



## Message from the Department Chair Alumni Role Models

This spring the Department has welcomed multiple alumni who have returned to campus to share their experiences and insights with current UH students. Our visitors included **Mark Shephard**, now at Strathclyde University in Glasgow, who talked with undergraduates about opportunities for graduate study in the UK. **Iñaki Sagarzazu** gave a talk to graduate students about how to apply and interview for post-docs and jobs in British universities. In April, the Undergraduate Committee organized our first **Alumni Career Day** to give students a chance to meet UH graduates who have pursued interesting careers using their political science skills. **Terry Hallmark** talked about industry jobs in public affairs and risk analysis, **Colleen Barry** talked about using her teaching and research skills in human relations and market research, and **Alex Obregon** talked about how to turn an internship into a career in



**Political Science advisors Christina Williams and Sandra Gold-Singleton lead our 2016 alumni at the college convocation**

local government. We much appreciate these and other alumni who have taken the time to share their stories with our students, and look forward to welcoming more alumni back to campus in future semesters.

--Susan Scarrow  
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## CNN on campus – y Telemundo también

The Political Science faculty had a lively week in late February, when the University of Houston hosted a Republican debate before Texas primary elections. Two days before the debate CNN parked its studio close to the Student Center, alongside the debate co-sponsor Telemundo. Other national and international journalists turned their attention to Houston as well, with everyone eager to hear from the local experts. UH Political Science faculty members appeared in multiple live and taped interviews for national and international television networks, including CNN, CNN *en español*, Telemundo, MSNBC, ITV (in the UK), and al-Jazeera, and talked with newspaper and radio reporters from across the United States and Canada.

Professors also integrated the debates into activities aimed at students, including participating in a university-wide event putting the presidential elections in context, and



**Students watch while Assistant Professor Beth Simas and Professor Dick Murray give a live CNN interview in their outdoor studio in front of Cullen Performance Hall**

partnering with the Valenti School of Communications to conduct instant polling of UH students while they watched the debates on campus.

## Undergraduate News

### Alumni Spotlight

**Steven Hall** is Senior Vice President for Alumni Relations at Boston University, where he has worked since 2007. Before coming to Boston he was well known on our campus as CEO and president of the UH Houston Alumni Organization.

He writes about his experiences as a political science major: "Looking back, it's clear that the intellectual skills that I honed in my political science courses serve me on a daily basis. Institutions of higher education like BU or UH are large complex organizations with many stakeholders and my coursework gave me tools to understand organizational dynamics, politics, economics and cultures. What I do, like most industries, is very data driven and the ability to use data to make decisions about policies or practices is invaluable. These are all things I learned, but most importantly, UH, in general, and my political science studies, in particular, continued to develop my ability to understand complicated ideas, analyze them, and understand how those ideas shape organizations and society."

Political Science major **Charlotte Christian** recently represented the University of Houston at the **United States Naval Academy's 56th annual Foreign Affairs Conference**. (See picture to the right, with midshipmen from the Naval Academy.) The conference hosted students from over 60 universities and 40 countries, including delegates from military schools from around the world. The theme of this year's conference was "Women and Security: The Implications of Promoting Global Gender Equality". The theme was a great fit for Charlotte, who has already published research in this area.



Congratulations to **Joshua Freed**, whose essay won first place in a national essay contest sponsored by The Center for Political and Economic Thought at St. Vincent College. Joshua is a political science-economics double major. His essay addressed the relevance of George Washington's Farewell Address to contemporary American politics.

Political Science majors **Kelley Cloud, Ryan Graham, Emily Joslin, Sarah Kim, Sahar Sadoughi** and **Noah Young** were honored this spring by being elected to the inaugural class of the UH **Phi Beta Kappa** chapter. Phi Beta Kappa is a nationwide academic honor society. Membership is reserved for top academic achievers who have completed a broad liberal arts education, including foreign language study.

Congratulations to the following students who won competitive scholarships from the College of

Liberal Arts and Social Sciences in recognition of their strong academic skills and community leadership **Aristela Alderett, Rachel Clark, William Contreras, J Ehlinger, Jessica Espaillet, Ana Ibague, Daniela Munoz, Ayesha Muzaffar, Philip Reyneke, Courtney Taylor, Bradley Thompkins, and Cesar Valles**.

Two political science alumni currently studying at Duke University Law School have big plans for the summer. **Garrett Brodeur** has internships lined up, first at Jones Day law firm in Houston, and then at a Japanese law firm in Osaka, Japan. **Kory Kittel** will be clerking for the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Congratulations to Ana Ibigue who has been awarded a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship to conduct faculty-supervised research.

## Forum brings scholars to campus

2015-16 was the inaugural year for the Tocqueville Forum in American Ideas and Institutions, which received a \$50,000 grant from the Jack Miller Center. This spring, the Forum hosted a conference on the future of American political thought, gathering ten mid-career scholars from around the country. **Associate Professor Jeremy Bailey** and **Assistant Professor Alin Fumurescu** organized the conference and are leading the Tocqueville forum.

Throughout the year the Forum also hosted several talks aimed at students, with distinguished speakers discussing their research. Guests included Keith Whittington (Princeton), Steve Wirls (Rhodes), Authur Melzer (Michigan State), and Paul Carrese (US Air Force Academy), speaking on topics ranging from the philosophic foundations of American foreign policy to definitions of democracy during the early republic. Students also had opportunities to meet these scholars in more informal settings.

