

# CV | Samantha McDonald PhD

sammc5773@gmail.com  
www.samiam.info

From the U.S. Congress to Meta, I use my skills in user experience (UX) + academic research to understand and design technology for human engagement. I love to explore the ethical, political, and cultural implications of designing technical systems.

## EDUCATION

### **University of California, Irvine** — *Ph.D. Informatics*

Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences

Dissertation Committee: Melissa Mazmanian (chair), Paul Dourish, Erhardt Graeff, Bill Tomlinson

### **University of California, Irvine** — *M.S. Informatics*

Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences

### **University of Maryland, Baltimore County** — *B.S. Information Systems*

Department of Information Systems

Research Advisor: Amy Hurst

### **Sophia University** 上智大学, Tokyo - Abroad

## DISSERTATION

### **Constituent Communication in Representative Democracy: Testing Platforms for Deliberation in the U.S. Congress**

My PhD dissertation explores theories of representative democracy, deliberative democracy, civic technology, and the U.S. Congress.

## EXPERIENCE

### **Meta** — *UX Researcher*

Served the Monetization pillar. Addressed advertising needs across a diverse range of clients, from small businesses (e.g., bakeries, hair salons, Etsy stores) to large corporations (e.g., Amazon, Nike).

Investigated topics such as A/B testing, statistical literacy, and user trust in statistical measurements. Focused on UX areas of information accessibility, information recall, user retention, product actionability, and product flow.

### **POPVOX Foundation** — *Consultant*

Collaborated with the POPVOX Foundation as part of my doctoral research to pioneer what is believed to be the first asynchronous, single-topic, online town hall for Members of Congress.

Designed every aspect of the experiment over the course of a year, ensuring academic rigor and practical relevance on a public platform. Findings were used to develop a civic metric toolkit for participatory governance platform design.

### **Facebook — UX Research Intern**

Conducted research for the Business Integrity Transparency & Controls team. Designed an unmoderated user test to assess the effectiveness of Facebook's "Why Am I Seeing This Ad?" feature. Focused on user discoverability and actionability to determine if the design empowered users to manage their advertising experiences.

### **POPVOX — Research Intern**

User testing, design, and research on a new constituent correspondence and media software called LegiDash.

### **Congressional Management Foundation — Independent Research**

Conducting research and developing public reports in collaboration with the Democracy Fund, Congressional Management Foundation, and the Open Gov Foundation. Advised CMF on matters related to constituent communication technology in Congress

### **Congressional Management Foundation — Consulting Researcher**

Performed data analysis for four Congresspersons deploying constituent satisfaction surveys in their districts. Produced public reports on findings.

### **Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab — Intern**

Supported SIRIUS, an Intelligence Advanced Research Project Activity (IARPA) to design and implement educational video games for mitigating cognitive biases in the intelligence field.

Designed and deployed in-person surveys with participatory observation. Results helped determine the effectiveness of the video games to educate users on cognitive bias mitigation, and to select which video games to deploy to intelligence analysts training.

### **Prototyping and Design Lab, UMBC — Undergraduate Research**

Extensive research on 3D printing for assistive technology use and education. Included 3D modeling, rapid prototyping, 3D printer construction, and user-centered design studies

### **Merkle Inc., — Intern**

Captured SQL database requirements for a new billing application.

## **PEDAGOGY**

### **-Lecturer-**

#### **ICS3, Internet Technologies and Their Social Impact**

University of California, Irvine. Spring/Fall 2020

130-150 students. Online courses due to COVID.

### **-Teaching Assistantships-**

#### **ICS5, Global Disruption and Information Technology**

University of California, Irvine. Fall 2017.

Online course, 200+ students with online discussion forums around technology and sustainability.

## ICS 162W, Organizational Information Systems

Winter/Spring 2018

40+ students per class. Taught weekly discussion sections on technical writing and organizational theories.

-Teaching Training-

ICS 298A, Teaching Assistantship Seminar, Fall 2016

Course Design Certificate Program, UCI Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation, Fall 2018

## PUBLICATIONS

– JOURNALS –

**[J1] Communications Technology as Symbols of Institutional Legitimacy in the U.S. Congress.**

Samantha McDonald, Fan Yin & Melissa Mazmanian. (2020) Journal of Information Technology & Politics (JITP)

**[J2] Investigating the implications of 3D printing in special education.**

Erin Buehler, Niara Comrie, Megan Hofmann, Samantha McDonald, and Amy Hurst. (2016) ACM Transactions on Accessible Computing.

