A Note from the Chair

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Department in Columbian College. When I think about our 100-year history, students immediately come to mind. We have trained thousands of political science majors and many other GW students over these years. We provided analytical tools and honed their critical thinking skills. Our students follow many career paths: law, public service, business, teaching, research, and even web design and opera. We count among our alumni college presidents, U.S. senators and representatives, federal and state judges, state and local officials, and many others successful individuals who contribute to their communities. We are proud of our alumni’s accomplishments. This fall we will celebrate our anniversary with a reception during Alumni Weekend on September 28th. I invite you to join us for the celebration.

The past 100 years are marked by change. The university that I joined in 1993 has changed: we have a new president, a new provost, new residence halls and academic buildings, and many new faculty. The Department has changed. This is seen prominently in program rankings. We moved from a ranking around 50th to the top 25 in the latest National Research Council rankings of doctoral programs in political science. Our faculty publish research in the leading journals and presses of the discipline. The Department is seen as a program on the move.

As we celebrate the past 100 years, we look forward to the future. Our future will be shaped by our current undergraduate and graduate students. A word that captures our students is ‘engaged.’ They are engaged in classes – reading scholarship, writing papers, and discussing the issues of the day. They are engaged in research – winning fellowships and grants to support their independent research projects and supporting faculty research through assistantships. They are engaged in Washington – serving as interns for elected officials, government agencies, and advocacy groups. Our students are preparing for their own career path, and I look forward to hearing their success stories in the years ahead.

-Paul Wahlbeck, Department Chair
Happy Anniversary, Department of Political Science!

Department celebrates 100 years of history at The George Washington University

This year, the Department of Political Science is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its incorporation into the Columbian College (now The George Washington University). The Department has a rich history and has grown and changed over the past 100 years from a program with only three faculty members to one of the largest programs in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences with over 700 undergraduate students, over 100 graduate students, and 49 full-time faculty.

The Early Years

The Political Science Department had its origins in the Department of Jurisprudence and Diplomacy in 1898, which offered graduate and professional studies in close affiliation with the law school. In 1907, with the addition of undergraduate course offerings, the College of Political Sciences was born. The mission of the College of Political Sciences was to offer "systematic and scientific instruction in the various branches of the political sciences." The College, in the 1910 GW Bulletin, advertised itself in words that still ring true today: "In Washington are collected the official records of the Nation's history. Here are accumulated vast stores of information concerning the condition of the country and the problems confronting us as a people."

Department Affiliates with Columbian College and Expands

Following a financial crisis in 1913, the College of Political Sciences was incorporated into the Columbian College (of Arts and Sciences). The Political Science Department in 1914 employed three faculty who offered 14 courses, ranging from Elements of Political Science and American Government to European Governments and Principles of International Law.

The Department experienced exceptional growth in two periods over the following decades. The first period of expansion occurred following World War II when the Department doubled from six faculty members in the 1944-1945 school year to 12 in the 1949-1950 school year. The second period of growth took place in the 1960s. The Department benefitted from institution-wide expansion and by the end of the decade, had grown to 24 faculty members.

Changing Course

After even further growth and change throughout the next 20 years, the 1990s were a time of focus on scholarly productivity and a push to attract the best faculty in the field. New faculty members were aggressively recruited and, once hired, were encouraged to focus on their research and publication. An atmosphere of collegiality was nurtured, and collaboration was encouraged. A haphazard pattern of publication was replaced by a more focused effort at placing works in the top journals and with high quality academic presses.

Pursuing Academic Excellence

These and other efforts bore fruit. In 2011, the National Research Council ranked GW’s Political Science doctoral program 24th in the nation. A survey conducted by the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) project later that year ranked GW as having the 9th best undergraduate Political Science program in the country. The masters’ program rose to 7th, while the Ph.D. program ranked 15th. Most recently, the 2013 U.S. News and World Report assessment of graduate programs ranked the Department’s American Politics subfield 16th in the nation.

