

Welcome Back to Campus!

Well, it is surely a great feeling to be able to say Welcome Back! We have, all of us, had a YEAR! I hope that's reason enough to explain the absence of a Summer Newsletter from us last year...Did you miss us?

While we were missing all of our connections, we were working hard educating our undergraduate and graduate students and working on our research. In this edition of our departmental newsletter, we highlight some of the great things still going on (albeit often virtually) in POL SCI @ UWM. Thanks for taking a look and please don't hesitate to reach out to me to say hello, ask for more information, or offer to participate in our alumni events!

Sara Benesh, Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Political Science



Team POL SCI @ UWM Walks/Runs Again

We are excited to put together a team for the Panther Prowl again this year to raise money for our students. Won't you join us? Find Team POL SCI @ UWM and we'll see you there!

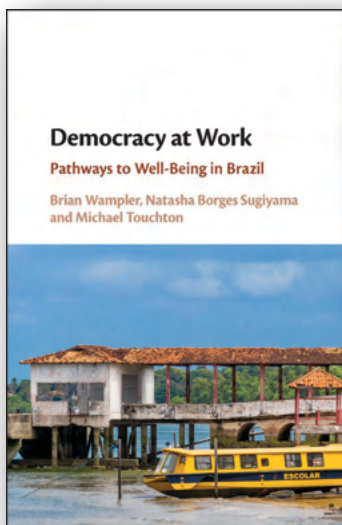
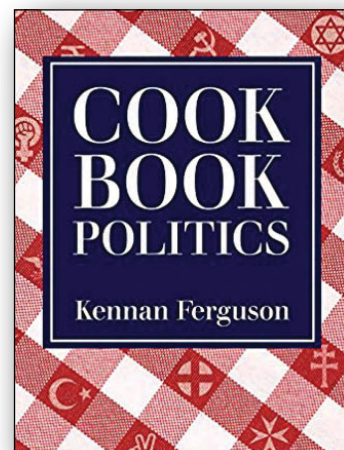
[Panther Prowl](#)



Book Corner

We are pleased to highlight two new books authored by UWM Political Scientists. Pick up your copies today!

Kennan Ferguson is author of [*Cookbook Politics*](#) (Penn Press, 2020) which explores questions around how cookbooks have or do politics. Of course, cookbooks are not political in conventional ways but they are indicators of human taste across space and over time, and in some ways they form and reflect who we are as a society. Here, Kennan explores the sensual and political implications of cookbooks, demonstrating how they create nations, establish ideologies, shape international relations, and structure communities. We're betting you won't look at your cookbooks in the same way after checking this book out!



Natasha Sugiyama is coauthor of [*Democracy at Work: Pathways to Well-Being in Brazil*](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2020 with Brian Wampler and Michael Touchton) which explores how democracy might enhance human development, moving beyond the conventional political science approach, which focuses on electoral competition and ideology and partisanship. Instead, in their book, they focus on participation beyond elections, studying how citizens engage toward promoting well-being and how crucial local governance is to improve the well-being of the people. They focus their attention on Brazil and engage in a mixed-methods study of the effect of participation, social programs, and government capacity on well-being (as measured by infant mortality, maternal mortality, poverty, and education). Spoiler Alert: When municipalities expand participatory institutions, adopt social programs, and build local state capacity, they make the lives of their citizens better! The critics call the book convincing and important, and we quite agree. Pick it up and read it for yourself!

DEPARTMENTAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

We are so grateful to have generous donors fund two important scholarships for our current students and one award for a UWM alumnus in law school at UW-Madison: the Michael C. LeMay Political Science Scholarship; the Wilder Crane Scholarship; and the Russell R. Bonfiglio Memorial Scholarship. This year, we congratulate three fantastic students, recognized for their excellence and supported through this generous scholarship money:

- Michael C. LeMay Scholarship (\$2000) to Sandra Ibraheem
- Wilder Crane Scholarship (\$1000) to Yunus Orhan
- Russell R. Bonfiglio Memorial Scholarship (\$1500) to Eleanor Borden (UW Law)

Thank you, LeMay and Bonfiglio families and friends and family of the late Wilder Crane for your support of UWM students and alumni! And congratulations to these worthy recipients!

