




Salil D. Benegal

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 [Personal website](#)
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Employment

Union College

Department of Political Science

Joseph B. Board Assistant Professor of Environmental Policy, 2023-present

DePauw University

Department of Political Science

Associate Professor with tenure, 2022-2023

Assistant Professor, 2016-2022

Affiliated faculty: Environmental Fellows Program

Education

Ph.D.: Political Science, University of Connecticut, 2016

Dissertation: *A Changing Climate in the Public Mind: How do Economic Risks and Partisan Divides Affect How We Think about Climate Change?*

Committee: Lyle Scruggs (chair), Matthew Singer, Paul Herrnson

Graduate Certificate in Human Rights: University of Connecticut. 2012.

M.A.: Economics, University of Connecticut, 2010.

B.Sc.: Chemistry, Illinois Institute of Technology, 2008

Teaching and research

Environmental politics, climate policy, energy transitions, public opinion, political psychology

Journal articles

12. Motta, Matthew and Salil Benegal. 2023. "How Pandemic-Related Changes in Global Attitudes Toward the Scientific Community Shape "Post-Pandemic Environmental Opinion". *Public Understanding of Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09636625231167735>
11. Benegal, Salil, Flávio Azevedo, and Mirya Holman. 2022. "Race, ethnicity, and support for climate policy: Understanding group differences and mechanisms." *Environmental Research Letters*. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/aca0ac>

10. Benegal, Salil and Matthew Motta. 2022. "Overconfident, Resentful, and Misinformed: How Racial Animus Motivates Confidence in False Beliefs" *Social Science Quarterly*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13224>
9. Benegal, Salil and Mirya R. Holman. 2021. "Understanding the importance of sexism in shaping climate denial and policy opposition" *Climatic Change* 167: 2.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-021-03193-y>
8. Benegal, Salil and Mirya R. Holman. 2021. "Racial prejudice, education, and views of climate change" *Social Science Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13004>
7. Bayulgen, Oksan and Salil Benegal. 2019. "Green Priorities: How Economic Frames Affect Perceptions of Renewable Energy." *Energy Research & Social Science* 47:1.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2018.08.017>
6. Benegal, Salil. 2018. "Overconfidence and the Discounting of Expertise: A Commentary." *Social Science and Medicine* 213, 95-97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2018.07.039>
5. Benegal, Salil and Lyle Scruggs. 2018. "Correcting Misinformation About Climate Change: The Impact of Partisanship in an Experimental Setting." *Climatic Change* 148: 2, 61-80
<http://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-018-2192-4>
4. Benegal, Salil. 2018. "The Spillover of Race and Racial Attitudes into Public Opinion about Climate Change." *Environmental Politics* 27:4, 733-756
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2018.1457287>
3. Benegal, Salil. 2017. "The impact of unemployment and economic risk perceptions on attitudes towards anthropogenic climate change." *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*:
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-017-0452-7>
2. Scruggs, Lyle, and Salil Benegal. 2012. "Declining Public Concern About Climate Change: Can We Blame the Great Recession?" *Journal of Global Environmental Change* 22(2): 505-515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2012.01.002>
1. Bai, James, Kaleyhia Flowers, Salil Benegal, Milagros Calizo, Vrudhdhi Patel, and Sandra Whaley Bishnoi. 2009. "Using the Enzymatic Growth of Nanoparticles to create a Biosensor: An Undergraduate Quantitative Analysis Experiment." *Journal of Chemical Education* 86(6): 712-716. <http://doi.org/10.1021/ed086p712>

Book chapters

2. Benegal, Salil, and Lyle Scruggs. 2016. "Economic Conditions and Public Opinion on Climate Change" in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Climate Change Communication*.
<http://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.310>
1. Chapman, Audrey R., and Salil Benegal. 2013. "Globalization and the Right to Health." in *The State of Economic and Social Human Rights: A Global Overview*, ed. Alanson Minkler. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 61-85.

Working manuscripts

7. “Blamed for blackouts: Understanding polarization and misinformation over renewable energy in the United States.” With Lyle Scruggs.
6. “Late Deciding Voters in US Presidential Elections.” With Thomas J. Hayes.
5. “Cost Sensitivity, Partisan Cues, and Support for the Green New Deal.” With Jon Green.
4. “Understanding early COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy across racialized demographics in the United States.” With Emmitt Riley.
3. “Hostile sexism, Dunning-Kruger attitudes, and views of climate change.” With Mirya Holman.
2. “Intersections of gendered and economic system justification, and implications for climate change.” With Flavio Azevedo and Mirya Holman.
1. “Partisan norms in environmental action: Examining the effect of ingroup views on partisans' attitudes towards climate change”. With Lyle Scruggs.

