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Political Science Department Newsletter, v10n1, June 2015

University of Northern Iowa. Department of Political Science.

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Political Science

at the University of Northern Iowa

Volume 10 Issue 1, June 2015

Political Science Department Strives for Engagement

Engagement has always been a key aspect of politics. For those of us who study politics at UNI's Department of Political Science, 2014-15 became an academic year in which we pledged to make engagement (with prospective students, current students, alumni, the UNI community, and the community at large) an especially important focus. This year, members of the department regularly interacted with prospective students as they came to campus for visits, orientation, and advising. For our current students and the broader UNI community, we undertook a new initiative to begin a series of forums where faculty members offered perspectives on current events within their areas of expertise. To broaden our audience and interest, we frequently joined with faculty members from other departments, who would also contribute their perspective and expertise to the topic of discussion. We were able to offer forums on the terrorist group Boko Haram, the crisis in Ukraine, the 2014 elections, and corruption in China. In addition, we co-sponsored a talk from former U.S. Representative Jim Leach on "The Challenges of Non-Partisanship in a Partisan Era." In other areas of engagement, two MPP students brought the "Elect Her" program to campus that provided training for students interested in running for positions in student government. Two of the students who participated in the training ran successful campaigns, and are now the President and Vice President of the Northern Iowa Student Government!

We were also active in community engagement this year. The MPP students organized a fundraising extravaganza for the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence in the fall. The Women in Politics scholarship benefit dinner was another highlight of our community engagement. Faculty also participated in several community forums through the American Democracy Project, Darwin Week, and the American Association of University Women. Finally, departmental members continue to be called upon frequently by the media to comment on our various areas of expertise.

We hope you, as alumni, will continue to engage with us. We have worked to expand our social media outreach. Be sure to keep up with our latest events, announcements, and networking opportunities through our website and on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Visit us at <http://www.uni.edu/csbs/polisci/>. You can also "like" us on Facebook at Department of Political Science, University of Northern Iowa; "follow" us on Twitter @unipolisci; and "connect" with us on LinkedIn through UNI Political Science Majors & Alums.

Donna R. Hoffman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Department Head



Donna Hoffman and Justin Holmes participate in a Political Science Forum on the 2014 Elections.

Recent Graduate: Byrant Hickie



Graduate Bryant Hickie and grandfather, Don Moore

I have been interested in politics since before I can remember. In grade school, I remember telling my teachers that when I grew up, I wanted to be Governor. I couldn't imagine a better place to continue my pursuit of political knowledge than in Iowa, the first-in-the-nation state. I have recently graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a Bachelors of Art in Political Communication and a minor in Politics and Law. In the final weeks of my last semester here at UNI, I balanced studying for finals with applying for law

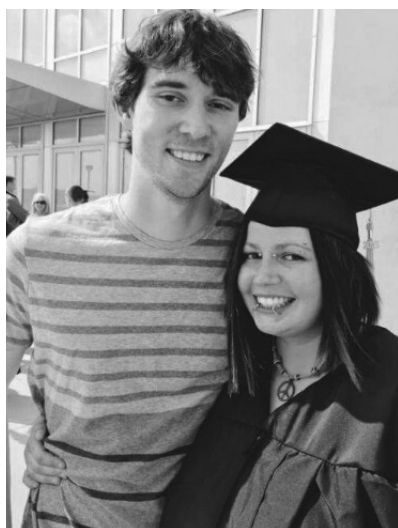
school and jobs with presidential campaigns. The fact is, there is so much one can do with a Political Communication degree from UNI. With the help of the outstanding faculty of the Political Science Department, I have decided to attend Drake University Law School

this fall. At Drake, I hope to have an emphasis in policy or legislative affairs.

My hope is to use my law degree to further my political career. While at UNI, I interned for Senator Charles Grassley and worked on several local campaigns. These positions helped me earn a job working for the Republican National Committee last summer. I took a short sabbatical from college to work as a Political Field Director in Oregon, where I ran a campaign office in Medford. Once I returned to Iowa after the election, I began to look at law schools as an option to further my career.

During my time at UNI, I was involved in many clubs and organizations. I was Chair of the College Republicans, and Vice President of the Political Science Society. The variety of political science classes at UNI has helped me excel as a political operative. My course load within the Political Science Department gave me the analytical, oral, and written communication skills necessary for excelling in my chosen field. The base of knowledge I acquired through my studies will serve me well in my future as a public servant.

