

# MARIA D. PEREZ

PhD Candidate Political Science and International Relations



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## SUMMARY

I use mixed methods in my dissertation to test the effect that corporate communication strategies have on the behavior and attitude of firms' stakeholders. I have experience working with quantitative statistical analysis, survey data, A/B testing, survey experiments, in-depth interviews, focus groups, text analysis, machine learning, time series data and hierarchical multilevel-regression analysis.

## EXPERIENCE

**UX Researcher & Market Research, Summer Intern** *Ableton Inc, Los Angeles.* 05/2021 – 08/2021

- Designed and executed a research project to expand the reach of Ableton's software by identifying points of market entry, improving the methods to engage with current and prospect consumers, and informing the advertising product strategy.
- Completed a competitive analysis and benchmarking report on the music software industry's key players and their products.
- Collaborated with the UX and product team in creating a mix method research framework to identify user needs and improve their engagement with the product. This included defining questions for a survey methodology and in-depth interviews, and developing quantitative measurements for usability testing.

**Graduate Research Assistant** *University of Southern California, Los Angeles.* 08/2020 – Present

- Designed and executed a cross-country A/B test that increased the subscription of local politicians to a NGO's newsletter.
- Developed the statistical analysis of public opinion estimates by running hierarchical multilevel models with the R package lme4 using complex survey and demographic data.
- Matched, cleaned and managed sensitive data from the cross-national European Value Survey database and other official European statistical data sources to feed into the hierarchical multilevel models.
- Generated small-area poststratification frames (weights) using census data and the R package anesrake.

**Teaching Assistant** *University of Southern California, Los Angeles* 08/2019 – 08/2021

- Advanced Strategy (MOR 563, MBA course)
- Political Economy (IR 213, undergraduate course)
- International Relations (IR210, undergraduate course)

**Executive Associate Public Affairs & Communications** *Estudio de Comunicación, Spain* 10/2017 – 06/2018

- Lead consultant in the development of the firm's new public affairs research department.
- Defined and implemented corporate political strategies through key stakeholder mapping and engagement tactics.
- Designed and analyzed surveys, interviews and focus groups with clients' stakeholders (i.e. consumers and employees).

**Associate Public Affairs Consultant** *KREAB Worldwide, Spain* 12/2014 – 09/2017

- Researcher at the KREAB Research Unit for socio-economic studies on trade and business relations in Spain.
- Formulated, implemented and analyzed corporate reputation and perception studies targeting the brand image of international clients from private and non-profit sectors. Methods included surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews and text analysis.

## RESEARCH & SOFTWARE SKILLS

- Causal Inference | Survey Experiments | Field Experiments with partnering organizations | Conjoint Surveys.
- Qualitative Methods | Focus Groups | In-depth Interviews.
- Survey Data | Hierarchical Multilevel Modeling | Time Series Data | Estimation of poststratification frames (MRP).
- Webscraping and quantitative text | Sentiment analysis | Supervised and unsupervised topic modeling.
- R; Stata; Python; LaTeX; Qualtrics; Tableau
- Spanish, English

## EDUCATION

<b>PhD, Political Science and International Relations</b> <i>University of Southern California, USA</i>	Expected 2023
<b>MS, Economics and Applied Econometrics</b> <i>University of Southern California, USA</i>	Expected 2021
<b>Postgraduate Certificate, Public Affairs Management</b> <i>Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, Spain</i>	2017
<b>MA, Political and Corporate Communication</b> <i>Universidad Camilo José Cela, Spain</i>	2015
<b>BA, English Studies and Linguistics</b> <i>UNED, Spain</i>	2015
<b>BA, International Relations</b> <i>Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain</i>	2014

## PAPERS & PROJECTS

1. **"What Drives Politicians to Learn?"** (with Miguel Pereira and Kaya Axelsson) (2021)
  - Experimental design to test which messages increase the participation of political elites in a global workshop on climate change. Used multilevel regressions with postratifications to generate public opinion estimates on environmental issues.
2. **"Values Over Money: The Effect of Corporate Activism of Political Stakeholders"** (2021)
  - Conjoint survey experiment and field experiment with political elites to quantify the extent to which corporate activism creates additional economic costs for domestic and foreign firms that communicate their socio-political values.
3. **"Can Corporate Activism Drive Political Consumerism?"** (2021)
  - National survey experiment with 6500 Amazon MTurk workers and in-depth interviews to identify the causal effect of the firms' sociopolitical communication tactics on the consumers' boycott or boycott responses.
4. **"Sources of the Activist Firm: Firm-Level Determinants of Corporate Activism"** (2021)
  - Mixed methods to explore the determinates of corporate political activism. The project includes, in-depth interviews, survey data and quantitative analysis of an original database on firm-level political behavior.
5. **"Who Has Preferential Access to Legislators: A Lobbying Experiment and Elite Survey"** (2020)
  - Lobbying field experiment and elite survey partnering with two advocacy organizations to provide a causal estimate of the effect of an organization's type of interests on its access into legislative institutions.