



Letter from the Chair Engaging the Community: Issues & Debates

The educational mission of the university does not stop in the classroom. This fall semester Political Science helped to host several prominent guests who came to campus to discuss important topical issues with students and the wider community. October 24 was a particularly busy day for such activities.

In the evening, **Dr. Dan Carpenter** of Harvard University presented the College of Liberal Arts and Social Science annual McGovern Lecture on Health and Family Values. He shared his research on regulation and U.S. healthcare markets to an audience of students, alumni and colleagues from the Houston health policy community. The event was organized by Political Science faculty member **Dr. Ling Zhu** and Master of Public Administration director **Dr. James Thurmond**.



Pictured above: **Dr. Dan Carpenter** receives the McGovern medal from **Dean John Roberts** and **Dr. Susan Scarrow**.

That same day the University's new Center for International and Comparative Studies sponsored a visit by Iranian scholar and activist **Dr. Trita Parsi**. He shared insights on ongoing negotiations with Iran over nuclear developments and the lifting of economic sanctions. This visit was organized by Political Science professors **Dr. Jon Slapin** and **Dr. Cyrus Contractor**. Dr. Parsi spoke to students in the

afternoon at an event marking United Nations Day. His talk was later broadcast by a Houston radio station. In the evening Dr. Parsi spoke on campus at a student and community dinner for 200, co-sponsored by Houston's Muslim Professional Association.

We hope to see you at our upcoming community events!

--Susan Scarrow
sscarrow@uh.edu

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Welcome New Faculty

At the start of the fall semester we welcomed three new faculty members.

Assistant Professor Francisco Cantu (Ph.D. University of California, San Diego) studies electoral corruption and electoral integrity, with a particular interest in Latin American politics. His publications include "Identifying Electoral Irregularities in Mexican Local Elections," forthcoming in *American Journal of Political Science*.

Associate Professor Jason Casellas (Ph.D. Princeton University) joins us from the University of Texas at Austin. He specializes in American politics, with specific research and teaching interests in Latino politics, legislative politics, and state and local politics. He is the author of *Latino Representation in State Houses and Congress* (Cambridge University Press).

Assistant Professor Patrick Shea (Ph.D. Rutgers University) joins our revived and growing field of International Relations. His research focuses on the political economy of war, and crisis decision making. His publications include "Financing Victory: Credit, Democracy, and War Outcomes," forthcoming in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Undergraduates Excel

Alumni Spotlight: Edgar Colón

Edgar Colón is a proud holder of multiple UH degrees, including a B.A. in economics, an M.B.A. in Finance, a J.D., and a Ph.D in Political Science. He also holds an LL.M. in Banking Law from Boston University School of Law. Dr. Colón is an attorney in private practice whose work has included negotiating construction contracts for chemical projects in Latin America, and mergers and acquisitions agreements. In addition to his legal practice, since 2008 he has served as a Visiting Professor of Political Science at the University of Houston-Downtown.

Dr. Colón is an active participant in Houston civic life. He served on the Board of Directors of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce from 1994 until 2009. In 2008 he was appointed Chairman of the Board of the Harris County Sports and Convention Corporation, the body that operates such public facilities as Reliant Stadium (the home of the Houston Texans football team).

Dr. Colón's dissertation research focused on judicial systems in Latin America. He continues to conduct research and publish in this area.

Political Science and Sociology double major **Stephanie Brooks** (below) spent the fall semester in Lima, Peru, serving as a State Department intern at the U.S. Embassy. She was assigned to the Consular



Section, where she helped with their work on visas and providing services for U.S. citizens and businesses in Peru. Ms. Brooks found out about the internship from the State Department Diplomat-in-Residence who is based in the University of Houston Political Science Department. You can read more about her experiences in Peru, and about the Diplomat-in-Residence Program, on our [web page](#).

