Palmer and Roseanne McManus* August 2019 – July 2020

- Collaborated with a team to code militarized conflicts into individual incidents based on news articles for the fifth iteration of the Militarized Interstate Dispute dataset
- Assisted project leaders in aggregating separate incidents to the more complex dispute level and in finalizing the datasets for release
- Summarized information on entire conflicts into few-sentence narratives released alongside the data

Research Intern, The Hudson Institute's Center for Political-Military Analysis September 2017 – May 2018

- Conducted qualitative research on security issues including weapons proliferation

Skills

Methods: Network analysis, deep learning, machine learning, natural language processing, traditional regression models
Programming: R, Python, SQL
Languages: Spanish (working proficiency reading, limited working proficiency speaking), German (limited working proficiency)

Awards

Paterno Fellowship, The Pennsylvania State University 2022 – 2023
C-SoDA Accelerator Award, The Pennsylvania State University 2022
Political Science Graduate Research Fellowship, The Pennsylvania State University 2022
Jesse M. MacKnight Memorial Graduate Scholarship, The Pennsylvania State University 2019
Pi Sigma Alpha, The University of Kansas 2016

Publications

Block, Ray, Jr., Michael Burnham, **Kayla Kahn**, Rachel Peng, Jeremy Seeman, and Christopher Seto. 2022. "Perceived Risk, Political Polarization, and Adherence to COVID-19 Mitigation Guidelines." *Social Science and Medicine* 305.

Palmer, Glenn, Roseanne W. McManus, Vito D'Orazio, Michael R. Kenwick, Mikaela Karstens, Chase Bloch, Nick Dietrich, **Kayla Kahn**, Kellan Ritter, and Michael J. Soules. 2022. "The MID5 Dataset, 2011-2014: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 39(4): 470–482.

Selected Working Papers

Burnham, Michael, **Kayla Kahn**, Ryan Yang Wang, and Rachel X. Peng. "Political DEBATE: Efficient Zero-shot and Few-shot Classifiers for Political Text." arXiv preprint: https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2409.02078.

Kahn, Kayla. "License to Kill: Terrorist Group Relationships and Lethality." **Dissertation research**.

Kahn, Kayla. "Live and Let Die: Terrorist Group Lethality, Survival, and Success." **Dissertation research**.

Selected Teaching Experience

Primary Instructor, The Pennsylvania State University, *International Relations Theory*   August 2023 – December 2023

- Guided students through the process of writing a research paper by providing feedback on smaller assignments that would eventually come together to be the final paper
- Facilitated discussion posts and provided feedback on assignments relating current events to grand theory, theories of international conflict, or theories of international economy

Teaching Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University, *Introduction to International Relations*   August 2021 – December 2021

- Collaborated with other teaching assistants and professor in order to grade exams
- Expanded on concepts from lessons during office hours