– Conference Papers –

*ACM conference papers are considered prestigious high-impact publications in my field, much like journals in other fields.*

**[C1] Information Materialities of Citizen Communication in the U.S. Congress.** Samantha McDonald and Melissa Mazmanian. (2019) ACM CSCW Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, Article 47. November 2019.

**[C2] Uncovering challenges and opportunities for 3D printing assistive technology with physical therapists.**

Samantha McDonald, Niara Comrie, Erin Buehler, Nicholas Carter, Braxton Dubin, Karen Gordes, Sandy McCombe-Waller, and Amy Hurst. (2016) ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS).

\*Best Student Paper Award

**[C3] Inclusion and education: 3D printing for integrated classrooms.**

Erin Buehler, William Easley, Samantha McDonald, Niara Comrie, and Amy Hurst. (2015) ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers & Accessibility (ASSETS).

– Workshops –

**[W1] Technologies for Constituent Communication in the U.S. Congress.**

Samantha McDonald. (2020) ACM CSCW Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing. Doctoral Consortium.

**[W2] The Sage Community Coordinator: A Proof of Concept**

Juliet Norton, Birgit Penzenstadler, Samantha McDonald, Emily Kang, Nora Koirala, Rieko Konishi, Gabriela Pena

Carmona, Jainea Sha, Sebastian Troncoso. (2019) ACM Workshop on Computing within Limits (LIMITS).

**[W3] Understanding the Role of Democratic Representation in Citizen Engagement.**

Samantha McDonald. (2019) ACM CSCW Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing. Workshop on Design and the Politics of Collaboration: A Grassroots Perspective

**[W4] Political realities of digital communication: The limits of value from digital messages to members of the US Congress.**

Samantha McDonald, Bonnie Nardi, and Bill Tomlinson. 2017. (2017) ACM Workshop on Computing within Limits (LIMITS).

**[W5] Sustainable Food Systems for Preventative and Prescriptive Medicine.**

Samantha McDonald, Bill Tomlinson. (2017) ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. Workshop on Designing Sustainable Food Systems.

**[W6] 3D printing: a future collapse-compliant means of production.**

Samantha McDonald. (2016) ACM Workshop on Computing within Limits (LIMITS).

**– POSTERS –**

**[P1] TweetHeads: An Analysis of Twitter Use By Different Heads of State.**

Sara Milkes, Samantha McDonald, Benedict Salazar Bolgado.(2019) ACM CSCW Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing. Poster.

**[P2] ICTs for Representative Constituent Communication in the U.S. Congress.**

Samantha McDonald. (2018) ICT4S Information and Communications Technology for Sustainability.

**[P3] Tactile aids for visually impaired graphical design education.**

Samantha McDonald, Joshua Dutterer, Ali Abdolrahmani, Shaun K Kane, and Amy Hurst. (2014) ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers & Accessibility (ASSETS).

**– WHITE PAPERS/ARTICLES –**

**[14] Constituent Correspondence in the U.S. Congress. A Survey of Staff Perspectives.**

Samantha McDonald. (2018) The Democracy Fund.

**[15] From citizens to data points: A word of caution for legislators.**

Samantha McDonald and Melissa Mazmanian. (2019) Blog Post. LegBranch.org. 10 December. 2019.

**[16] How Congress turns citizens' voices into data points. Samantha McDonald (2019)**

The Conversation. 16, September. 2019.

**[17] Staff Perspectives on the State of Constituent Correspondence in the U.S. Congress.**

Samantha McDonald (2018) Legislative Branch Capacity Working Group. 19, December. 2018

[18] **A grand challenge for HCI: food + sustainability.**

Juliet Norton, Ankita Raturi, Bonnie Nardi, Sebastian Probst, Samantha McDonald, Daniel Pargman, Oliver Bates, Maria Normark, Bill Tomlinson, Nico Herbig, et al. (2017) *Interactions* 24, 6 (2017), 50–55.

[19] **Data, Storytelling, and Congress.**

Samantha McDonald. (2017) Congressional Management Foundation Blog. 21, July. 2017.