Recent Graduate: Katie Bennett



Katie Bennett and Robert Goss at Katie's graduation from UNI, May 2015

Growing up in a household headed by two passionate partisans, and where politics was routinely discussed at the dinner table, I was immersed in politics at a very young age. I would often tag along when my parents went to various political rallies and events. Living in Des Moines, Iowa, allowed for many of these opportunities and experiences, especially in the lead up to the caucuses. As I went through junior high and high school, what had once been a superficial understanding and interest in politics as a child became an

integral part of my life. I began to form my own opinions and stances on various issues as I learned more about the American political system.

While I was fascinated by politics and remained fairly active in it throughout junior high and high school, I never planned on studying it in college, let alone pursuing a career in it. When I transferred to the University of Northern Iowa, from Des Moines Area Community

College, my intention was to attend law school after graduation. In fact, I even switched majors from psychology to political science at the last minute. While fulfilling my major requirements and finishing up the liberal arts core, I began taking more and more political science courses as electives. There were even a couple semesters where I only took political science courses. It was the undertaking of a diverse range of political science courses that ignited my desire to further my education in political science. Through my coursework, I began to learn the complexities of the field and became more intrigued with the study of political science. Halfway through my second year at UNI, I realized that political science was far more than just an interest; I wanted to be a political scientist.

My senior year at UNI was spent preparing for the GRE and applying to graduate programs for political science. This fall I will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where I will be working towards my Masters in comparative politics with a focus on Russia. After attaining my Masters, my hope is to continue on with my education in pursuance of a Doctorate in the field. I will admit that when I had decided on graduate school for political science, I had no desire to become a college professor. I was not entirely sure of where I would end up, but I just knew I wanted to study something I was passionate about and figure it out later. However, while finishing my degree, I realized just how invaluable and influential my political science professors had been during the three years I attended UNI. Which is why, in part, I wish to be a college professor in the future.

Alumni Profile: Matt Horihan

I graduated with a B.A. in Political Science in 2009. Serving the public was my main motivation for choosing political science as a major. Following graduation, I worked for Senator Chuck Grassley for three years as his Health Care Legislative Correspondent. This position provided the opportunity to communicate with Senator Grassley's constituents regarding health care issues and advise the Senator on health care policy. Also, I sometimes worked on Senator Grassley's varying political committees. Following my work with Senator Grassley, I worked on Governor Mitt Romney's presidential campaign in 2012 where I served as one of his Digital Events Lead Coordinators. In that position, I managed a small team traveling in all swing states with the goal of boosting turnout at political events, while simultaneously collecting important data about likely voters. Next, I worked at the law firm Alston and Bird, LLP, where I conducted policy analysis and advised various clients and health care providers on health care policy issues and legislative affairs. In 2013, I moved back to Iowa to consult on two congressional races. My focus was working as Congressman David Young's strategist for the

2014 election. Currently, I serve as State Director for the American Future Project which is a conduit for discussing Governor Bobby Jindal's policy ideas.

My political science degree provides me with knowledge I have used in many of my jobs. UNI gave me an initial education in health care policy applicable to my work in Senator Grassley's office and at the Alston and Bird law firm. I have also used the knowledge gained at UNI about polling data and voter turnout throughout my campaign work. Most importantly, UNI supported my initial start in politics and policy by creating an avenue to intern for the former Speaker of the Iowa House, Christopher Rants. That internship opened the opportunity to manage two Iowa House races when I was a sophomore. My political and policy career was launched due to support from UNI in my college years.

How to Form a SuperPAC: Eric Boisen, Political Science, Class of 2015

While taking Campaigns and Elections with Professor Hoffman last fall, I wondered what it would take to start a Super PAC. Today, one hears about these all the time; how difficult are they to create? I decided to find out. The answer is: surprisingly easy. All one needs to do to create a Super PAC is 1) a partner, 2) a pen (or pencil), 3) a way to print documents and mail them to the FEC, and 4) a bank account.

My partner in this endeavor, Jordan Bancroft-Smithe, is a recent UNI alum. We had to decide who was going to be president of our Independent Expenditure Committee (AKA SuperPAC) and who was going to be the treasurer. The treasurer does more work because he has to file reports to the Federal Election Committee (FEC). Next, one needs to print off a "Statement of Organization," fill out the form, and mail it off to the FEC. One also needs to send a cover letter with the form saying the group will raise unlimited funds. Before mailing off the Statement of Organization, the SuperPAC will need a bank account. After creating your banking account and filling out the Statement of Organization, you will receive an email from the FEC, and wham, you have a SuperPAC. Have fun raising unlimited funds!

