SPEAKER SERIES BROUGHT DIVERSITY TO CAMPUS
Honoring an Oklahoma Pioneer

CUTTING EDGE STUDENT RESEARCH
Independent research work trains a new generation of scholars and leaders

FEMP FACULTY WIN NSF GRANT
Funding to support research on tornado preparedness in Oklahoma
Change and Opportunity

The Political Science Department has gone through important changes this year. After serving as department head since 2011, Dr. Jeanette Mendez became the Interim Associate Dean of Research and Facilities for the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) in July of 2017. Dr. Mendez's promotion to permanent Associate Dean was approved by the OSU/A&M Board of Regents, making her the first woman in CAS to serve as an Associate Dean. We appreciate all of Dr. Mendez's contributions and dedication to our department and are very excited for her. She will continue to contribute to our program through her teaching and scholarship. Other changes include the Fire and Emergency Management Program’s move to The College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology under the Division of Engineering Technology (effective July 1, 2018). This transfer will enhance the program and provide additional benefits and opportunities for our students.

This was a year of many successes. Our faculty had a very productive research year: 20 new refereed publications accepted, 3 book contracts signed, 2 edited books published, over 40 conference presentations/invited talks. Our faculty are well recognized for their expertise and featured in high visibility media outlets during this year including the Christian Science Monitor, Politico Magazine; The New York Times; The Wall Street Journal; Reuters News Agency; KFOR; PBS; NPR; and CNBC. This expertise is not only shared to the public at large, it is constantly imparted to our students. Our students continually impress us with their academic excellence. Their strong academic record is evidenced by the strong pool of scholarship applicants this year, the most impressive of which we honor during our annual awards ceremony. Our students are also engaging in important outreach in their communities. Our Alumni are recognized for their many contributions as well. Political Science Alumni Matt Stiner (2007) and Kimberly Geddie (2009) were awarded Rising Star Awards in 2017 by CAS, both reaching a major milestone in their careers, demonstrating exemplary community service and commitment to volunteerism. Vance Winningham (1963) won a very prestigious distinguished alumni award, recognizing him for extraordinary career achievements and distinguished service.

Our department events continued to showcase our being a center for discussing diversity issues and an open environment to debate the latest issues of the day. We have further prioritized opportunities for students to make practical applications of their knowledge through their participation in study abroad opportunities, internships throughout the state and in D.C., and enhancing their engagement in research and teaching.

What has not changed is that our staff continues to be the best. I am sad to say goodbye to Pam Amos, who has provided administrative support to our department these past 27 years. She has been a great colleague and we wish her all the very best.

While our department has experienced a lot of change, we are seizing this moment to evaluate strategies to best serve the needs of our students. I look forward to reporting on our continued success and future growth in the coming years.

Dr. Farida Jalalzai
DEPARTMENT HEAD
Election 2018 Warm-up

As early practice for next fall’s election, representatives from OSU’s Young Democrats and College Republicans faced off in a debate this May.

Students who attended were able to hear the parties’ stances on issues such as healthcare, the recent Oklahoma teacher protests, and politics on the Korean peninsula.

Hannah Atkins Speaker Series Brings Cutting-Edge Diversity Research to OSU Campus

Hannah Atkins was the first African-American woman state legislator in Oklahoma and was the highest-ranking woman in the Oklahoma state government. This year, we continued to honor Hannah Atkins’s legacy as a political trailblazer by featuring leading scholars speaking on women’s political empowerment worldwide.

Our second annual Hannah Atkins Memorial lecture on September 19, 2017, featured Dr. Meg Rincker, Associate Professor of Political Science at Purdue University-Northwest. She discussed her new book, Empowered by Design: Global Decentralization and the Gender Policy Trifecta (Temple University Press, 2017) which focuses on whether reforms that move political power from the national to the meso or local level increase women’s political participation and political influence. This year’s speaker series continued with Dr. Pedro dos Santos, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Luther College, who presented on “Corruption, Democracy and the Dynamics of Brazil’s Political Crisis” on October 12, 2017.

Our series concluded with Dr. Mona Lena Krook, Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, who presented on “The Cost of Doing Politics? Violence and Harassment against Female Politicians” on April 18, 2018.

