

Alumni Profiles
Highlighting excellence

Pi Sigma Alpha
PSA has another banner year

Model Competitions
Students excelled for 5th year running

Discourse in Democracy
DiD welcomed many distinguished speakers

Political Science Program | Fall 2022

ALUMNI NEWSWIRE



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In a crowd of applicants, be the one that stands out.



Texas State University's Constitution Day Lecture Series Presents:



Religious Freedom, Natural Rights, and Our Forgotten Principles of Constitutional Liberty

What did freedom of religion mean to the Founding Fathers? Guest speaker, Dr. Vincent Phillip Muñoz, contends that the principles which informed the Founders' understanding of "freedom" are largely absent from modern conceptions, and argues a return to their vision of freedom, natural right, and liberty is necessary to bridge partisan divisions.

Thursday, September 22, 2022

7:00 PM

Texas State University, San Marcos | Alkek 250



Dr. Vincent Phillip Muñoz

Tocqueville Associate Professor of Political Science
Associate Professor of Law, University of Notre Dame

An award-winning teacher, lecturer, and author, Dr. Muñoz authored *God and the Founders: Madison, Washington, and Jefferson*; *Religious Liberty and the American Supreme Court: The Essential Cases and Documents*; *American Constitutional Law*; and *Religious Liberty and the American Founding: Natural Rights and the Original Meanings of the First Amendment Clauses*. His articles have appeared in a variety of journals including *The Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, *American Political Thought*, and *The American Political Science Review*, and his work has been cited in numerous Supreme Court opinions, most recently by Justice Alito in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* (2021) and by both Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Thomas in *Espinoza v. Montana* (2020).

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Co-sponsored by Discourse in Democracy, the Jack Miller Center for Teaching America's Founding Principles and History, Pi Sigma Alpha, Supporting Women in Political Science, and the Department of Political Science.

If you require accommodations due to a disability in order to participate, please contact 512.245.2143 at least 72 hours in advance of the event. Texas State University is a tobacco-free campus.



Gabrielle Perez

"I served as a Foreign Media Analyst at the US Department of State, where I handled serious matters under close supervision of an experienced foreign affairs officer. Some of my reports ended up in the hands of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and other officials. Every morning, my team received a briefing of scheduled State Department events, the President's schedule, press releases, and tweets of the Secretary and spokesperson that would be posted later in the day. Being a part of something greater than myself was exciting and fulfilling. This internship gave me an opportunity to participate in efforts to change the world."

"I served as a Tax Law Intern for Blue Fox Tax Express. I performed administrative support tasks, conducted research, and assisted in the preparation of taxes for local non-profit organizations, which helped me develop a clearer understanding on how policymaking directly affects taxation. I also studied various tax codes, exemptions, and allowances, which increased my knowledge of legal and financial strategy. I'm grateful for the opportunity to explore my future career path in tax law, gain valuable work experience, and network with professionals in the field. Most importantly, I've gained greater confidence in my capabilities and knowledge."

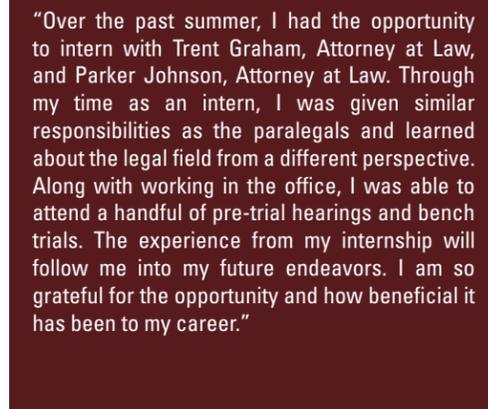


Malec Jebr



Haley Abila

"For the Spring 2021 semester, I interned for the Felony Division of the local District Attorney's office. I archived case files, organized and delivered important legal documents to judges and attorneys, and performed general clerical duties. Overall, the experience was influential in helping me make crucial career decisions. It was a great opportunity to network within the legal field. If you're interested in law or politics, taking an internship is a great choice!"



Stefan Garza

"Over the past summer, I had the opportunity to intern with Trent Graham, Attorney at Law, and Parker Johnson, Attorney at Law. Through my time as an intern, I was given similar responsibilities as the paralegals and learned about the legal field from a different perspective. Along with working in the office, I was able to attend a handful of pre-trial hearings and bench trials. The experience from my internship will follow me into my future endeavors. I am so grateful for the opportunity and how beneficial it has been to my career."



Abi Blackwell

Alumni Newswire

Annual magazine for the Texas State political science program

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LETTER from the Chair

Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of our program's *Alumni Newswire*! As usual, it's been a busy year here.

Two of our students presented papers at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association; a half dozen attended a conference sponsored by the Texas Network for the Study of Public Issues (TNSPI) at the University of Dallas on Critical Race Theory; three attended the 67th Student Conference on National Affairs (MSC-SCONA) at Texas A&M; three students presented at the college's annual Undergraduate Student Research Expo; and dozens of our majors attended the 25th Annual Eugene Scassa Mock Organization of American States Competition and the Southern Regional Model United Nations. At both of the latter events, our majors dominated the awards.

Discourse in Democracy, Pi Sigma Alpha, and Supporting Women in Political Science sponsored a wide array of speakers including Dr. William B. Allen (Emeritus Dean of James Madison College and Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Michigan State University, former chairman of the US Commission on Civil Rights, and member of the National Council on the Humanities); Judge Don Willett of the US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit; Jordan Berry (Berry Communications LLC); San Marcos City Council Members Melissa Derrick and Alyssa Garza; Michael Lind of the University of Texas at Austin; Dr. Charles Kesler of Claremont-McKenna College; Dr. Terri Givens of McGill University; Austin Prochko, Selene Rodriguez, and Sam Pohl (Texas Public Policy Foundation); Dr. James W. Muller (University of Alaska); Dr. Steven D. Smith (University of San Diego); and Dr. Brian Taylor (Syracuse University).

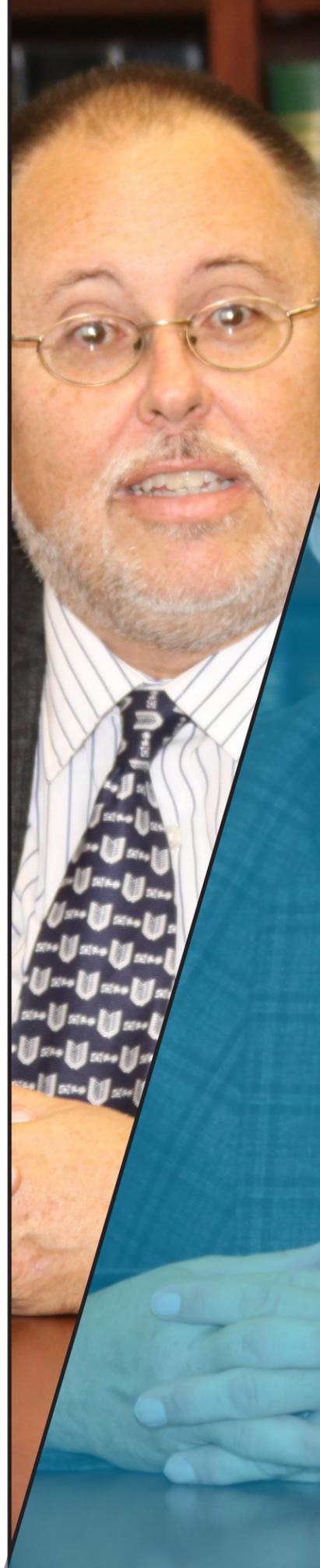
On the faculty side, members were recognized by Texas State's Alfred H. Nolle Chapter of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society; received awards from the college for teaching and from the university for service; published books with Palgrave MacMillan and Kendall Hunt; published articles and reviews in a wide variety of journals including *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, *The Washington Post*, *the Journal of Criminology*, *Law*

and Liberty, *The Catholic Social Science Review*, *Public Discourse*, *Contemporary Political Theory*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and the *Human Rights Quarterly*; and delivered papers at a wide array of conferences including the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, the International Studies Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, Society of Catholic Social Scientists, the International Academy of Business Disciplines, and Southern Political Science Association, as well as at conferences sponsored by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, the University of Dallas, the Center for Religion and Culture, the Austin Institute, and the University of Nebraska.

Keep reading to get all the details of what we've been up to (and what our alumni have been doing).

And, by all means, stay in touch! You can reach out to us at politicalscience@txstate.edu with any questions you may have about the department or to update your alumni information.

Dr. Kenneth L. Grasso
Professor, Political Science
Chair, Department of Political Science
Texas State University



DISCOURSE

Discourse in Democracy | Presents Full Slate of Distinguished Speakers

Discourse in Democracy (DiD) inaugurated the year in September, hosting the Department of Political Science's annual **Meet the Professors** night. More than 80 students attended the event, which gave political science and public administration majors the opportunity to meet and talk with more than two dozen faculty members and learn about the courses they teach, their backgrounds, and their areas of interest.

They also received information concerning internship opportunities and career building, as well as various groups associated with the department such as Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society; SWIPS (Supporting Women in Political Science); Pi Alpha Alpha, a worldwide honor society for public administration; the department's model Organization of American States and model United Nations groups; and the Texas State chapter of the International City/County Management Association.

Afterward, students and faculty were able to mingle informally with faculty and representatives of the various groups and organizations over pizza and cookies. Students in attendance were given assorted departmental swag including t-shirts and

baseball caps.

One student called the event "a great, warm welcome to the department's faculty and student body." Another noted that it "provided a lot of information about the department and its various programs" and showed "just how much support professors can provide."

In September, nearly 300 students, staff, and faculty attended DiD's annual **Constitution Day** lecture. Dr. William B. Allen, Emeritus Dean of James Madison College and Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Michigan State University, former chairman of the US Commission on Civil Rights, and member of the National Council on the Humanities, spoke on "The Constitution as Critical History." Allen tackled fundamental questions about the Constitution, including its origins, its role in ordering American political life, the role of negotiation and consensus in constitutional change, and its relationship to the institution of slavery. In his own words, he aimed to describe "forthrightly just what the Constitution is, this Constitution that we rightly revere but rarely understand." Allen noted the two dominant viewpoints on this question—one viewing it as "a fixed but revisable text," the other as "a medium

through which contemporary preferences are projected." He proposed instead a third, "neglected but far more persuasive viewpoint": that the Constitution "is a story ... or a history of previous political settlements."

Political science student Mofe Abiodun found the lecture "very informative" and said it was "interesting to hear Dr. Allen's analysis concerning the Constitution." Dr. Casey Wheatland called Allen "a masterful speaker," noting that "few share the insight into the Constitution that he demonstrated."

In addition to the lecture, Dr. Allen hosted a seminar for two dozen political science majors focusing on George Washington's "Rules of Civility." The discussion focused on why Washington believed these rules were important, the nature of and importance of good character, and its relevance today. MA student Jordan Hobbs said that Allen was "a great teacher" who "made interesting points." Another student who attended the seminar noted that Allen "kept the entire classroom engaged" and "drew out fascinating conclusions from the document about not only George Washington's character but the ethics of character in general."

