With the national elections generating non-stop media coverage and public discourse, the POLI Department finds itself in the middle of another very active “political season” as 2008 begins. Because the Department houses a large percentage of the State’s experts on local and national elections, several members of the faculty are unusually busy granting interviews and offering commentaries on the elections. This issue of the POLI Newsletter provides a sampling of the high level involvement of our faculty in this facet of community affairs, and also chronicles a number of additional scholarly activities that have occurred during the preceding months. We hope that you find this brief overview of our accomplishments useful, and encourage you to contact us if you have suggestions for improvement.

The Department has much additional news, all of it exceptionally good. Most exciting is the fact that we have succeeded in hiring four new faculty, three of whom will join us this coming Fall, and the fourth in January of 2009. Details (and pictures) will be published in our first Fall Newsletter. We are also well on our way to a stellar year with respect to graduate student placement success, and we will bring you the details on this front in our next Newsletter. Finally, we have recently hired—and want to now welcome in print—a new Business Manager for the Department, Melissa Gross. Melissa, who hails from Alabama (where she earned a BA degree in History), has considerable office experience by way of positions held at the University of Indiana and, more recently, our own School of the Environment. We are very happy to have her on board.

As noted in earlier editions, the Newsletter is issued four times per year (twice each semester). We are especially interested in hearing from alumni and friends concerning any relevant activities, honors, career changes, or other developments among our POLI community. We can be contacted via email at poli@sc.edu, or by mail at the Department of Political Science, Gambrell Hall, USC, Columbia, SC 29208. Your interest in the Department is sincerely appreciated!
The 2008 Election: POLI Faculty & the Media

Among an academic department’s many responsibilities, being responsive to media inquiries is one that falls disproportionately on any Political Science Department during an election year. With the South Carolina Primaries’ significant role in the national elections, our Department has been virtually overwhelmed with requests for expert commentary and insights. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but gives a sampling of how several POLI faculty provide this service to the public.

**David Darmofal** was interviewed by the *Hilton Head Island Packet* for a story on religious affiliation and Latino identification with the Democratic and Republic parties. He also met with Kazuhito Takenaka, the First Secretary in the Political Section of the Embassy of Japan to discuss the 2008 presidential elections and South Carolina’s role in that process.

**Charles Finocchiaro** was interviewed by *Time Magazine*, *The Buffalo News*, *Al-hurra* (Middle East Broadcasting Networks), *The Hill* (Washington, D.C.), the Press Office of the Consulate General of France, and *La Tercera* Newspaper (Santiago, Chile), all relating to the 2008 elections.

**Blease Graham**, an enduring source of political commentary for local and national media outlets, was too busy being interviewed to provide a specific list of contacts. Suffice it to say that he has been consulted by virtually every news outlet that covers the presidential elections.


In addition to this partial (yet lengthy!) list of media contacts, the Department also co-hosted (with the
College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies) the **South Carolina Presidential Primary Symposium** on Thursday, January 17th, 2008. Longtime adjunct professor **Donald Fowler** coordinated the event, which included several high-profile journalists such as Dan Balz of the *Washington Post*, Roger Simon of *Politico.com*, and Tom Edsall, Political Editor of the *Huffington Post* and Pulitzer Moore Professor of Journalism at Columbia University. The event was attended by over 150 students, faculty, and interested citizens. 

Another event related to the 2008 elections was the arrival of a group of about 20 students from Eastern Kentucky University. The Department hosted the visitors, who were here to study the Republican and Democratic primaries. **Kendra Stewart**, a POLI alumnus and Associate Professor of Political Science at Eastern Kentucky, led the delegation. In addition to interacting with several POLI faculty, the students met with representatives of the two political parties, and observed Andrew Gobeill’s morning radio show on South Carolina Public Radio.

In addition, another delegation of students from Saint Olaf’s College also visited the campus. Comprised largely of students who are interning and/or working in political campaigns, the group stopped at USC as part of a “traveling classroom” studying the 2008 primaries. While in the Department, they were provided with expert analysis from **Blease Graham** and **Donald Fowler**. Upon leaving campus, many of the students dispersed to their respective campaign staffs.

