Zion Little

Department of Political Science
Washington University in St. Louis

l.zion@wustl.edu
lzion96.github.io

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Game theory and political economy; strategic communication and credibility; computational and probabilistic social choice; formal verification and AI-assisted theorem proving.

EDUCATION

Washington University in St. Louis 2027 (expected)
Ph.D. Political Science
Dissertation: "Three Essays in Political Economy"
Committee: Keith Schnakenberg (Chair), Justin Fox, Carlo Horz

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 2020
B.A. Political Science and Economics

WORKING PAPERS

Little, Zion, Jacob Montgomery, and Keith Schnakenberg. 2026. "Preregistration as Cheap Talk: The Logic and Limits of Self-Enforcing Plans in Scientific Research." Under review, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. SocArXiv preprint.

Little, Zion. 2026. "Reconceptualizing Probabilistic Social Choice Functions" (working title). Working Paper. Formally verified in Lean 4. Repository available upon request.

Little, Zion. "Managing Relationships: Bureaucratic Discretion and Credibility." Working Paper. Draft available upon request.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Little, Zion. "When Is Strategic Ambiguity Actually Strategic When Voters Are Rational?"

Little, Zion. "Strategic Attention Capture: Flooding the Zone and Attention Management."

Little, Zion. "Attentive Cheap Talk."

SOFTWARE

(Working Project): A Lean 4 Formalization of Social Choice Theory. Written to Mathlib's conventions for contribution to Mathlib; developed with Claude. In development, expected completion early 2027.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2024. "Preregistration as Cheap Talk: The Logic and Limits of Self-Enforcing Plans in Scientific Research."

TEACHING

Teaching Assistant, Washington University in St. Louis

Theories of Individual and Collective Choice I, Fall 2022, 2023, 2024 (graduate game theory; instructors Anna Wilke and Justin Fox).

The Legislative Process, Spring 2025 (undergraduate; instructor Jaclyn Kaslovsky).

Quantitative Political Methodology, Spring 2024 (undergraduate; instructor Timm Betz).

Introduction to Political Theory, Spring 2023 (undergraduate; instructor Clarissa Hayward).

WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

Political Economy Workshop and Data Science Lab, Washington University in St. Louis.

COMPUTING

Lean 4, R, Python (SageMath), Emacs Lisp, LaTeX.

Last Updated: October 28, 2026