The department's Constitution Day activities were made possible by a generous grant from the Jack Miller Center for Teaching America's Founding Principles and History. Constitution Day and Citizenship Day is an American federal observance recognizing the adoption of the United States Constitution and those who have become United States citizens by birth or naturalization.

In March, **Judge Don Willett** of the US Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit, spoke to an audience of more than 150 students and faculty on the importance of civic literacy. Willett, who served on the Supreme Court of Texas before joining the federal judiciary, argued that widespread ignorance of the grounding principles of the American experiment in self-government and ordered liberty constitutes a fundamental threat to it. To illustrate his point, Willett drew heavily on the words of the Founding Fathers, especially Benjamin Franklin's famous proclamation that America is "a republic, if you can keep it." Willett argued, citing Lincoln's dictum, that the "golden apple" of the Declaration of Independence is preserved by the "silver frame" of the Constitution, and that only the people's understanding of these documents and the relationship between them ensures their continued existence.

Willett lamented the gaps in public knowledge about not only American history and the political philosophy undergirding the founding but also about basic institutional facts. He noted, for example, that only 51 percent of American adults can name all three branches of government, while only 38 percent can identify the governor of their state.

Yet Willett offered hope, pointing out that those low numbers actually constitute an upward trend, and said he believes that the modern tools of internet research and social media can provide considerable assistance in addressing the problem of "civic illiteracy."

Several students appreciated Willett's sense of humor, calling him "genuinely funny," while others called attention to his "impressive knowledge of the Founding."

In October, DiD and the Department of Political Science hosted a panel discussion titled "**Redistricting Texas.**" The panel included the department's own Dr. Michael Faber, who spoke about the history of redistricting and controversies surrounding it; Dr. Rebecca Theobald of the University of Colorado, who discussed the geographical considerations bearing on redistricting; Dr. Betsygail Rand of Texas Lutheran University, who explored



Russia in Ukraine

With Russia and Ukraine prominent in the news, DiD sponsored a series of sessions on the topic. The program began with a panel in early March, attended by more than 75 students and faculty members. "**War in Europe: The Crisis Between Ukraine, Russia, and NATO**" featured four members of the department's faculty: Dr. Franziska Boehme-Newell, a specialist in international law; Dr. Tom Doyle, an expert on nuclear policy and ethics; Dr. Ionut Popescu, a specialist in American foreign policy and grand strategy; and Dr. Susanne Sternthal, a Russologist.

Doyle, the event's moderator, started by laying out an overview of the conflict. He was followed by Popescu, who evaluated the war's strategic dimensions, paying special attention to how a realist appraisal of the conflict intersects with American grand strategy vis-à-vis Russia and China. Sternthal then placed the conflict in context by recounting the events of the past few decades and exploring the role of long-standing cultural factors in its emergence. Finally, Boehme-Newell examined the conflict through the lens of international law and reviewed the wartime human rights abuses which Russian forces have committed. The event concluded with a 30-minute question and answer session, in which the audience could pose questions to individual panel members or the panel at large.

Zachary Poston, a graduate student in the Department of Political Science, praised the event's accessibility, stating that "as someone who didn't understand the first thing about international politics," he was able to emerge from the panel with the knowledge "to further dive into the topic." Another attendee praised the event's "thoroughness," adding that "the diversity of expert perspectives gave the panel the breadth and depth necessary to examine such a complicated conflict."



Judge Don Willett with students

the mathematical procedures employed in drawing and analyzing districting maps; and Dr. Mark P. Jones of Rice University, who examined the political situation surrounding the current redistricting effort and its potential effects on the future of Texas and US politics. The event was moderated by Dr. T. Vance McMahon of the Political Science Department. One attendee noted that the event “was a timely and fascinating discussion,” conducted by “highly knowledgeable panelists.”

Dr. Michael Lind visited campus in November for a lecture on “America’s New Class War.” Professor of Practice at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, Lind has authored many books, including *The Next American Nation* (Free Press, 1995), *The American Way of Strategy: U.S. Foreign Policy and the American Way of Life* (Oxford University Press, 2006), and *Land of Promise: An Economic History of the United States* (Harper Collins, 2012). His lecture drew on his most recent book, *The New Class War: Saving Democracy from the Managerial Elite* (Random House, 2020). Over 150 students and faculty attended the talk.

Lind contended that the modern left’s orientation of politics around issues of gender and race fails to account for the rise of a national neoliberal managerial class that cuts across racial boundaries. While acknowledging racial barriers to educational access, he used demographic data to show that college education is a better predictor of class privilege than is race. The dominance of this new class, he argued, threatens to undermine democracy by effectively excluding the bulk of Americans from the political process. He characterized the rise of Donald Trump as a rebellion of the American working class against the American managerial elite and gave prescriptions for forming a new base of working-class power in America. Attendees praised Lind’s “historical knowledge,” “insight,” and “engaging lecture style.”

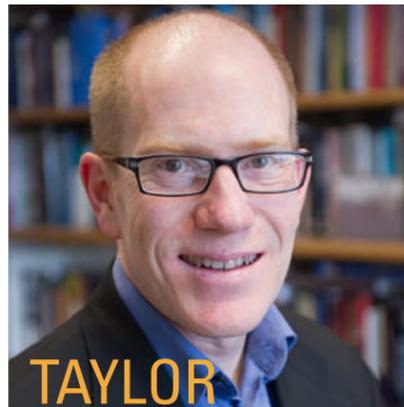
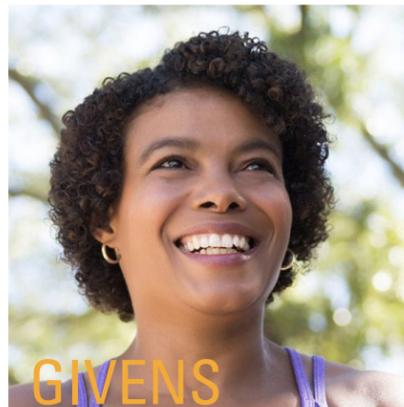
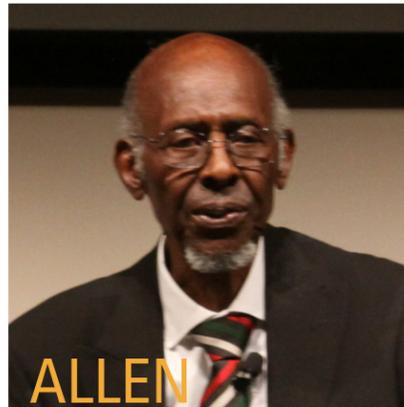
In February, **Charles R. Kesler**, Dengler-Dykema Professor of Government at Claremont-McKenna College, delivered a lecture to more than 200 students and faculty in the Alkek Teaching Theater. “The Crisis of the Two Constitutions” drew on Kesler’s recent book of the same title. Kesler posited that today’s polarization is driven by two conflicting understandings of the American constitutional order. One centers on the founders’ original understanding of the Constitution as grounded in the political and moral vision of the Declaration of Independence, and the other emerges out of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century progressivism (in particular, the thought of Woodrow Wilson) and views the Constitution as a living, evolving document which ought to adapt to meet modern political needs. Kesler laid out both understandings and explored their strengths and weaknesses.

In a follow-up seminar the next day, Kesler met with twenty political science majors to discuss “New Currents on the American Right and Left.” The seminar explored how, on the left, American liberalism has changed in the course of the twentieth century and how, on the right, debates rage among conservatives about what they are trying to conserve and how to address contemporary challenges.

One attendee praised the thoroughness of Kesler’s presentation of the issues, noting that he “reflected on many parts of the problem” and “painted a complete picture.” Another student extolled Kesler’s virtues as a lecturer, calling his speech “engaging” and “full of vivid turns of phrase.”

February also saw DiD host the department’s annual **Alumni Night**. A panel of five alumni shared their post-graduation experiences with an audience of more than 50 students. The alumni discussed their careers and advised attendees on several topics of professional interest, including developing relationships with faculty members, building social capital, and curating social networks via academic and professional conferences.

The panel consisted of Ellen Earl (BA 2019), incoming editor-in-chief of the *Texas A&M Law Review* at Texas A&M University School of Law; Evan Olszewski (BA 2019), land use project coordinator at Land Use Solutions; Rex Wyatt (BA 2019, MA 2021), authorized personnel specialist at Texas Animal Health Commission; Kate Moriarty (BA 2019), staff assistant at



Steven D. Smith with faculty and students

the United States Senate; and John Flores (MA 2021), teacher, San Antonio Preparatory Schools.

The presentations were followed by a question-and-answer session and informal conversations between the students and alumni over refreshments. Students who attended the event were given department goodie bags, which included department hats, t-shirts, flash drives, and valuable information regarding department resources. One attendee noted that the event was “a major success,” adding that they were “very thankful” that the department hosted it. Another described Alumni Night as “full of information” that would be “extremely helpful” in pursuing a post-graduate career.

The DiD series continued in April with the University of San Diego’s **Steven D. Smith’s** lecture, “Undoing the American Settlement: The Rise and Decline of American Religious Freedom.” Prof. Smith focused on the way America’s traditional approach to religion and public life was shaped by the decentralized nature of the American body politic, its far-reaching religious pluralism, and its lack of a consensus about the proper role of religion in public life. This approach allowed states and localities considerable latitude to craft their own approaches to this subject. Today’s culture wars, Smith argued, were precipitated in part by the Supreme Court’s attempt, starting in the 1960s, to impose a unified approach on American society. The lecture was followed by questions and answers.

One grad student called the lecture “extremely interesting,” adding that Smith “brought up points that are broadly missed by the mainstream conversation around religious freedom.” Another applauded his attention to history, affirming that Smith succeeded

in “establishing an alternative genealogy of religious freedom.”

The following day, Smith held a seminar for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students, during which he expanded on some points from his lecture, including the internal tensions in the approach to religious liberty advocated by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and the impact of declining religiosity on the future of American religious liberty. The seminar afforded students the opportunity to engage Smith in discussion, and as one attendee noted, “connect Smith’s scholarship to points of interest to us.”

The series continued in early April, when Syracuse University’s **Dr. Brian Taylor** delivered a lecture, “What is Putin Up To? Understanding Russian Foreign Policy.” Forty students and faculty gathered to hear the talk, which focused on the factors that shape President Putin’s decision making—what Taylor, in his book by the same title, calls “the code of Putinism.” Some key factors Taylor highlighted include a nostalgia for the Soviet Union and Russia’s imperial past, Russia’s distinctive cultural and religious characteristics, and Putin’s anti-American ideology and desire to maintain power in the Kremlin. Taylor also showed some recent videos of Russia’s national security meeting to exemplify Putin’s absolute control over decisions in Moscow during the days before the invasion of Ukraine.

Dr. Popescu, the moderator of the event, welcomed “the chance for Texas State students and faculty to hear from one of the most respected Putin analysts in the country” and reflected that “Taylor’s analysis of the how the past and present of Russia’s actions intertwined illuminated the connections between Putin’s longstanding ambitions and his most recent actions.” Jeron Barrett,



a Texas State graduate student, found Taylor to be “excellent at providing in-depth responses to all the questions he was asked” and was grateful for the “new perspectives” he offered. Bethanie Jones, another graduate student, appreciated Taylor’s focus on the “psychological aspect” of Putin’s leadership, which she had “seen hinted at in other commentaries” but not “delved into” with such depth.

