

# Department of Political Science Newsletter

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## Note from the Chair

### Greetings from Political Science

When I became Department chair in June, I did not appreciate fully what a dynamic institution this is. I was aware of the faculty's research and teaching, the growing excellence of our graduate program, and the engagement of our undergraduates. Yet, the breadth of the activity has been stunning.

The faculty participate in campus events discussing policy and the political climate, work on cutting-edge scholarship, and comment in the media on national and world events. Graduate students are winning grants for their dissertation research, publishing articles, and earning jobs at colleges and universities around the

globe. Our undergraduates work in internships, learn in innovative courses, and engage in their own independent research.

I hope this newsletter gives you a taste of the excitement surrounding our Department. The GW Political Science Department is a special place. I know that you too appreciate its many contributions. I owe a special thanks to our many supporters. You help make us one of the leading programs in the nation.

I wish you all a very happy new year.

**Paul Wahlbeck**

## An Engaged Faculty

### Faculty Debate Health Care Policy

Bob Stoker and Robert Betz participated recently in a debate on health care policy. The debate was hosted by the Student Association and co-sponsored by College Republicans and College Democrats.

The two faculty members, each invited to represent one of the parties, had an exchange about healthcare reform before opening the floor to questions from the students. The two faculty demonstrated how one can have a spirited, civil exchange of ideas. "You can disagree," Stoker said, "without being disagreeable."

The evening discussion emphasized that students are engaged in current policy debates. "I was impressed," commented Betz, "at how the students grasped some of the extremely difficult, fundamental questions facing health policy today."

Passion about politics is a natural given as many students were attracted to GW by its location a few blocks from the White



Robert Betz (center) and Bob Stoker (right) debate health care policy  
Photo: GW Hatchet, Elise Apelian

House. Betz remarked, "Most GW students appeared to me that evening to certainly be passionate about politics. More important, though, I felt they were sincerely open to a full-bodied discussion about policy."

Both Stoker and Betz said their exchange with the students at the debate reinforced their appreciation of teaching at GW. As Stoker put it, "I think the debate shows why GW is the best place to study politics -- energetic, engaged, and knowledgeable students."

## GRADUATE STUDENT TESTIFIES BEFORE CONGRESS

Dan Green, a doctoral student, testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs Subcommittee on July 19. The committee was discussing American policy in Yemen. Green

commented on U.S. strategy against Al-Qaeda.

Green, who is completing his dissertation on the selection of the chairmen of Joint Chiefs of Staff, is a Soref Fellow with the Washington Institute on Near East Policy.

He has also written a book, *The Valley's Edge: A Year with the Pashtuns in the Heartland of the Taliban*. The book is based on his



Dan Green testifying before a Senate subcommittee  
Photo: C-SPAN

experience as a diplomat and military veteran working with villagers in Afghanistan.

### Faculty Focus

## Department Adds International Relations Experts

Caitlin Talmadge and Alexander Downes joined the Department's faculty this fall, adding to the Department's strength in International Relations.

Talmadge, who received her doctorate from M.I.T. in 2011, commented that she was attracted to GW because "The Department's profile was rising rapidly, so I was very excited when a job came open. Based on the interview experience, I could tell it was a stimulating, collegial environment where I could grow as a scholar and be challenged by a really smart bunch of faculty and students."

Talmadge, who is teaching Introduction to International Relations, remarked that the students have been fun to teach given how politically aware and astute they are. "My undergrad students," Talmadge observed, "know what is going on in politics, which adds a fun element to almost anything we discuss. My graduate students also bring a lot to the classroom, whether it is military service, time spent in a foreign country, experience in government, or academic study of another field such as public health. They enable me to have the excitement of learning new things while I teach, which I don't think is an experience I'd have everywhere."

Talmadge studies the sources of states' battlefield effectiveness in interstate wars.

She is working on a book that offers an explanation of why states generate differing levels of fighting power even when they have similar material endowments and other similar features such as a common culture. Talmadge focuses on the role of states' civil-military relations in shaping the way these states structure their promotion, training, and command systems, which strongly condition the military power they generate.

One of her case studies is the Iraqi military under Saddam Hussein, and GW's Washington location has been a boon. "It has been great to be in DC," Talmadge noted, "so I can easily access the thousands of recently declassified, translated documents from the Ba'ath regime that are located at a military base about four miles from GW. Scholars come from all over the world to use these, and they are literally a couple metro stops from my office."

Alexander Downes came to GW after spending seven years at Duke University. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 2004.

