

Rebecca H. Best

Department of Political Science & Philosophy
University of Missouri - Kansas City
407 Cherry Hall, 5030 Cherry Street, Kansas City, MO

Email: bestrh@umkc.edu

URL: <https://research.umkc.edu/bestrh/>

Education

- 2012 PhD in Political Science, University of North Carolina
- 2008 MA in Political Science, University of North Carolina
- 2006 BA in Political Science, East Carolina University

Appointments

- 2023- present Chair, Department of Political Science and Philosophy, University of Missouri - Kansas City
- 2020- present Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Philosophy, University of Missouri - Kansas City
 - Affiliated faculty, Missouri Institute of Defense & Energy*
 - Affiliated faculty, Race, Ethnic, & Gender Studies*
- 2012- 2020 Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Missouri - Kansas City

Research & teaching interests

Insurgencies, terrorism, women in terrorism and insurgency, competition between non-state actors, bargaining models with state and non-state actors, civil war resolution, reintegration of military veterans and non-state combatants, and civil-military relations.

Grants (funded), honors & awards

- 2024 UMKC Career Bridge Award (with Debra Leiter). \$4,000.
- 2024 UMKC Entrepreneurship and Innovation Grant (with Viviana Grieco) \$70,000.
- 2022 NEH Dialogues on the Experience of War Grant (with Viviana Grieco and Whitney Terrell) \$99,997.
- 2022 UMKC Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence Fellow, \$9,000.
- 2021 UMKC Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence Fellow \$5,000.
- 2021 Haskell Distinguished Research Award, UMKC College of Arts and Sciences \$5,000.
- 2020 Carrie Chapman Catt Prize for Research on Women and Politics, \$2,000.
- 2019 Chancellor's Early Career Award for Excellence in Teaching, \$1,500.
- 2019 Dirksen Congressional Center Congressional Research Award, \$3,500.
- 2017 College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award, \$1,000.
- 2014 UMKC Friends of the Library Grant to purchase *The International Relations Encyclopedia*, \$3,170.

Grants under review

- 2025 Countering the Russian Federation's Sanctions Evasion Activities, Bureau of International Security-Nonproliferation, Department of State, United States (with Clayton Webb, University of Kansas, and Susan Hannah Allen, University of Mississippi).
- 2024 NEH Dialogues on the Experience of War Grant (with Viviana Grieco)

Publications & talks

PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH ARTICLES

- 2023 Schroeder, Theresa, Rebecca Best, and Jeremy Teigen. 2023. "See G.I. Jane Run: The Rise of Female Military Veteran Candidates for Congress." *American Politics Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X2311157>
- 2022 Brannon, Elizabeth and Rebecca Best. 2022. "Here for the Right Reasons: The Selection of Women as Peace Delegates." *International Studies Review* 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac005>
- 2021 Best, Rebecca and Simanti Lahiri. 2021. "Hard choices, soft targets: Terror proscription and strategic targeting decisions of FTO." *International Interactions* 47(6): 955-985. DOI: [10.1080/03050629.2021.1962856](https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2021.1962856)
- 2021 Best, Rebecca, Kyleanne Hunter, and Kate Hendricks Thomas. 2021. "Fighting for a Seat at the Table: Women's Military Service and Political Representation." *Journal of Veteran Studies* 7(2): 19-33. <https://journal-veterans-studies.org/articles/10.21061/jvs.v7i2.266/>
- 2021 Best, Rebecca and Greg Vonnahme. 2021. "Military Service and Legislative Agendas: A study of legislators in four states." *Armed Forces & Society* 47(2): 367-385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X19848009>
- 2020 Best, Rebecca. 2020. "Women and Conflict Studies." *Oxford Bibliographies in Political Science*. Ed. L. Sandy Maisel. New York: Oxford University Press. Aug. 26, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199756223-0315>
- 2020 Hunter, Kyleanne and Rebecca Best. 2020. "You can't have women in peace without women in conflict and security." *Georgetown Security Studies Review* 8(2): 5-18. <https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-PDF-82-Manuscript.pdf>
- 2019 Best, Rebecca, Sarah Shair-Rosenfield, and Reed Wood. 2019. "Legislative Gender Diversity and the Resolution of Civil Conflict." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(1): 215-228. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912918785459>
- 2018 Best, Rebecca and Navin Bapat. 2018. "Bargaining with Insurgencies in the Shadow of Infighting." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3(1): 23-37. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogx025>. Ungated access as a *Journal of Global Security Studies* "most-read" article. https://academic.oup.com/jogss/pages/most_read.
- 2013 Best, Rebecca, Christine Carpino, and Mark J. C. Crescenzi. 2013. "An Analysis of the TABARI Coding System." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30(4): 335-348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894213491176>
- 2010 Crescenzi, Mark J. C., Rebecca H. Best, and Bo Ram Kwon. 2010. "Reciprocity in International Politics" In Robert Denemark et. al. eds. *The International Studies Association Compendium Project*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