I had a lot of fun learning about this process. It was interesting to see how easy it was to create a Super PAC. All one has to do is keep up on the quarterly filings. I ran our PAC for 6 months before closing it down. Unfortunately, the Koch brothers didn't donate to our PAC, but they may donate to yours.



Eric Boisen (left) and Jordan Bancroft-Smithe

One Student's Story: Victoria Hurst, Making a Difference



As a prospective, first-generation college student, I had little understanding of financial aid at a university. I was aware that

attending college was incredibly expensive, and I knew that it would not be feasible for me to go to college unless I received adequate scholarships and grants to offset the costs of attendance.

In applying to attend UNI, I filled out the university scholarship application. During this process, I also became aware of something of which I had never heard: the FAFSA. In looking more into the federal financial aid process, I found out that the State of Iowa also offers scholarships and grants to students, including the Iowa Grant and the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship (AIOS). With this in consideration, after learning the results of my UNI scholarship application and the hometown scholarships for which I had applied, I knew that I should have ample assistance to meet my financial obligations for my first two years of college.

What I failed to realize in this process is that a student may not receive aid that is more than the estimated cost of attendance in an academic year if they are receiving federal financial aid. Because of this, my financial aid was reduced by roughly \$2,000 for my first year at UNI, resulting in difficulties to attain adequate financial assistance for my second year, despite being over-funded in my first year. While I understood the justification for capping financial assistance, I struggled to understand why so much aid is offered to incoming freshmen and substantially less is offered for students returning for their second year.

In looking at my financial aid package, the AIOS seemed to be an area that could be restructured to prevent overfunding in the first year and underfunding in the second. The AIOS is a one-year scholarship that equates to a maximum funding amount of roughly the cost of

in-state tuition at a public university in Iowa (\$7,885 for students receiving the AIOS for the 15-16 academic year). Community college students may renew this scholarship for a second year but not students attending a university. The scholarship is designed for low-income, high-achieving students, to allow these students better access to higher education.

In speaking with peers who had had their funding reduced in their first year, most of them were also recipients of the AIOS. While I am unsure of their funding status for their second year, if their aid situation was similar to mine, had the AIOS been divided in half and disbursed over their first two years of college, many of these students would not have needed their aid to be reduced in their first year, making more funding available for them to return to the university for a second year.

In my third year at UNI, I had the privilege of being appointed the Director of Governmental Relations for the Northern Iowa Student Government. Part of the responsibilities of this position involves maintaining a regular, weekly presence at the Iowa State Capitol during session to lobby on behalf of student interests. This typically involves supporting funding for UNI, as well as other issues of interest to the student body. While acclimating to the environment at the Statehouse, I had the opportunity to meet many new people. In this process, I voiced my concern regarding the one-year structure of the AIOS to a Senate Republican caucus staffer on the Education Appropriations Subcommittee. The first funnel deadline had passed at this point, but he encouraged me to reach out to Senator Chelgren (R-Wapello) to sponsor language to divide the AIOS into a two-year scholarship with the same amount of total funding split over two years as an amendment to the education appropriations bill. Senator Chelgren offered an amendment with this language, but it was ruled not germane, so it was not considered.

In my fourth year at UNI, I was reappointed Director of Governmental Relations, but this time, I knew

much more about the legislative process at the Iowa State Capitol and had all of the contacts I had made in the previous year, allowing me to hit the ground running on the AIOS restructure. Representative Salmon (R-Black Hawk), whom I had spoken with the previous year regarding the AIOS, sponsored a bill to restructure the scholarship at the beginning of this legislative session. In speaking with House Republican leadership regarding the importance of restructuring the scholarship, the House Education Committee resubmitted the bill as the sponsor, and it passed out of committee and the House unanimously. I also spoke with Senator Sinclair (R-Wayne), Ranking Member of the Senate Education Committee, and she sponsored the sister bill to the House bill in the Senate. I additionally spoke with Senator Quirnbach (D-Story), Chair of the Senate Education Committee, and he was relatively supportive of the restructuring of the scholarship, but as an amendment to the appropriations bill, not a separate bill, causing the Senate legislation on the restructure to die in the first funnel. When the passed House legislation was referred to the Senate Education Committee, Senator Quirnbach assigned Senator Dvorsky (D-Johnson), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Sinclair, and himself to the subcommittee, but the subcommittee did not meet prior to the second funnel deadline, causing the legislation to die in the second funnel. However, I did present Senator Dvorsky with information regarding the benefits of restructuring the scholarship, supplemented by information provided by UNI's Office of Financial Aid, in hopes he would support restructuring the AIOS. I further spoke with Senator Schoenjahn (D-Fayette), Chair of the Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Danielson (D-Black Hawk), and Governor Branstad about my hopes of having the scholarship restructured.

