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Democracy in Action

Political Science Students Active in 2012 Campaigns

GW is unique because students live and work in the shadow of the Capitol. Yet again, GW was named one of the nation’s three most politically active universities by The Princeton Review. This year our undergraduate majors took their interests to campaigns during the election season. Students worked in phone banks and pounded the pavement to register voters and canvas for Mitt Romney and Barack Obama. They dedicated their time to several Congressional campaigns throughout the country including both House and Senate races in Virginia, California, Washington, and Massachusetts. GW political science students also offered their skills and enthusiasm to political organizations including the Republican National

Engaged Students

Graduate Students Host First Annual Conference

Presenting and discussing research is considered a favorite pastime for aspiring scholars, and the Department’s graduate students are no exception! On October 12th, current graduate students organized and coordinated the First Annual Graduate Student Conference in Political Science at the George Washington University. The event was a major success, with over 30 students in attendance.

The conference consisted of panels on a wide range of topics related to “political transition,” a broad but important theme in contemporary political science scholarship. Over two-dozen presenters represented all major sub-fields of political science, and travelled from multiple area schools, including: GW, University of Maryland, George Mason University, University of Delaware, Georgetown University, University of Virginia, and Johns Hopkins University.

The initiative to begin an annual conference was a response to the recognition by graduate students in several area departments of the importance of closer connection and engagement with other graduate students. When asked about the event, Department Chair Paul Wahlbeck agreed by saying, “Sharing ideas and research with fellow graduate students is a critical part of the graduate school experience.” The conference was a great way to work toward this goal by sharing ideas among peers at other universities.
Students in 2012 Election

Continued from Page 1

Committee, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, and the Human Rights Campaign. Borders did not limit our students’ participation: one student, a junior, assisted with a campaign while studying abroad in Australia and another interned for an international consulting firm doing campaign work in Georgia.

Today’s students truly upheld GW’s proud tradition of political activism.

2012 Election:

GW Students Get Involved

Democratic Campaigns

- Jeff Jacobson was a volunteer and Ahmad Hasen was an Organizing Fellow for the Obama campaign in VA.
- Courtney Corbissier worked on the Obama campaign in Columbus, Ohio.
- Alanna Jereb assisted on President Obama's campaign in Alexandria, Virginia at the Mount Vernon office.
- Daniel Egel-Weiss was an Organizing Fellow with Obama for America - Illinois this summer.
- Senya Merchant was a Student Intern Fellow at Obama for America - Virginia.
- Kyle Miskell and Graham Rabinowitsch were Student Fellows for Organizing for America – Virginia.
- Jared Robert MacDonald worked for Korean Americans for Obama as well as on former Virginia Governor Tim Kaine’s Senate campaign.

Obama Campaign

- Phil Gardner was the Communications Director with Denny Heck for Congress in the South Puget Sound area of Washington.
- Chris Sedor was an intern on Tim Kaine’s campaign for Senate in southern Fairfax County, Virginia.
- Tyler L. Wolanin volunteered on Tim Kaine’s Senate campaign and interned remotely for Elizabeth Warren’s Senate campaign.
- Jimmy Kaduboski was an intern with the Elizabeth Warren Senate campaign. He helped start a “GW for Elizabeth” program that phone banked and recruited Massachusetts voters.

Local Campaigns

- Charley Sucher was an intern at the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), which coordinates and fundraises for many political campaigns.

Other

- Tyler McDonald and Andrew Barris worked on Mitt Romney’s campaign in Arlington, VA.
- Shoshana Weissmann was the Chairman of “GWU for Romney” and ran the social media for Romney’s DC team. She was also the Volunteer Coordinator for Wendy Long for U.S. Senate.

Republican Campaigns

- Jim Hilk worked in California’s 9th District for the Ricky Gill campaign.

Local Campaigns

- Jonathan McKinstry worked in the Communications Department for the Republican National Committee
- Lindsey Stearns was an intern with Newt Gingrich’s campaign headquarters during the primaries.