- 2009 “Panopticism and the use of “the Other” in *To Kill A Mockingbird*.” *Mississippi Quarterly: The Journal of Southern Cultures* 62(3/4): 541-552. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26477256>

BOOK CHAPTERS

- 2019 Best, Rebecca. 2019. “[Re]Negotiating Citizenship through Military Service.” In *Invisible Veterans: What happens when military women become civilians again*. Kate Hendricks Thomas and Kyleanne Hunter (eds.). ABC-CLIO

BOOK REVIEWS

- 2023 Best, Rebecca. “*Service above Self: Women Veterans in American Politics*. By Erika Cornelius Smith. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2022.” *Perspectives on Politics* 21(2).

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

- 2023 Best, Rebecca, Jessica Blankshain, & Debra Leiter. Apr 12, 2023. “What the Israeli Defense Forces’ Protests Imply About the Role of the Military in Democracies.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2022 Best, Rebecca, Debra Leiter, & Simanti Lahiri. Aug. 11, 2022. “Five Questions about the Assassination of Ayman al-Zawahiri.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2022 Best, Rebecca. May 25, 2022. “Why Isn’t there a Domestic War on Terror in the US?” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2022 Best, Rebecca. May 10, 2022. “Why Risk for Violence in U.S. Rises without Roe.” *Washington Post* Monkey Cage.
- 2022 Leiter, Debra and Rebecca Best. Feb. 25, 2022. “How Germany’s Coalition Change Contributed to Putin’s Strategic Miscalculation in Ukraine.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2022 Best, Rebecca & Elizabeth Brannon. Feb. 17, 2022. “Rubber-stamping Women’s Inclusion.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2021 Bapat, Navin, Rebecca Best, and Simanti Lahiri. Nov. 4, 2021. “Israel Designates Palestinian Groups Terrorist Organizations.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2021 Best, Rebecca. Sept 1, 2021. “Why the “terrorist” label helps some groups and hurts others.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2021 Bapat, Navin & Rebecca Best. Aug 30, 2021. “The Revolt of Islamic State-Khorasan.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2020 Bapat, Navin & Rebecca Best. Jan 30, 2020. “Can the Taliban Trust Trump.” Political Violence at a Glance.
- 2019 Schroeder, Theresa, Jeremy Teigen, & Rebecca Best. Nov 15, 2019. “The Democrats are running more female veterans for office than ever before - but can they win?” *The Conversation*.
- 2019 Bapat, Navin and Rebecca Best. Sept 12, 2019. “Here’s why the Taliban might still want to negotiate with the U.S.” *Washington Post/Monkey Cage*.
- 2019 Best, Rebecca, Kyleanne Hunter, Theresa Schroeder, & Jeremy Teigen. Sept. 6, 2019. “Military service was once a fast track to U.S. citizenship. The Trump administration keeps narrowing that possibility.” *Washington Post* Monkey Cage.
- 2018 Best, Rebecca and Jeremy Teigen. Nov 14, 2018. “An unprecedented number of female military veterans ran as Democrats this year. Here’s why they were unusually successful.” *Washington Post* Monkey Cage.

SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES & BACKGROUND INTERVIEWS

- 2023

- KMBZ Dana & Parks, Oct. 9 and 11, 2023, Hamas attack and Israel's response in Gaza.
 KCUR (NPR affiliate) Up To Date, Jan 19, 2023, Brazil, Fall-out from Bolsonaro's anti-government riots.
- 2022 KSHB, Jan 4, 2022, Anniversary of January 6 insurrection
- 2021 KMBZ Dana & Parks, Aug 26, 2021, US withdrawal from Afghanistan
 FOX4 and KSHB, Jan 6, 2021, Attack on U.S. Capitol
- 2020 KSHB, Oct 6, 2020, Protests at Kansas City City Hall
 KMBZ Dana & Parks, Jan 8, 2020, Assassination of Suleimani
 KCUR (NPR affiliate) Up to Date, Jan 3, 2020, Assassination of Suleimani
- 2019 KMBC, Mar 18, 2019, New Zealand Terror Attacks
- 2018 Connecting Vets, Oct 29, 2018, [‘Show us your combat ribbon:’ attacks on female veteran candidates](#)
- 2017 KCTV5, May 23, 2017, ISIS claims attack at Arianna Grande concert
 KCTV5, Apr 14, 2017, MOAB, ISIS, and North Korea
 KCTV5, Apr 7, 2017, US Missile Strikes in Syria
 KCTV5, Feb 22, 2017, ISIS Supporter Arrested in Missouri
 KCTV5, Jan 30, 2017, Effects of Travel Ban
- 2016 KCTV5, Sept 19, 2016, New York and New Jersey bombings
 KMBC, Aug 16, 2016, Sovereign Citizens in Kansas City
 FOX4 and KCTV5, Jul 18, 2016, Sovereign Citizen Movement
 KCTV5, Jul 15, 2016, Soft targets of terrorism
 KCTV5, Jun 12, 2016, Orlando Nightclub Shooting
- 2015 *Kansas City Star*, Dec 15, 2015, interview with reporter Mara Williams on terrorism
 KCTV5, Dec 3, 2015, San Bernardino attack
 KMBZ Kansas City's Morning News, 98.1 FM, May 6, 2015, on Garland, TX terrorist attack
 KMBC, May 5, 2015, Garland, TX terrorist attack
- 2014 KMBC, Dec 9, 2014, Report on CIA interrogation techniques
- 2013 KSHB, Jul 2013, Morsi removed from power, crackdown against Muslim Brotherhood, etc.
 FOX4, KMBC, and KCTV5, Apr 15, 2013, Boston Marathon bombings

SELECTED PUBLIC TALKS

- 2024 Variations on Democracy panelist, Mid America Freedom Band (funded by American Political Science Association Herring Fund for Political Art), Kansas City Public Library, Sept. 21, 2024.
- 2024 Cockefair Chair Course: Civil-Military Crises as Threats to Democracy: Argentina, Israel and the United States (public lecture series), with Dr. Viviana Grieco, Spring 2024.
- 2023 Introduction for Cockefair Lecturer, John Mearsheimer, Feb. 23, 2023.
- 2022 Panel on Extremism, Kansas City Chamber Centurions, December 2022.
- 2021 Guest lecture on Women Veterans for the Public Leadership Program at University of San Francisco.
- 2021 Lecture on Israel-Palestine Conflict for Vanguard Club, Kansas City, July 2021.
- 2020 Guest lecture on Women Veterans for the Public Leadership Program at University of San Francisco.
- 2019 Panelist, "America's Long War," Park University, Parkville, MO.
- 2019 Women at War, United States Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.
- 2018 Introduction for Cockefair Lecturer, Amb. Michael McFaul, Nov. 18, 2018.
- 2018 Women at War, United States Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

- 2017 Moderator, Roundtable Discussion on Refugees in the United States, Asbury United Methodist Church, May 4, 2017
- 2017 Women at War, United States Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.
- 2016 Women at War, United States Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.
- 2016 Kansas City Repertory Scholars' Forum, Copaken Stage, Kansas City, MO.
- 2016 "Terrorist Motives and the Portrayal of Terrorism in *the Invisible Hand*." The Artist in Society, University of Missouri at Kansas City, Oct 25, 2016.
- 2015 Introduction for Cockefair Lecturer George Packer, Feb 26, 2015

PODCASTS

- 2023 Best, Rebecca and Alexis Petri. 2023. "Research and Rescue." Season 1 (7 episodes). <https://researchandrescue.buzzsprout.com/>

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (DETAILS ON REQUEST)