Later in April, a second panel concluded the Ukraine series. **“Ukraine, Russia, and the Future of International Order”** was moderated by the department’s Dr. Ionut Popescu and featured Drs. Ed Mihalkanin, Alex Kroeger, and Tom Doyle of the Political Science Department, as well as Dr. Mark Pomar of the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas.

The panel focused on the significance of the war in Ukraine and its implications for the future of the liberal international order. The panelists approached this question from a variety of perspectives. Doyle explored it from the perspective of International Relations theory, examining how a multi-power world order might come about and how it might differ from previous periods of competition on the international stage. Kroeger used his expertise in authoritarian government to explain Putin’s popularity throughout the world and guess at Putin’s motivations and plans. Mihalkanin and Pomar used their knowledge of the regional

history and contemporary politics of Eastern Europe to reach differing conclusions about the driving geopolitical factors of the conflict and its implications for the future.

The event featured a vigorous exchange of views and lots of discussion with the audience. As one student remarked, the meeting was “lively,” with a “diversity of opinions” that gave attendees a “behind the scenes peek” at the scholarly debates in contemporary International Relations theory.

Meanwhile, another March event was a lecture by **Dr. Terri Givens** of the University of Texas at Austin on her recent book, *Radical Empathy: Finding a Path to Bridging Racial Divides*. Nearly 70 students, faculty, and staff listened as Givens opened the talk with a synopsis of her life—especially her experiences growing up and receiving education as a black woman in the 1970s and ‘80s—and as she went on to lay out a theory of “radical empathy.” Radical empathy, Givens explained, is composed of two types of empathy: emotional empathy, or feeling how another person feels; and cognitive empathy, or understanding how another person sees the world. Givens argued that the application of “radical empathy” is the most effective route to bridging racial

divides and eliminating racism in the workplace, the academy, and beyond.

DiD partnered with the Common Experience Program and the university chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) to bring **Mr. Juan Ortiz** to speak to an audience of 50 members of the university community in October. As the director of the City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Ortiz is a member of the Emergency Management Association of Texas, the International Association of Emergency Managers, ICMA, and the Local Government Hispanic Network. Though the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is one of the smallest departments for the City of Austin, it is the most visible during an emergency.

Ortiz described the challenges he encountered in emergency management, including reporting to multiple bosses. For instance, he stated that it is possible to report to the fire chief, assistant city manager, the mayor, and a county judge. The latter two individuals are the most important offices during a disaster. He observed that his civics and American government classes were the most important courses he took because they explained how government functions.

When not dealing with disasters, Ortiz is busy writing and revising plans. His 28-year career in the United States Coast Guard may have influenced his ability to plan. In military parlance, he noted, “Proper planning prevents [predictably] poor performance.” To create a good plan, he said, all stakeholders have a part to play in the process. His remarks centered on the cyclical process of emergency management that occurs in four phases: preparedness, response, recovery, and prevention/mitigation. The audience was encouraged to buy supplies ahead of a disaster to avoid the last-minute rush to the supermarket or a big box store. Supply chain system management issues exacerbate the challenges of last-minute preparedness. Water, canned goods, and other non-perishables can be purchased slowly and rotated regularly to avoid spoilage. Also important is an emergency supply kit

including flashlights, batteries, medical supplies, and one gallon of water per day per person for consumption. Ortiz also reminded the audience to get to know their neighbors. Questions from the audience were focused on Winter Storm Uri in February 2021.

Though his office is small, it has added personnel over the years. Ortiz said his office seeks graduate students with knowledge of public administration, financial analysis, and Spanish speaking skills. With the large grants that his office receives, he needs personnel to help manage those funds in compliance with the grant requirements.



If you are interested in attending any of the department’s Discourse in Democracy events, follow #txstpolisci on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter for event announcements. You can also visit the department’s calendar, polisci.txst.edu.





Model Competitions

Texas State Students Excel at ESMOAS, SRMUN

Continuing Texas State’s tradition of success, political science and other majors again garnered an array of awards at the 25th Annual Eugene Scassa Mock Organization of American States (ESMOAS) and the Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN) in the fall of 2021 and the spring of 2022.

Approximately 120 students from across the region competed in the Summit of Americas and moot court competitions at the ESMOAS, held November 4–7 at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio. Participating universities included Baylor, Louisiana-Lafayette, Angelo State, St. Mary’s, Texas A&M International, Concordia, St. Thomas, Our Lady of the Lake, Universidad Regiomontana, and National Autonomous University of Mexico. Students debated numerous regional topics ranging from rebuilding a sustainable tourism sector while preserving health security to strengthening the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Texas State students represented the nations of Brazil and Colombia and fielded two moot court teams. Team Brazil consisted of Andrea Garcia Rodriguez (head delegate), Bridget Negrete, Miguel Perez, Destiny Fox, Taylor Williams, and Joel Zamora. Team Colombia consisted of Aaron Acevedo (head delegate), Kaitlyn

Rodriguez, Priscilla Gonzalez, Mason Melead, Esai Garcia, and Ava Stuart. The teams of David Moncada/Marie Frere and Arleth Herrera/Tucker Tate rounded out Texas State’s Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) moot court teams.

Andrea Garcia Rodriguez, MOAS president and political science senior, said, “My journey at Texas State wouldn’t have been the same if I wasn’t part of both MOAS and MUN. They have not only broadened my horizons with new knowledge but also have been a way for me to discover what I’m passionate about and that is International Relations. I know I’ll use everything I learned in my future.”

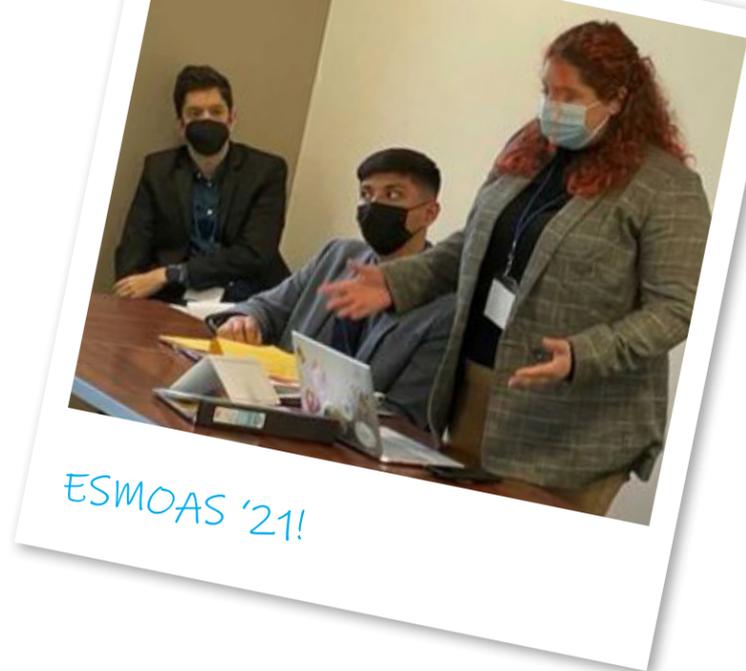
Taylor Williams collected a number of honors, including selection by faculty for chairmanship for the 26th Annual ESMOAS in 2022 (Secretariat for Multidimensional Security); Outstanding White Paper (1st Place in Committee, Secretariat of Political Affairs); and Director’s Parliamentary Award (1st Place Overall). Priscilla Gonzalez and Mason Melead received Distinguished Delegate (2nd Place in Committee, Secretariat for Multidimensional Security), and David Moncada won Outstanding Orator (1st Place Overall, Inter-American Court on Human Rights moot court Competition).

From November 18–20, Texas State students participated in the SRMUN competition in Atlanta, Georgia. Students debated numerous topics of global importance such as the role of youth-led media in promoting a culture of nonviolence and assisting states in combating transnational money laundering operations. Junior English major Marie Frere commented, “Working diplomatically to form comprehensive solutions for real world problems is one the reasons I love participating in Model UN.” Approximately 450 students, comprising 53 delegations from 32 universities, competed in the SRMUN competition. Participating universities included Kentucky, Auburn, Mississippi State, Georgia Tech, Central Florida, North Carolina at Charlotte, the College of Charleston, and Old Dominion.

Texas State students represented the nation of Israel at SRMUN. Team Israel consisted of Andrea Garcia Rodriguez, Aaron Acevedo, David Moncada, and Marie Frere. The group won Outstanding Delegation, topping the other 52 delegations. The Outstanding Delegation award marks the second semester in a row that Texas State has won first place overall at SRMUN, with Texas State’s Team Mexico winning the SRMUN virtual competition in March of 2020. In addition to the team award, Acevedo and Frere won Outstanding Delegate, a first-place award in their committee. Acevedo, a political science senior and Texas State’s Model UN president, said his model UN experience was beneficial in a number of ways. “I was able to network with a diverse group of people from different walks of life and with different expertise,” he said. “It also improved my public speaking and quick critical thinking skills.”

In the spring, Texas State students participated in the SRMUN competition, March 24–26 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Students debated numerous global topics ranging from fostering sustainability in food supply chains to establishing sustainable strategies to manage demographic change. Political science senior Ava Stuart said, “I learned so much more about how diplomacy works and have grown as a speaker throughout the course of the semester. These skills have helped me with other classes and continue to help me no matter where I go.”

Approximately 500 students, comprising 66 delegations from 40



universities, competed in the SRMUN competition. Texas State students represented the Czech Republic, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Republic of Tunisia. Representing the Czech Republic were Ben Nudelman, Alexis Jones, Manny Gonzalez, Tennyson Moreno, Ava Stuart, and Nicole Lopez Zorilla. The Islamic Republic of Iran was represented by Stephen Lara, Julia Maldonado, Charles Issac, Arleth Herrera, Newsha Salehkah, and Mason Melead. Isabel Duarte, Tucker Tate, Mtalazia Stone, Miguel Perez, Destiny Fox, Austin Wright, Jamie Castiblanco, Azul Cortez, and Aaron Acevedo represented the Kingdom of Spain; while Bridget Negrete, Prince Kamanda, Kacendra Cyr, Kenith Gonzalez, and Taylor Williams acted as the Republic of Tunisia.

Highlighting Texas State’s students’ accomplishments, the delegation representing the Islamic Republic of Iran won Honorable Delegation (3rd Place Overall) and the delegation representing the Czech Republic won Distinguished Delegation (2nd Place Overall). This marks the fifth SRMUN competition in a row that Texas State has had at least one delegation placing in the top three, with Texas State delegations finishing in first place in the previous four SRMUN competitions.



College Recognizes Political Science Students

In April the College of Liberal Arts hosted its annual Awards Ceremony to honor students for their excellence in academics and character. The Department of Political Science was well represented.