All of these speakers highlighted the democratic consequences related to women’s incorporation, or lack thereof, in the political sphere. Our speakers do not limit their engagement to their public lectures but also directly engage our students in our classes and at social events. These interactions showcase our department’s commitment to discussing important political issues of the day, connecting students to cutting-edge research, and creating a welcoming environment to explore diversity.
OSU’s Political Science and FEMP programs pride themselves in the high quality research produced by their faculty (such as the NSF-funded research discussed on page 8!), but we are especially proud of mentoring the next generation of scholars and policy practitioners. This year saw an exceptional number of achievements by our student researchers, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Beginning with the graduate students, political science M.A. student Rosalie Swingle was chosen to compete in the finals of the OSU Graduate College Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition. She presented a quick summary of her thesis study, titled “Effective of Evicted: The Impacts of Rent Control and Landlord Lobbying on Tenants,” to a panel of judges. The competition was a meaningful experience, Rosalie says, because it gave her an opportunity to take her research beyond the classroom to raise awareness and suggest solutions to a serious social issue. Rosalie is grateful for the mentoring and support she received from the faculty in preparing and delivering her 3MT, and she looks forward to encouraging political science students to participate next fall.

In November, FEMP PhD student Rawan Tawalbeh traveled to the IAEM Annual Conference in Long Beach, CA, where she presented a poster of her current research, “Mental Health Consequences of Disasters: A literature Review.” This project, which she worked on with Dr. Alex Greer, won the Bronze Recognition in the Best Poster category, demonstrating the high quality of her research project.

Rawan wasn’t the only graduate student who traveled to share their research, as political science MA student Spencer Mitchell traveled to the Midwest Political Science Annual Conference in Chicago, IL, to present two of his research projects.

Proving that undergraduate political science researchers can hold their own against the STEM fields, senior Taylor Todd has been the recipient of a number of cross-campus research awards for her project, “Who Rules the Rulings? Disputant Strength and Legal Preparedness in World Trade Organization Dispute Settlement Proceedings.” She completed her research as part of the Wentz Research Grant program, working under the mentorship of Dr. Holley Hansen. In this project, Taylor examined all trade dispute cases that went before the WTO and analyzed the factors determining which countries won or lost their court cases. For her work, Taylor was one of only six undergrads in the entire university - and the only student from a non-STEM field - to receive this year’s Women’s Faculty Council Research Award. She was also the upperclassmen recipient of the Library Research Award (given to one student in the entire university) and presented her work at the International Studies Association Annual Conference in San Francisco, CA. It’s no wonder, then, that Taylor was named the Political Science Outstanding Senior for 2018!

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Bridging Diversity, Building a Future

Meet the 2017 Larason Scholarship Winner, Natasha Richartz

Our 2017 Larason award winner, Natasha Richartz, grew up bridging cultural divides. Her father was born and raised in Germany and while her mother was born in Michigan, her maternal grandparents were immigrants from Mexico. Natasha herself was born in Germany, moving to the US when she was 2 years old.

Now a junior at OSU, Natasha is working on her Bachelor of Science in Political Science, with a minor in Sociology. She plans on attending law school, and is deciding whether to focus on child advocacy law, criminal law, or international law. Natasha is extremely passionate about children – especially those in the foster care system- and would love the opportunity to legally serve children in need of a loving and dependable family. Her passion for legally representing children has been further assured through volunteer work with the Children’s Miracle Network Hospital, and with Camp Lutherhoma- a Christian summer camp.

Her international background, however, has also given her an appreciation of how much freedom women in the United States have compared to other countries. If she does pursue international law, she would specifically focus on global women’s rights issues.

Upon winning the Larason Scholarship, Natasha told us “This scholarship was a huge relief to my family and me financially, and alleviates the stress about continuing my education, since I do plan to pursue law school after my undergraduate.”

When asked about her OSU experience, Natasha states:

I can genuinely say that I would not be the person I am today without the immense hard work, dedication, encouragement, and knowledge from my professors here at OSU, especially the ones in the Political Science and Sociology department. Although applying for law school and preparing for graduation can be daunting, I feel confident with the foundation my professors have given me to succeed in whichever path I take after my time here at OSU. Overall, I hope to become an alum that is able to give back to Oklahoma State University the way it has given me.

