



Letter from the Chair Interpreting Politics: Beyond the Headlines

Political scientists are in the business of helping to put headline news into a broader perspective. Our classes explore relations between political institutions, economic and historical circumstances, political culture, and political ideas. Outside the classroom, we also cultivate understanding of current political events and debates.

In recent months, UH Political Science faculty members have been frequent commentators in local and national media, offering perspectives on topics ranging from Texas re-districting to Russian plans for the Ukraine.

We also organize public forums to spur conversations about current events. For example, in October the Department co-hosted a forum examining migration by



Fox News Anchor **Jose Grinan** interviews Associate Professor **Jason Casellas** and **Luis Salinas**, the film producer, before the October immigration forum.

unaccompanied minors. This event featured the screening of a prize-winning Mexican film about the immigration journey, followed by a panel discussion about Houston's response to the influx of young migrants. In November, the Department and the Center For International and Comparative

Politics hosted a forum on developments in Central and Eastern Europe 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

You can learn about our public events on our website. We hope to see you at future events! --Susan Scarrow
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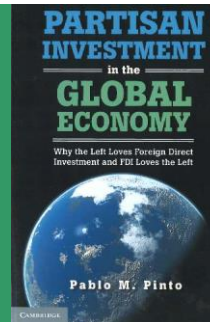
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Welcome New Faculty Members

This fall we welcome three new faculty members. **Associate Professor Pablo Pinto**, an expert in the politics of foreign direct investment, joins our growing International Relations sub-field. Professor Pinto earned a law degree in his native Argentina and worked as corporate counsel for Toyota Argentina before enrolling in a doctoral program at U.C. San Diego. He taught at Columbia University before moving to the University of Houston. Professor Pinto will teach courses in International Political Economy and Globalization.

Assistant Professor Scott Clifford studies political



psychology, and is an expert in experimental methods. He earned his doctorate at Florida State University and held a post-doctoral appointment at Duke University. He will teach courses in Political Psychology and Research Methods.

Assistant Professor Alin Fumurescu is a political theorist who authored the timely and well-received book "Compromise—A Political and Philosophical History." He earned his doctorate at University of Indiana Bloomington before holding a post-doc at Yale University. He will teach courses in European and American political thought.

Award-Winning Political Science Majors

Alumni Spotlight:

Congratulations to UH Political Science Alumnus **Michael Dimock**, recently promoted to President of Pew Research Center. He earned his B.A. from UH and his PhD from the University of California-San Diego. He appears regularly on all the major news networks as an election and public opinion analyst.

Since our spring newsletter, many students have won scholarships, fellowships, and internships. Below are some of their stories:

Graduating senior **Paula Santamaria** was awarded a one-year position through a White House initiative to open doors to public service. She is working as special assistant to the chief administrator for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Constitution Day Essay Winner: in September political science major **Brittany Sutton** won the Daily Cougar's Constitution Day contest and had her article published in the campus newspaper.

U.S. State Department Internship: Alex Fisher, double major in political science and psychology, is currently working as an intern in the U.S. Embassy in Macedonia. During the summer he interned at the World Affairs

Council in Houston.

UH Scholarship Winners: Three students were awarded Peek Family Scholarships for Political Science majors. **Mohammad Ullah** is a senior who is preparing for law school, and who is also interested in public administration. **Charlotte Christian** is a junior who is interested in international relations. **Melvin Rodriguez** is a senior with interests in public law and political theory. Senior Political Science major **Stephanie Brooks** won a scholarship from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Danie Mascarenhas won a Rowan Companies Scholarship to support her studies.

Scholarships for Further Study: Among our majors who won scholarships for post-graduate studies are doctoral students **Derek Fan** (Ohio State University), **Sidney Simpson,**

(Notre Dame University), **Joshua Jackson** (University of Georgia).

Sravanithi (Sarah) Padullaparti, earned a scholarship to study for a Master's in Public Policy at University of Maryland Baltimore County. Many of our graduates started their legal studies with impressive scholarship awards, including **Dylan Blackwell** (UH), **Garrett Brodeur** (Duke), **Tiffany Cebrun** (Howard), and **Ariel Lira** (Texas A&M).

Congratulations to all of these students! And to our readers who are current and recent students: we hope that these examples inspire you to apply for all sorts of honors and programs. Ask your professors for help with your applications, and when you win, let us know so that we can share the inspiration with future students.

CICS Launches a Global Fellows Program

The Center for International and Comparative Studies (CICS) recently launched its new Global Fellows program. The program fosters undergraduate education in the area of international affairs. The fellows regularly meet with the Center director, **Prof. Jon Slapin**, to discuss the latest research on topics related to the Center's many events. The inaugural fellows are **Charlotte Christian**, a junior majoring in political science, **Cassie Gianni**, a

senior majoring in economics, **Emily Johnson**, a sophomore majoring in history and English, and **Anais Landaeta**, a senior majoring in political science.

During the Fall 2014 semester, the fellows have attended Center events on the United States Agency for International Development, on successes and failures in the post-Communist world 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and on the ongoing crisis and civil war in Syria.

In the spring semester, the Center is planning further events on politics in the Middle East, European integration, US diplomacy and other topics.