Public Scholarship

6. NPR Michigan Radio interview: Study: Republicans can be persuasive when correcting climate change misinformation. <https://www.michiganradio.org/environment-science/2018-04-26/study-republicans-can-be-persuasive-when-correcting-climate-change-misinformation>
5. Washington Post Monkey Cage editorial: Pruitt’s EPA denies climate science. Republicans can correct him. Will they? <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/05/04/pruitts-epa-denies-climate-science-republicans-can-correct-him-will-they/>
4. DailyKos: Elite Opinions On the Right Might Be Key To Booting Pruitt. <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2018/4/17/1757750/-Elite-Opinions-On-the-Right-Might-Be-Key-To-Booting-Pruitt>
3. Sierra Club: Climate Deniers Are More Likely to Be Racist. Why? <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/climate-deniers-are-more-likely-be-racist-obama-trump-climate-change>
2. Washington Post (citation): White America’s racial resentment is the real impetus for welfare cuts, study says. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/05/30/white-americas-racial-resentment-is-the-real-impetus-for-welfare-cuts-study-says/>
1. NexusMedia: Racial Resentment May Be Fueling Climate Denial. <https://nexusmedianews.com/racial-resentment-could-be-fueling-climate-denial-65d32fbeaa8e/>

Recent conference presentations (Last 2 years)

Benegal, Salil, and Lyle Scruggs. "Correcting partisan misinformation over renewable energy in the United States" Presented at the 2023 Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Chicago.

Hayes, Thomas J., and Benegal, Salil. "Waiting to Decide and Deciding Elections: Late-Deciding Voters in U.S. Elections." Presented at the 2022 International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) Annual Meeting, Athens, Greece.

Benegal, Salil, Flávio Azevedo, and Mirya R. Holman. "Race and climate change: understanding group differences and mechanisms." Presented at the 2022 Climate Pipeline Project at the Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

Benegal, Salil, and Mirya R. Holman. Hostile Sexism, Dunning-Kruger attitudes, and views of climate change. Presented at the Politics and the Life Sciences conference and workshop at Western University in London, Ontario (2021)

Benegal, Salil, and Mirya R. Holman. Racial prejudice, education, and views of climate change. Presented at the Politics of the Environment and Climate Change (PECC) Lab, at Royal Holloway, University of London (2021)

Prior research grants:

DePauw University J. William and Dorothy A. Asher Fund in the Psychological Sciences (Spring 2018)

DePauw University Faculty-Student Summer Research Grant (Summer 2017)

DePauw University J. William and Dorothy A. Asher Fund in the Social Sciences (Spring 2017)

University of Connecticut Brain Imaging Research Center (BIRC) Seed Grant for fMRI Research (Fall 2015), with Mikhael Shor, Peter Molfese, and Thomas Hayes

"Media and Public Opinion about Renewable Energy", experimental survey design and analysis with Oksan Bayulgen, UConn Department of Political Science, 2015.

CIRI Human Rights Data Project, data coding for physical integrity rights violations for David Richards, UConn Human Rights Institute, 2013.

"Household Consumption and Gender Inequality: Evidence from India", data collection and analysis for Shareen Hertel and Nishith Prakash, UConn Human Rights Institute's Economic and Social Rights Program (ESRP), 2011.

"Explaining Public Opinion about Climate Change", data analysis with Lyle Scruggs, funded by UConn Center for Environmental Studies and Engineering (CESE), 2011.

"Globalization and the Right to Health", data analysis with Audrey R. Chapman, funded by UConn Health Center, UConn Human Rights Institute's Economic and Social Rights Program, and University of Ottawa. 2010-2011.

Social and Economic Rights Fulfillment (SERF) Index Project, data coding for economic rights outcomes for Susan M. Randolph and Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, UConn Department of Economics and Human Rights Institute. 2010.

Courses taught

American Politics

Introduction to American Government
Political Psychology

Environmental/Public policy

US Environmental Policy
US Energy Policy
(Comparative) Politics of Climate Change

Comparative

Comparative Politics and Government / Introduction to Comparative Politics
Introduction to Human Rights
Comparative Perspectives in Human Rights

Methods

Research Design and Writing

Pedagogical workshops

Union College FDI Summer Course Incubator (2023)
DePauw University “Q” workshop on teaching Quantitative Reasoning (2018)
DePauw University “S” workshop on Speaking (2018)
DePauw University “PPD” workshop on teaching Power, Privilege, and Diversity (2017)

Professional service

Manuscript and grant refereeing

American Politics Research; Climatic Change; Energy Research & Social Science; Environment & Behavior; Environmental Communication; Environmental Politics; Global Environmental Change; International Journal of Public Opinion Research; Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Parties; Journal of Human Rights; Journal of Politics; Legislative Studies Quarterly; Political Behavior; Politics, Groups, and Identities; Review of Policy Research; Social Science and Medicine; Social Science Quarterly, Time-Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences.

Conference service

- Discussant for 2023 Climate Pipeline Workshop
- Discussant for conference panel at 2023 Midwest Political Science Association Conference
- Chair for conference panel at 2019 Midwest Political Science Association Conference
- Chair for conference panel at 2018 American Political Science Association Conference

- Discussant for conference panel at 2018 Midwest Political Science Association Conference
- Chair and discussant for conference panel at 2017 Midwest Political Science Association Conference

Invited talks

University of Alabama in Huntsville (2021)

Wabash College (2016)

University-level service (Union College)

- Environmental Science, Policy & Engineering Program (ESPE) Steering Committee (2023-)

University-level service (DePauw)

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) member, 2020-present.
- Environmental Fellows Honors Program Steering Committee (2017-2021)
- Honors Scholar thesis reader, 2017-2021
- Honors Scholar thesis primary advisor, 2018-2019
- Coordinator of faculty writing workshops (Fall 2017-2019)

Department service (DePauw Department of Political Science)

- Search committees for American Government (2017, 2019) and International Politics (2018, 2019, 2020) term/one-year jobs.
- Department liaison for Pi Sigma Alpha (2020-2022)

References upon request

Updated August 23, 2023.