When the Senate Appropriations Committee offered their budget, to my delight, the language for the restructure was in the appropriations language, as Senator Quirnbach had said he had wanted it. The same

language appeared in the House appropriations bill, as well as the final appropriations bill that passed both the House and Senate. With this new language, qualifying freshmen entering the university in the fall of 2016 will receive the AIOS over two academic years, rather than only over one year. While it is too late for me to have this option, I am pleased to know that the efforts I have made over the past two years will likely make a difference to future AIOS recipients.

Upon graduating from UNI this spring, Congressman Steve King (R) offered me a full-time position as the District Representative in his Ames office, working to help constituents in Iowa's 4th Congressional District. In beginning my role with the Congressman, I became aware of the demanding schedule of a member of Congress, and I asked him, "Don't you ever get tired? I feel like if I had your schedule, I would be exhausted." He replied, "No, I can't. You see, the more people I meet and places I go in the district, the more I learn about different issues affecting the people, and it's my job to fight for them. I can't get tired, as I need to meet with these people so I can try to make things better for them in Washington. If I stopped putting forth all of my effort day in and day out to try to make things better in Iowa and the United States, then I should no longer be representing the people of Iowa's 4th Congressional District." After the Congressman explained this, I knew that I was working for the right person. Congressman King has dedicated a substantial portion of his life to public service, and it is my hope to follow his example of commitment to public service with my life.

John F. Kennedy once said, "And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." Public service isn't about personal gain--it's about personal sacrifice in hopes of doing something that will help people in the future. My goals in life don't involve fame or fortune--I simply want to make a noticeable difference in the lives of others, and if I can do that, then all of my efforts will have been worth it.

MPP Students Organize Fundraiser

Students from the Master of Public Policy program organized a fall fundraiser for the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence in October. The fundraiser featured dinner, a silent auction, and recognition of alumni and former program director Dr. Carol Weisenberger. The highlight of the evening was four operatic selections performed by the MPP's own Willie Morales, tenor, and Geraldine McMillian, soprano, who is a frequent guest performer with orchestras throughout the world.

From left to right, MPP students Tigstu Woldeyohanns, Toluwani Johnson, Diane Orefo, Dr. Carol Weisenberger, Rachel Gregory, Amy Bentley, Erin Cubit, Kerri Robinson, and Willie Morales



Women in Politics Scholarship Benefit

In the fall semester, the Department of Political Science was pleased to host Professor Jennifer Lawless at UNI. Lawless is professor of Government at American University in Washington, D.C., where she also serves as the Director of the Women & Politics Institute. She is the author of *Becoming a Candidate: Political Ambition and the Decision to Run for Office* (Cambridge 2012). In 2006, Professor Lawless ran for the Democratic Party's nomination for the U.S. House of Representatives in Rhode Island's 2nd district. She also

appeared in the 2011 film *Miss Representation*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. The documentary exposes how the mainstream media contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence in America. Professor Lawless was the featured speaker at the Women in Politics Scholarship benefit dinner and kept the crowd riveted with both the results of her research on women in politics, as well as her own experience running for office.



Professor Jennifer Lawless addresses the attendees at the Women in Politics Scholarship benefit

News from Faculty



Chris Larimer

During the past year, I was able to complete two book projects. My research on Iowa governors will be published in a book due out this fall titled, *Gubernatorial Stability in Iowa: A Stranglehold on Power*. I also completed revisions to a co-authored book, *The Public Administration Theory Primer (3rd edition)*, which is scheduled to be published in early 2016. I continue to work with Donna Hoffman on our panel survey of Iowa voters. We presented a portion of these findings at the 2015 annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago. Finally, in terms of research, a co-authored work with Rebecca Hannagan and Matthew Hibbing on gender balance laws in Iowa was accepted to be published in the journal, *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. On teaching, this past spring I taught the Senior Seminar in Political Science. The topic was “social pressure and politics” and students in the class conducted a semi-random field experiment during the NISG student body elections. The results were fascinating! Using existing research, students designed messages (sent to students two days before the election) that produced statistically significant increases in voter turnout. As in previous years, students in the “Iowa Politics” class visited the State Capitol in Des Moines, meeting with state legislators, lobbyists, as well as the governor. We also had several guest speakers visit our class, including U.S. Senator Charles Grassley.