[20] **Stuck in Thomas Land No More.**

Samantha McDonald. (2017) Congressional Management Foundation Blog. 13, July. 2017

## FUNDING

2018–2021 **Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)** National Science Foundation | \$114,000  
2020 **Associated Graduate Students. Travel Grant.** University of California, Irvine | \$600  
2019 **Congressional Research Grant.** The Dirksen Congressional Center | \$2,450  
2019 **Research Grant.** UCI Center for Organizational Research | \$1,000  
2019 **Conference Travel Scholarship.** Department of Informatics | \$1,000  
2018 **Rob Kling Memorial Fellowship.** Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences | \$2,000  
2018 **Summer Research Grant.** Democracy Fund | \$10,000  
2018 **Conference Presentation Grant.** Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences | \$190  
2017 **Research Grant.** UCI Center for Organizational Research | \$500  
2017 **Conference Presentation Grant.** Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences | \$300  
2017 **Travel Grant.** Associated Graduate Students University of California, Irvine | \$400  
2017 **Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Fellowship.** U.S. Department of Education | \$11,000  
2016 **CREU Research Grant.** Computing Research Association For Women. | \$10,300  
2012–2016 **Center for Women in Technology (CWIT) Scholarship.** UMBC | \$40,000  
2015 **Vijay Jose Memorial Scholarship.** UMBC, Information Systems Department | \$200  
2012, '14, '15 **The Grace Hopper Conference Travel Scholarship.** UMBC, Center for Women in Technology | \$3,600

## PRESENTATIONS

2021 **Guest Panelist,** Online Participation and Democracies. University of Toronto  
2021 **Podcast Guest,** Personal Finance For PhDs by Dr. Emily Roberts  
2020 **Visiting Guest Lecture,** Political in Human–Computer Interaction, University of Helsinki  
2020 **Guest Class Panelist,** INST-800 The Engaged Intellectual, University of Maryland, College Park  
2020 **Community Research Presentation,** LIMITS. ACM Workshop on Computing within Limits  
2020 **Research Presentation,** TICTeC 2020  
2019 **Guest Lecture,** University of California, Irvine. ICS3, Internet Technologies and Their Social Impact

2019 **Guest Lecture**, University of Southern California, CSCI 499, Computing For Social Good  
2019 **Presenter**, The Rise of Platforms: Individual, Institutional, and Governance Questions for Communication Research. ICA Post-Conference  
2018 **Presenter**, Opaque Media: A Workshop. UCI  
2018 **Participant**, UCI Technology, Law, and Society Summer Institute  
2017 **Assistant Organizer**, Food CHI Designing Sustainable Food Systems Workshop  
2016 **Participant**, Sustainable CHI Workshop

## ACADEMIC SERVICE

2019-20 **Lab Manager**, LUCI, Laboratory for Ubiquitous Computing and Interaction  
2020 **AC/Reviewer**, ACM Human Factors in Computing Conference (CHI)  
2019 **Co-Chair**, Student Volunteers, iConference  
2019 **Paper Reviewer**, ACM Human Factors in Computing Conference (CHI)  
2019 **Paper Reviewer**, ACM Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)  
2018 **Student Volunteer**, ACM Human Factors in Computing Conference (CHI)  
2017 **Student Volunteer**, ICT for Sustainability (ICT4S)  
2017 **Student Assistant**, ACM LIMITS Workshop

## VOLUNTEER AND EXTRACURRICULAR

2017-21 **Court Appointed Special Advocate**, Foster Care Volunteer, CASA Orange County  
2019-21 **Shut Up & Write**, Weekly Writing Group Host, UCI Informatics.  
2019 **PhD Workshop Mentor**, Google Explore CRS Undergraduate Workshop  
2017-19 **Rock Wall Setter**, UCI Anteater Recreation Center  
2017 **UCI Organizer**, End of Term Archiving Hackathon (#DataRefuge)  
2017 **Volunteer Gardener**, UCI Sustainable Polycultures Project  
2016-17 **Volunteer Robot Inspector**, Vex Robotics Competitions  
2016-17 **Volunteer Builder**, UCI Aquaponics Club  
2016 **Course Completion**, **American Alpine Institute** – Alpine Rock Climbing  
2015-17 **Trail Builder Volunteer**, Mid-Atlantic Climbers Association  
2013 **Guest Panel Speaker**, STEM Girl Power  
2013-14 **Guest Speaker and Volunteer**, UMBC CWIT Bits and Bytes Retreat For High School Girls  
2013 **Donation Coordinator**, Maryland Food Bank CWIT Scholars  
2012-15 **Treasurer/Secretary**, UMBC Rock Climbing Club