



Political Science

A Newsletter for Alumni and Friends

Summer 2019

One of Political Science's Premier Journals to be Edited at UWM

Distinguished Professor Kathleen Dolan will take the reigns as co-editor of the *American Journal of Political Science*, one of the top two peer-reviewed journals in the discipline. (Sadly for the Department, this means she'll be stepping down as Department Chair.) The AJPS publishes work that significantly advances knowledge and understanding of citizenship, governance, and politics. As editor, Professor Dolan will evaluate peer reviews of submissions made to the *Journal* and, in consultation with her Editorial Board, make publication decisions. As you might imagine, this is a significant achievement constituting an indelible mark on the discipline, and we are thrilled at the Midwest Political Science Association's excellent choice.



Milwaukee Area Political Science Seminars

The inaugural year of MAPSS (Milwaukee Area Political Science Seminars) clearly met its goal of reaching across town to engage in scholarly pursuits with the political scientists at neighboring Marquette University. The talks, which alternate between the UWM and Marquette campuses, were well-attended, the discussions were engaging, and the presentations, enlightening. Presentations ranged from analyses of public opinion to protest, both in the U.S. and across the world. We look forward to Year Two, to learn even more, and thank Associate Professor John Reuter (UWM) and Associate Professor Amber Wichowsky (Marquette) for implementing their great idea. (These presentations, by the way, are open to the public. Feel free to stop in! Information on dates and topics can be found online, at <https://uwm.edu/political-science/events/>. See the archives for a list of the papers given at MAPSS meetings.)

We Want to Hear From You!

We'd love to hear from you, alumni, on what you're doing with your Political Science degree! Please feel free to email Professor Sara Benesh at sbenesh@uwm.edu and let us know what you're up to. We may even ask to profile you in next year's newsletter or invite you to campus to

participate in one of our new Careers Brown Bag events!! Email Sara for details!



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Spotlight: Alumni

Veterans Advocate Graduates with Honors

Sam Rogers graduated this Spring with a POL SCI major with the Law Studies Option, and watch out world, because he's got BIG plans! Sam has been deeply involved in student governance at UWM and worked hard on issues near and dear to him as an Army veteran. After returning from his third tour in Afghanistan, Sam served on the Veterans Advisor Council to the Chancellor, was elected President of Student Veterans of America – Milwaukee, and was a two-term Veteran Advocacy Senator on the Student Association. He's also worked hard to grow the College Republicans club on campus and was recently elected Vice Chair of the Ozaukee County Republican Party. We'll miss you here, Sam, but wish you all the best!



Talsky to Take On D.C.



New UWM Alum Alexandra Talsky (POL SCI minor) was selected from a competitive process as one of twelve foster care alumni for the Foster Youth Internship Program® with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. As a part of the program, Alex worked as a Congressional Intern in the United States House of Representatives and authored an in-depth research report on federal child welfare policy focusing on college support programs in higher education. Her report was presented to Congress and the White House in July 2019.

Alex thanks Professor Kristin Trenholm of the Political Science Department for her mentoring, especially within Pi Sigma Alpha, where Alex was a member of the organization and the Executive Board.

Scott Dettman to Lead Avenica

Our alum, Scott Dettman (POL SCI BA, MA, and ABD) has been tapped to lead Avenica as CEO. Avenica is a national leader in entry-level recruitment and career placement. According to Avenica, Dettman is “a dynamic leader with an incredible energy for the mission of the company.” Congratulations, Scott!



Help us find our Alumni!

Do you have a college friend who isn't on our mailing list? We know that we are missing contact information for some alumni - will you share this with your friends and ask them to update their contact info?

Contact information can be updated at: <http://uwm.edu/alumni/update-your-information/>

Spotlight: Graduate Program

Professor Kraft and the Experimental Politics Lab

Assistant Professor Patrick Kraft and some industrious graduate students from POL SCI have begun a social science research group that aims to use experimental methods to address questions about political attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Members of the lab have diverse substantive interests across several fields in political science.

Starting in 2018, Professor Kraft initiated weekly meetings open to all political science graduate students at UWM. The initial idea was to provide a forum to discuss recently published papers, workshop new research ideas, and provide feedback to one another in a supportive environment. These discussions turned out to be so productive that the group launched a collaborative research project on immigration attitudes that involves all lab members as coauthors. They are in the process of developing a novel experimental design to study how to correct common misperceptions about immigration and are starting data collection this summer. What a timely topic, and what a fantastic opportunity for our graduate students!

If you would like to find out more about the Experimental Politics Lab @ UWM, you can check out their website: <https://experimentalpolitics.github.io>



Heideman to Present Poster at PolMeth XXXVI

Amanda Heideman, ABD, has been selected to present her work at The Society for Political Methodology's Annual Summer meeting at MIT. This is a big honor, and we're quite proud of her! She'll be presenting work from her dissertation. Her project uses a dynamic, group-level Bayesian IRT model to construct estimates of public opinion at the local level among different racial groups using several national-level surveys from the ANES and CCES.



According to Amanda, "This model is cool because it models latent traits at the level of demographic and geographic groups rather than individuals (making it more computationally efficient than models that estimate individual-level opinion). It also allows me to explore change in public opinion over time by incorporating a dynamic linear model for the parameters of the hierarchical model."

She then uses these estimates to examine the relationship between public opinion and policy outcomes, and whether some opinions count more than others. Overall, the project offers an interesting methodological contribution while also providing insights to important substantive questions about the quality of representation in local politics, which is just what political science ought to do. Congratulations, Amanda!

Spotlight: Graduate Program cont.