Brian Warby

This has been another exciting year. I had the opportunity to teach Latin American Politics, a new class for me and one that hasn't been taught for several years. Students enjoyed discussing political transitions from authoritarian regimes to democracy, market oriented economic policies and populist or communist policies, evolutions in indigenous rights, gender equality and, more recently, LGBT rights. I also taught the honors section of International Relations, which allowed me to

try some pedagogical techniques that work well in small group settings.

As a new faculty member it was a new experience to serve on the Political Science Department's scholarship committee. It was rewarding to see students whose academic work reflects their interest and dedication to political science and to see them recognized and rewarded for their work. Unfortunately, our scholarship money is limited because there are many more students who are dedicated and work hard.

Another highlight from this year was the Midwest Political Science Association's annual conference. I attended the conference and presented two papers. Both papers were from a new line of research I have been pursuing over the last year that studies conditional cash transfer programs. One of these papers is a co-authored piece with UNI student John Hickl who just graduated in Global Studies and Spanish. The paper looked at the long-term, societal impacts of Brazil's conditional cash transfer program, *Bolsa Familia*. The paper was well-received by the panel and the discussant gave us valuable feedback that we intend to incorporate as we work to get this research published. I also continue working on my dissertation project, which studied the interaction between political institutions and the conditions under which microfinance reduces poverty. I am working to get this research published as well.

At home, Kade is now a year old and becoming very mobile. We, therefore, have to keep the gate on the stairs locked and anything valuable up high. James just turned three and loves ball sports. Claire, who is six, has turned into a bookworm and Gene, at eight, spent the last year dividing his time between his second grade class and the third grade math class.



Ramona McNeal

It has been a productive year for publications and other research activities. During this period, I have continued my long term commitment to research on

e-government and the impact of technology on political participation. In addition, recent collaborative efforts have taken my research agenda in new directions. Among these projects are two forthcoming book chapters and a forthcoming encyclopedia journal entry. The first is in *Social Media and the Transformation of Interaction in Society*. It is a co-authored book chapter, which explores “digital paranoia”. More specifically, it examines whether recent news headlines regarding online security and Internet privacy have altered individual online behavior. The second is in *(R)evolutionizing Political Communication through Social Media* and is a co-authored book chapter that looks at whether or not social media is helping to fuel political polarization. Finally, I have a forthcoming co-authored encyclopedia entry that looks at how Web 2.0 is influencing U.S. presidential campaign strategies in *Encyclopedia of Mobile Phone Behavior*. In addition, I have five co-authored book chapters under review. Two look at variations in state-level laws that combat cybercrimes. The first compares cyberbullying laws while the second explores differences in cyber harassment and cyberstalking laws. Two others explore differences in public support for federal policies. The first chronicles changes in public support for government wiretapping powers under the PATRIOT Act while the second examines support for stricter carbon dioxide emission levels in power plants. The final manuscript compares differences in state-level laws that mandate telemedicine insurance coverage.



Allison Martens

It was another great year for me as part of the Political Science Department at UNI. I was fortunate this year to have received recognition for my published research, being awarded, along with my co-author Jason Gainous of the University of Louisville, the Robert L. Lineberry Award by the Southwestern Social Sciences Association. This award recognizes the best paper published the previous year in the peer-reviewed journal *Social Science Quarterly*. We received the award for our article “Civic Education and

News from Faculty continued...

