

CARLA GARCIA (she/her)

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EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA

Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science

Expected Spring 2026

Dissertation: *Who Said That All Is Lost?* Essays on Student Protest Movements in Latin America

Committee: F. Daniel Hidalgo (Chair), Evan Lieberman, Ben Ross Schnieder

University of Central Florida

Orlando, FL

B.A. in Political Science, B.S. in Economics

2020

Magna Cum Laude and University Honors

SKILLS

Software/Programming: R, LaTeX, Qualtrics, Adobe Creative Cloud

Research: Surveys, causal inference, qualitative interviews

Languages: Spanish (native proficiency)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA

PhD Candidate

September 2020 – Present

- Completed two years of graduate coursework in Comparative Politics and Political Economy
- Conducted interviews with student activists at public universities as part of international field research trips in Mexico City, Mexico and Guatemala City, Guatemala
- Leverage quantitative and qualitative research methods to write a dissertation composed of three research papers, each of which explores the social impacts of student protests in Latin America
- Design, implement, and analyze online research surveys in international contexts
- Present at conferences and departmental workshops to communicate findings to academic community

PROFESSIONAL AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

MIT Summer Research Program

Cambridge, MA

Pod Leader Liaison

June – August 2024

- Worked closely with staff from the MIT Office of Graduate Education to provide support and programming for a cohort of nearly 100 undergraduate research interns from diverse backgrounds
- Supported a group of 20 *pod leaders* (graduate student mentors), assisting them with managing issues in their intern groups and providing feedback on program deliverables
- Planned and hosted workshop presentations for interns on topics such as research poster design, the graduate school application process, and graduate fellowships
- Held weekly office hours to assist interns with questions about the academic research process, career goals, and graduate school admissions

MIT Summer Research Program

Cambridge, MA

Pod Leader

June – August 2023

- Mentored a group of ten undergraduate research interns who were visiting MIT as part of a program designed to introduce students from underrepresented backgrounds to academic research and graduate education
- Collaborated with a partner (co-pod leader) to plan weekly discussion meetings and social events for the group
- Provided feedback on interns' deliverables, such as mock grant proposals, scientific abstracts, and posters

MIT Department of Political Science

Cambridge, MA

Grader – How Dictatorship Works

Spring 2023

- Graded written exams and final presentations for a midsize undergraduate political science course

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Latinx Graduate Student Association

Cambridge, MA

President

September 2025 - Present

- Led a large, campus-wide student organization whose mission is to support and empower Latinx-identifying graduate students
- Oversaw the organization's executive board by delegating tasks and providing support for event planning
- Maintained strong relationships with various student affairs offices on campus

Social & Cultural Co-Chair

September 2024 – August 2025

- Collaborated with a team to plan social events intended to foster a sense of community and belonging among Latinx-identifying graduate students at MIT
- Co-chaired the planning committee for MIT's 2025 Latino Graduation Celebration, a large-scale event hosted in collaboration with the Latino Cultural Center, MIT Alumni Association, and MIT Intercultural Engagement
- Organization awarded the 2025 MIT RISE Award for Student Organization of the Year

MIT Office of Graduate Education

Cambridge, MA

Graduate Diversity Ambassador

September 2024 – Present

- Promoted the recruitment of a diverse graduate student body by participating in various outreach activities, such as Q&A panels for underrepresented prospective students

Political Science Graduate Student Council

Cambridge, MA

Diversity Co-Chair

September 2024 – May 2025

- Organized a student-run initiative that paired prospective PhD applicants from diverse backgrounds with a graduate student mentor who would provide guidance on the application process
- Advocated for student concerns within the department, especially as they related to belonging and inclusion

Latin American Working Group

Cambridge, MA

Organizer/Co-Organizer

September 2022 – May 2024

- Coordinated an interdisciplinary workshop series which invites local scholars to give talks at MIT about research projects related to Latin American politics and society

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"The Effects of Social Protest on Public Opinion: Evidence from Colombia" *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Los Angeles, CA. Sept 2023.

"The Effects of Social Protest on Public Opinion: Evidence from Colombia" *LAPOP Public and Democracy in the Americas Conference*, Antigua, Guatemala Sept 2022.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2020 – 2025

American Political Science Association Diversity Fellowship, 2020

UCF Ronald E. McNair Scholar, 2018 – 2020