Ava Stuart won Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award in Political Science, while Kaylee Boggan received Outstanding Graduate Student Award in Political Science. Elektra Jordan received the Richard B. Henderson Award for academic excellence and character in the tradition of Distinguished Professor Emeritus Henderson. The Howard M. “Prof” Greene Award, awarded for academic excellence, went to Chelsea Johnson and Jessica Myers. Sandra Trujillo Gaytan, Tyler Hemenger, and Liam Trapane received the Barney and Linda Knight Scholarship which is awarded to students majoring in political science or business who have persevered in the face of adversity, overcome financial challenges, and demonstrated academic success. Alexandra Pearce received the Walter Richeter Scholarship, awarded to full-time students majoring in political science or journalism who demonstrate academic merit. Hunter Davis and Jordan Villareal received the Daniel Farlow Scholarship, which honors a longtime

political science faculty member and Piper Professor.

The following were recipients of Academic Excellent Certificates, awarded to juniors and seniors who maintain at least a 3.75 GPA: Aaron Acevedo; Mackenzie Acree; Blancheneige Beohon; Bailey Bishop; Arianna Bivins; Lindsey Boyd; Abigale Cordero; Hunter Davis; Tegan Debrock; Julia Degraaf; Macey Fields; Atlanta Flower; Emma Garcia; Jorge Gonzalez; Ramiro Gonzalez; Jacob Graybill; Chizobam IHEME; Chelsea Johnson; Elektra Jordan; Brianna Kearns; Jackson Lester; Regina Macias; Alexia Malcom; Johnna McClendon; Jordyne McClinton; Mikail McGuire; Taylor McKinion; Elizabeth Mey; Adriana Montoya; Neida Morales Valdez; Kristen Mullane; Wandaka Musungira; Jessica Myers; Faith Njenga; Blaine Peacock; Cotton Rasco; Axeel Rodriguez; Alejandra Sanchez; Gregg Santos; Grace Schlafer; Tauber Short; Ryan Sternberg; Ava Stuart; Alexander Vandewalle; Ariela Velazquez; Rachel Wargo; Kenley Weeks; Tyler White; Madison Woodrom; Valerie Wosnig; and Gafus Yesildal.



PSA Sees Busy Year

Marks End of James Presidency

In October, Texas State alumnus **Jordan Berry** spoke to a meeting of the university’s Rho Eta chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha (PSA). Berry owns and operates a successful political consulting company, Berry Communications, which services a wide and impressive host of clients including Senator Ted Cruz and Tesla. Berry gave a synopsis of his career, speaking on his education at Texas State, his first jobs, and his start in political consulting. Political science major Joe Chalfant said the discussion “provided a wonderful overview for those seeking a career in campaigning or consulting. Jordan’s experience and success gave attendees insight into the complexities and strategies of his field that can rarely be found in a classroom setting. Above all, he gave students tremendous advice and offered everyone a helping hand in connecting them with those who can jumpstart their careers.” Dr. Casey Wheatland, who also attended, noted that “Jordan’s conversation with students was delightful. He is an interesting and engaging man with long experience in an important field. His advice to students—to learn how to write and to take initiative—is spot on and will serve them well in any serious endeavor.”

PSA’s **fall induction ceremony** was held in November at Palmer’s Restaurant in San Marcos. More than 20 new members were inducted into the chapter, marking another record-setting year for the Texas State chapter of the national political science honor society. Buddy Garcia, former Texas railroad commissioner and Texas State political science alumnus, spoke to members about the importance of being politically engaged in an increasingly apathetic environment. He also drew on his extensive experience in state government to offer members advice on their careers.

PSA inaugurated its spring semester in February, when it hosted **Austin Prochko and Sam Pohl** of the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) as they spoke to more than 30 students and faculty. PSA president Nick James interviewed the two about their careers in public policy and politics. They discussed political involvement, the importance of networking, and the need for increased political engagement from younger generations. Dr. Wheatland, who attended the event, noted that “the conversation with TPPF was a great opportunity for students to learn what political careers are out there and how they can get their start” and commended the speakers for being “very generous with their time and knowledge.”

In early March, PSA partnered with Supporting Women in Political Science (SWIPS), and Phi Alpha Delta (PAD, Texas State’s pre-law fraternity) to sponsor a **trivia night** in George’s at the LBJ Student Center with pizza, prizes, and games. More than 60 students



attended the event, which featured trivia questions submitted by professors across the department.

Later in March, PSA hosted **Dr. James W. Muller**, a renowned expert on the life and writing of Winston Churchill, to discuss his new edition of Churchill’s *The River War: An Historical Account of the Reconquest of the Soudan*. The talk was delivered virtually to an audience of more than 40 students, staff, and professors. The first part was a presentation on the book, including an overview of the events of the war, a description of Churchill’s attitudes toward the war and its participants, and a reflection on the implications of the conflict for the political situation in Northern Africa and Britain. The second part consisted of a lively Q&A session, in which Muller impressed one participant with his “seemingly endless” knowledge of Churchill.

The year wrapped up on April 23, when PSA held its **spring 2022 induction ceremony** for 14 new members. The keynote speaker was Jason Isaac, a former state representative. His talk focused on the importance of civic engagement and our responsibilities as citizens. Mr. Isaac and Sam Pohl, the director of external relations at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, were inducted as honorary members into the chapter.

President **Nick James** stepped down as he prepares to graduate this summer, after 2 years of leadership in which he grew the chapter from 5 to more than 50 active members. Under his leadership the chapter sponsored numerous events ranging from lectures to social gatherings and established itself as an active and visible presence in the department and across campus. “What Nick James has done with Pi Sigma Alpha is nothing less than extraordinary,” observed Dr. Kenneth Grasso, the department’s chair. “Nick not only revitalized the chapter, his leadership resulted in the 2 most active years in the group’s entire history. He will be missed.” Former vice president Francisco Valdovinos has stepped into the role of president and hopes to continue the pattern of excellence that the chapter has come to represent on campus.

Founded in 1920, Pi Sigma Alpha is the national honors society for political science. Open to eligible political science, public administration, and legal studies majors and minors, Pi Sigma Alpha’s goal is to connect those interested in politics and policy with a wide variety of professionals from across the state and help its members get jobs, internships, and experience before and after college. The Texas State Chapter, Rho Eta, was established in 1988, and over the last thirty years has hosted a variety of lectures and community-service projects. The chapter can be followed on Instagram [@txstpsa](#).



ALUMNI PROFILES

HIGHLIGHTING EXCELLENCE



ATTICUS BOUSMAN: Scots Law, One Leap at a Time

It's a big decision to attend law school. Expensive, rigorous, and time-consuming—law school demands much of its students. For Atticus Bousman, these challenges weren't enough, so he decided to attend law school at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Atticus seems to live life by one motto: "Jump in!"

Atticus didn't know what he would major in until he took an elective course in social contract theory at Texas State. He credits Prof. Rodolpho Hernandez's "enthusiasm and genuine joy for the subject" with "opening [his] eyes to his current path." Although Scottish criminal law is the object of his study today, Atticus notes that he still "makes time for social contract theory."

Atticus's enduring passion for social contract theory isn't the only thing he picked up at Texas State. He speaks also of "lifelong friendships," "important connections," and his "most cherished gift": critical thinking. "Without this," he says, he "would not be able to attend law school" or "create lofty dreams for [his] career." Atticus also highlighted the effect of professors' optimism on his career. "The professors at Texas State always assured me that no problem was insurmountable. There is no doubt in my mind; their

optimism for my situation supplied me with the brass to take a leap and attend law school in Scotland."

Although Atticus doesn't have his future planned out, he has high hopes for himself. For Atticus, a career "is comparable to jumping off a cliff": "I have no idea what to expect until both feet leave the safety of the earth's edge. I can see the starting point and a vague idea of the end, although the expanse between the two points will be all-telling." For some, this ambiguity may be frightening, but for Atticus, it's "enthraling," and he "can't wait to dive headfirst."

When asked what advice he'd offer students, Atticus highlights the importance of "committing yourself wholeheartedly," "fully

embracing the subject matter," and "engrossing yourself in all the discussions [and] happenings of the student body." Above all, Atticus stresses "enjoying the ride." "Exams are challenging, but everything in between is a fantastic experience."

Atticus sees the field of political science "expanding and becoming more mainstream." The rise of "social media-based political personalities" and the "increasing number" of social media users, Atticus argues, will "lead to political science coming out of the classroom and into the general public's daily conversations." Atticus argues that this trend will expose "younger generations" to political science earlier, leading to a more politically "mindful" base. In effect, he says, "the field can only balloon." ●

MARIAH S. RODRIGUEZ: Forging Ahead and Keeping Balance

Mariah Rodriguez grew up with parents heavily involved in politics and a deep appreciation for political processes. It's no surprise that she is so politically active now, working full time at the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF), occupying a spot on the board of the Digital Education and Work Initiative of Texas (DEWIT), and collaborating with local political organizations. Perhaps more surprising is that, despite all this, Mariah is the mother to two small children and has a third on the way.

Mariah probably learned how to stay cool under pressure during her time in the Marine Corps' military intelligence. That experience also convinced her to "pursue more knowledge on political science and international relations." Her degree from Texas State followed this plan "perfectly," and she connected especially with Dr. Ionut Popescu over their shared background in military intelligence. Mariah feels that this connection propelled her career forward, as Dr. Popescu was able to help her obtain an internship at the US Department of State.

Mariah stresses the importance of connections like the one she shares with Dr. Popescu for career building: "What you know is important, but oftentimes it is who you know that gets your foot in the door." Furthermore, Mariah advises students to "always be willing to forge new relationships and go for things you think you may be unqualified for," since "you never know who may take a chance on you."

Moving forward in her career, Mariah hopes to become the campaign director for TPPF's Right on Immigration Campaign and eventually run for office. During the 2022 election cycle, Mariah was asked to run for Texas House District 45 and county commissioner but turned both campaigns down to focus on her family. Once her children grow older, though, Mariah is confident that her background and education will be instrumental to a successful campaign. ●





KENLEA BARNES: Realizing the Beauty of Education

Kenlea Barnes says that her time at Texas State “changed her path.” “Like most,” she says, “I only had the desire to have a great time in college, graduate, and land a job that would make me a *lot* of money.” So, she started out college as a business and psychology major, but soon found that she “missed learning about history and ... our political world.” After taking a class with Dr. Sherri Mora, Kenlea decided that “political science was the perfect way” to fulfill her “love for reading and learning.” Indeed, Kenlea has been “reading great books ever since,” taking classes with Dr. Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo, Dr. Ken Ward, and Dr. Rudy Hernandez. Political science, Kenlea says, “never allows me to be bored and continuously grows and improves my understanding of the world.”

Today, Kenlea is a PhD student at the University of North Texas (UNT) and will transfer in the fall to Louisiana State University (LSU) for a PhD in political philosophy and American politics. There, she will continue her research on American political thought and institutions, mass media, and early modern political philosophy. At UNT, she has developed “wonderful working relationships” with professors that have given her the connections needed to publish in her first year of graduate school. It is through these studies and her time at Texas State that Kenlea has “grown and come to appreciate what an education can provide,” a realization that has led to her “main goal” of “becoming the best teacher

[she] can be.” “Whether at a university or high school level,” she says, “I want to show students the importance and beauty of an education.”

Indeed, Kenlea feels that “we have all seen in the past few years how important it is to be informed and educated about past and present political events.” She urges current students to “remember that studying political science is more than prepping for law school or future political careers.” “Instead,” Kenlea says, “it is about educating ourselves and others to pursue the hardest questions that have yet to be answered” and “arming ourselves for the ... hardships to come.” “And that,” Kenlea adds, “is what is admirable.”