The Department of Political Science benefits from the foundation for success laid over the past 100 years. We hope to continue our academic excellence and build on the success of our faculty, students, and alumni in the future. Cheers to the next 100 years!
Q&A:

With Steven Frenkil, B.A., Class of ’74

Steven Frenkil received his B.A. in political science from GW in 1974 and was recently installed as the newest president of the George Washington Alumni Association (GWAA). A member of GWAA since 2008, Frenkil most recently served as Vice President for Student-Alumni Initiatives and President-elect. In 2010, Frenkil received GW’s Alumni Outstanding Service Award for his volunteer contributions to the university and the broader school community. After attending GW, Frenkil received his J.D. from the University of Maryland, and now works for Miles & Stockbridge P.C. as a principal representing management in employment law and education law matters. Recently, the Department spoke with Frenkil about his experience, and his advice for fellow and future Department alumni.

What does being a GW alumnus mean to you?

It is great to be part of a worldwide network of alumni - as well as students, faculty, staff and administrators - who share a common central experience. Colonials are often drawn to service and leadership in their careers or volunteer endeavors. Additionally, GW has impacted me in numerous ways. Some of my closest friends today are people I met on this campus. Among my primary outside interests today, two of them – politics and art – are things I first studied here. We had a lot of fun and grew up here in the early 70’s in a world embroiled in political and social turmoil.

How did your degree in Political Science from GW influence your career path?

I came to GW wanting to examine the interplay between the political process and the legal system. That interest became more focused as a result of my political science courses and many discussions with professors at GW. Examining the effects of political systems and behavior on legislation led to an interest in how the laws are applied and fostered a decision to go to law school and practice law. This turned out to be a good decision. My two primary areas of practice are employment law and education law – two arenas in which many of the most interesting public policy, political, and social issues are played out daily.

Can you tell us about your experiences with the Department of Political Science at GW?

In the early 70’s, there were numerous themes in politics and government that impacted the Department: (1) the Cold War – the conflict between the U.S. and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies; (2) the Sino-Soviet Split – the freeze between the two largest communist countries; and (3) the American political/social climate - the anti-war movement, intense social change, and Watergate. While many explored other critical areas of Political Science, it was difficult for many, including me, to resist the pull of these then central themes in the political landscape. The Political Science professor who most impacted me was John Starrels, who focused on European political systems and comparative politics, and who provided strong mentoring in political analysis and writing.

What are you most looking forward to about your new position as GWAA president?

I enjoy being on campus and working with alumni, students, faculty, staff, and administrators to support the University. During the two-year term, our goals are to promote a culture of Colonials Helping Colonials, enhance the student-alumni connection, reinforce the diversity of the Alumni Association, and increase our engagement in community service. We will be doing a lot more, but that will keep us busy. I would love to hear from any alum would like to get involved or share any comments; email me at stevefrenkil@gmail.com.

What advice do you have for current GW students?

College is one of the longest periods of time that you will have to engage in sustained inquiry and exploration with few other time constraints. It will set the stage for how you pursue inquiry in the future. So, take the most challenging courses available. Do outside reading and research to empower yourself to assess and challenge positions taken by classmates and professors. Figure out what truly interests you and pursue it, rather than what is convenient or expected. Kerry Washington said it well at Commencement - “write your own story.”
Alumni Spotlight

Drew Cohen (B.A. ’08) Clerks in South Africa’s Emerging High Court

Clad in a traditional robe and jabot, Drew F. Cohen, who earned his B.A. in Political Science and Economics from GW in 2008, has spent the past four months transcribing nearly every case heard before the South African Constitutional Court. The fledgling court, with formal traditions inspired by the country’s British roots, has only been around since 1994—and as a foreign clerk, Mr. Cohen gets to witness history in the making as the South African legal system continues to develop.

