

# Ayaan Ali

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## EDUCATION

### Columbia College, Columbia University

B.A. History, B.A. South Asian Studies, Minor in Computer Science

Specialization in 20th Century South Asia

New York, NY

**Expected:** May 2026

**Major GPA:** 4.0/4.0

**Honors:** Saltzman Scholar, Institute of Global Politics Scholar, National Merit Scholar, Dean's List

**Selected Coursework:** World Migration, Transregional, History of the Modern Middle East, Theory from the South, Introduction to South Asia, Islam, Islam v. Music, Cinema and Colonialism in South Asia, Urdu for Heritage Speakers I-II, Advanced Urdu, Advanced Programming, Introduction to Databases, Data Structures in Java, Abstract Algebra

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN | New York, NY | *Policy Intern*

**May 2025 – Aug. 2025**

- Took notes, drafted statements, produced research, and attended meetings for Mission diplomats working on the UN's First Committee and Sixth Committees, dealing primarily with international legal affairs and security.
- Attended five Security Council meetings as a primary representative for Pakistan and submitted research memos based on meeting notes; reports covered maritime security and international sea disputes, hate crimes and Islamophobia, and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).
- Drafted Pakistan's statement for the open debate on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) during the 9992th meeting of the UN Security Council.
- Edited and drafted Pakistan's statement for the 69th General Assembly open debate on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). This statement was read by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN.
- Represented Pakistan for the majority of the 35th Meeting of State Parties on the Law of the Sea, a forum overseeing the review of UNCLOS and the Committee on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.
- Wrote 15 page research report for Mission resolution on Islamophobia and hate speech after the 2025 Pahalgam Attack in Kashmir which was then delivered to the recently appointed UN Envoy on Combating Islamophobia.

### International Trade Administration | New York, NY | *International Trade Intern*

**Sept. 2024 – Feb. 2025**

- Selected as part of the Virtual Student Federal Service out of over 50 applicants in the final VSFS class prior to 2025 federal funding cuts.
- Consulted American-based commercial importers and exporters on favorable target markets based on strategic, data-driven analytics; specifically produced research reports for clients breaking into South Asian markets.
- Completed large-scale cleanup of in-house Client Relationship Management (CRM) database in Salesforce, restructuring and validating over 3000 client records and obtaining a relevant repository of client data.
- Created 5 "data matrices" which were combinatory documents of data-oriented market research paired with written recommendations to clients on how to best restructure their exporting businesses.
- Assisted, alongside other interns, in organizing a virtual conference for businesses in Portland and the greater Pacific Northwest to come and learn about the services of the International Trade Administration and Commercial Service; conference attracted approximately 100 small businesses in attendance.

### McLaughlin & Stern LLP | New York, NY | *Undergraduate Summer Associate*

**June 2024 – Aug. 2024**

- Assisted in document review on employment litigation against BigTech firm; rewrote bylaws for non-profit side of major New York museum; amended trust of prominent Nevada Family; drafted a will for a former neurologist; wrote two legal memos for a national 527 tax-exempt political organization; filed 1023 and 2729 forms to IRS for several non-profit clients.
- Prepared legal materials and participated in a mock trial in front of the Honorable David J. Kirschner of Queens County; components included a case on defamation and a case on libel.

### Columbia Daily Spectator | New York, NY | *Deputy Editor, Data Reporter, News Reporter*

**Aug. 2022 – Dec. 2024**

- Edited, compiled, and managed the completion of 12 data journalism projects using tools such as Adobe Illustrator, Pandas, D3.js, Matplotlib, and RawGraphs; projects included statistical visualizations, graphical annotations, and reader surveys including graphical annotations of the House Committee Report on Antisemitism, the conditions of university language lecturers, revisions of Barnard policies on protesting, and the spectrum of university administrative responses to campus encampments.
- Wrote over 20 investigative stories for the Spectator's approximately 100,000 monthly readers on litigation against the university, new administration appointments, campus protests over events in Gaza and Iran, admissions statistics, class registration difficulties, and the largest medical school donation in university history.

- Oversaw a data newsroom of 10 reporters, editing over 40 articles and data projects under university news beat.
- Broke a student editor strike at the *Columbia Law Review* which became my most widely read article and received more than a million social media impressions and was cited by several legal publications like the *ABA Journal*.