Kenlea sees the field of political science continuing to grow and harbors hope that it might grow toward the unification of theory and empirical study. “Though the field has been moving towards a strictly quantitative approach,” Kenlea would like to see “old books” and “contemporary studies” synthesized to form “an innovative approach.” “History is an important component of our field,” Kenlea argues, “and as we have seen, it does tend to repeat itself on occasion.” Thus, she feels that scholars must work to “bridge the gaps” between “compartmentalized” disciplines in order to form a well-rounded and all-encompassing map of the political landscape. ●

BARBARA SMITH: Waging Peace and Building Hope Around the World

As she was growing up, Barbara Smith was surrounded by a value system that encouraged her to help others. This would eventually lead to a career building democracy and peace around the world.

In 2020, Smith was named vice president of peace programs at the Carter Center, founded by former President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter to advance peace and health worldwide. Smith oversees the center’s democracy, human rights, conflict resolution, and rule of law programs that are active in Syria, Mali,

Sudan, Israel-Palestine, Liberia, Guatemala, and Bangladesh. The staff at the center have observed more than 113 elections in 39 countries and helped develop international election standards. They also work on conflict resolution and human rights and democracy programs.

“Some of our human rights work is to support human rights defenders,” Smith says. “We work to protect some of the things we take for granted: freedom of expression, to engage effectively

in society, and freedom from persecution. We are working with countries to create human rights defender networks so that if someone feels like they are under threat, we can help protect that person.”

It is a career trajectory that is different from the one she set out on at college. Smith, a native of Tyler, was initially interested in pre-medicine before ultimately deciding to focus her studies internationally. She earned her master’s degree in political science from Texas State University in 2001.

“I really became captivated with this idea of democracy and political participation, and as I learned more about what kind of work the United Nations and entities like the US State Department do, I was really fascinated with the ability to help people overseas,” she says.

Smith credits a number of Texas State professors with contributing to her success. Her master’s thesis advisor, Dr. Robert Gorman, “provided guidance and support,” helping her line up an internship with the US State Department which proved instrumental to her career. Under Dr. William Stouffer, Smith learned to mentor students, a skill she later utilized as an instructor at Denver University. With Dr. Paul Kens, Smith acquired a “foundational” understanding of constitutional law, which would later “inform the work [she does] at the Carter Center to preserve and advance American Democracy.” She also credits Dr. Ed Mihalkanin’s instruction in international relations theory with giving her “an analytical framing and basis for analyzing various contexts” that she has “used throughout [her] career in the US government and the non-profit community ... around the world.”

In Washington, DC, Smith had assignments at the US Agency for International Development and the National Security Council in the White House as a director for Afghanistan and Pakistan affairs. Smith lived in both countries, and her work in Afghanistan focused on the constitutional process and elections, including the first post-Taliban election.

After more than a decade working in the capital, Smith established Mountain Time Development, an international development consulting firm in Colorado. She also served as a senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies’ Human Rights Initiative, where she conducted fieldwork and research on civil society.

When the opportunity came to work at the Carter Center, Smith was ready for the challenge. “It is a well-respected institution that works in the peace and democracy field. For me, this position was the perfect fit. It really is a chance to continue to contribute to what we call ‘waging peace’ and building hope around the world.”

When asked what advice she would give current students, Smith replied, “As a

political science student, I don’t think I appreciated what a great resource our faculty at Texas State truly are for students with a real passion for public service and teaching. So my advice would be to absorb as much as you can now, for it will prove useful later in your career.” She also commented that the university provides many important foundational courses but also a wide range of other options as part of its offerings, which “allows the student to explore so many aspects and elements of political science.”

“Whether your passion is local politics, academia, public policy or administration, international relations, or international development,” Smith concluded, “Texas State can help build the skills and knowledge you need to succeed in your chosen profession. The possibilities are endless.” ●





ROBERT W. WILSON III:
“Aim at Heaven and You Will Get Earth Thrown In”

Robert Wilson considers himself a “political junkie.” When he worked as a long-haul truck driver, he spent most of his time listening to political talk shows on the radio. But during the senior year of his undergraduate studies at Eastern New Mexico University, his interests expanded from “politics” *per se* to “more foundational philosophical questions.” The “nature of government,” “human nature,” and “man’s place in the *polis*” became animating philosophical quandaries for Robert. “I had compartmentalized politics away from theology,” Robert says, “but as I read classical literature, I realized that [they] have more in common than we give them credit for.” It was these questions and this classical link that led Robert to pursue his master’s at Texas State.

Robert was especially drawn to Texas State’s master’s program—in fact, it was the only program he applied for. “I consider Texas State to be one of the best political theory programs in the nation,” he says, “because of the network of professors that make up the department.” He was especially impressed with Dr. Ken Grasso and Dr. Paul DeHart, who “challenged [his] worldview on the nature of man, government, and society.” He says that “there are two kinds of genius in the world”: those who “awe you” but “make you think ‘I could never do that...’” and those who “awe you and inspire you” because “you think ‘I want to do that!’” For Robert, “the professors of political science at Texas State are in the latter camp. They spur you on to dig deeper, learn more, and apply that learning to real-life scenarios and concepts.”

Robert is working hard to bring that same inspiration to students,

teaching dual-credit American and Texas Government classes to high school students while working as an adjunct instructor at Lamar Institute of Technology. In the immediate future, Robert plans to develop his curricula and teaching skills. But going forward, the sky is the limit: Robert has aspirations of “writing... articles (and maybe a book) on education, political theory, and politics” and of “higher office, likely in the US House.” In office, Robert hopes to “push for congressional term limits” and eventually leave a “legacy” of “inspiring others to think ‘I can do that!’”

When asked what advice he’d give current political science students, Robert emphasized knowing “why you want to pursue” a degree and “how you will use it.” Robert cautions that while political science “is a worthwhile and rewarding field,” it is also “seen as somewhat vague and universal.” Thus, it’s important to have a strong idea of how you will turn a degree in political science into a career.

Robert sees this “somewhat ... universal” and “far-reaching” character of political science as a challenge when it comes to defining the field and its future. But in general he hopes to see a classical turn in the field: “If the field continues in its modern direction, then I see political science circling around on itself over and over again as new models and fad predictions of human behavior take shape. If, however, it returns to its traditional roots, it will solidify as an instrument of understanding human nature rather than attempting to steer human nature.” ●

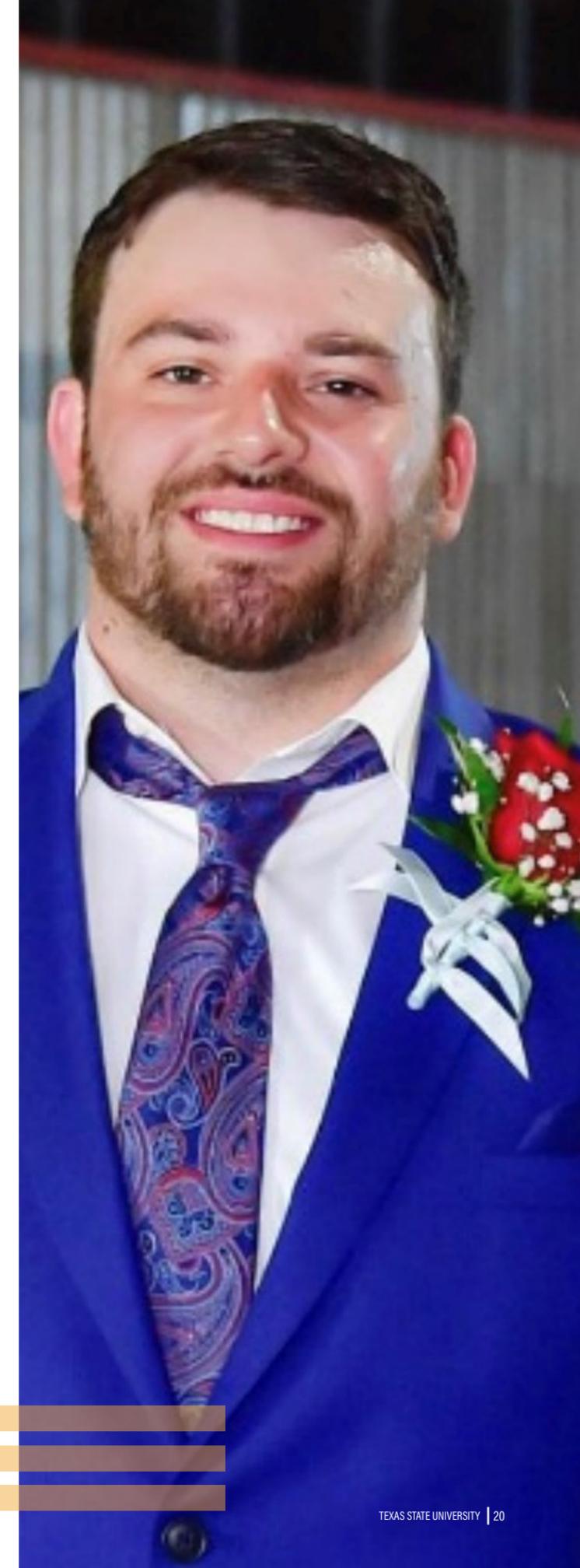
MORGAN DAVIDSON:
Helping Find Meaningful Solutions

Morgan Davidson has always been interested in government, conflict, and political theory. He suspects that these interests can be traced to the United States founding, which introduced him “to all three in one era.”

At Texas State, Morgan welcomed the opportunity to indulge this foundational interest, learning about “the laws, principles, and foundational concepts within our constitution” with Dr. Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo and “Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and their critics” with Dr. Paul DeHart. Morgan praises Texas State for its “robust and diverse” scope. “Classes in the subfields of American politics, political theory, international relations, and public law” and a second major in history “examining world, European, and American history,” he posits, formed “a substantive and extensive” background from which he “derives material for [his] research.” He also draws attention to the skills that he picked up from his professors, such as Dr. Menchaca-Bagnulo teaching him to make “sound arguments” and helping him “find his voice,” Dr. DeHart imparting the art of “critiquing and creating logically sound theories,” and Dr. Ionut Popescu “growing” Morgan’s comfort with public speaking.

Morgan is currently enrolled in the MA/PhD program at Texas Tech majoring in American politics and international relations, with a minor in public policy. His research interests are polarization, American voter behavior, American foreign policy, US-China relations, and conflict resolution. Morgan is especially passionate about political polarization, and though he paints a sorry state of affairs with “dis/misinformation run rampant,” “political institutions discredited,” “partisan refusal to agree on facts,” and “prominent figures not held accountable for their actions,” he “refuse[s] to believe or accept” that the “world is broken and beyond restitution.” Morgan believes that “a collective effort” with “good people sharing their stories, using their voices, and standing up even when it is hard” could heal the divide and put an end to the “lies, hate, and division that do nothing to better us.” To this end, Morgan hopes to use the “perspectives gained at Texas State and the research skills developed at Texas Tech” to “influence public policy” in a research or teaching position, perhaps even at Texas State.