Months after obtaining a joint J.D./M.B.A. at the George Washington University Law School and School of Business in 2012, Drew sifted through jobs for legal practitioners abroad. An opportunity came quickly: South Africa, which employs two to four foreign law clerks for its 11 justices, sought an American clerk for Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng of the highest court on constitutional matters. The seven-month clerkship spans three of the court’s four terms. Drew applied, and this February, he packed his bags for Johannesburg.

South Africa employs both domestic and foreign law clerks, generally aiming to have one foreign clerk from each continent. The clerks provide research, notes, procedural summaries, and analysis. At the hearings, they take their seats in front of court justices and scribe entire proceedings. They collaborate during roundtable discussions and review different issues and perspectives regarding upcoming cases.

“The seminars themselves are the most helpful. It reminds me of law school studying groups, when you’re hashing out ideas—but now there are actually practical, real consequences,” Drew said. Drew emphasized that South African apartheid ended only about 20 years ago, and as a result, many of the country’s laws and constitutional doctrines are still developing. Participating in a system that is still emerging creates diverse experiences in the courtroom.

“The cases that come before the court are far more colorful than the cases in the United States,” Drew explained. “The basic principles and doctrines of law, which are 300 years old in the U.S., are still being developed here.”

Drew has worked on more than 30 cases so far, reviewing everything from the legality of pregnancy policies in local schools to the country’s right to enforce laws of foreign tribunals. Several cases have garnered international media attention, and Drew has seen details of cases he has been involved in later fill pages of the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.

In addition to their work during legal proceedings, clerks also give tours of the Constitutional Court. These tours have given Drew a chance to interact with influential political figures. So far, he’s provided tours for Chief Justice Ivor F. Archie from the Supreme Court of Trinidad and Tobago, Israeli journalist Gideon Levy, and Southern District of New York Judge George B. Daniels.

Drew’s clerkship ends in early September. After that, he is considering another overseas clerkship in Israel, hoping to deepen his unique experiences in South Africa.

“Each case, no matter how mundane, has an incredible impact on a basic principle of law,” Drew said. “The institutions and doctrines are still evolving, and it’s neat to be able to see that evolution take place.”

In The Classroom

Media & Politics with Professor Danny Hayes

First offered during the fall semester of 2012, Professor Danny Hayes’ Media & Politics undergraduate-level course is one of the many interesting and innovative classes currently being offered by the Department of Political Science. Media & Politics, which looks at the relationship between media and government, explores topics like press freedom; how journalists determine what is newsworthy; how the media affects public opinion; and the many rapid changes in the media environment that are currently taking place.

As a former journalist, Hayes has a unique perspective on the subject. “Much of my interest in politics stems from my days as a reporter,” Hayes said. When asked about his motivation for teaching a course such as this one, he added “it’s also very hard to fully comprehend American politics without understanding the media, which I think makes this an especially important class.”

Hayes’ personal research, which explores the way media coverage affects public opinion and voting behavior, has helped him develop the course. Hayes said, “I often use experiments to study this process. So that allows me during the semester to explain how experiments can be used to test hypotheses, and to provide examples from my own research. Last fall, for instance, I showed the class results from experiments I’ve run that explore how exposure to different kinds of news stories can influence Americans’ support for military action against Iran.”

When asked about his favorite teaching methods and activities, Hayes explained that he spends a good deal of class time working with students to help them make connections between events in the news and the
Graduate Student Research

**Ph.D. Student Conducts Dissertation Research in Palestine**

Daniel Nerenberg, a current Ph.D. student in the Department of Political Science, was recently awarded funding from a newly created Department Graduate Research Fund to conduct dissertation research in the Palestinian territories. Below, Daniel describes some of his experiences abroad:

“I stumbled upon what would eventually become my dissertation topic seven years ago, at a dinner party on one of my first trips to the Palestinian territories. I had moved to Ramallah, the administrative capital of the occupied Palestinian territories, to study Arabic at nearby Birzeit University. That night I witnessed a battle of words between two Palestinian friends. One charged the other of betraying the Palestinian people, a heavy accusation in these parts. The accused was a supporter of Salaam Fayyad’s dubious ‘economic peace’, which saw Palestinians engaged in close economic cooperation with Israel and Israelis. Fayyadism, as it came to be known, was largely considered a faulty strategy by most Palestinian intellectuals and activists, in part because it preached maximal cooperation with Israel despite the ongoing occupation and the moribund two state solution. Cooperating with ‘the enemy’, in such a context, was tantamount to treason. Not every guest agreed with the assessment, and a fiery debate broke out. What exactly were the red lines of cooperation with Israel? How should Palestinians interact with the occupier? When is cooperation more, and when less, acceptable? Are some forms of cooperation so egregious that they effectively banish the guilty party from the nation?

National identity is a fickle beast - it is neither fixed nor primordial. It requires definition and redefinition at every stage of national contestation, especially for those groups seeking self-determination. One role of a national leadership is to confront this challenge by defining clear red lines of cooperation with the adversary. I came back to Ramallah in June 2012 to explore these red lines, contested in discourse between Palestinian leadership and society. The work is rewarding - every day I seek out interviews with Palestinians engaged in norm-generation. This includes members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Palestinian Authority, and the opposition, including Hamas and PFLP activists. It also includes members of civil society who challenge the leadership’s legitimacy, like Divestment and Sanction (BDS) movement, or heads of local councils throughout the occupied Palestinian territories. I buttress this discourse with a careful analysis of Palestinian law and media, including, for example, the leaflets that during the first intifada served to guide the mobilization of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

This is a paradoxical time for Palestine. On the one hand, it is more secure and prosperous than it has been in years. It is, perhaps ironically, the most stable ‘state’ in the region; as Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Libya, Bahrain, and others tremble from the sea change that swept the region in December 2010, Palestine remains remarkably entrenched in the status quo. This stability makes research a lot easier. I have rarely feared for my safety, and have little trouble securing interviews. It is an untenable status quo in the long-term, and its effect on Israelis and Palestinians forced to live under a system of occupation is more dire than most realize. But it is also a fortuitous time to be here. Palestine is also a beautiful country, and I’ve been lucky enough to walk its peaks and valleys almost every weekend since arriving. I’d like to think that these hikes have given me perspective throughout the research.

I return to George Washington University at the end of the summer, after a little more than a year in the field. I could not be more excited to reunite with the incredible academic community in the Department, and to turn my work into what I hope will be a valuable contribution not only to their education, but also to democracy.”

**Professor Hayes’ Media & Politics**

*Continued from Page 4*

course material. During last fall’s class, for instance, Hayes mentioned that the class “talked frequently about the way that media coverage of the 2012 campaign was or was not consistent with scholarly literature we were reading.” Hayes often shows clips from Comedy Central’s The Daily Show, which he says “helps keep things from getting boring.” Commenting on recent events in the news, Hayes suggested that this semester’s class will likely feature animated discussions about whether the U.S. media should or should not publish information about secret national security programs.

“I also hope that students leave as savvy consumers of political news. That would be a contribution not only to their education, but also to democracy.”

The fact that the subject of media and politics is constantly changing and evolving is one of Professor Hayes’ favorite things about the course. “There’s always something new -- seismic changes to the news business, the rise of social media, Kim Kardashian and Kanye West’s baby (no, wait, not that). It’s virtually impossible to get bored,” explained Hayes. Ultimately, Hayes hopes his students will take away important lessons from Media & Politics. “In addition to knowing more about the media’s role in politics,” he said, “I want them to have a good sense of how political scientists conduct research, and what that research can tell us about the world. I also hope that students leave as savvy consumers of political news. That would be a contribution not only to their education, but also to democracy.”
Celebrating Commencement

Congratulations, 2013 Graduates!