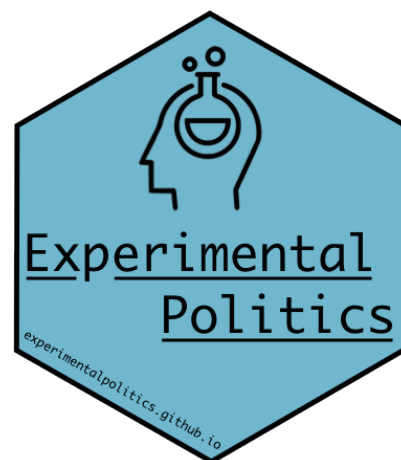
If you'd like to explore the possibility of adding a scholarship in your family's name, or would like to contribute to one of our existing scholarship funds, contact [Leslie Horn](#) in UWM's Development Office.

Spotlight: Grants and Programs

Experimental Politics Lab Publishes Paper, Wins Grant

[The Experimental Politics Lab](#) (our social science research group that uses experimental methods to address questions about political attitudes, beliefs, and behavior, run by Professor Patrick Kraft and open to all POL SCI graduate students) received news this summer that its project, "Reliable Sources," was accepted for publication at American Politics Research.

The study examines how the impact of misinformation corrections is moderated by media choice. In their experiment, participants are asked to read a news article published by Fox News or MSNBC, each highlighting the positive economic impact of legal immigration in the United States.



While the news content was held constant, the "treatment" changes whether participants are allowed to freely choose a media outlet or are randomly assigned to one or the other. The results demonstrate the importance of people's ability to choose: While factual misperceptions are easily corrected regardless of how people gained access to information, subsequent opinion change is conditional on people's prior willingness to seek out alternative sources. The paper concludes that encouraging people to broaden their media diet may be more effective to combat misinformation than disseminating fact-checks alone.

The project was led by Professor Patrick Kraft and included contributions by Dr. Nicholas Davis ('20 PhD), Taraleigh Davis (Third-Year PhD student), Dr. Amanda Heideman ('20 PhD), Jason Neumeyer ('20 MA), and Shin Young Park (ABD).

Earlier this year, Professor Kraft was awarded the Discovery and Innovation Grant (DIG) from UWM for his project "We Need To Talk: Correcting Misinformation Through Political Discussions." The DIG is a seed-funding program that supports high-quality, innovative research by investing in projects selected through an independent and objective process with a maximum award of \$125,000. This grant provides funding for two RAs (second-year PhD student Enes Ayasli and first-year PhD student Nasrin Chaleshtari), and will help the Lab expand its research on misinformation correction. Prior research suggests that political discussions among people holding diverging views can substantially reduce polarization. The lab, through a combination of unique observational and experimental studies, will explore the social transmission of corrective information, to see if that process works the same way. A four-wave survey and focus groups are planned for Spring 2022.

Spotlight: Graduate Program

Yunus Orhan (ABD) Wins APSA Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant



Yunus Orhan has won a prestigious Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant from the American Political Science Association (funded by the National Science Foundation). These are extremely selective grants (only 20 are awarded nationwide), and we're thrilled that Yunus' project, "The Road to Democratic Backsliding: How Affective Polarization Increases Support for Illiberal Politicians" was funded. Yunus will use the funds to work to understand why voters select "illiberal" politicians – politicians who take steps to maintain power (though they hold elections) and pay little attention to rights and freedoms of citizens. His theory is that voters do so not due to ideological polarization, but rather due to affective polarization. In other words, they do not vote for particular politicians

due to ideological congruence but rather due to extreme dislike and distrust of the "other" party. Greater affective opposition increases voters' willingness to vote for candidates from their own party, even when those candidates behave in ways that are undemocratic. To test these ideas, Yunus will employ experimental surveys of 1,500 respondents in Turkey. Complicated, fascinating, and timely, right? We're looking forward to what he finds!

