

KARRA MCCRAY GIBSON, PH.D.

University of South Carolina, Department of Political Science — Columbia, SC 29208

karragibson@sc.edu ♦ karramccraygibson.com

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC
Assistant Professor of Political Science

August 2025 - Present

EDUCATION

Brown University, Providence, RI
Ph.D. in Political Science

June 2025

Dissertation Title: *Black Representation in Congress: Identity, Ideology, and Geography*

Committee: Professor Katherine Tate (Chair), Professor Marion Orr, Professor Wendy Schiller

Howard University, Washington, DC

2018

Master of Arts in Political Science

Subfields: Black Politics, American Politics

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

2016

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and English, *Magna Cum Laude*

Academic Awards: Leadership Distinction in Professional & Civic Engagement, President's List, Dean's List

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Testa, Paul, Tarah Williams, Kylee Britzman, **Karra McCray Gibson**, and Matthew Hibbing. 2025. "Does the Messenger Shape the Message's Effect? Race, Black Lives Matter, and the Efficacy of Social Movement Messages." *Journal of Politics*. **Forthcoming**.

Gibson, Karra McCray and Katherine Tate. 2025. "Black Legislators and the Politics of Squad Democrats in the U.S. Congress." *National Review of Black Politics*. **Forthcoming**.

Garcia, Jennifer, **Karra McCray Gibson**, Christopher Stout, and Katherine Tate. 2025. "Does Descriptive Representation Matter More Now Than in The Past? A Reexamination of Black Faces in the Mirror in a Post-Racial Era." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*.

McCray, Karra W. 2022. Review of *The Congressional Black Caucus: Fifty Years of Fighting for Equality*. *National Review of Black Politics*, 3-3.4.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Gibson, Karra McCray. "From Alliance to Action: How Influence Legislative Sponsorship for Congressional Black Caucus Members."

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Testa, Paul, Tarah Williams, Kylee Britzman and **Karra McCray Gibson**. “The Rising Tide that Lifts all Boats? The Persuasive Strategies and Power of Black Women Activists.”

Essel, Kristen and **Karra McCray Gibson**. “Advocating for #MeToo: The Legislative Effects of Congressional Women’s Caucuses.”

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

McCray, Karra W. 2023. [Singular vs. Plural: How Wars Shape Imagined Sovereignty](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2023. [You Can Run from Racism, But You Can’t Hide – Or Can You?](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2023. [Douglass Did Not Imitate Classical Rhetoric; He Transformed It](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2023. [Which Groups Win Meetings with the President?](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2023. [Traumatic Events Are Decreasing Voter Turnout in Affected Areas.](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2022. [Linear Development in the Global South? We’ve Had It All Wrong.](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2022. [Under Which Conditions Will Latinos Show Anti-Black Racism.](#) *Political Science Now*. American Political Science Association.

McCray, Karra W. 2022. [Black Representation Among Commissioned Officers in the Biden White House.](#) Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W. 2021. [Report Card on Black Chiefs of Staff to Cabinet Secretaries in the Biden Administration.](#) Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton 2018. [Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the \(Virginia; Tennessee; Pennsylvania; Mississippi; Maryland; Delaware\) Congressional Delegation.](#) Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

Scott, Elsie. L., **Karra W. McCray**, Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [Diversity Among Top U.S. House Staff.](#) Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Women in Legislative Studies Annual Conference	2023
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2023, 2022
American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2024, 2022
National Conference of Black Political Scientists	2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2017*, 2016
University of South Carolina Advising Conference	2018
<i>*Paper accepted for presentation but could not be presented due to death in family.</i>	

INVITED TALKS

Black Politics Dissertation Workshop, APSA	2024
--	------

Teaching Tips Professionalization Seminar, Political Science Dept., Brown University	2023
“So You’re Thinking about a PhD?” - Howard University Pre-PhD Summer Program	2024, 2023
“State of Black Women Union Roundtable” - Choose T.R.U.E. Project	2023
“2021 and Beyond: Building Equitable Futures” - Brown University Graduate Panel	2021
“The Importance of Voting” - Why Not Young Lives Matter Nonprofit Organization	2020
“Let’s Talk about Colorism” - Xi Beta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.	2018

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

GAP Student Travel Award (\$250)	2025
Taubman Center for American Politics and Policy Graduate Research Fellowship Award (\$2,500)	2023
Office of the Dean of the Faculty & the Dept. of Political Science, Brown University (\$2,268)	2023
Ruth B. Mandel Dissertation Research Award (\$2,000)	2023
Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship (\$81,000)	2023-2026
APSA Public Scholarship Fellow (\$2,000)	2022-23
2022 APSA Summer Centennial Center Research Grant (\$1,309) for the “The Persuasive Power of Black Women” with Paul Testa, Kylee Britzman, and Tarah Williams	2022
New Perspectives in American Governance Grant (\$11,000), Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies with Katherine Tate	2022
Dr. Bernard Edwin Bruce Endowed Fellowship, Brown University Graduate School	2021

HONORS & AWARDS

Paul L. Beasley Trio Trailblazer McNair Alumni Award	2024
Continuity of Government Paper Graduate Student Award hosted by the Democracy Fund, NCOBPS and the Ronald Walters Center for Leadership and Public Policy	2022
P. Terrence Hopmann Award for Teaching Excellence, Brown University	2023, 2021
Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Honorable Mention	2022, 2021
Outstanding Advocate for First-Year Students Award, UofSC	2020
Outstanding Service to Students - Division of Academic Affairs & Student Support, UofSC	2020
Nominated for M. Stuart Hunter Award for Outstanding Teaching in University 101, UofSC	2020
Nominated for Outstanding New Staff Member and the Excellence in Collaboration Award, UofSC	2019
Who’s Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities, UofSC	2016
Greek Woman of the Year by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, UofSC	2015
Dr. Kendra Ogletree-Cusaac Spirit Award, Ronald E. McNair Achievement Program, UofSC	2015
Opportunity Scholars Program Tutor of the Year, UofSC	2015

TEACHING

Undergraduate Courses:

POLI 201: American National Government	Fall 2025
POLI/AFAM 353: Introduction to Racial and Ethnic Politics	Fall 2025

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Chair and Discussant, Roundtable: Congress and History Conference	2025
Chair, APSA Panel: Gender, Intersectionality, and American Party Politics	2024
Reviewer, <i>Politics, Groups, and Identities</i>	2024
Research Mentor, Lumiere Education	2023
Graduate Organizer, Northeast Workshop in Empirical Political Science (NEWEPS-20)	2023
President, Nabrit Black Graduate Student Association, Brown University	2022-2023
Advocacy Chair, Nabrit Black Graduate Student Association, Brown University	2021-2022
Graduate Student Representative, Political Science Dept., Brown University	2021-2022

TRAINING

Foster Student Learning through Effective Teaching, Center for Teacher Excellence	2025
Teaching Seminar, Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, Brown University	2021

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mentor <i>The Yawkey Foundation</i>	2020-Present
Founder <i>Lifting Our Youth</i>	2018-Present

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association
Midwest Political Science Association
National Conference of Black Political Scientists
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated

SKILLS

Programming Languages: R (Tidyverse, ggplot)
Software: \LaTeX , Microsoft Office Suite