Other

- Kristen Hildreth was an intern at the HRC and has focused primarily on Marylanders for Marriage Equality.
- Juliana Amin worked as an LGBTQ Outreach Fellow at “Obama for America DC”. She is also the Campaign Director for the “GW College Democrats”.
- Samuel P. Garrett worked for the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, which works to elect openly lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) leaders to office.

LGBTQ Issues

- Daniel Wein worked in Sydney, Australia on Alex Greenwich’s successful campaign to become a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly in the Australian Parliament.
- Natalie Chotiner worked for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe under their Limited Election Monitoring Commission, observing the media coverage of the presidential election.
- Elizabeth Glusman was an intern on the International Political Team at Penn Schoen Berland. She did campaign work for The Georgian Dream Coalition and the recently confirmed Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili.
Q&A:
With Al Kaltman, Ph.D., Class of ‘70

Al Kaltman received his Ph.D. in political science from GW in 1970 and has been an adjunct professor in the department for the past two years. After serving in the Air Force and pursuing diverse interests including foreign languages and computer programming, Kaltman enrolled in GW’s Ph.D. program in mathematics. However, he was soon convinced by a favorite professor to transfer into the political science doctoral program. After earning his Ph.D., Kaltman went on to have a successful career, the last 30 years of which were in the insurance business. He started his own company in New York, specializing in insuring high risk drivers, and employed several hundred people.

When asked about what accomplishments marked his career, Kaltman says, “As important as the results of the organizations I was privileged to lead were, even more important were the opportunities I had to develop young managers. When I look today at the positions they hold and the results they are achieving, I take satisfaction in the part I played in helping them to become successful leaders.” In 2010, he returned to GW as a professor and currently teaches a political science course called Leadership, which exposes students to the values of leadership and strengthen students’ writing ability.

How did your GW education contribute to your success?

At first glance, a Ph.D. in political science would seem like a useless appendage for someone who is managing an IT department or an insurance company, but that would be shortsighted. The analytical and critical thinking skills I learned as a student have proved invaluable, as have the ability to express myself clearly and concisely orally and in writing. I doubt that I could have written the two books I did on ethical leadership or the many articles I’ve authored if I had not been fortunate enough to attend GW.

What motivated you to return to GW as a teacher?

Professor Forrest Maltzman invited me to teach a course on leadership, and I was delighted to accept the challenge as long as I could teach as an unpaid volunteer. It’s one small way of giving a little back to the university that has played such a big role in my life. Although candidly, I must say I gain more from teaching here than I give. The students are generally bright, interested and interesting. Teaching here is a joy.

What has been rewarding about teaching GW students?

Harry Truman believed that the only thing new in this world is the history we haven’t learned, and Bismarck said that only a fool learns from his own mistakes, while a wise man learns from the mistakes of others. I approach the study of leadership by looking at past and current examples of successful and failed leadership. By the time students attend my class, they have written the standard college research paper more times than they can remember. Men and women in leadership positions rarely have time to read much less write lengthy research papers; they require concise communications, memoranda and reports that are comprehensive in scope but clear and succinct. My overall goal for the class is to help the students learn lessons in leadership that will stand them in good stead throughout their lives irrespective of whatever career path they follow.
Spotlight on New Faculty

Danny Hayes
Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 2006

*What is your first impression of GW/GW students?*
I've felt very welcome both within the department and the university. This is both a collegial and vibrant place to work -- and that's a hard combination to beat.

*What research projects are you currently working on?*
I am currently working on two projects. The first project, based on my dissertation analyzes the individual and collective behavior of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. The second project examines whether major institutional reforms increase or decrease social stability. We answer this question by focusing on the emancipation of the Russian serf peasants in 1861.

*Can you give us a fun fact about yourself?*
I collect owls (not real ones, of course) in all possible shapes and forms. Currently there are more than 600 "birds" in my collection.

Rachel Stein
Ph.D., Stanford University, 2012

*What attracted you to GW?*
I love following politics, so the opportunity to live and work in our nation's capital was certainly an attraction. When I came to GW for my interview, I also found that the Department of Political Science was full of people doing interesting, novel research and who also genuinely like and respect each other. I don't think you can find that combination in too many other places.