Congrats to all our 2018 Department Scholarship Award Winners!

Natasha Richartz
The A.R. Larason President’s Distinguished Scholarship

Chase LaSpisa
The Raymond & Afaaf Habiby Scholarship

Cody Green & Risquat Karim
The Paul Bohannon Scholarship

Zachary Kensinger & Erin Smith
The Paul Matthews Scholarship

Laney Lynch
The Franz Von Sauer Scholarship

Ashlee Lester
The Harold V. Sare Scholarship
In Action

Stephens advocates for college education

OSU Student Government Association President and political science major Erica Stephens was one of a select group of students, faculty and representatives from Oklahoma’s public colleges and universities to speak at the state Capitol on February 13 to help promote the value and importance of higher education in Oklahoma.

Stephens and three other students spoke at the event and told attendees how they have benefited from higher education, and how attending one of Oklahoma’s public colleges and universities has positively impacted their lives.

OSU Student is DC Bound

Summer means internships for many political science students, and this summer, several of our majors are heading to Washington, DC to work in Congress. One of these students is Judson Mork, who will be working in the office of North Dakota Senator John Hoeven. As Judson writes:

I know that an opportunity like this is a rare achievement for a kid from a farm in Western North Dakota. I credit and appreciate the skills instilled in me through our Political Science Department for the ability to represent our University this summer.

Congrats to Judson, and to all our students who are heading out to promising jobs and internships this summer!

Kirksey elected to national board

Dr. Jason F. Kirksey, former political science professor and current vice president for institutional diversity and chief diversity officer at Oklahoma State University, has been elected to a three-year term on the board of directors for the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education.
Political Science Majors Inducted into Mortar Board

This past April, 3 political science students - Zach Kensinger, Bridget Flynn, and Chase LaSpisa - were inducted into the OSU chapter of the prestigious national honor society, Mortar Board. Demonstrating the exceptional quality of our undergraduate students, they will join continuing member Taylor Todd, making political science one of the most prevalent majors amongst OSU’s current Mortar Board members.

These students are joining an elite group, as past members of Mortar Board include former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and NFL quarterback Drew Brees. Honorary members include former Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O’Connor, former president Jimmy Carter, and poet Maya Angelou.

Also honored at the ceremony was Dr. Holley Hansen, who was a recipient of one of the 2018 Golden Torch Awards. This award is given annually to one professor from each of the colleges at OSU, and Dr. Hansen was chosen to represent the College of Arts & Sciences. These professors are nominated by students and selected for their commitment to the ideals of Mortar Board: scholarship, leadership and service.

Pam Amos Retires

After 29 years of service to the university - and 27 years in the department - our Senior Academic Support Assistant, Pam Amos, is retiring. Pam first joined the Political Science department in August of 1990, after previously working at the Animal Diagnostics Laboratory at OSU. Since then, she has been the first face most students see when they walk into our department. We thank her for all her work over the years, and wish her a happy retirement!

Pam, during her retirement party this past April.

OTHER NEWS

OSU Professors Receives Best Paper Award for Research on Native American Partisanship

Political science professors Dr. Rebekah Herrick and Dr. Jeanette Mendez have been awarded the Pi Sigma Alpha best paper award for their paper “American Indian Identity’s influence on Party Identification," presented at the 2017 Western Political Science Association (WPSA) conference in Vancouver, BC. They will officially be presented their award during next year’s conference in San Francisco.
From July 1st through July 8th, the Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology Program (FPST) and the Fire and Emergency Management Administration Program (FEMP) spent part of their summer in South Africa to gain a better understanding of the fire risk in informal settlements. The trip provided students from the two disciplines an opportunity to work jointly to address fire risk in informal settlements.

Informal settlements are unplanned communities, with shack-like homes constructed as a makeshift structure built of corrugated tin or steel and other miscellaneous materials such as brick and cardboard. These homes are often constructed on land that the builder has no legal claim to, such as previous public park land, and not in compliance with current building standards. They are often built close together, without room for roads or sewage systems and limited access to electricity and water. Approximately one billion people live in informal settlements worldwide, with over two million of those living in South Africa.