Downes cited the Department's reputation as a motivation for moving to GW. "Political Science at GW is a Department on the rise, and that was a big draw." In particular, GW's top-notch faculty in international relations was an attraction. "With the recent additions of Charlie Glaser, Michael Barnett, and several terrific junior faculty to an already

strong group," Downes commented, "GW has become the equal of any Department in the country as a place to study international relations."

Downes has been impressed by his students this semester. "The M.A. students in my class at the Elliott School this semester bring diverse and interesting backgrounds to the table, which makes for interesting classroom discussion. I'm looking forward to teaching GW undergraduates in the spring and Ph.D. students next year."

Downes' main research project at the moment concerns the consequences of foreign-imposed regime change. He also has ongoing projects on the credibility (or rather the lack thereof) of threats by democracies in international crises, the causes of U.S. strategic bombing of civilians in the Korean War, and the effectiveness of strategies of civilian victimization.

"I am very excited to be at GW," Downes concludes, "and look forward to continuing to build the Department into a premier destination to study Political Science."

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## An Accomplished Faculty Finnemore Named University Professor

Martha Finnemore is George Washington's newest university professor, joining an elite group of the university's most distinguished faculty members. A university professorship is GW's highest faculty rank and recognizes outstanding scholarship.

"The university professors are a distinguished group, and it's exciting to be in such company," said Finnemore. There are only nine other university professors at GW, including Michael Barnett, university professor of political science and international affairs.

Provost Steven Lerman commented, "Acknowledging Dr. Finnemore's extraordinary accomplishments by appointing her university professor is merited in its own right and sends a clear message that we appreciate the achievements of our own colleagues."

A faculty member in the Department since 1992, Finnemore teaches undergraduate and graduate students about world politics and international institutions. Her research focuses on

global governance, international organizations, ethics and social theory. She is the author of several prize-winning books. Finnemore received GW's Trachtenberg Prize for Scholarship in 2006 and in April was elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences—one of the nation's most prestigious honorary societies and a leading center for independent policy research.

One of Dr. Finnemore's new responsibilities as a university professor will be to teach in the University Honors Program, which she called a "plum assignment." University Honors courses are typically limited to 15 to 20 students. "Teaching a small number of smart undergraduates is a very exciting opportunity," Finnemore said.

She also noted that her new appointment will allow her more time for the research that she loves. "I think this is a vote of confidence from the university that they'd like me to keep doing that work," she said.

Finnemore said she enjoys working at the university because of her "engaged" students and her "top-notch" colleagues.



Martha Finnemore  
Photo: Courtesy of GW Today

Calling George Washington a "special university," she said its location and passionate student body make the university stand out. "Often, students are doing the things that we're actually studying in class, and that connection between the city, politics and their academic life in my classroom is remarkably productive," said Dr. Finnemore. "It makes the learning experience a two-way street; they learn but I learn too, because they bring all the knowledge they've gained from being out and around in town in my classes. That would not be true in any other city in the country."

## Students Engaged with Policy Students Work to Balance Budget

Political science majors and 13 former members of Congress worked together to find ways to reduce the federal deficit during an interactive exercise.

The political science students, along with students from the Graduate School of Political Management, teamed up with former members of Congress for the "Principles and Priorities" simulation interactive exercise, sponsored in part by the United States Association of Former Members of Congress and the Concord Coalition.

After an overview of the current fiscal problems and budget deficit, participants were instructed to balance spending and revenue by looking at a number of policy options and areas, including mandatory and defense spending. The students were

challenged to find \$1.2 trillion in savings, or more, over the next 10 years.

Students divided into special committees that included at least one former member of Congress on each committee. The committees were charged with developing solutions using workbooks that detailed the current federal budget and an options book that included a list of possible policy proposals and their respective cost estimates.

Political science major Danica Brown



Former Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va.) worked with George Washington students to come up with federal deficit solutions (Photo: Courtesy of GW Today)

said she attended the event to get an idea of the "conversation that goes into budgeting."

"Events like today's are important for students to participate in because we're going into the real world very soon and we're going to be the ones that want to make these decisions," she said. "It gives us a little more of a mature view of politics and the reality of the situation. The numbers we decide on will affect someone's life one day."

## Alumni Engaged with GW Alumnus Supports Scholarship

After winning California's MEGA Millions jackpot lottery last year, political science alumnus Gilbert Cisneros (B.A. 1994) and his wife, Jacki, are giving back with a \$1 million gift to establish a need-based scholarship endowment for political science students, and an additional \$100,000 to GW's Yellow Ribbon Program in support of veteran education.