*What is your first impression of GW students?*
I am teaching a freshman seminar for the first time this semester and I am very impressed with how politically engaged the students are. They know history and they follow current events. This really helps take our in-class discussions to a higher level.

*What research projects are you currently working on?*
At the moment, I am working on turning my dissertation project, entitled "Crime, Punishment and War," into a book. I am also in the early stages of initiating a new data collection project, which I hope will produce a database of all the wartime speeches of American presidents from George Washington to Barack Obama.

*Can you give us a fun fact about yourself?*
I have lived in both Warsaw and Moscow and I can make a pretty good batch of borscht.

Evgeny Finkel
Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2012

*What attracted you to GW?*
GW is currently the best in the U.S. (if not in the world) to study the regions I am most interested in -- the post-communist world and the broader Middle East. D.C. also has archives that are crucial for the work I do -- the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Archive and the Slavic collection of the Library of Congress.

*What research projects are you currently working on?*
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*Can you give us a fun fact about yourself?*
I collect owls (not real ones, of course) in all possible shapes and forms. Currently there are more than 600 "birds" in my collection.
Steve Biddle
Ph.D., Harvard University, 1992
What attracted you to GW?
Among the most important factors for me were the department’s combination of scholarly rigor and policy engagement, the program’s growing reputation in the field, and its culture of collegiality. This can be a very cloistered profession on many campuses, and I was impressed by GW’s openness to policy debate in a context of serious scholarship. Not a lot of schools can maintain that balance. And I was very impressed by what I heard about the program from friends and colleagues elsewhere. I solicited advice widely when I was considering the offer, and I was struck by how many people felt GW was rising rapidly in its profile and standing – this was a remarkably widespread view. I’ve only been here a little while now, but from what I’ve seen so far, I can see why. This is a dynamic department and a fun place to be.

What research projects are you currently working on?
My chief research effort right now is a book project titled “How Nonstate Actors Fight: Explaining the Military Choices of Guerillas, Warlords, Militias and Mercenaries.”

Can you give us a fun fact about yourself?
I’m a C12-rated epee fencer, a very bad cellist, and recently added the Greater Coucal to my life list when birding in Borneo with my daughter last summer.

Celeste Arrington
Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2010
What attracted you to GW?
The unparalleled breadth and depth of East Asia-related social science research that faculty here are conducting and the range of different perspectives represented within the political science department.

What is your first impression of GW students?
They are curious, politically engaged, and eager to participate in class.

What research projects are you currently working on?
I am finishing a book manuscript that examines why some victims of alleged government wrongdoing and negligence in South Korea and Japan obtain more redress than others. I am also writing papers that analyze transnational legal mobilization and leprosy-related activism in East Asia; the evolution of the public sphere in South Korea since democratization; and the role that anonymity plays in litigation and political activism in Japan.

Can you give us a fun fact about yourself?
I used to be a coxswain and coach crew.

Call for Nominations for Political Science Alumni Award
The Department of Political Science is currently accepting nominations for the Political Science Alumni Award!
Do you know an undergraduate or graduate political science alumni whose contributions and achievements since graduating from GW merit recognition?
If so, nomination forms are available on the Department’s website at http://www.gwu.edu/~psc
Don’t forget to submit your nomination by Friday, February 1st!
Alumni Connections
From GW to Dr. Oz: One Political Science Alumna’s Journey

Kristin Kirkpatrick (BA ’98) was recently named one of 35 health experts to follow by the Huffington Post. A national presenter and regular contributor to the Dr. Oz show, Kirkpatrick graduated from GW in 1998 with a Bachelor’s degree in political science, and began her career in the D.C. area. Now a Registered Dietitian in the state of Ohio, Kirkpatrick says that attending GW changed her life.

“GW introduced me to the world,” she says, and gave her a one-of-a-kind college experience. “Where else will your freshman dorm be next to an embassy, or can you have the opportunity to work for the White House?”