Other Kudos

Jingnan Cho (ABD) has published three papers coming out of his forthcoming dissertation, entitled, "The Political Economy of Factionalism in Reform-Era China: Informal Institutions and the Regional Distribution of Non-Public Investment." You can find his full bio on our Department webpage, under "Hire a UWM PHD." We look forward to great things from Jingnan!

Taraleigh Davis (third-year PhD Student) has been awarded a Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship through the UWM Graduate School. The DGSF is a highly-competitive award that recognizes and supports the most academically excellent master's and doctoral students at UWM. Only around 15 such awards are given annually, across campus. Congratulations, Taraleigh!

Spotlight: Undergraduate Program

PI SIGMA ALPHA, Chapter Epsilon Xi

Pi Sigma Alpha, Chapter Epsilon Xi, took the challenges presented by the pandemic, and still crushed it! They participated virtually in UWM's Student Involvement Fair; they hosted the Diplomat in Residence online via Zoom; and they continued to stay in touch and in the community as best they could online. Before the pandemic, all of the officers were able to participate in the national Pi Sigma Alpha Student Research Conference in Washington DC. (In the accompanying photo, they're preparing for their presentations, with the help of Professor Sara Benesh.) The experience they had presenting their research and obtaining feedback on it was invaluable (and the visit to DC was really fun!). Overall, we are very proud of this Chapter, which recently won another Best Chapter for 2019-2020. (Fingers crossed for 2020-2021!) Congratulations to these great POL SCI undergraduates as well as their faculty mentor, Dr. Kristin Treholm.



Welcome to The Self-Care Club.

Healing, Restoration, and Self-Care for Students of Color at UWM

Urging Students of Color to Care...for Themselves

Professor Benesh, along with Professor Anika Wilson of the African and African Disapora Studies Department, created the Self-Care Club with funding from UWM's Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the UWM Office of Research. In response to a call for proposals, Professors Benesh and Wilson sat down to think about what would best serve our students of color. After talking to students about programming, lectures, book groups, etc, they learned that what students needed most was REST. Our students of color were tired – from the pressures of the pandemic, from the increase in attention to racial justice, from busy lives as students with outside obligations – and so the two set out to find a way to provide a space for self-care. Driven by the belief that one cannot do well in the world without first doing well for oneself, they created a series of self-care seminars. Beginning with specific relaxation and self-care techniques and continuing through expression via the written word and through visual arts, and finishing with hands in the dirt at a community garden, all assisted by The SCC Care Package, which provided materials, the two led a large group of eager students back to themselves. This Fall, the focus is on community, and the SCC will engage with an Afro-Latino Drum and Dance group, an American Indian Fire Circle, and UWM's Lyrical Sanctuary, a creative open-mic event. And there will be another Care Package too. [Find out more about the Club.](#)

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, and is excited to see their POL SCI professors mentioned in their acceptance statements.

Laurence Byrne	Connor Lynch	Emily VanHandel	Quinn Whitlow
Mariah Howard	Sophia Mobley	Alec Waln	

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 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.



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 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. And invite you to campus to participate in one of our new Careers in POL SCI Brown Bag events! Follow us on facebook and instagram too! (@UWMPolSci)

POL SCI @ UWM Faculty in the News



Professor Kathy Dolan on COVID rules and the UW System for [Wisconsin Public Radio](#).

Professor Paru Shah on defunding the police on [WUWM](#).

Professor John Reuter on political dissent in Russia on [CBC/Radio-Canada](#).

Professor Hong Min Park on polarization in Congress in [The Columbian](#).

Professor Sara Benesh on Democrats' Court-packing plan for [politifact.com](#).

Professor Natasha Sugiyama on child grants to women in Brazil for [theconversation.com](#).

Professor Shale Horowitz on the Biden Administration's foreign policy for [WUWM](#).



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