Orhan Gives Paper, Gets Scholarship

Yunus Orhan, another of our ABDs, presented his research at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science



Association in Chicago this spring. His work sought to explain under what conditions dictators choose to empower courts, arguing that threats from political opponents diminish prospects for judicial independence. Yunus will be getting some advanced training in political methodology at the ICPSR at the University of Michigan this summer, using his Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM) Certification Scholarship. Yunus won one of 10 scholarships, nationwide. And beyond all that, Yunus recently published an article on Washington Post's Monkey Cage (with Associate Professor John Reuter). Check it out here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/07/18/turkeys-ruling-party-is-splintering-heres-why>

Spotlight: Undergraduate Program

New course: Law Through Popular Culture

Our alumni may be jealous of our current students who, this past fall, participated in the first offering of the course "Law Through Popular Culture." Yes, they took a class where their homework was to watch movies! But they learned so much more! Professor Sara Benesh, our incoming department chair, created the course as a natural outgrowth of some of her recent research. The course focused its energy on ascertaining the extent to which popular portrayals of law and courts had the potential to influence public perceptions of the judiciary. Coupling television shows and movies with scholarly research, students identified research questions and built research designs by which to test for such a relationship. Fun and informative – imagine that? (Professor Benesh talks about the course in a recent issue of the College of Letters & Science's *In Focus*, available here: https://issuu.com/uw-milwaukee/docs/03_march_in_focus/4.)

UWM POL SCI Students Inducted Into Phi Beta Kappa

The Department congratulates the following POL SCI students on their induction into Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious undergraduate honors organization:

Jose Apostol	Taylor Pilon
Luz Chavez-Gutierrez	Breeha Shah
Daniel Hoeft	Theodora Ocken
Mayya Pechenova	Brendaliz Valdes

Phi Beta Kappa recognizes academic excellence in the liberal arts and intellectual exploration. Eligibility is based on a record of breadth in coursework across the liberal arts and sciences, and a minimum 3.8 GPA for induction as a junior or a minimum 3.6 GPA for induction as a senior. Only about 10% of colleges and universities in the U.S. have a chapter; in the UW-System, only Milwaukee and Madison have earned a chapter. The Eta Chapter, here at UWM, was installed in February 1974.

Kudos To Our Chapter Of Pi Sigma Alpha

Pi Sigma Alpha, Chapter Epsilon Xi, was extremely active this year, hosting several high-profile events that drew excellent crowds to UWM's campus, and participating in some excellent research experiences. The Chapter hosted a lecture by Isabelle Johansson from the United Nations on sex trafficking and sponsored a screening of the film "On the Basis of Sex" with a panel discussing following. Members also participated in meetings with Republican Senator Kelly Ayotte and Democratic Strategist Donna Brazile when they were on campus together to talk about women in leadership. And, Pi Sigma Alpha co-sponsored "The Future is Voting Tour," a nonpartisan, get out the vote campaign. The Chapter also hosted a couple of debates on campus between the College Republican and the College Democrats. (A civil discourse between differing views! Imagine that.) Finally, the Chapter sent members to the American Political Science Association meeting in Boston, the Midwest Political Science Association meeting in Chicago, and the Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Research Conference in D.C., where members presented their own independent research.



While our Department thinks the chapter is one of the best in the nation, we just received word that the National Pi Sigma Alpha organization thinks so too! As Executive Director Sean Twombly said, "I am thrilled to make this award [a Best Chapter Award for schools with undergraduate enrollment over 25,000 students] to the Epsilon Xi Chapter for the second time in five years. It is clear that [Advisor Kristin Trenhom], Daniel Hoeft as president, and the rest of the chapter officers and members worked hard to sustain an active and vibrant chapter." The award carries a cash prize that the chapter will undoubtedly use for more programming next year, as well as recognition in *PS: Political Science and Politics*.

We encourage all of those interested in Political Science to look into joining one of the BEST FIVE CHAPTERS of Pi Sigma Alpha in the nation! See <https://uwm.edu/political-science/undergraduate/pi-sigma-alpha/> for membership criteria.

Spotlight: POL SCI Readies For The Democratic National Convention

Faculty from Charlotte, North Carolina, the site of the 2020 Republican National Convention, traveled to UWM this spring to talk about a variety of research ideas they hope to partner with faculty on from across UWM as Milwaukee readies to host the Democratic National Convention. There will be many opportunities for graduate students and undergraduate students to get involved from volunteering to interning. Watch our webpage for more information.



UWM Faculty & Graduate Students in the News

As you might imagine, our faculty get called upon frequently to contribute their expertise to local and national media outlets. Did you catch these?

Distinguished Professor and Wilder Crane Professor Tom Holbrook spoke with Sinclair Media about Trump's presidential approval rating: <https://wjla.com/news/nation-world/new-poll-finds-trump-more-popular-than-ever-but-still-trailing-biden>.

PhD Candidate Yunus Orhan and Associate Professor Ora John Reuter contributed this article, on Turkey, to the *Washington Post's* Monkey Cage: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/07/18/turkeys-ruling-party-is-splintering-heres-why/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.1862125140cb.

Associate Professor Sara Benesh talked with Adam Liptak of the *New York Times* for his article on Chief Justice John Roberts: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/23/us/politics/chief-justice-john-roberts-supreme-court.html>. She also spoke with Henry Gass of the *Christian Science Monitor* on the Chief: <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Justice/2019/0326/Why-Chief-Justice-Roberts-is-moving-to-the-center-of-the-court>.

Distinguished Professor Kathleen Dolan spoke with FiveThirtyEight about voting for women: <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americans-say-they-would-vote-for-a-woman-but/>.

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