Democratic Capacity: How Do Teachers Teach and What Works,” which examines what kind of teaching methods get the best results in high school civic education classes. *Social Science Quarterly*, published by the SSSA, is a highly respected outlet in our field, and we were thrilled to accept their honor at the SSSA’s April meeting in Denver. I didn’t make the trip, but Jason assures me the skiing was still great even in late spring! Jason and I are currently in the process of bringing to publication the next article in our series on teaching and civic education, which explores the political ideology of civics teachers to determine whether liberal or conservative teachers are more likely to use the most effective teaching methods. As for my own individual research, I presented a paper on the political feuds amongst progressive reformers fighting for compulsory health insurance for workers in the early twentieth century this April at the Midwest Political Science Association’s annual meeting in Chicago. Interestingly these feuds were powered in part by disagreements over whether mothers should be encouraged to enter the workforce or stay at home with their children. Much has changed in the last 100 years, and yet some of these debates remain the same.

Other highlights for the year included getting more involved with student organizations here at UNI. I signed on as faculty advisor to two new student chapters of national organizations on campus: Common Sense Action, which seeks to engage Millennials in the political process, and No Labels, which attempts to bring bipartisan solutions to our gridlocked politics. It is inspiring to work with young people eager to bring positive change to our political system. I also continued to engage with the local AAUW chapter, speaking at their annual dinner meeting last fall on “Empowering Women in Government.” We had a wonderful discussion on what it will take to motivate more young women to run for political office. This is an issue I care a great deal about it, and I was thrilled to be able to present two of my graduate students for recognition at the dinner who were responsible for bringing the first AAUW/Running Start “Elect Her” training for young women interested in running for office to a university campus in Iowa.

To close, as Political Science’s social media administrator, let me encourage you to keep up with us online. We maintain a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, so be sure to check us out to keep up on all the latest about our events and faculty, and most importantly to let us know how you are doing.



Scott Peters

This year I continued to try to incorporate more in-class activities into my courses and to spend more time helping students learn to navigate the increasingly complex world of information.

Nearly every course I teach now includes a couple of class periods about information literacy and politics, and I pay special attention to the ways we increasingly consume news--via social media and found through search engines--can skew the information we receive. My research on state supreme court elections continues, and a book manuscript is slowly but surely coming along. I presented one chapter from the book at the Western Political Science Association meeting in Las Vegas. In this part of the book, I show that regulations that states adopt in the hopes of making judicial elections less political may, in fact, increase the likelihood that interest groups will get involved in the campaign. In essence, by stifling candidates’ ability to speak for themselves, states create an information vacuum that interest groups fill. I also had the privilege this year of serving as the Chair of the UNI Faculty. In that capacity I wrote an op-ed that appeared across the state advocating for more state funding for UNI and met with legislators to lobby on our behalf. I’m grateful to so many alums across the state who keep pressuring their legislators to recognize UNI’s unique and important role within Iowa by correcting our historical disadvantage in the state’s funding formula. When not working, I’ve spent a lot of time at soccer fields. I play in a recreational league and coach my 5 and 7 year-old daughters. During the fall and spring I was at the soccer fields five days a week. When I’m not at the soccer fields or otherwise occupied with kids’ activities, my wife and I have been trying to improve and expand our home garden.



Jayme Neiman

My first year at UNI has been exciting and hectic. I was happy to spend the year teaching public administration classes and getting to know the students. Working with a smaller major is infinitely

rewarding when it comes to having the opportunity to spend quite a bit of one-on-one time with individual students and I have found that this is one of my favorite parts of teaching at UNI. Amazingly, while adjusting to teaching a full load, I have been able to keep up on the research that I began during graduate school at the University of Nebraska (Go Huskers!). I presented a paper at the Midwest Political Science Association titled “Jackie (and Jill) Robinson in the Statehouse: Gender and Educational Attainment Influences on Office-Holding and Leadership Positions” that explores the expectations of female state legislators in terms of education. Another paper, one that I worked on with colleagues at Nebraska, “Speaking Different Languages or Reading from the Same Script? Word Usage of Democratic and Republican Politicians” was published in *Political Communication* this spring, and I have two more papers under review (keep your fingers crossed for me!). I hope to spend the summer alternating between taking my daughter to the pool and continuing with researching and writing.



Justin Holmes

In the last year, I have been working on several different research projects. Professor McNeal and I have a forthcoming book chapter investigating the connection between social media use and

polarization (surprisingly, using social media actually reduces polarization modestly). In the fall, I am excited to be teaching Political Communication again, especially given that it will be coinciding with the campaign for the 2016 Iowa caucuses.