In Summer 2013 Political Science major **Cynthia Milian** conducted research on term limits and women's representation in U.S. state legislatures. Her research, sponsored by the UH Summer Undergraduate Research Project, was supervised by **Assistant Professor Jennifer Clark**. In October she was awarded first prize for the research poster based on this work which she presented

at the UH Undergraduate Research Day. This coming spring Ms. Milian will be working in Washington, D.C. as a Leland Congressional Fellow. Next year she hopes to continue her studies in law school.

This fall 46 UH students, including 35 political science majors, are participating in [Civic Houston Internships](#) all over the Houston metropolitan area. They are working in offices of state representatives, city councilors, and other elected officials, and for non-profit organizations such as the World Affairs Council and Neighborhood Centers. Students, who earn political science credit while engaged in these internships, write about their experiences and conduct independent projects. The Civic Internship Program, organized by the Hobby Center for Public Policy, helps prepare students for future work in public service.

School Year Kick Off at Reliant Stadium

In September graduate students and faculty celebrated the start of the school year by attending the UH-Rice University football game in Reliant Stadium. The outing was hosted by UH Political Science alumnus **Edgar Colón** (see story this page). The afternoon's entertainment concluded on a high note, with the UH team taking home the Bayou Bucket trophy.

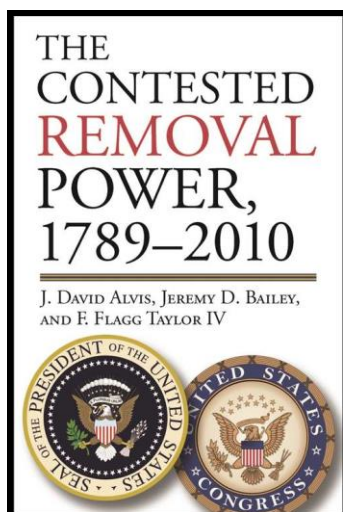
This fall our graduate program welcomed 13 new master's and doctoral students. The entering class includes students from 5 U.S. states and 4 foreign countries.



Dr. Edgar Colón, Associate Professor Jason Casellas, and Dean John Roberts cheer on the Cougars at the Bayou Bucket game in September

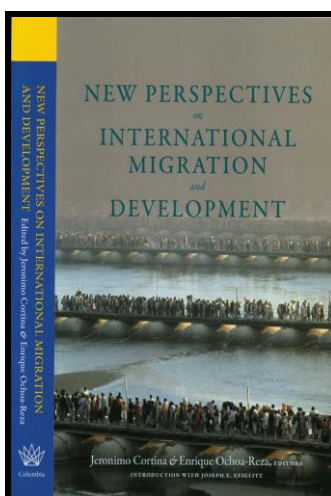
Faculty News

Associate Professor Jeremy Bailey has published *The Contested Removal Power, 1789–2010* (Kansas University Press, 2013). The book, co-written with J. David Alvis and F. Flagg Taylor IV, examines the history and constitutional theory of Senate efforts to remove presidents and presidential appointees.



Associate Professor Jeffrey Church was recently awarded the “best first book” prize by the Foundations of Political Theory section of the American Political Science Association. His book, *Infinite Autonomy: The Divided Individual in the Political Thought of G. W. F. Hegel and Friedrich Nietzsche*, was published by Penn State University Press in 2012. Committee members described the book as a “remarkably fresh and counter-intuitive take on these two German thinkers”.

Assistant Professor Jeronimo Cortina co-edited *New Perspectives on International Migration and Development* (Columbia University Press 2013), along with Enrique Ochoa-Reza. The book’s chapters investigate connections between migration and development, culture, family reunification, human rights, and government policy.



In Memoriam Professor Gholam Hossein Razi

We are sad to report that UH faculty member emeritus Dr. Hossein Razi died in October. Dr. Razi, who earned his doctorate at U.C. Berkeley, joined the University of Houston faculty in 1957. He came to UH Political Science just as it was developing as a free-standing department, and he helped it grow into a doctoral program. Dr. Razi taught for almost 50 years at the University of Houston, offering courses in Middle East politics, International Relations, and American foreign policy.