The university collaborated with Stellenbosch University and the Western Cape Government Disaster Management to focus on ways to improve fire safety in a number of informal settlements in the Stellenbosch and Cape Town areas. Fire is one of the leading risks in informal settlements, leaving thousands homeless in South Africa each year. Stellenbosch University and the Western Cape Provincial government are leading a research initiative to address the fire risk in informal settlements.

This is a truly unique experience that provides students with a hands-on opportunity to see the impact of fire prevention in a high fire risk, multi-hazard environment. It gave the students a chance to practice their research skills, interviewing residents about fire safety and their experience with smoke alarms. This study abroad provided a unique experience to work in other cultures and understand fire risks that are drastically different from those commonly found in the United States. This is an incredibly critical experience for these students, given that both FPST and FEMP graduates often work in international settings, including the Middle East, Asia, and Europe.

FEMP professor named 2017 Outstanding Emerging Scholar

Dr. Tristan Wu was presented with the Outstanding Emerging Scholar Award during the 60th Western Social Science Association Conference in San Antonio. The awards recognize cutting edge research, substantial contributions to the social sciences, and the strong promise of future such contributions.
Dr. Neal attends workshop at Swedish Embassy

On October 3-4, 2017, Dr. Dave Neal was invited to attend a workshop at the Swedish Embassy in Washington, D.C. focusing on disaster response. Neal was one of 14 invited speakers, and one of two social scientists at the event.

The purpose of the workshop was to enhance collaboration and research between Swedish and American disaster researchers. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency and the United States’ Department of Homeland Security sponsored the event. In addition, Neal attended a dinner held at the Swedish Ambassador’s home. The picture above is a group picture of the speakers (including keynote speaker Craig Fugate, former head of FEMA).

Drs. Wu and Murphy awarded NSF

This past year, Dr. Tristan Wu and Dr. Haley Murphy were awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation grant to support their research on tornado preparedness. Their project seeks to improve the understanding of the kinds of information people seek when facing a tornado threat, how the information they obtain affects their risk perceptions, and the way that their risk perceptions affect their protective actions such as evacuation or staying in storm shelter.

This study will utilize social experiment approach and present study participants different tornado scenarios. The study seeks to understand when and how people make decisions on protective actions under different types of tornado threats. Drs. Wu and Murphy plan to conduct a pilot study using college student and a household study in Stillwater, Oklahoma during the coming fall semester.

From OSU to Amsterdam and Beyond

Dr. Alex Greer and Dr. Tristan Wu presented research at The Third Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studies, March 21-23 in Amsterdam. Drs. Greer and Wu presented research related to earthquakes in Oklahoma, flooding in Colorado, and historic tornadoes in Xenia, Ohio and Moore, Oklahoma.

Drs. Greer and Wu also presented a paper with Dr. Ray Chang and Dr. Haley Murphy titled, "Challenges Managing a New Hazard: Earthquake Mitigation and Preparedness in Oklahoma", at the 2018 Southern Political Science Association Conference within a Conference on Emergency Management, Disaster, and Politics in New Orleans in January this year.

Dr. Chang wins best poster at IAEM

FEMP faculty Dr. Ray Chang and 2 graduate students, Steven Melton and Rawan Tawalbeh, participated in the 65th IAEM Annual Conference in Long Beach, CA in November of 2017. Dr. Chang was invited to give an hour-long presentation about the 4 cases studies in Taiwan, and he also received Gold Recognition (best poster of the year) for his ICS research.
When talking about his degree choice, Kyle tells us:

"I started out solely as an international business major, but halfway through my career at OSU, I decided to also earn a double degree in political science so I could focus more on foreign affairs. Ideally, I would have liked to have majored in international relations to prepare for my future career as a Foreign Service Officer, but it wasn’t offered at the time. I have always been interested in US politics, too, so I think the combination was a good fit for me. It also prepared me well for a master’s degree at the Harvard Kennedy School."

