



Message from the Department Chair Education for the Long Term

When caught up in the rhythms and deadlines of busy semesters, it's easy to lose sight of how these semesters add up. Yet at UH Political Science, as at all academic institutions, both students and faculty are the beneficiaries of our predecessors who had big visions and strong leadership. These include former faculty who established vigorous and nationally-recognized research agendas, past department chairs who lobbied to get our graduate degrees established, donors who gifted endowments, and alumni who have carried the name of UH into the wider world.

In March 2017 our Department celebrated this history at a 60th anniversary party for our MA degree. With over 50 grad alumni and faculty from many eras in attendance, this was a fun evening for reunions and reminiscing. The program included long-time faculty members **Joe Nogue** and **Richard Murray** talking about UH in the 1960s, and former department chairs **David Brady** and **Kent Tedin** sharing tales from the wild 1970s. They were joined by alumnus **Arnie Vedlitz**, the recipient of the Department's second doctoral degree, and **Sharon Tunstall**, the alumna who travelled furthest for this event.

Drs. Christopher Cookson, Hammons and McKee reunite at the Grad Alumni Party



To honor this anniversary, alumni and faculty have established a new Fund for Graduate Excellence to support UH POLS graduate students. You can read more about this on the last page. Creating such an endowment, like the education process in general, is all about long term impact. We know that the students we teach today will be tomorrow's great teachers and leaders. Happy Anniversary UH POLS, and onward to the next 60 years of high quality graduate education!

--Susan Scarrow
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UH Students at Air Force Academy Event



Three Political Science majors spent their spring break in Colorado attending the Air Force Academy's 58th Annual Assembly, an invitation-only conference for undergraduates from select schools from around the U.S. This year's conference focused on the timely topic of the cyber domain and issues for U.S. national security. During the week students participated in small group discussions and attended plenary sessions addressed by leading policymakers in the cyber-security area. Thanks to funds donated by alumni and friends, the UH Political Science Department was able to pay travel costs for these students. They are pictured here (from left to right): **Gaby Calderon** (Sophomore); **David Anthony Martinez** (Junior); **Mah-Noor Ahmed** (Senior).



Congratulations May Graduates!

Political Science graduated over 80 students in May, including at least 25 majors who graduated with honors of some type. As the graduating major with the highest GPA, **Ana Ibague** carried the processional banner at the college convocation (at left, with Department Chair Susan Scarrow). Father and son political science graduates **Kenneth Levin** and **Herschel Levin** received a standing ovation when they crossed the stage: at 86 years young, Kenneth Levin was the oldest UH graduate in May.

Some of these recent grads have more study in their immediate future. Students who will start doctorates in political science in the fall include **Maria Ferreira**

(University of Pittsburgh), **Joshua Freed** (UC-Berkeley), **Jay Ehlinger** (UNC Chapel Hill) and **Chloe Stowell** (Stanford). **Mah-Noor Ahmed** and **Benjamin Nelson** will both pursue an M.A in foreign policy at George Washington University. **Zachary Brown** will attend University of Virginia Law School. Many others are headed for law schools and grad programs around the country, some are heading off to teach, or to work in Austin and Washington.

Whatever your plans, we send congratulations and best wishes to all of our May graduates. Stay in touch!

Undergraduate News

SUMMER RESEARCHERS In June **Andre Ross** participated in the Bunche Institute at Duke University, a program for advanced political science majors sponsored by the American Political Science Association. Closer to home, majors **Margaret Lynch**, **Danielle Niangar** and **Justin Truong** received Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships to pursue independent research in political science under UH faculty mentorship.

TEACHING THE TEACHERS In May 7 advanced graduate students completed the Political Science Department's teaching readiness course. This two week program, designed and taught by Graduate Director **Jeff Church** and Undergraduate Director **Jerry Jackson**, is aimed at students preparing to teach their first "solo" undergraduate courses. It introduces them to tools for engaging students and to rules for classroom management, and it helps them polish syllabi for their upcoming classes.



PI SIGMA ALPHA: HONOR SOCIETY GOING STRONG In May the UH Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha (the national political science honor society) held its annual end-of-year banquet. As part of its festivities, it initiated 20 new members (above). Some of them graduated in May, while others will be returning next year to lead the chapter.

PEEK SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED **Justin Truong** and **Rodrigo Escobar** are this year's winners of the Peek Family Scholarship, the top CLASS scholarship for political science majors. This scholarship was established by M.A. alumnus **Howard Peek** and his wife, **Dr. Kathryn Peek**.

Faculty News

RESEARCH GRANTS Assistant Professor **Zach Zwald** has received a grant from the US Air Force Academy to support research on Risk Disposition and Strategic Stability. **Professor Brandon Rottinghaus** and **Associate Professor Jeronima Cortina** have received a grant from MIT to study vote centers and turnout.