- 2024 International Studies Association (Midwest)
- 2023 International Studies Association (Midwest)
- Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society
- 2022 International Studies Association
- International Studies Association (Midwest)
- 2021 International Studies Association (Midwest)
- 2019 International Studies Association
- International Studies Association (Midwest)
- Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society
- 2018 International Studies Association (Midwest)
- Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association
- 2017 Peace Science Society (International) North American Meeting
- Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association
- Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting
- 2014 Peace Science Society (International) North American Meeting
- Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting
- 2013 International Studies Association (Midwest)
- Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association
- 2012 International Studies Association
- 2011 Peace Science Society (International) North American Meeting
- Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association
- New Horizons in Conflict Analysis: Applications to the Middle East, University of South Carolina
- 2010 Peace Science Society (International) North American Meeting
- Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association
- 2009 International Studies Association

Additional training

- 2023-2024 UMKC Leadership Development Program
- 2023 Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security (Audited), Fort Leavenworth, KS

2021 Bridging the Gap Project [International Policy Summer Institute](#)
 2010 [Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models](#), Washington University in St. Louis.

Teaching

COURSES TAUGHT

Introduction to International Relations; Politics of the Middle East; Terrorism and Political Violence; Graduate Seminar in International Relations; International Conflict and Cooperation (previously International Security); International Conflict Resolution and Cooperation; Women and Conflict; Women, Gender, and Conflict (General Education version); International Political Economy; Culture and Diversity; Bridging the Civil-Military Divide; Threats to Human Security.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

2018- present Chris Johnson
 2020 Brian Steed, PhD

Selected academic service

SERVICE TO THE DISCIPLINE¹

2019-present Editorial Board Member, *International Interactions*
 2024- 2025 Co- Program Chair, [Early Career Workshop](#), International Studies Association.
 2023 President, International Studies Association - Midwest.
 2022 Program Chair, International Studies Association - Midwest.
 2022 Section Chair, Positive Political Theory, Southern Political Science Association.
 2021 Chair, Best Book Award Committee, International Studies Association - Midwest.
 2021 Member, Hermann Award for the Best Paper Utilizing Text Analysis in Leadership Studies, International Studies Association - Midwest.
 2020 Chair, Best Data Paper Award Committee, *International Interactions*.
 2018- 2020 Governing Council, Member at Large: International Studies Association - Midwest.
 2019 Outstanding Reviewer, *Political Research Quarterly*.

Peer Reviewer

Oxford University Press, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Polity Press, University of Missouri Research Board Grant Proposal, *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *International Interactions*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *International Studies Review*, *Poverty and Public Policy*, *Social Science Computer Review*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Global Security Studies*, *Political Psychology*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Parameters*, *Armed Forces & Society*, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Civil Wars*, *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *Conflict and Cooperation*, *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, *International Political Science Review*

¹Conference chair and discussant roles omitted for space.

DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2023- present	Chair, Department of Political Science and Philosophy
2023- present	Major Academic Plan Mentor, Political Science
2022- present	UMKC University Assessment Committee
2022- present	UMKC Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
2013- present	Social Media Coordinator, Department of Political Science & Philosophy
2012- present	Scholarship Committee, Political Science
2023- 2024	Program Assessment Coordinator, Political Science
2023- 2024	Judge, Undergraduate Research Symposium, University of Missouri at Kansas City
2022- 2024	Report Subcommittee Chair, Diversity & Inclusion Committee of School of Humanities and Social Sciences
2022- present	School of Humanities and Social Sciences Public Facing Research Group
2021- 2023	Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence (CAFE) Faculty Fellow for Research and Creativity, University of Missouri
2022	Chair, College of Arts and Sciences Rules Committee
2020- 2022	College of Arts and Sciences Rules Committee
2020- present	Director of Study Abroad, Department of Political Science
2019- 2021	President's Award Committee for Excellence (Early Career and Sustained), University of Missouri
2019- 2021	Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Political Science
2018- 2020	College of Arts & Sciences Award Committee
2015- 2020	Guest Speaker Coordinator, Department of Political Science
2013-2019	Departmental Representative, Freshmen and Transfer Orientation
2014-2019	Departmental Representative, Experience UMKC
2017- 2019	Judge, Undergraduate Research Symposium, University of Missouri at Kansas City
2012-2021	Graduate Admissions and Curriculum Committee, Department of Political Science
2013-2019	Senior Thesis Advisor
2012-2017	Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Political Science
2014	Reviewer, University of Missouri Research Board Grants
2014- 2015	Development Committee for IS Minor
2012	Comparative Politics Search Committee, Political Science Department
2012	Judicial Politics Search Committee, Political Science Department