Best Wishes to Mike Licari



Dr. Mike Licari, a member of the Department of Political Science at UNI, has accepted the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Indiana State University. Dr. Licari joined the political science faculty in the fall of 2001, was promoted to associate professor in 2003, and professor in 2013. During his time at UNI, Mike also held multiple leadership roles and administrative positions,

including chair of the faculty senate, Dean of the Graduate College, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, and most recently Interim Provost and Executive Vice President. Mike was also very active in the Cedar Falls community, serving as scoutmaster and former chair of the Price Lab School Parental Advisory Committee. Members of the department are sad to see Mike, his wife Kirsten, and son Daniel leaving for Terre Haute, but we are confident that Indiana State will be gaining an excellent provost. We wish Mike and his family all the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

Welcome Katrinka Carpenter



Katrinka Carpenter joined the Department of Political Science in the summer of 2014 as the new departmental secretary. Katrinka has worked at UNI since 1984 and most recently was the secretary in Applied Human Sciences. Katrinka says, "Even though I'm a seasoned veteran, there are always new university or departmental policies and procedures to learn. It is great to be in Political

Science with terrific faculty and to work in the beautifully renovated Sabin Hall. I encourage all alumni who haven't been on campus for a while to stop in and see it (and us). My student days are done, but I think many of the department's courses sound quite fascinating. I am an avid reader of books on Iowa history and collect Iowa-related antiques these days. It's hard to believe almost a year has gone by for me here. My heartfelt thanks to Jane Hunter for all her help with this transition." The Department is pleased to have Katrinka in the main office, as she brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience from her time at UNI.

Welcome Jill Wittrock



Dr. Jill Wittrock joined the faculty as a new assistant professor in May 2015. She is also the Assistant Director at the Center for Social and Behavioral Research, which is a freestanding unit within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences that conducts original research and provides applied research services to faculty, academic units, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies throughout the state of Iowa. Previously Dr. Wittrock was a

Senior Research Associate at the University of Michigan, and in that capacity she managed international and federally funded projects on

topics as diverse as social capital in the Middle East, education reform in Qatar, and election forensics. Before working at Michigan, Jill was an Assistant Professor at the University of Exeter and a Post-doctoral Research Associate at the University of Oxford.

Dr. Wittrock completed her Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Iowa. Her dissertation examined the effects of election reform on political behavior, in particular, studying the ways in which changes to electoral rules influence how voters decide on a candidate. At UNI she will be teaching courses on comparative politics, political institutions, and statistical methods for political science. Born and raised in Carroll County, Dr. Wittrock looks forward to becoming reacquainted with her home state and raising her family in the Cedar Falls area.

Visiting Assistant Professor Evan Renfro



This year, the Department was pleased to host Visiting Assistant Professor Evan Renfro. Dr. Renfro came to UNI from the US Naval War College, Honolulu. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Among the courses that Dr. Renfro taught this past year were international relations, the Middle East, and human rights. He will also be teaching courses this coming academic year, including a course on terrorism and insurgency. He recently published (with Linnea Y. Duvall) "Refocusing the U.S. Strategic Security Perspective" in *Joint Force Quarterly*.

Pi Sigma Alpha Induction



On December 9, 2014, eight students were inducted into the Alpha Delta Chi chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha in the Great Reading Room. Pi Sigma Alpha is the national political science honor society whose purpose is to further the interest and scholarship in political science. Professor Chris Larimer serves as the faculty advisor for the Alpha Delta Chi chapter at UNI.

From left to right, Brent Dunlay, Emily Chiochon, Melissa Johnson, Katie Evans, Dr. Larimer, Connor Brakeville, Tyler Schuck, and Tanner Lascheid. Not Pictured: Alisha Thompson.

The Stephen A. and Linda Segebarth Auditorium Dedicated



Steve and Linda Segebarth with Emeritus Professor of Political Science Dhirendra Vajpeyi at the dedication of the Segebarth Auditorium.

Sabin Hall is now home to the Segebarth Auditorium. Steve, who earned his bachelor's degree in History (1967) and master's degree in Political Science (1974) from UNI, along with his wife Linda were honored at a dedication ceremony in April. They recently created the Stephen A. and Linda Segebarth Endowed Scholarship and the Segebarth Endowed Fund for Excellence. The Stephen A. and Linda Segebarth Endowed Scholarship will provide support for students majoring in social and behavioral sciences with preference given to students who are involved in student government or areas of civic engagement, while the Segebarth Endowed Fund for Excellence will be used by the dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS) to support strategic opportunities that will advance the College. In commenting on the reason for the gifts to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Steve said, "Linda and I are both concerned about the growing decline in civic literacy across the U.S. We need to make sure that there is a pipeline of social scientists, historians and political scientists as resources for all citizens and newcomers to ensure better understanding and engagement in the democracy." Steve and Linda also created the Vajpeyi Political Science Endowed Fund in 2009, which honors Emeritus Professor Dhirendra Vajpeyi, who was a faculty member in the Political Science Department when Steve was a student. Professor Vajpeyi gave a moving address at the dedication ceremony that honored Steve and Linda's contributions to UNI.