When asked what advice he’d give to undergraduate students, Morgan stressed the importance of actually doing the readings. Although he knows “it can be difficult to feel that it is necessary,” he says that “you never know what you may think or feel when you read some of the most powerful words and ideas ever put down on paper for yourself.” As for his fellow graduate students, Morgan wants to offer encouragement. Although it’s “tough,” and “some days it may seem like you have lost your passion,” “if you push through, the field will reward you beyond imagination and it is so invigorating to overcome a challenge and have your love for your studies renewed.” ●



SWIPS Offers Distinguished Speakers

Supporting Women in Public Science (SWIPS) is a nonpartisan, women's professional education and development organization at Texas State University. Its purpose is to aid political science majors and other students to explore all facets of political science so they may discover their professional and academic interests. During the 2021–2022 term, SWIPS sponsored a number of lectures and other activities, including a trivia night jointly organized with Pi Sigma Alpha (see PSA article).

At its inaugural event in September, SWIPS welcomed **Dr. Dianne Rahm**, who spoke about her career and gave advice to students looking to follow in her footsteps. Rahm described the development of her academic interests, which narrowed from broader questions of science and technology to specific questions of environmental and nuclear energy policy as the Cold War ended. She also spoke about the classes she's taught in environmentalism at the undergraduate and graduate level and recommended the BA/BS degree in sustainability as a way to explore these topics. Keeping with SWIPS' mission of "focusing on the professional development of women in political

science," Rahm also reflected on the ways in which being a woman affected her career in academia and in public policy. Finally, she advised the students present to "be tenacious" and "seek further opportunities at every step."

Also in September, SWIPS partnered with IGNITE TXST to host a meeting with San Marcos Councilmembers **Melissa Derrick and Alyssa Garza**. Nearly 20 people attended the meeting, including the two councilmembers, three SWIPS officers, the IGNITE TXST president, and Dr. Lamm. The councilmembers began by speaking about their experience running for office. Derrick advocated maintaining an active social media presence and building strong connections, while Garza emphasized the importance of community-building. Despite her campaign being "last-minute," Garza noted, she was able to rally support from groups she had ties to through her education advocacy. Both councilmembers also highlighted the importance of intersectional organizing and spoke about their experience as women in office. Derrick insisted that women must assert their positions vigorously and refuse to tolerate condescension.

Garza spoke about the importance of family and mentors as valuable support systems in helping navigate particularly difficult political quandaries. The councilmembers concluded by discussing their current policy initiatives.

At its October meeting, SWIPS welcomed **Dr. Jennifer Lamm**, who gave attendees professional advice and shared about her experience as a political science professor and researcher. The primary piece of advice Lamm offered was to "indulge curiosity." Dr. Lamm developed this habit during her deployment, when she noticed that non-citizens fighting in the US Army showed little interest in gaining citizenship. This curiosity became an interest, and that interest solidified into her dissertation topic. Lamm also spoke about networking and rejection, urging the audience to reach out for interviews with experts and overcome fears of rejection, since pursuing opportunities can lead to important career developments and professional friendships.

Dr. Hyun Yun, a member of the department's faculty, spoke at the November SWIPS meeting. Yun focused primarily on her research interests in political media and public opinion and her career. She also discussed her background in South Korea, past research endeavors, and potential opportunities for students seeking to work in her discipline. Dr. Yun recommended following one's passions in pursuing higher

education. She noted that publishing in one's personal area of interest contributes to networking or collaborative possibilities with other academics across the country, even those in other fields. She explained that over the course of her career she has worked with scholars in various fields, including communication, psychology, political science, public administration, and even STEM disciplines.

In February, SWIPS teamed up with the international law fraternity Phi Alpha Delta (PAD) for a **law school information session** for about 15 current Texas State students. The meeting featured interviews with two previous PAD presidents, which were broken into five segments: undergraduate activities/resources, the LSAT, the application process, acceptance, and final tips/advice. The conversation was full of practical, hands-on student perspectives that pre-law students might not find through online resources or by speaking to faculty. One speaker, for example, shared that a broader consensus is beginning to emerge that the LSAT is not a dependable metric for success in law school, and that applicants should focus on building their resume and extracurriculars while pursuing their undergraduate degree. Furthermore, both speakers attributed their success to being on top of their application material and found it vital to reach out to advisors and "human resources" like Dr. Carol Dochen (Texas State's Law School Admission Council coordinating pre-law advisor) for help editing applications and selecting schools. Both speakers also emphasized the importance of time management. They stressed that it is almost impossible to prepare for the sheer workload of law school and noted that applicants should take plenty of time to relax, see family, and take a break from thinking about law school in between acceptance and attendance. Both speakers agreed that effective time management and a combination of breadth and depth in undergraduate activities are extremely important to success in law school.

Texas State alumna **Selene Rodriguez** of the Texas Public Policy Foundation spoke at the April meeting of SWIPS. Rodriguez offered advice regarding internships and the think-tank career path. She emphasized the importance of time management and taking initiative, the value of a leadership mindset that is about helping as much as about commanding, and the essential role of networking and connections. Concerning job searching, Rodriguez said that qualifications and requirements on job applications are not as strict as they seem, so prospective applicants should sell themselves as best they can, put everything on their resumes, and be ready to elaborate. SWIPS President Jessica Myers, who helped organize the meeting, said that Rodriguez "gave a lot of incredible advice for prospective policy interns and offered herself not only as a resource but also a point of contact for a potential internship at TPPF." Following the meeting, 6 SWIPS members messaged Jessica regarding the internship spots.

TEXAS STATE STUDENTS Make Their Mark

Providing external opportunities for our students to learn and practice, the political science program sends students to conferences throughout the year.

Students Participate in Critical Race Discussion

In October, a group of Texas State students attended the fall meeting of the Texas Network for the Study of Public Issues (TNSPI) at the University of Dallas. The conference focused on topics surrounding Critical Race Theory (CRT), including its fundamental commitments, theoretical roots, and historical development, as well as the current controversy concerning its teaching. In addition to student delegations from schools across Texas, many scholars of note attended the conference, including the department's own Dr. Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo, who presented a talk titled "Background and Context of the CRT Movement"; George Yancey of Baylor University, who gave a keynote lecture on "The Critical Race Theory Controversy"; and Santiago Piñon of Texas Christian University, who spoke on "The Residue of Colonialism: Interpreting Texan Race Relations through a CRT Lens."

Zachary Poston, a student in the master's program, praised the conference. "The topics discussed ranged from Southlake to Black Nationalists. And though the topics were broad, the focus was concise," he said. "It was really useful to not just understand

Critical Race Theory in practice, but to find the intellectual origins and foundational texts of the movement and see how it has changed or been adapted over time." Nick James, also in the MA program, called the conference "another wonderful example of the Texas State Political Science Department's commitment to providing external educational opportunities to its faculty and students." He also noted that Texas State had the largest delegation of any university outside Dallas. James was impressed that "the conference and its organizers managed to facilitate respectful and thoughtful conversations between the racially and ideologically diverse attendees" on "such a viscerally divisive topic."

TNSPI is sponsored by the American Public Philosophy Institute. Located at the University of Dallas, APPI seeks to bring the natural law tradition in which the American Founding was rooted to bear on the issues and challenges facing America today.

Graduate Students Attend SPSA Conference

Two political science graduate students, Jordan Hobbs and Zachary Poston, presented their first academic papers at the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) in San Antonio in January. Jordan presented "American Liberty as the Great Mediator: Understanding the Tensions between Morality and Law in American Constitutionalism," while Zachary presented "How the 'Second Discourse' and the 'Social Contract' Are Not All That Far Apart." Both papers were developed from seminar papers for a course with Dr. Paul DeHart, and both papers were well-received. Poston commented that "SPSA introduced me to leading scholars in the field, and provided me with valuable feedback on my research."



TXST Attends Prestigious National Security Conference



A delegation of Texas State students attended the 67th Annual MSC Student Conference on National Affairs (MSC-SCONA) conference in February. The conference focused on prominent issues concerning US security, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, the southern border, and future energy sources. Throughout the conference, students had the chance to connect with leaders and peers from diverse backgrounds in military and technology. Keynote speakers included Admiral William R. McRaven, retired US Navy four-star admiral and former chancellor of the University of Texas System, and General David H. Berger, commandant of the Marine Corps.

Chizobam Iheme, Jordyne McClinton, Benjamin Salazar, and R. J. Gonzalez represented Texas State. Iheme said the event “opened our eyes to the complexity of real-world issues.” Likewise, Salazar

said the conference “was filled with enlightening experiences” and “valuable lessons in teamwork.”

MSC-SCONA is an annual collegiate conference that brings together delegates from across the nation and the world. Each year, MSC-SCONA discusses a topic of national and global importance, giving delegates the chance to interact with the nation’s premier academic scholars, industry professionals, and public figures. Delegates participate in small-group roundtables, led by a subject matter expert facilitator, and work together to create a policy paper. Founded in 1955, the conference has hosted many prestigious speakers, including Texas State’s most famous alumnus, President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Students Exhibit at College of Liberal Arts Expo

In April, three political science majors participated in the College of Liberal Arts’ annual Research Expo. The expo is an online showcase of the research of the college’s undergraduate students, including oral presentations and an online poster session. Twenty-four students across fields including psychology, history, and computer science made presentations.

Two students, Kayla Frazier and R. J. Gonzalez, presented posters. Frazier’s explored “The Judicial Philosophy of Ruth Bader Ginsburg,” while Gonzalez’s addressed “The British-Led Western Alliance and the 1940s Nuclear Arms Race.” Another political science major, Tennyson Moreno, gave an oral presentation on “Flying Machine Foreign Policy.”



Dr. Paul Kens | Retires

The end of the spring semester marked the retirement of a long-time member of the department, Dr. Paul Kens. Dr. Kens joined Texas State’s faculty in 1987 after receiving his PhD from the University of Texas (UT) at Austin. Dr. Kens also received a JD from UT in 1971; he practiced law until the early 1980s and co-authored *Buying, Renting, and Borrowing in Texas* (Texas Consumer Association, 1980) and *Consumer Rights and Remedies* (West Publishing Company, 1983).

A noted scholar in the field of constitutional law and history, Kens’ books on the topic include *The Supreme Court Under Chief Justice Morrison R. Waite: 1874–1888* (University of South Carolina Press, 2010), *Justice Stephen J. Field: Shaping Liberty from the Gold Rush to the Gilded Age* (University Press of Kansas, 1997), and *Judicial Power and Reform Politics: The Anatomy of Lochner v. New York* (University Press of Kansas, 1990). His articles and reviews have appeared in variety of journals, including the *Journal of Supreme Court History*, *American Journal of Legal History*, *NYU Journal of Law & Liberty*, *Tulsa Law Review*, *Journal of American History*, and *Review of Politics*. Since 2018, he served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Supreme Court History*.

Although he has retired from teaching, Kens is continuing to research and is in the process of writing another book, which he hopes to finish within a year. The working title is *Munn’s Warehouse: How Gilded Age Corporations Tried to Add Freedom from Regulation to the Constitution—and Failed*.

Dr. Kens is a two-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship and has received the School of Liberal Arts Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities, the Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities, and the Presidential Seminar Award.