"We are delighted that Gilbert has decided to give back to his alma mater through the Cisneros Scholarship Fund," said Columbian College Dean Peg Barratt. "He and Jacki have translated their good fortune into a generous gift that will help generations of students to achieve their academic dreams. On behalf of those who will benefit, I applaud their thoughtful philanthropy."

In creating the scholarship endowment, the Cisneros' specified that preference be given to students majoring in political science who have a demonstrated interest in Hispanic history

and culture. Their goal: to give students who are in financial need the same educational opportunities that they enjoyed.

"This is something that I always dreamed of being able to do if I got the chance," said Cisneros, who also serves on the Dean's National Council for the Arts and Sciences. "It's great to be able to give some students . . . the chance to study politics in the heart of the nation's capital."

"My husband is Hispanic and I'm half-Hispanic, so we wanted to help create more opportunities for those students," added Jacki Cisneros. "We had always talked about the stuff that we would do if we ever could, and it seems fitting to give back now that we're able to. For us, it's about being able to make a real difference."

The couple's additional \$100,000 gift to the Yellow Ribbon Program was inspired by Gilbert Cisneros' military service. He received a scholarship to GW through Navy ROTC and served in the U.S. Navy for 10 years as a supply corp officer.



Jacki and Gilbert Cisneros (B.A. 1994)  
Photo: Courtesy of GW Arts & Sciences

The couple will continue to support educational initiatives through the Gilbert and Jacki Cisneros Foundation. The new foundation seeks to improve the chances of students attending college by reaching out to them at the middle-school level.

"These gifts are just part of an ongoing process," Gilbert Cisneros said. "We've had this great gift bestowed upon us and we feel blessed to be able to turn around and help others. Education can be a life-changing experience that no one should miss."

## Donor Gifts Advance Department

The Political Science Department relies on gifts from many alumni, friends, and parents. During the last academic year, the Department received gifts from 60 donors. These gifts, whether large or small, provide the foundation for many Department initiatives.

This support is invaluable. It allows the Department to aid research by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as helping junior faculty become established in their fields.

Gifts allowed undergraduates this past year to attend a national political science conference to present their own independent research. Because of a gift from a generous alumna, the Department was able to support three students who were on the program at the Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting in Chicago.



At the Midwest Political Science Association National Meeting in Chicago: Emily Baer-Bositis (B.A. 2011), Steven Kelts, Julie Silverbrook (B.A. 2009), Katherine Meier-Davis (B.A. 2011), and Forrest Maltzman (from left to right)

Several graduate students also presented their research at this conference, and the Department was able to send graduate students to nine different conferences. The opportunity to meet people who are leaders in their field is an important networking tool.

A second valuable benefit of gifts to the Department is the support it provides for junior faculty research. These resources defray the expenses associated with their research and enable them to hire students to work with them on their projects.

Brandon Bartels, an assistant professor who studies American politics, is engaged in a study of support for social welfare programs. In particular, Bartels is interested in determining whether public approval of these programs is affected by how they are delivered – by tax breaks or direct spending programs. To this end, Bartels used research funds to pay participants to partake in a survey experiment.

Thank you for your support!

Visit the Department Website  
<http://www.gwu.edu/~psc>





Philip Winger, Jason Quatrini, Allison Quatrini, and Alyx Mark (from left to right)

## GRAD CAUCUS

The Graduate Caucus, which consists of the Department's graduate students, has been an active presence for the past several years. In recent years, they collected pet supplies for the Washington Animal Rescue League, served lunch at So Others Might Eat, and sponsored a team in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

This fall semester the Graduate Caucus hosted a Pumpkin Festival in October. Students took a break from their classwork and dissertation research to enjoy a fall day at Butler Orchard in Germantown, MD.

They also hosted a "grad bag" where a student presented a research project with other students providing feedback. Another event this fall was "BKAP" (Better Know a Professor) where they sat down with Alex Downes to talk with him in an informal setting.

The Graduate Caucus sponsored an Adopt-A-Family program this holiday season. We donated a record number of gifts this year! Donated gifts included baby products, books, school supplies, kitchen supplies, winter clothing and even a space heater! There is no doubt that these needed gifts will help brighten the holidays for our "adopted" families. We are proud of our Department's generosity and our tradition of involvement in this great program and support for our local community!