**Columbia Law School** | New York, NY | *General Assistant*

**Sept. 2023 – Dec. 2023**

- Managed circulation desk during evening hours as one of five undergraduates staffing a graduate-only library.
- Led collaboration with the New York Public Library and received over 150 applications.
- Supervised the management of Barbri study materials for over 100 3L students studying for the bar.

**Berick Center for Student Advising** | New York, NY | *Mathematics Peer Tutor*

**Sept. 2023 – Dec. 2023**

- Tutored 22 Columbia undergraduates in multivariable and integral calculus over the course of the semester.
- Developed new worksheets and problem sets to assist each student with cementing key concepts, leading to an average improvement of 24.7% on exams across all tutored students.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Saltzman Institute for War and Peace Studies** | New York, NY | *Incoming Research Assistant and Scholar* **Sept. 2025**

- Selected out of hundreds of applicants for the Fall 2025 cohort of the Saltzman Program for Undergraduates which pairs selected scholars with institute faculty for research assistantships in international security studies, war and peace studies, and regional studies throughout the 2025-26 academic year.

**Institute of Global Politics** | New York, NY | *Research Assistant for Dr. David Shimer*

**April 2025 – Present**

- Produce primary and secondary research on global cases of election interference in which the democratic opposition prevails against the incumbent regime's electioneering attempts; case studies include India in 1977, Serbia in 2000, Ukraine in 2004, Sri Lanka in 2015, U.S. in 1800, France in 1877, and Philippines in 1986.
- Send weekly research memos of approximately 15-20 pages in length to Dr. Shimer for review and contribution to his upcoming academic outputs.
- Leveraged South Asia archival experience, and deeply investigated the institutional and social causes of the 'Emergency' period in India in the buildup to the 1977 election, culminating in a report of about 5000 words which used direct primary source material from the 1970s such as speeches, newspapers, radio addresses, and books either read in Urdu-Hindi or translated into English.

**Columbia College, Columbia University** | New York, NY | *2024 Humanities Research Scholar* **May 2024 – June 2024**

- Independently investigated an original research question over a six week funded fellowship in history and religious studies; the topic was on the influence of Sufism on British Romanticism under supervision of Dr. Aziza Shanazarova (Religion) and Dr. Denise Cruz (English).
- Made use of the rich tradition of Sufi hagiographic literature in Persian, translated from English, as well as original criticism by Romantic poets Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth for a research project.
- Participated in a six week long seminar, learning skills such as Zotero and archival research, to leverage for the project; presented project poster at the 2024 Columbia Fall Research Symposium.

## LEADERSHIP

**Columbia Pakistani Student Association (PSA)** | *Senior Advisor, President, Secretary*

**May 2024 – June 2024**

- Led all club operations during the 2024-25 academic year including a general body of 100+ students and 17-person executive board, managing an allocated budget of over \$10,000 and club social media presence of 1000+ followers across all platforms.
- Directed *Chamak*, a ticketed fashion show, performance exhibition, and dinner with 150+ attendees and six major South Asian fashion label vendors.
- Organized *Soch*, a ticketed academic conference with 10+ invited panelists and 100+ attendees, which focused on environmentalism and sustainability in Pakistan.
- Directed *Hungama* (twice), a South Asian cultural celebration in collaboration with NYU PSA, including dance, dining, and live music, and was attended by 250+ students from regional colleges; the event was featured in a New York Times culture article.

**Application Development Initiative (ADI)** | *Organizing Committee Member, Social Media*

**Aug. 2022 – January 2024**

- Wrote weekly newsletters over two years on emerging internship opportunities in CS to 2,000+ recipients.
- Reinvigorated social media presence on Instagram and Facebook with extensive video advertising and infographic posts about club activities, resulting in a 4000+ follower growth over a single semester.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS & LANGUAGES

**Technical:** Java, Python, SQL, C, JavaScript, GitHub, Jupyter Notebooks, Pandas, Salesforce, Zotero, Worldox, Excel

**Languages:** English (Native (C2) Fluency), Urdu (Proficient (B2) Fluency)

**Interests:** South Asian history and politics, Sufism, Urdu poetry, continental philosophy, folk rock, cycling, and fashion