When asked to comment on his time at Texas State, Dr. Kens noted how much the University has changed. “Over the course of the 34 years I have been here, Texas State has changed its name, doubled in size, and evolved into a highly respected research university.” Dr. Kens feels “proud” to have played his part in this growth and “lucky” to have career goals that aligned with it. He gives his thanks to the deans, chairs, administrators, colleagues, and students who supported him, and says he will miss being around students, unlike “the drive down I-35 from Austin.”

Going forward, Dr. Kens sees a future for himself and his wife in which retirement makes it easier to “fit in” the traveling and exercise they both enjoy. At this writing, Dr. Kens is traveling the American West, bicycling throughout regions of New Mexico, Colorado, and Nevada which he hadn’t found “the right moment” to visit before now.

Texas State Faculty in the News



Susanne Sternthal

On April 14, Dr. Susanne Sternthal published an article at the independent news agency *The Conversation*. In “Manifesto Published in Russian Media Reflects Putin Regime’s Ruthless Plans in Ukraine,” Sternthal reviewed a disturbing manifesto published in Russian state media in early April by journalist and Kremlin-aligned political operative Timofey Sergeytsev and examined the structure of Russian state media and Russian propaganda. She noted, “The Russian government not only has total control over all media, but it dictates what can be seen and heard.” Sternthal’s

article went viral, hitting 25,732 views in four days, a record for *The Conversation*. Additionally, the article was republished across the internet and sparked discussion on Twitter. For the article, Sternthal drew on her extensive knowledge of Russian culture, especially her research on the composition of modern Russian media. Dr. Sternthal has lived and worked in Russia, both as a lecturer and as a liaison to a joint US-Tatarstani telecommunications venture. At Texas State, she offers an annual course in Russian politics.

Kenneth Grasso

The Epoch Times interviewed Dr. Ken Grasso for a May 2022 analysis of the Republican primary runoff for Texas attorney general, which pitted Ken Paxton against George P. Bush. Grasso suggested the race may be indicative of a “sea change that’s occurring in Texas politics and politics generally,” manifesting the historical tension in the Texas Republican Party “between the more social conservative/populist wing, and the more mainstream business Republicans.” Grasso said that “Paxton is clearly the candidate of the Trump wing of the party in the sense that he is ... a social conservative, more populist oriented, more aggressive and assertive in pushing his political agenda.” While Bush tried to align himself with Trump and distinguish himself from “his famous relatives who were anti-Trump,” Grasso added, “clearly he’s the candidate of the other wing of the party.” After the article was published, Paxton defeated Bush in the May 24 primary context.



Roger Abshire

In late September, the department’s Dr. Roger Abshire was interviewed by KENS5 News, the CBS affiliate in San Antonio. The segment for which he was interviewed was titled “Why Republicans Want to Audit Election Results in a State President Trump Won.” Abshire expressed concern that “The whole notion of constantly questioning the legitimacy of elections may have a detrimental effect on overall perceptions about the election,” adding, “I don’t imagine it’s going to make people want to vote more.”



Franziska Boehme Newell

Dr. Franziska Boehme published an article in June in the *Washington Post*’s “The Monkey Cage,” whose mission is to connect political scientists to America’s public conversation. Her article, “Germany Acknowledged Colonial Atrocities in Namibia as Genocide: Victims’ Groups Want More,” detailed the German government’s recent recognition of the 1904–1907 atrocities against anti-colonial forces and civilians in Namibia as genocide and the significance that the recognition holds in German and Namibian history. At the same time, Boehme noted, while “Namibia’s president called the agreement a first step,” he “expressed hope that further steps would include ‘an apology, to be followed by reparations.’”

In July, Dr. Boehme again made use of her expertise on the subject, when she appeared on Gideon Rachman’s *Financial Times* podcast “Rachman Review,” in a segment titled “Can Germany Atone for Its Colonial-Era Genocide?” Boehme spoke with Rachman and Esther Muinjangué, the Ovaherero Genocide Foundation’s chair, about “the decades-long journey towards official recognition of Germany’s colonial-era atrocities” and the significance of the public apology. They explained the meaning of Germany’s long silence and discussed how the official apology fell short of proper restitution for the victims’ descendants.

Texas State Alumnus, Former State Rep Speaks

The Honorable Doug Miller, winner of Texas State University’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2018, visited campus and spoke to Dr. Tom Varacalli’s Introduction to Political Science class in November. Miller, a former member of the Texas House of Representatives and a former mayor of New Braunfels, spoke with the students about the dignity of public service, the pivotal role of character, the need to foster personal relationships and friendships, and the importance of grit and determination. He also encouraged the students to apply for internships. Charles Isaac, a political science student in the class, described Miller’s insights as “extremely valuable.”



INKLINGS Cover Henry Clay, Cold War, International Law



In the early and middle decades of the twentieth century, a small group of intellectuals met weekly at Oxford University to read aloud and discuss their works in progress. The meetings were characterized by lively exchange of ideas. The group members called themselves The Inklings, suggesting that their thoughts and works in progress should be taken in the spirit of reflection, criticism, and, sometimes, humor. In the same spirit, the Department of Political Science at Texas State University has held gatherings over the course of some twenty years, providing an opportunity for faculty members to present their thoughts and works in progress. A feeling of fellowship, the exchange of ideas, occasional criticism, and some humor—as in the gatherings of the original Inklings—have characterized the department’s Inklings talks, seminars, and roundtables.

In September, students and faculty gathered to kick off the fall’s Inklings series. **Dr. Franziska Boehme Newell’s** talk, “From Consistent Compliers to Backlashers: Compliance and Resistance at the International Criminal Court (ICC),” explored the nuances of states’ responses and attitudes toward international law and international criminal proceedings. Drawing on the framework she created for an ongoing book project, Newell outlined several categories of state response to the ICC and offered empirical explanations for these tendencies. In so doing, Newell sought to demystify the topic and offer a coherent system for



understanding states’ relationship to international law and international legal organizations. One graduate student observed that the talk “was incredibly informative for both those already familiar with the topic as well as those who may not be as well versed.”

In February, **Dr. Casey Wheatland** spoke to an Inklings gathering about Henry Clay’s political economy. One of the founders of the Whig Party and one of the most important American statesmen of the pre-Civil War era, Clay championed what he termed “the American System,” a program designed to promote economic development and unify the country. The talk was attended by 18 students and faculty members. According to one attendee, Dr. Wheatland’s talk was “accessible” and allowed members of the audience to ask “thoughtful questions” despite the complexity of the subject matter. Most of the questions centered around contemporary applications of Clay’s theories. One attendee described it as “a successful, engaging event filled with rigorous academic discourse.”

For the final Inklings gathering of the year, **Dr. Ionut Popescu** delivered a talk on China-US relations in March. Dr. Popescu called the relationship “Cold War II,” a state of Great Power conflict coalescing in the aftermath of the US’s post-Cold-War hegemony. To examine the brewing conflict, Dr. Popescu drew on his extensive knowledge of American and Chinese grand strategy to predict how these powers would butt heads. Dr. Popescu predicted that unlike the first Cold War, Cold War II probably will not be fought through proxy wars, as China is disinclined towards military intervention—though this could change in Taiwan or the South China Sea. Rather, Cold War II, Popescu argued, would be fought economically and diplomatically, as China aims to break up American financial and diplomatic hegemony, secure access to high-tech resources like lithium, and become the foremost industrial power through command of forward-looking industries like AI, supercomputing, and robotics. Meanwhile, America and her allies would mostly be focused on warding off the Chinese push for hegemony by maintaining the liberal world order and competing for control of key resources. This conflict, Popescu predicted, will likely play out over the span of 50 years, though this timetable has been accelerated in the eyes of the Chinese by a perceived weakness in American power.



Quieraney Belvin, Medal of Hope Awardee

Photo Credit: @txstla

Political Science Profs, Students Earn Kudos

At the College of Liberal Art's annual General Faculty Meeting in August, Dean Mary Brennan recognized three members of the Department of Political Science's faculty for their accomplishments. **Dr. Lynn Crossett** and **Dr. Thomas Varacalli** received Presidential Distinction Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Service, respectively. Additionally, Dr. Sherri Mora received a College Achievement Award for Excellence in Teaching. These awards are issued annually by the university "to recognize and reward superior accomplishments, to provide models of excellence for fellow faculty, and to encourage all faculty to continue to perform, improve, and advance their teaching, scholarly and creative activity, and service."

Two political science faculty members were named favorite professors by Texas State's Alfred H. Noelle Chapter of Alpha Chi National College Honor Society in the fall of 2021. **Dr. Howard Balanoff**, a member of the department's public administration faculty, and **Dr. Charles Kels**, who teaches in the department's

Master of Arts in Legal Studies Program, were recognized for their outstanding teaching. Alpha Chi is a national honor society which promotes academic excellence and exemplary character among undergraduate college and university students and honors those who achieve such distinction. Founded in 1922, it is the oldest honor society at Texas State.

Quieraney Belvin, a senior in the Department of Political Science, was recently awarded the Medal of Hope by the Texas State University Leadership Institute. The prestigious award, which honors students who are "dedicated to inclusivity of others, social responsibility, civic engagement, empowerment, and exemplify integrity and ethics," was granted to Belvin on account of her prolific volunteer work and her service as student senator and justice of the Peer Review Board. She also served on two university committees, actively contributed to four student organizations, and attended various leadership and professional development conferences,

seminars, and programs, such as the Capstone and Pathfinder events. "As a first-generation student," Belvin said, "I am proud to obtain my diploma in May 2022, because it shows my dedication to my academics. But to receive the Medal of Hope is a symbol to my family and friends that college was the best investment for my future. It shows that I didn't walk with my head down for the past four years, but I went out and I attempted to build and further

my leadership skills." In addition to the Medal of Hope, Belvin earned several awards for scholastic achievement throughout her college career, including two Academic Excellence certifications from the Black Faculty and Staff Coalition as well as placement on the Dean's List.

Sanchez Named to TXST's Graduate House

Armando Sanchez, a student and graduate instructional assistant in the Department of Political Science, was recently appointed to the Graduate House of Representatives as the political science representative for the College of Liberal Arts. The Graduate House of Representatives is a body of student government that represents graduate students at Texas State. It consists of two representatives from each academic college who are nominated by the dean of their respective college.

Representatives "serve as the primary student government advocate for all graduate students at Texas State University by listening and acting transparently as a liaison between the students, the university, and surrounding communities." Initiatives spurred by Grad House representatives have ranged from increasing lighting on parts of campus to passing Title IX legislation. Representatives also take on leadership roles in a variety of recurring initiatives, including Graduate Student Appreciation Week and the annual Lunch with the Deans.

The Graduate House gives those involved firsthand experience of the legislative process and "functions as a sort of rational arbitrator" to the Senate. Representative Sanchez is filling the seat previously held by another political science major, Ethan Van Gorkom. Representative Gorkom assumed the role of Parliamentarian, as well as chair of the Equity and Inclusion



Committee. Responsibilities included knowing "the student government constitution and the student government code of laws, to ensure the meetings flowed properly."

For the recently appointed Representative Sanchez, "the legislature is the branch where change happens." During the duration of his appointment, Sanchez hopes "to push legislation that better correlates with what graduate students want" and "bring more diversity and inclusion when it comes to people of color."