Graduate Students & Graduate Alumni

Students

In September doctoral student **Amy Accord** attended the “Political Parties Summer School” sponsored by the European Consortium for Political Research. The two week summer school, this year held in Lueneberg and Berlin, Germany, brings together advanced students from Europe and North America to present their research and to meet junior and senior scholars in their fields.

Elena Farah, who graduates with a doctorate in December, has been appointed Director for Public Financial Sustainability for the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. Her work for the foundation will build on her dissertation research on public pensions.

Alumni

In December 2012 **Dr. David Barker** became head of the Institute for Social Research at Sacramento State University. This institute specializes in applied social research, with a special focus on California politics.

Dr. Joe Howard, University of Central Arkansas, was recently appointed editor of *The Midsouth Political Science Review*.

Dr. Philip Michelbach, West Virginia University, is spending the year at Potsdam University, Germany, as a Fulbright Professor.

Earlier this year **Dr. Thanapan Laiprakobsup** presented a paper at the Association for Asian Studies Conference in San Diego, CA, titled “Testing the Myths of Thai Voters: A Case Study of Nan Province’s

Voters.” Dr. Laiprakobsup teaches at the National Institute of Development in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr. Marwa Shalaby is serving as the Director of Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program at Rice University’s Baker Institute. In early 2014 she will lead the Baker Institute’s international conference on Women and Human Rights in the Middle East.

Dept. of Political Science
University of Houston
PGH 447
Houston, TX 77204-3011

Phone
713-743-3890

Fax
713-743-3927

E-mail
PoliticalScience@uh.edu

[Political Science Web Page](#)

“Grad School Is Tough, but Worth It”

UH political science doctorate **Dr. Katherine Barillas** recently gave a talk to UH Social Work students about how her studies have influenced her work as an advocate for child welfare. Dr. Barillas is Director of Child Welfare Policy and Governmental Relations at *OneVoice Texas*. She spent the spring of 2013 working on child welfare issues during the Texas legislative session.

Here is a summary of her remarks:

“A doctoral program is one of the hardest and most rewarding things you will ever do. Sometimes you will see the light and sometimes you will feel like you are in a pit and will never get out. When the latter feeling engulfed me, I would imagine myself in the gallery of the Texas House or Senate chamber watching the passage of a piece of legislation that I had brought forward.

It would get me through those tough moments.

This past legislative session I got the opportunity to see that daydream become a reality as legislation I was a part of passed not only one chamber, but both and went on to be signed by Governor Perry to become law.

It is a long tough road, but if you have a passion and your Ph.D. is part of helping you realize it, then ultimately it will be worth every moment.”

Alumnus Appointed Ambassador

Congratulations to **Dr. Tuncay Babali**, who was appointed Turkish Ambassador to Canada at the end of 2012. Dr. Babali earned his doctorate in Political Science at the University of Houston while serving as the Vice Consul at the Turkish Consulate in Houston. His postings after

leaving Houston included appointments in the Turkish embassies in Washington, DC and in London, as well as a year spent as a Fellow at Harvard University’s Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. While serving as a diplomat Dr. Babali has written academic

articles on energy geopolitics. In 2006 he published updated research from his doctoral dissertation in a book titled, *Caspian Energy Diplomacy: Since the End of the Cold War* (Bilkent University Foreign Policy Institute, Ankara).



Thank you for your support!

The photo at left shows the new overhead projector that was installed this fall in the conference room that Political Science shares with the Sociology department. This projector and furniture bring much-needed updates to the room that hosts classes and frequent lectures by visiting scholars. These updates were made possible by much appreciated donations to the Political Science Gift fund.

Other gifts this year have helped to host lunches for undergraduates meeting with visiting speakers, and have helped graduate students attend conferences to present their research. In addition, contributions to our graduate scholarship fund had triple impact thanks to a 2-for-1 match (a match which is still in effect). Gifts such as these transform the lives of our students. Thank you for your generous support!

To support our students: visit the “[Donate](#)” section of our Department web page for more details, or go to the [College web site](#) to donate on-line.