PROMOTION Congratulations to Justin Kirkland, who has been approved for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

AWARDS Congratulations to **Assistant Professor Beth Simas** for winning the Provost's Core Teaching Award, in recognition of her contribution to improving student success in the required Core courses on American and Texas governments and constitutions. Beth's efforts have included developing and assessing the effectiveness of on-line sections.

NEW BOOK Professor **Susan Scarrow** has published a multi-author volume, *Organizing Political Parties: Participation, Representation, and Power*. This volume assesses the causes and consequences of party organizational differences, looking at experiences of 19 democracies and 122 parties. The book uses data from the newly-released Political Party Database.

TRANSLATION *Compromise: A Political and Intellectual History*, a book by **Assistant Professor Alin Fumurescu**, has been translated into Chinese. Below, an interview about the book in the *Beijing News Book Review*.



Graduate Students

CONFERENCES Our graduate students regularly present their research at national and international conferences; indeed, in 2016 and 2017 they presented 55 single- and co-authored papers. Thanks in part to alumni donations, most students received departmental funding for these trips.

PUBLICATIONS Conference presentations are a step towards publication, and students have been active here too. Their recently accepted or published articles include (with abbreviated titles): **Philip Waggoner**, "Assessing the Value of State Legislative Experience...in National Electoral Performance," *Social Science Quarterly*; and "Informal Politics: The Role of Congressional Letters in Legislative Careers," *Journal of Legislative Politics*; **Leonardo Antenangeli** and **Jonathan Solis**, "Corruption is Bad News for a Free Press," *Social Science Quarterly*; Associate Professor **Justin Kirkland**, **Leonardo Antenangeli**, and **Yeaji Kim**, "Measurement Error and Attenuation Bias in Exponential Random Graph Models," *Statistics, Politics, and Policy*; Assistant Professor **Elizabeth Simas** and **Marcia Bumgardner**, "Modern Sexism and the 2012 U.S. Presidential Election," *Politics & Gender*.

NEW JOBS FOR RECENT PhDs **Luai Allarakia** is joining the research staff of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, located in the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (Qatar). **Rodrigo Nunes** is working in The Hague (Netherlands) as a researcher for HiiL Innovation, a non-profit that works to improve justice systems around the world. **Luke Williams** is starting as an assistant professor at Misericordia College in Dallas, Pennsylvania.

FELLOWSHIP WINNERS Congratulations to graduate students **Jonathan Solis** and **Kenicia Wright**, who have been awarded the highly competitive dissertation completion scholarships from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences for the 2017-18 academic year. Jonathan's research investigates government-perpetrated attacks against the media, looking at experiences in Latin America. Kenicia's research focuses on the connections between minority female representation and social inequality in the United States. Kenicia is working as a TA this summer at the ICPSR summer school in Ann Arbor.

Alumni on Campus

This spring the Department invited alumni to return to UH to talk with students about how political science degrees can lead in to careers. In March, alumni **Sharon Tunstall** and **Arnie Vedlitz** participated in a career panel for graduate students focusing on options beyond the path of teaching. In April, alumni **Seth Howard**, **Carol Lewis**, **Nancy Liounis**, and **Jacob Torres** participated in a well-attended panel for undergraduates, where they answered questions about how to make the most of internships, how to network effectively, and ways to make the most of skills learned in courses.

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Doctoral Program Gains Recognition



In the recently published *US News & World Reports* 2018 rankings of US doctoral programs, the UH political science program moved from 68 (tie) to 51 (tie). This was one of the biggest jumps in the quadrennial rankings among the rated political science programs, and places our grad program among the top rated at UH.

We're pleased to see that others are discovering what we have known for a while: that UH offers high quality political science training and attracts good students. We have the added advantage of

our location in an internationally-connected metropolis that offers students unique research laboratories and relevant work opportunities.

Thanks to alumni, current students, and current and former faculty for your help in spreading the word about our top-notch programs. *Go Coogs!*

The Graduate Excellence Fund: *Helping Students Succeed*

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of UH Political Science graduate programs, a group of alumni and faculty took the first steps towards establishing a new Graduate Excellence Fund. Proceeds from this endowment will be used to enrich graduate education. Now, as always, graduate students do not have much extra money; we don't expect this to change in the future, which is why we are creating an endowment that can help students for years to come.

Payments from this Fund can make a big difference almost immediately: \$600 can help a student attend a conference to

present her research; \$1200 can help a student complete his dissertation by buying a question on a survey.

To establish this Fund as a permanent endowment, we need to raise \$25,000. We are about halfway there already! Can you help us make this goal?

We invite you to join alumni, students, faculty and friends of UH Political Science in establishing this lasting gift to future generations of UH students. The form below gives details on how to give.

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



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Graduate Excellence Fund Gift Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Amount of gift: \$100 \$250 Other _____

Please designate my gift to the Political Science:

- Graduate Excellence Fund (HE18178HA587)
- Political Science Annual Gift Fund (HC49553RN)

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