Stay tuned for more news on CICS events! If you wish to join the Center's mailing list, send an email to cics@central.uh.edu

Faculty News

This summer four department members were promoted to associate professor with tenure: **Tanya Bagashka, Jennifer Clark, Ryan Kennedy, and Lydia Tiede.** We congratulate them all!

Associate Professor Jeremy Bailey was awarded the Ross Lence Chair, an honor reserved for political theory faculty who excel in teaching.

Professor Susan Scarrow was awarded a 3-year National Science Foundation grant to support an international study of

political parties' organizational choices. Her co-PIs in Germany and the UK also received matching grants from their national science foundations. For this project, teams from 23 countries are collecting and analyzing data on topics including the impact of candidate selection rules, and participation of women and minorities in party governing bodies.

This past summer **Associate Professor Ryan Kennedy** gave a presentation at the Center for Disease Control and

Prevention's CSELS science seminar on his work with David Lazer and others using Big Data for disease tracking. Their research was used in updating this fall's version of Google Flu Trends.

Assistant Professor Ling Zhu is a founding co-director of the Scholarly Strategy Network Texas Chapter. In this capacity she recently participated in "Taking Stock of Health Reform", a policy forum sponsored by the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University.

Graduate Students & Grad. Alumni

Ph.D. candidate **Matthew Lang** has been awarded a fellowship from the Strategic Data Project at Harvard University. The Fellowship is a two-year program that places and develops talented data strategists in partner agencies where they can have an immediate impact. Matthew is completing his dissertation on presidential party building.

Ph.D candidate **Marcia Breyer** was awarded the Maud Smith Paddock Graduate scholarship from the UH Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies department, to support her dissertation research on "Campaign Rhetoric and the Gender Gap in American Politics".

Ph.D. candidates **Andrea Eckelman** and **Markie McBrayer** won APSA travel grants to attend the annual conference in Washington DC, where they presented their research.



UH PhDs **Carlos Huerta, Kenneth Manning, Mark Shephard, Karen Baird, Chris Carmen, Sally Howard, David Barker** and **Susan Scarrow** at the APSA reception in Washington D.C.

We were pleased to catch up with many former students and former faculty at the "Texas Universities" reception at the APSA meetings (pictured above). It was a memorable evening (even before the six hour fire evacuation later that night!). Many current graduate students attended as well, because nine of our current students were presenting their research at the conference. We hope to see many of more of you at future conference receptions!

Alumni News

Dr. Marika Litras was recently promoted to Director of the Division of Program Operations at the U.S. Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program. In this new role she oversees important programs, including enforcement initiatives, expert statistical analysis, program evaluation, the Functional Affirmative Action Program and the Indian and Native American Employment Rights Program.

Dr. Lee Payne has been promoted to Associate Professor at Stephen F. Austin State University.

Dr. Anna Mikulska has been appointed as a research analyst at Center for Energy Studies at Rice University's Baker Institute.

Dr. Laila Sorurbakhsh has been appointed a visiting assistant professor of political science at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

We note with sadness the death of **Dr. Randall Strahan**, long-time professor of political science at Emory University. Dr. Strahan was a political science major at the University of Houston who went on to earn his PhD. at the University of Virginia. He credited UH Professor Ross Lence with inspiring his long interest in American politics and political thought.

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Undergraduate Research Flourishes

This summer several political science majors immersed themselves in research as recipients of UH Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships. **Hadill Calderon, Charlotte Christian, Ton La, Jr., and Eric Schroeder** worked with faculty mentors as they pursued their research. They presented their results at Undergraduate Research Day (pictures below). Hadill Calderon won an outstanding poster award, and Ton La won an audience favorite award. Congratulations to all of these researchers and their faculty mentors!

Hadill Calderon also participated in this year's American Political Science Association's Ralph Bunche Institute, held at Duke University. This full-scholarship program provides students from around the country with intensive research



Hadill Calderon with mentor **Dr. Beth Simas**;
Charlotte Christian with mentor **Dr. Patrick Shea**

experiences, and helps prepare them for graduate-level study. This fall Hadill is applying to graduate schools, and hopes to pursue studies in public policy and comparative politics.

On Labor Day weekend junior political science major **Eiman Siddiqui** presented a paper at the American Political Science Association Annual meetings in

his paper, which he co-authored with a Northwestern University undergraduate, was "A Computational Approach to Studying Framing in Political Rhetoric." This fall he has been working with Professors **Justin Kirkland** and **Jon Slapin** on a legislative research project.

Introducing our first Lineberry Scholar



First year graduate student **Philip Waggoner** is the first holder of the Robert L. Lineberry Scholarship. This newly-created scholarship was endowed by friends and family of the long-time UH professor to honor his memory and to carry on his commitment to educating students about politics and policy.

Philip joined our doctoral

program after completing a Master's in Public Administration at the University of Colorado. In 2014 he served as a Policy Analyst in the Colorado House of Representatives. Philip has a strong interest in state and federal legislative politics and in the policy process.

We thank all the generous donors who helped to establish this scholarship.

Stay in Touch!

- E-mail us & send us your news: PoliticalScience@uh.edu
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