After graduating from OSU with double degrees in international business and political science, Kyle earned his Master’s Degree in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. At Harvard, he served on the Harvard Graduate Council and the Board of Directors for the Harvard and MIT Cooperative Society, Inc. He was then sworn into the Foreign Service, and served three tours before resigning last year. His overseas postings included Nassau, The Bahamas and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. His most recent posting was as a public affairs officer at the Department of State in Washington, DC. This year Kyle began consulting for Booz Allen Hamilton, a management consulting firm based out of the DC area. He is currently working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Also known for singing and acting, as a student at OSU, Kyle reached the Top 25 on Season 7 of American Idol, and performed on the Ellen DeGeneres Show. When living in DC he appeared on House of Cards and Veep.

Kyle stresses the important role his OSU professors played in his long-term career success. In fact,

"One professor who had a tremendous impact on my life and career was Dr. Graalman, the Director of Scholar Development. I learned about the Pickering Fellowship when I took his “Windows to the World” honors course freshman year, and his office prepared me very well for the application process. He was also very supportive throughout the rest of my time at OSU, while I conducted research and applied to graduate school."

We are proud to honor Kyle’s achievements this spring during our Annual Awards Ceremony, and look forward to seeing where his career next takes him!
This past March, Dr. Harold Victor Sare, former Head of the Department of Political Science and Regents Service Professor, passed away. Many department alumni remember him as dedicated to his students, as Dr. Sare worked tirelessly to give them the best education he could muster to enlighten them about the workings of the government of their own country, as well as governments of other countries, particularly India and Japan.

Dr. Sare entered the U.S. Army at the end of World War II and served in South Korea with Military Government. After receiving his Bachelor’s in political science and pre-law at then Oklahoma A&M College, he entered Harvard University to pursue a PhD in government. He would later return to OSU to serve as department head. Even after his retirement, he remained active in the department, continuing to teach his specialty courses in Asian studies and U.S. foreign policy. Dr. Sare was also a dedicated public servant. Amongst his many other volunteer activities, he served in an unpaid position as the State Legislative Chair for the Oklahoma Retired Educators Association and was an active member of the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce. His passion for teaching and community service will sorely be missed.

Each year, the College of Arts & Sciences recognizes alumnus/alumna who has graduated in the past 10 years who have already reached a major milestone in his/her chosen career, has shown exemplary service to the community, and/or has a proven commitment to volunteerism. This past year, that list of 8 included two political science alumni, demonstrating the amazing achievements of our alumni.

The first recipient, Kimberly Geddie, graduated from OSU in 2009 with a double major in English and Political Science. The Dallas, Texas, native was drawn to service shortly after graduating. She joined Teach For America, working with over 300 high school students as a secondary English teacher in Newark, New Jersey. Six years later, Geddie is now the director of DREAM Partnerships. She travels the globe to support the over 45 international partners as a measurement and evaluation specialist, ensuring the organizations are set up to rigorously evaluate their effectiveness.

The second recipient, Matthew Stiner, graduated Magna Cum Laude from OSU in 2007. He received a prestigious Harry S. Truman scholarship after graduation, allowing him to pursue a master’s degree in Public Administration. Stiner has served in the Marine Corps and received the Combat Action Ribbon for service in Iraq. Stiner later served as the first director of Justice for Vets, a nonprofit organization based out of Alexandria, Virginia. He was also the director of military and veteran affairs at the White House after working as a senior adviser to Secretary of Veteran Affairs Robert McDonald, and is currently the director of government affairs for Humana Military, a subsidiary of Humana Inc.

In Memoriam

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CONGRATS TO OUR GRADUATING SENIORS!

**Fall 2017**


**Spring 2018**


....and to our Masters and PhD students who successfully defended their theses this year!

Ben Caffee
Jung In Kim
Aeryanna Gruenwald
Briana Hatfield
David Huntsman
TJ Menzer

Spencer Mitchell
Martinus Alcantara do Rosario
Jonathan Rubenstein
Kyle Weiss
Blake Whitney
David Yonko

Learn more about how to support the Department of Political Science's teaching and research mission by going to http://polsci.okstate.edu/alumni-friends/giving