

Over the past academic year, I worked on a political science thesis. I focused on the Voting Rights Act and the supreme court case: *Shelby County v. Holder*. My research focused on data analysis, which required a lot of data collection. Therefore, my advisor mentioned that I should look into the resources that the library provides. To begin, he recommended reaching out to the Hesburgh Libraries Librarians. I emailed Mark Robison, the librarian focused on political science. Once I reached out to him, he responded promptly and asked for details about my project. Despite the fact that it was a busy time of the year, close to finals in the fall semester, he made time to meet with me in person. Our meeting was scheduled for thirty minutes, but Mark met with me for closer to an hour and a half. I sincerely appreciated the time he spent working with me. After this meeting, we were able to correspond by email through winter break and up until the submission of my senior thesis. I felt extremely supported by his assistance and his guidance. Throughout my research process, Mark encouraged me and my work. He was also interested in my findings and supportive no matter what. Whenever I was stuck with no prospects of proceeding, he was there to lend a helping hand.

I initially turned to Mark because I was looking for a way to access data on presidential voter turnout and voter registration. I had trouble finding this information on the internet. I had seen something about David Leip's data collection, but there was no clear code book and the price was high, at \$74 per year of data. I was looking for six different years. Mark let me know that the library had already purchased four of the years I was interested in and sent them to me to access the information. Then, he told me that the library could purchase the data from 2000 and 2020 and promptly shared those with me. This information was a dream come true and completely inspired me to begin my data analysis.

Mark went far beyond my initial inquiry. The main piece of guidance that Mark had for me was to explore and learn. He gave me so much guidance throughout my project. He even showed me how to search for court cases, which provided me an additional level of understanding of the content I was learning about. For instance, I was introduced to Nexis Uni and the Supreme Court Insight database. I had not been aware of these sources and was able to gain a greater understanding of my research.

My final question for Mark was regarding the method of citation for data. I asked him how I could go about citing the David Leip data, for example. He had such amazing advice and sent me examples of how other researchers had cited David Leip's data historically. I had never cited data before and was unsure how to go about it. Mark completely calmed my fears and gave me the confidence to cite this source.

Through my research, I also used the Center for Digital Scholarship. I reached out to the Research Data Services Consulting Team. They immediately reached out to help me with my inquiry. Within minutes, I had a team of individuals helping me with my inquiry. I was trying to open a .dat file and was unable to. When I provided the team with more information, they were able to help me. I ended up not needing to open the .dat file. A member of the team actually knew of an R package with the information I was looking for: cpsvote. This insight was game changing for my research and helped me keep forging ahead in my analysis. I love using RStudio, so I was very excited to see that this package existed. Furthermore, when I had some questions about the package, I was able to address my questions using the CRAN page for cpsvote that a member of the Center for Digital Scholarship's team had shared with me.

I was also able to use the spaces in the Hesburgh Library for this project. I have a favorite spot in the library that is extremely underrated. It is the bench on the second floor of the library.

This bench is alone, but it is next to an outlet. I am a senior now, but I have loved this spot since the fall of my first year. As a first year, some of my peers would see me at this bench and call it my spot. This bench has provided me with so much comfort over the years, particularly this year, as I worked through my data collection, literature review, and analysis. I also completed my thesis while in the library. I made my final few edits in the library and submitted my thesis to my advisor and the political science advisor at my bench. It was a fitting conclusion to this project.

Overall, I recognize that my thesis project would not have been the same without the help from the Hesburgh Libraries and the resources provided. I am very appreciative of the guidance I received from specific individuals, as well as online resources and physical study spaces. I am proud of my completed senior thesis and will look fondly on the experience for the rest of my life. Thank you to the Hesburgh Libraries for helping me fulfill my passion for and gain experience in political science research.