**ROSATI LEADS WITNESS FOR PEACE DELEGATION**

**Jerel Rosati**, who specializes in International Studies, served as the U.S. Delegation Leader for a group of 15 students who visited Colombia in May of 2007. A large majority of the students were USC undergraduates. The mission was subtitled “From Columbia to Colombia,” and was part of an ongoing program to promote public education about the nation of Colombia. Although the country has a reputation for being dangerous and violent, efforts are being made to educate the world concerning Colombia’s beauty, its tourist friendly environment, and its progress in combating such indigenous problems as the drug trade and paramilitary activities. A church served as the home base for the delegation, which spent its days in intense visits to a large number of governmental and non-governmental agencies focused on economic development and related topics. About half the time was spent in Bogota, the capital, and the remaining portion of the visit occurred in Cauca – perhaps the most historically and strategically important province in the country. The trip proved to be an extraordinarily valuable experience for all participants; they were provided with an intense introduction to the history and culture of Colombia, and came away with a much better appreciation for the country’s many charms and attractions.
STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Wendy Bashman, who received a BA in Political Science and MA in Criminal Justice, is employed with the U.S. Diplomatic Security Service. Having served in such countries as Egypt, Guyana, and Eritrea, she is now assigned to Beijing as the Deputy Olympic Security Coordinator to the U.S. Embassy.

Andrew James Montgomery Bentz, a May 2007 International Studies graduate, has been selected as a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Fellow. He will use the fellowship to pursue a MA degree in Political Science at Duke University.

Wesley Graybill (BA, 1991; MPA, 1994) was recently featured in The State newspaper’s focus on “20 Under 40,” which consists of local residents who are making a difference in their communities at a relatively young age. Wesley is a commercial real estate attorney for Turner Padget Graham & Laney. A one-time staff attorney for the S.C. Administrative Law Judge Division, he also serves such community groups as Leadership Columbia, The Chamber of Commerce, and Boys’ and Girls’ Clubs of the Midlands.

Susan Haire (PhD, Political Science) is on a temporary leave from her tenure track position at the University of Georgia to serve a two-year term as the director of the Law and Social Science Program at the National Science Foundation.

Anna Henderson, a sophomore majoring in Political Science, played a major role in promoting legislation in the South Carolina General Assembly that regulates the sale of ingredients related to the manufacturing of methamphetamines. She worked with Representative John Brady to educate other legislators about the medical and social costs of meth addiction, and is credited with being a major force in the passage of the bill.

Susan Schorpp and Raul Sanchez Urribari, both current graduate students, presented a paper with Donald Songer titled “What Rights in the Rights Revolution: Analyzing Criminal and Other Civil Rights Cases Separately” at the South Carolina Political Science Association Meeting in New Orleans.

Chris Wuchenich (PS, 1994; MPA, 1999) has served in the University’s Division of Law Enforcement and Safety for 10 years and has also served both in the private sector and at the White House.

RECENT DONORS

The entire Department extends its gratitude to alumni and friends who have recently donated money to further our missions in research, teaching, and service. These generous individuals include:

Mr. William D. Blackmon, Dr. Jean Garrison, Ms. Wesley Graybill, Mr. Joe Huddleston, Ms. Latonya Leverett-Houston, Mrs. Linda I. Miller, Dr. Autar Robert Moore, Jr., The Northrup Grumman Foundation, Ms. Christine A. Wells, Dr. Lois Duke Whitaker.
WHITEMAN IS FIRST FACULTY PRINCIPAL OF “THE GREEN QUAD”

Beginning in August of 2006, David Whiteman began a three year term as the first Faculty Principal of the Green Quad and Director of the Learning Center for Sustainable Futures. The Green Quad’s central feature is an innovative and experimental community of 25 students who are helping to define what sustainability means for future generations. Students in the community live on the same floor of a residence hall, and participate as a group in field studies, a food co-op and garden, occasional community meals, interaction with like-minded faculty and students from other campuses, and on-going research projects. The overall mission of the Green Quad is to create a living and learning community which incorporates sustainability into all aspects of its operations and which serves as a model for the broader campus. The Quad promotes collaborative relationships among students, faculty, staff and community members to explore “green” values and to create a “green bubble” as an inspiration for other campus and community organizations. These goals are being implemented through a variety of programs, including educational initiatives emanating from the residents of the Quad; a Green Action Film Series that sponsors “action films” focusing on renewable energy, climate change, recycling, and agricultural innovation; the Community Garden Project (in collaboration with the Landscaping and Housing Departments at USC), aggressive recycling initiatives; and a special curriculum tailored to students interested in furthering the goals and objectives of this environmentally friendly endeavor. Anyone seeking further information should contact David at Whiteman@sc.edu.