"Elect Her" Comes to Campus

MPP students Kerri Robinson and Rachel Gregory took the lead in bringing the "Elect Her: Panther Women Win" workshop to UNI this spring. This event, sponsored by the American Association of University Women and Running Start, offers students the opportunity to gain hands-on campaign skills, hear from inspiring local speakers, and discuss research on women in government. The University of Northern Iowa is the only campus in the state selected as a site for this unique training opportunity. Approximately 35 students gathered for the all-day training sessions. Katie Evans, political science undergraduate, and Renae Beard, graduate student in Women's & Gender studies, both attended the training. They made the decision to run for president and vice president, respectively, of the Northern Iowa Student Government. We are pleased to report they were elected and took office late in the spring semester. Congratulations Katie and Renae!



State Representative Timi Brown-Powers addresses students attending the "Elect Her: Panther Women Win" workshop.

Iowa Politics Students Visit State Capital

In what has become an annual rite of spring, students in Dr. Chris Larimer's Iowa Politics class visited the State Capitol in Des Moines during the spring semester while the General Assembly was in session. Students were able to meet with Governor Terry Branstad, and members of the Iowa House and Senate.



From left to right: Alyssa Kudron, Meghan Gillins, Marcus Weymiller, Colton Voga, Barry Schintler, Tyler Stanley, Governor Branstad, Bryant Hickie, Isaac Pezley, and Victoria Hurst.

Scholarships and Awards

Conner Brakeville

Purple and Old Gold Award, Public Administration

Victoria Hurst

Purple and Old Gold Award, Political Science

Tyler Shuck

Black Hawk County Bar Association Pre-Law Scholarship

Parker Bennett

Glasener Political Science Scholarship

Parker Bennett

Charles Ray and Ada May Hoxie Scholarship

Elizabeth Lynch

Women in Politics Scholarship

Melissa Johnson

Women in Politics Scholarship

Jordan Rockwell

Vajpeyi Scholarship

Congratulations Graduates!

Summer 2014, Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 Graduates

BA, Political Science

Christopher Applegate
Katherine Bennett
Jessie Benson
Eric Boisen
Casey Dworzynski
Jeremy Everett
Tara Feikes
Corey Grover
Chelsea Herkelman
Victoria Hurst
Michele Kenney
Jeremy Kulish
Thomas Madsen
Austin McMahon
Tyler Morford
Brandon Pabst
Anne Reisener
Christian Sather
Elizabeth Sullivan
Linh Ta
Dallas Tuttle
Colton Voga

Reshad Waziri

Bryce Williams

BA, Public Administration

Mary Anderson
Conner Brakeville
Jonathan Butler
Araceli Castaneda
Erin Cayton
Peter Collins
Corey Grover
Victoria Hurst
Cody Kalvig
Andrew Kunkle
Tanner Lascheid
Hannah Marck
Miranda Merritt
Michelle Meyer
Matthew Miller
Joseph Patava
Krystal Robinson
Sandi Salkic
Elizabeth Sullivan

Colton Voga

Nathan Wiemers

BA, Political Communication

Bryant Hickie
Megan Kennedy
Emilio Sanchez
Samantha Welch

Masters, Public Policy

Amy Bentley
Arielle Brown
Erin Cubit
Adam Dobraska
Andrew Duncan
Rachel Gregory
Toluwani Johnson
Andrew Miller
Willie Morales
Diane Orefo
Kerri Robinson
Tigstu Woldeyohanns



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The Department of Political Science at the University of Northern Iowa offers degrees in political science, public administration, and political communication. We are one of the few undergraduate institutions in the country to offer majors in public administration and political communication. We feature student-focused education with small class sizes, research opportunities, and internships. Our distinguished teachers turn excellence in research into excellence in the classroom. Visit us at: www.uni.edu/polisci or on the Cedar Falls campus in Sabin Hall.