The Department of Political Science is incredibly proud of our 2013 graduating seniors, and can’t wait to find out what they accomplish next!

Seven students won Political Science Department prizes, which were presented at the annual Political Science commencement celebration on May 18th. The Howard C. Sacks Prize, which honors the top students interested in the study of Far Eastern Affairs, was awarded to Yunshan Leng. Alejandro Almodovar, Pengli Li, and Marissa Weisbaum received the John A. Morgan Prize, which honors the top graduating seniors who plan to study law. Finally, the Joshua Evans III Prize, given to the top graduating seniors in the Political Science Department, was awarded to Catherine Barnao, Kristina Cole, and Cameron Thompson. The National Political Science Honor Society, Pi Sigma Alpha, welcomed 36 new members at their annual ceremony on April 18th. Pi Sigma Alpha is the only honor society for college students of political science and government in the United States and has over 730 chapters around the country.

Our graduating seniors are going on to pursue many exciting opportunities as they leave GW. Several report plans to continue their education, with 8 students pursuing graduate degrees at universities such as Columbia, William and Mary, the London School of Economics, and Tel Aviv University. Four of those students are continuing their education at GW in master’s degree and dual degree programs. Seven students will go on to study law at schools such as GW Law, Harvard, Georgetown, UC Irvine, Cardozo Law School. Some graduating students will participate in Teach for America and City Year, while others will teach English overseas or work for the Peace Corps.

Many graduates will be entering the workforce. Future employers include Deloitte, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Citigroup, National Organization for Rare Disorders, Organizing for America, Success Academy Charter Schools, Strategic Media Services, IBM, Co Star Group, Accenture Consulting, and Domain PR. Congratulations to all our graduates, and best of luck with all of your future endeavors!
Thanks to Our Donors

These individuals made contributions to the Department of Political Science or the Sigelman Fund during the 2012-2013 academic year (July 1, 2012, June 21, 2013).

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

Sarah Binder and Forrest Maltzman **
Isabelle R. McDonough Bram, ’47
Rachel P. Caufield, ’02
N. Joseph Cayer
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Margaret Leong
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Mark J. Willey , ’75
Gregory H. Williams,’77
Steven Mark Yarnell,’72

* Parent/Current Student ** GW Faculty

ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

Paul D’Ambrosio, (B.A. ’81) published his second political thriller, Easy Squeezy, in May 2013 through Down the Shore Publishing. He is the director of news and investigations for the Asbury Park Press.

Honorable Cheryl Nora Moss (B.A. ’89) is the first Filipino-American elected to District Court in the history of the State of Nevada. In 2011, she received an award for being one of the 100 Most Influential Filipina Women in the U.S. from the Filipina Women’s Network.

Koji Murata (M.A. ’95) was named President of Doshisha University, one of the oldest private universities in Japan, in April 2013.

Sally Nuamah (B.A. ’11) recently presented a TEDx talk on the research she started on girls and education in Ghana with an Office of the Vice President grant that she received from GW under the guidance of Professor Steve Balla.

Maria Rost Rublee (Ph.D. ’02) recently won a United States Institute of Peace (USIP) grant for a project titled “Nuclear Norms and Global Governance.”

Want to read more Alumni News and Notes? Check out the Department’s new “Alumni” webpage: departments.columbian.gwu.edu/politicalscience/alumni

Have news to share? Please send us a sentence or two telling us about your recent academic or professional accomplishments! Send your news to polsci@gwu.edu and include “Class Note” and your degree/year in the subject of the email.

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Gifts to the Department of Political Science allow us to further our research and educational goals. Each gift, no matter how large or small, makes a positive impact on our educational mission and furthers our standing as one of the nation’s preeminent programs. You can make your gift to the Department in a number of ways:

- Securely online at 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
- Call the GW Annual Fund at 1-800-789-2611