Plato Conference to Be Held at USC

On March 20-22, 2008, the University and the Department of Political Science will help to host an international and interdisciplinary conference on Plato and Platonism from antiquity through the Middle Ages and Renaissance to the present. Sponsored by the Classics and Comparative Literature Programs, the Departments of Philosophy and Political Science, as well as the College of Arts and Sciences and private donors, the conference will showcase plenary speakers from Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These include: Luc Brisson of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique; John Dillon of Trinity College, Dublin; Mary Louise Gill of Brown University; Stephen Halliwell of the University of St. Andrews; James Hankins of Harvard University; Richard Kraut of Northwestern University; and Steven Shankman of the University of Oregon. The Conference will also feature panels exploring Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism Plato’s predecessors and his reception; literary and rhetorical aspects of Plato’s dialogues; Plato on women and politics, and on the body and soul. All sessions are open to the public. Detailed information concerning the event can be found at the Conference website www.cas.sc.edu/dfnc/CPLT/activities/10thannuconcfp.html Professor Jill Frank is a chief organizer of the event.

Faculty Publications & Scholarly Presentations


Heather Getha-Taylor has an article – “Identifying Collaborative Competencies” – pending in the Review of Public Personnel Administration.


Donald Songer also received final approval for the publication of his book – The Transformation of the Supreme Court of Canada: An Empirical Examination – by the University of Toronto Press.

Harvey Starr gave a presentation on “Reconceptualizing Borders in International Relations” to a high-level group of U.S. government officials in Washington, D.C. on January.

Mark Tompkins gave a presentation on “Outsourcing versus In-House Application Development” at the 2008 GIS Conference in Greenville.


Laura Woliver presented talks on “The Abortion Controversy in Context” at SUNY-Buffalo in November; “Teaching Diversity” at the American Political Science Association in February, and chaired a panel on “Women and Leadership” at the South Carolina Political Science Convention. Laura also published entries on “Abortion” and “Genomics and Human Genetics” in the Encyclopedia of Law and Society: American and Global Perspectives.

Neal Woods presented papers at several conferences, including “You Get What you Pay For: The Environment and Health Care”, Southern Political Science Association (with Kavid Konisky and Ann Bowman); “Competitive Federalism and the Shifting Incidence of Regulatory Cost”, Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management; and “Does Management Really Matter? Management Quality and State Environmental Performance”, Public Management Research Association. Neal also received word that his manuscript, “Promoting Participation? An Examination of Rulemaking Notification and Access Procedures,” has been accepted for publication in Public Administration Review.
TEACHING AWARDS:  A POLI TRADITION

Continuing a long and storied history of superior teaching, two of the Department’s adjunct faculty received “Excellence in Teaching Awards” for 2007-2008 from the Alpha Chapter of Mortar Board. The most recent recipients are Michael Briggs and Tobias Lanz. These individuals join an extensive list of POLI instructors who have received recognition for their teaching performance over the years. During one five-year period, for example, three of the recipients of the University’s highest teaching award – the Michael Mungo Award – went to POLI faculty. Among the thirty or so active POLI faculty in 2007-2008, at least fifteen have received Mungo Awards or Mortar Board recognition. Whether or not this constitutes some kind of a “record” is unknown, but the facts certainly support the notion that our Department places a great deal of emphasis on the significance of teaching as a critical professional responsibility.

INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT WITH S.C. SENATE

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Departmental Undergraduate Director Roger Coate, the Department entered an agreement with the State of South Carolina Senate in December of last year to support a Senate Internship Program for our undergraduate majors. The primary purpose of the agreement is to enhance the understanding of selected students on the structures and processes of South Carolina state government and provide them with hands-on knowledge through experiential learning. A minimum of six interns are to be selected in a competitive process each year for internships that run during the Spring and May semesters.

STAY IN TOUCH

If you know of anyone who is an alumnus of the Department of Political Science, or simply wants to be informed of what’s going on in the Department and the University, please let us know. We’re happy to add names to our newsletter distribution list. Send your suggestions to: Professor Dan Sabia, Chair, Department of Political Science, Gambrell Hall, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S. C. 29208.

Thank you for your support!