## Faculty News

**Prize winning research! Associate Professor Jennifer Clark** and graduate student **Luke Williams** were awarded the Pi Sigma Alpha paper prize for the 2015 Southwestern Social Science conference, for a paper titled "Leadership Power, Preference Homogeneity, and Legislative Party Conflict."

**Associate Professor Pablo Pinto** and Victoria Murillo won the Midwest Political Science Association's prize for best paper in International Relations at the 2015 conference, for their paper titled, "Heeding to the Losers from Trade. Evidence from Legislators' Trade Policy Preferences and Legislative Behavior"

**Professor Susan Scarrow** was awarded a UH John and Rebecca Moores Professorship, a university-level research chair. This 5-year award is given to full professors who have made outstanding contributions in the areas of research, teaching, and service.

In February **Associate Professor Pablo Pinto** and **Assistant Professor Patrick Shea** organized a 2-day conference on the Political Economy of Risk. Attendees included senior scholars from U.S. and British institutions who presented papers on the topic and participated in a public roundtable.

**Faculty on the move:** faculty members conducting research abroad this spring and summer include **Associate Professor Lydia Tiede** researching constitutional courts in Chile, **Assistant Professor Alin Fumurescu** conducting interviews on compromise in post-Communist Romania, and **Associate Professor Tanya Bagashka** researching constitutional courts in Bulgaria.

## Graduate Students

Congratulations to our students who have recently completed graduate degrees. **Andrea Eckelman, Bruce Hunt, Rodrigo Nunez, and Paula Pineda** were awarded doctorates. Andrea is starting a tenure-track job next fall at University of Montevallo (Alabama), and Bruce is starting a tenure-track job at Angelo State University (Texas). Congratulations also to **Zachary Greene, Eric Fay** and **Thair Abu-Rass**, who completed their master's degrees this spring. Zach will return to active military duty in the navy, Eric is starting doctoral studies in the fall at the University of Kentucky, and Thair will start doctoral studies at the University of Maryland.

Doctoral student **Margarita Ramirez** has been awarded a dissertation completion fellow for next year from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Doctoral student **Saadet Konak Unal** was inducted into the UH Phi Beta Delta - Honor Society for International Scholars. This organization recognizes scholarly achievement in international education and in promoting international understanding.



In early May students gathered in the halls of PGH for our second annual **Graduate Student Poster Session** (pictured above). Students spent two hours discussing their research with faculty and with fellow students, practicing explaining their research questions, and getting advice on ways to revise their projects for conference papers and journal submission. Students shared their research ideas, and gave each other tips on how to prepare for future conferences presentations and posters.

### Grad Alumni News

**Iñaki Sagarzazu** has been appointed as an assistant professor at Texas Tech University, where he will start in the fall semester.

**Richmond Nettey**, Associate Dean at Kent State University's College of Applied Engineering, Sustainability and Technology, has been promoted to full professor. He also was recently appointed to (TRB), National Academy of Science, to serve as a member of the Standing Committee on Airport Terminals and Ground Access on the Transportation Research Board, which is part of the National Academy of Science.

## Teaching the Craft of Teaching

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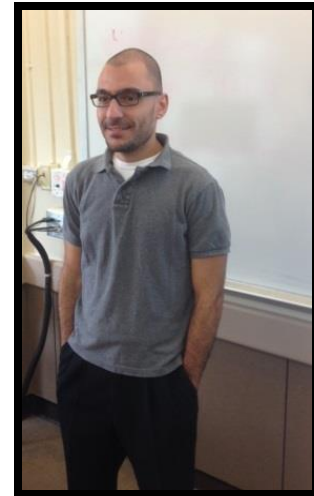
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In May 2016, with graduation over and the campus quiet, political science graduate students gathered in the classroom to discuss how to teach. This summer, the department piloted a two-week course for graduate students on the craft of teaching. Designed by Jerry Jackson (Director of Undergraduate Studies) and Jeffrey Church (Director of Graduate Studies), the course aimed to prepare advanced PhD students for teaching for the first time during the Summer sessions.

Professors Church and Jackson lectured on designing a course, writing a syllabus, framing good essay and test questions, and pedagogical tips for engaging students. At the same time, the course included a hands-on, workshop component. Around the seminar table, the graduate students presented their own syllabuses and essay questions, and gave 15-minute teaching demonstrations, which the group then discussed, identifying strengths and weaknesses and suggesting improvements. Most agonizingly for the students, Church and Jackson took a video recording of the teaching demonstrations, so the students could critique their own performances. "Most PhD programs do not train teachers, or at best hold information sessions that are disconnected from the



courses the students will teach," Professor Church said. "The idea behind our workshop is to give the students some concrete and individualized guidance just before they set foot in the classroom for the first time. Seven students took part in this workshop. One student, Leonardo Antenangeli (pictured), is teaching a course on Statistics for Political Science majors this summer. He said that he had been concerned about planning his course, and that the teaching workshop "provided a useful blueprint for designing a syllabus, deciding on appropriate course assignments and beyond."

**Many programs profiled in this newsletter have been made possible by donations from Department friends. We appreciate your continued support.**



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