New Faculty

In fall of 2022, Dr. Lauren M. Rowlands will join the political science department. Dr. Rowlands earned her MA in political science from Temple University in December 2016 and her PhD in May 2021. Additionally, she holds an MA in public policy and administration and a BA in political science from California Lutheran University, where she served as a visiting assistant professor from 2020 to 2021. Dr. Rowlands has taught courses on American government and politics, state and local government, civil rights, and public policy. Her research focuses on immigration policy, with special emphasis on the political and informational mechanics playing into policy development.



FACULTY UPDATE | Political Science Program

Roger Abshire is working on a book manuscript which argues that the institutional models used by the Constitutional Framers were not well suited to the way that the Constitution divides and allocates political power between the three branches of the federal government.

Ben Arnold coordinated the department's Model United Nations and Model Organization of American States programs.

Cecilia Castillo serves on the Texas State Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission.

Vince Bagnulo delivered a paper on "The Centrality of Progress in *On Liberty*" at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association.

Paul DeHart's article "Whose Social Contract? Hobbes versus Hooker and the Realist Social Contract Tradition" appeared in the *Catholic Social Science Review* 26 (2021): 3–21.

Bill DeSoto published three articles in 2021: "A Comparison between Australian and US Population on Attitudes to Criminal Behaviors," *Psychology, Crime, and Law* (2021); "Public Opinion on the Death Penalty in Latin America: Exploring the Individual Determinants in Eleven Jurisdictions," *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* (2021): 1–14; and "Racial Animus and Its Associations with Punitive Sentencing and Crime Types: Do Australian Community Attitudes Reflect the United States?" *Journal of Criminology* (2021).

Tom Doyle was named a Favorite Professor by Alpha Chi National Honor Society.

Michael Faber delivered a paper on "The 2021 Capitol Riot in Historical Context" at the Southern Political Science Association's Annual Meeting; a paper on "The Anti-Federalists and the Right to Bear Arms" at the Midwest Political Science Association's Annual Meeting; and a paper on "The Original First Amendment: Representation in the Early Republic" at the Southern Political Science Association's Annual Meeting.

Blake Farrar delivered a paper on "The Spiral of Political Youth Voice: An Application of the Spiral of Silence Theory to Opinion Expression Among New American Voters" at the International Academy of Business Disciplines 32nd Annual Conference.

Kenneth Grasso's article "The Verdict on the Founding: Good or Good Enough?" was published in the *Catholic Social Science Review* 26 (2021): 23–38.

Paul Kens served on the Editorial Review Board for the *Journal of Supreme Court History*. His 1998 book *Lochner v. New York: Economic Regulation on Trial* (University of Kansas Press) was recently ranked first on BookAuthority's list of the Best-Selling State Law Books of All Time.

Alex Kroeger delivered a paper on "Elite Coalitions and Power-Sharing in Africa in the Wake of the Cold War" at the Midwest Political Science Association's Annual Meeting.

Jennifer Lamm served on the planning committee for the Texas Women in Higher Education Conference.

Arnold Leder coordinates the department's Inklings programming.

Vance McMahan chairs the Political Science Program's Internship Committee.

Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo's article "Desire, Conflict, and Tradition in Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity" appeared in *Expositions: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities*. She also published two articles in *Public Discourse*: "Rethinking the Working Class" and "Lessons from King, Tocqueville, and Augustine on Loving Our Black Neighbors".

Ed Mihalkanin serves on the Board of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Museum of San Marcos, and the City of San Marcos's Juneteenth Committee.

Sherri Mora received the College of Liberal Arts Achievement Award for Excellence in Teaching; and her *Invitation to Political Science* (co-authored with Tom Varacalli) was published by Kendall Hunt.

Franziska Boehme Newell published a review of *Genocide Never Sleeps: Living Law at the International Tribunal for Rwanda in Human Rights Quarterly* (May 1, 2021); and "Germany Acknowledged Colonial Atrocities in Namibia as Genocide. Victims' Groups Want More," in *The Washington Post* (June 9, 2021).

Ionut Popescu published a review of *Seeds of Stability: Land Reform and US Foreign Policy in Perspectives on Politics* 19, 2 (June 2021): 686–7.

Omar Sanchez-Sibony's book *Democracy Without Parties in Peru: The Politics of Uncertainty and Decay* was published by Palgrave Macmillan.

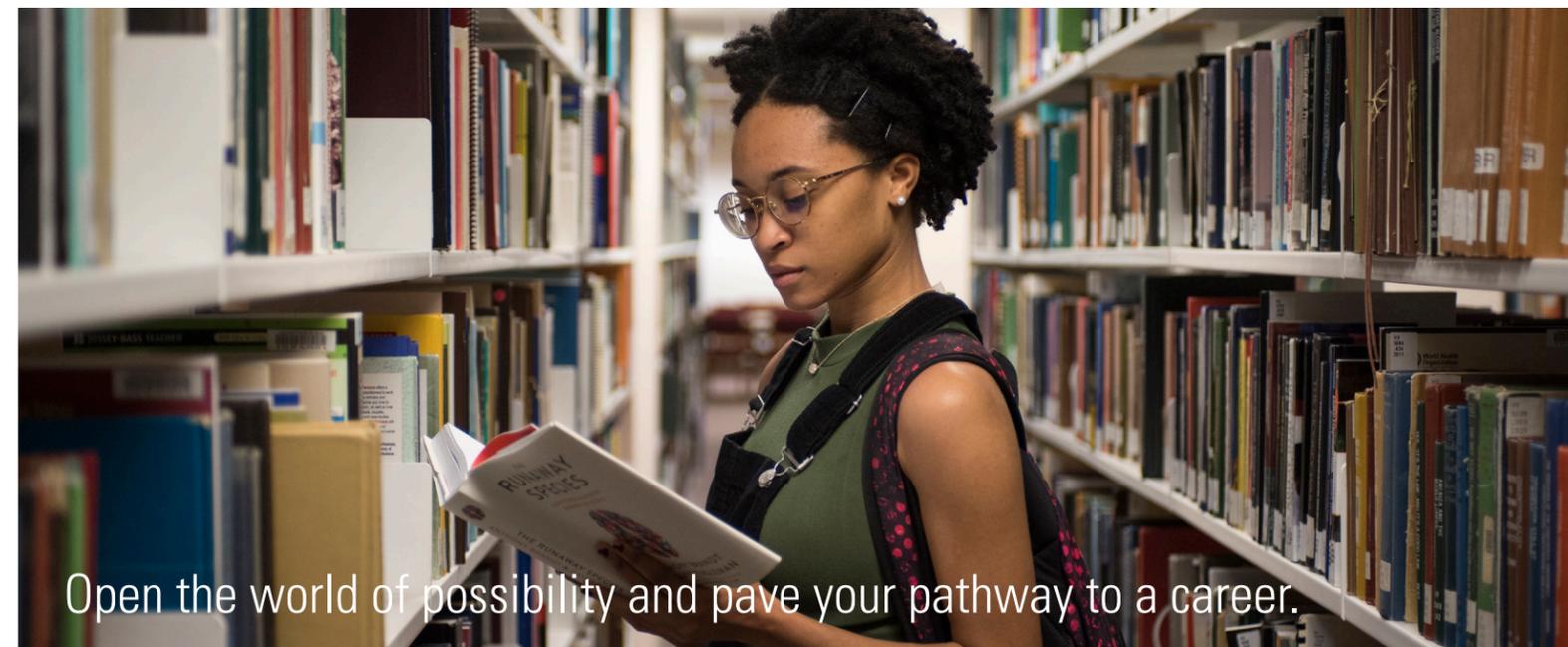
Eduardo Schmidt Passos is currently doing a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for the Study of Liberal Democracy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to develop his project on Carl Schmitt's political theology. His article on "Carl Schmitt's Early Legal-Theoretical Writings" was published in *Contemporary Political Theory* in February.

Tom Varacalli's book *Invitation to Political Science* (co-authored with Sherri Mora) was published by Kendall Hunt. He also received a Presidential Distinction Award for Excellence in Service.

Ken Ward was named Texas State's official Pre-Law Advisor.

Casey Wheatland gave an invited talk entitled "Praetorians: The National Security State Against the Constitution" at the University of Dallas's American Studies Institute Day. In May, he received his PhD from the Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship after successfully defending a dissertation on Niccolò Machiavelli and Girolamo Savonarola.

Hyun Yun's article "Beyond Political Capital: Do Social and Economic Capital Matter?" appeared in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 51, 2 (2021): 404–25; and her chapter "My Professor is Losing Her Mind and So Am I!" appeared in *Teach Political Science with a Sense of Humor: Why (and How to) Be a Funnier and More Effective Political Science Teacher and Laugh All the Way to Your Classroom*, edited by Kishor Vaidya (Canberra, Australia: The Curious Academic Publishing).



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Roger Abshire, Ph.D.
Lecturer
Areas of Interest: Constitutionalism, the Presidency, Law and Society, Political Theory



Blake Farrar, M.A.
Lecturer
Areas of Interest: American Politics, Political Behavior, Elections and Media



Ben Arnold, M.A.
Senior Lecturer
Areas of Interest: Electoral Politics, the Judiciary, International Institutions



Kenneth Grasso, Ph.D.
Professor
Chair
Areas of Interest: Political Theory, Religion and Politics, American Political Culture



Vince Bagnulo, Ph.D.
Lecturer
Areas of Interest: Political Theory, 19th Century Political Thought, Liberalism & Democracy



Paul Kens, J.D., Ph.D.
Professor
Areas of Interest: Constitutional Law and Theory, U.S. Constitutional Development, Judicial Politics



Cecilia Castillo, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Director, Master of Arts in Political Science
Areas of Interest: Political Theory, American Political Thought, Literature and Politics



Alex Kroeger, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Areas of Interest: Authoritarian Regimes, Democratization, African Politics



Paul DeHart, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: Political Philosophy, American Political Thought, Jurisprudence



Jennifer Lamm, Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer
Areas of Interest: American Politics and Political Development, Constitutional Law, Immigration



Bill DeSoto, Ph.D.
Professor
Areas of Interest: Local Government, Public Policy



Arnold Leder, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: Middle Eastern Politics, Terrorism, the Holocaust



Thomas E. Doyle II, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: International Security, Nuclear Ethics, International Ethics



T. Vance McMahan, J.D.
Professor of Practice
Areas of Interest: International Organizations, State Policy, Law in Politics and Society



Michael Faber, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: American Presidency, American Political Development, Early American Political Thought



Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: Political Theory, American Political Thought, Constitutional Law and Theory



Ed Mihalkanin, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Areas of Interest: International Relations, U.S. Diplomacy, U.S.–Latin-American Relations



Eduardo Schmidt Passos, Ph.D.
Lecturer
Areas of Interest: Political Theory, Contemporary Political Theory, Latin American Politics



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Associate Chair
Undergraduate Program Coordinator
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Kenneth Ward, J.D., Ph.D.
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Ionut C. Popescu, Ph.D.
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Omar Sanchez-Sibony, Ph.D.
Professor
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Hyun Yun, Ph.D.
Professor
Areas of Interest: Political Communication, Public Opinion, Elections and Media

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