Paul Zachary



Annelle Sheline



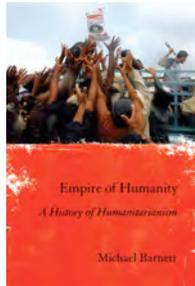
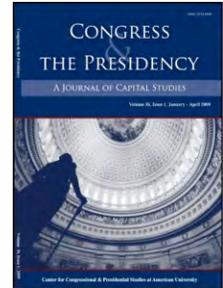
The Department's Adopt-A-Family Drive

Faculty Publications



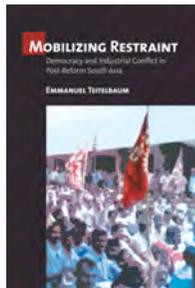
Bruce Dickson. "Updating the China Model." *Washington Quarterly*.

Eric Lawrence, Sarah Binder, and Forrest Maltzman. "The Impact of Party Cues on Citizen Evaluations of Senators." *Congress & the Presidency*.



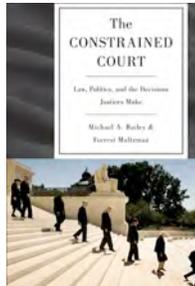
Michael Barnett. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. Cornell University Press.

Marc Lynch. "Explaining the Awakening: Engagement, Publicity, and the Transformation of Iraqi Sunni Political Attitudes." *Security Studies*.



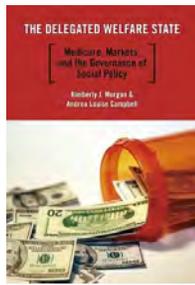
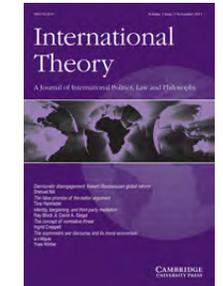
Emmanuel Teitelbaum. *Mobilizing Restraint: Democracy and Industrial Conflict in Post-Reform South Asia*. Cornell University Press.

Brandon Bartels. "Choices in Context: How Case-Level Factors Influence the Magnitude of Ideological Voting on the U.S. Supreme Court." *American Politics Research*.



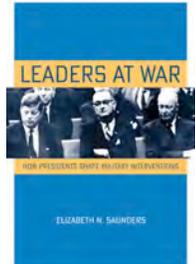
Forrest Maltzman. *The Constrained Court: Law, Politics, and the Decisions Justices Make* (with Michael Bailey). Princeton University Press.

Ingrid Creppell. "The Concept of Normative Threat." *International Theory*



Kimberly Morgan. *The Delegated Welfare State: Medicare, Markets, and the Governance of Social Policy* (with Andrea Louise Campbell). Oxford University Press.

Henry E. Hale. "Formal Constitutions in Informal Politics: Institutions and Democratization in Eurasia." *World Politics*.



Elizabeth Saunders. *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions*. Cornell University Press.

Harvey Feigenbaum. "America's Cultural Challenge Abroad." *Political Science Quarterly*





### Thanks to Our Donors

These individuals made contributions to the Political Science Department or the Sigelman Fund in 2011 (January 1, 2011 - November 30, 2011). We very much appreciate your kindness and support for our various activities.

Emily Baer-Bositis '11

Sarah Binder & Forrest Maltzman \*\*

Kyle Bird '09

Lindsay Brooker '09

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- Securely online at [www.gwu.edu/give2gw](http://www.gwu.edu/give2gw). Just choose "other" under designation and type in "Political Science Department"
- Mail your check, made out to The George Washington University and with "Political Science Department" in the memo line, to the University at 2100 M Street, NW, Suite 310, Washington, DC 20052
- By calling the GW Annual Fund at 1-800-789-2611

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## ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

Rennie A. Silva (B.A. 2005) was awarded a Fulbright grant to study media and political participation in Laos

Bob Lockwood (Ph.D. 1976) published three novels on Washington politics: *A Culture of Deception* (2007); *Political Ducks: Lucky, Lame & Dead* (2009); *Au Revoir, Israel* (2010) with a fourth novel underway, entitled *Sweet Revenge*

Francisco Pardo (B.A. 2009) was recently elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors of Equal Justice Works, a national organization committed to supporting the next generation of public interest lawyers

Benish Shah (B.A. 2004) wrote essays in *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age* examining the role of traditional & social media in the Arab Spring

*Send News to: Political Science Newsletter, George Washington University, 2115 G Street, NW, Monroe 440, Washington, DC 20052; or email us at [polsci@gwu.edu](mailto:polsci@gwu.edu).*



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