Before finding her path in the world of health and wellness, Kirkpatrick did just that—as a White House intern, she served on a presidential campaign. She says this experience, combined with events and lectures at GW, not only strengthened her as a student, but also as an individual.

After graduation, Kirkpatrick began her career by lobbying for medical nutrition therapy reform with the American Dietetic Association’s Policy and Advocacy group. Next, she went on to become the regional coordinator of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Hearts N’ Parks program in Montgomery County, MD. Kirkpatrick eventually returned to Ohio and joined the Cleveland Clinic’s Department of Cardiovascular Genetics, where she also enrolled in the University of Akron’s coordinated program in dietetics.

Kirkpatrick is currently manager of Wellness Nutrition Services at the Cleveland Clinic Wellness Institute, in Cleveland, OH, and is regularly quoted in publications such as Whole Living, Fitness, Women’s Health, Women’s Day and Self, as well as international media outlets. She is also a Huffington Post contributor.

Kirkpatrick’s success was built upon her experiences in college. GW not only influenced her life, but helped shape it—“it made me who I am,” she says. Her advice to current students? “Do everything, see everything and experience everything that the city and the school have to offer.”

Kirkpatrick sums up GW as the best experience of her life. “Every time on campus,” she says, “I smile, and can’t believe that I was lucky enough to walk that campus for four years.”

Story reprinted from the GW Alumni News Site-gwalumni.org Written by Melissa Nyman.

Campus Events

“Strategies for Success” Event Series Continues

Research is not only for faculty and graduate students. The Department’s undergraduate students play an active role in research, too! One of the Department’s goals is to encourage broader participation by its majors in research.

The Department recently hosted an event on research fellowships and opportunities titled “How to Win Undergraduate Research Fellowships.” Over twenty students learned how to find faculty mentors, develop manageable projects, and apply for GW research awards, such as the Luther Rice Collaborative Fellowship and the George Gamow Undergraduate Research Fellowship.

The event featured student presentations by former research fellowship winners and faculty research assistants, Adam Bethke, Dan Horning, and Jane Olmstead-Rumsey, as well as remarks from Paul Wahlbeck, the Political Science Department Chair; Dan Ullman, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies; Professor Steven Balla; and Paul Hoyt-O’Connor, the Director of the Center for Undergraduate Fellowships and Research.

Research fellowships are a great way for political science students to not only hone important analytical skills, but also give students the opportunity to do substantial work on topics about which they feel motivated and passionate.
John Muller (BA ’07) has authored his first book, Frederick Douglass’ Washington: The Lion of Anacostia, published by The History Press.

Bruce Stebbins (BA ’87) was appointed by the Governor, Attorney General and Treasurer of MA to serve as one of five new members of the newly created Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

Jonathan Robinson (BA ’12) was chosen as one of two runners-up in Pi Sigma Alpha’s Best Undergraduate Honors Thesis competition for 2012 for his paper, “Political Representation, Legislative Responsiveness, and Polarized Labor Markets: The Politics of Rising Wage Inequality in the United States”

Many political science alumni worked on Barack Obama’s reelection campaign: Katie Hogan (BA ’06) was the Deputy Press Secretary; Michael Kurtz (BA ’09) was the Deputy Midwest Finance Director; Michael Wear (BA ’11) worked as the Faith Vote Director; and Joe Rospars (BA ’03) was the Chief Digital Strategist.

Eric Cantor (BA ’85) was reelected to represent Virginia’s 7th District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Brad Morris (BA ’97) was a candidate for election to the U.S. House of Representatives, representing the 1st Congressional District of Mississippi.

Steve Israel (BA ’81) was elected to represent New York’s 3rd District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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.

Thanks to Our Donors
These individuals made contributions to the Department of Political Science or the Sigelman Fund in 2012 (January 1, 2012- October 31, 2012).

We very much appreciate your kindness and support for our various activities.

* Parent/Current Student ** GW Faculty

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- By calling the GW Annual Fund at 1-800-789-2611

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