Hello Again,

It’s been a while, but I’m writing to welcome you to the latest edition of the Patterson Hall/PSS Gazette. In the time since our last issue, much important work has gone on in the PSS Department, and we are excited about the coming years. Here is an overview of what has been happening… you’ll find a lot more detail in the rest of this issue.

Faculty. Our faculty continue to celebrate important accomplishments and to do excellent work with our students.

Dr. James Rhoads has been approved for promotion to Full Professor.

Dr. Shannon Smithey received Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor last year.

Dr. Aleprete now in his third year, has done excellent work, particularly with our Model United Nations Team.

Our newest hire is Dr. Kristenne Robison in Sociology; you can read more about her in the subsequent pages.

Meanwhile, our faculty continue to do outstanding research in both their areas of specialty and in the scholarship of teaching, regularly presenting at conferences and publishing in important journals.

We have seen significant collaborative research in the Department — Smithey and Kitzerow, Smithey and Rhoads, Aleprete and Rhoads — and Dr. Kitzerow has done exciting work updating her dissertation research on the role of women in the legal profession.

Meanwhile, our faculty have continued their excellent teaching and mentoring of students, inside and outside of the classroom.

Under Dr. Aleprete’s leadership, our Model UN team has participated successfully in national and international conferences, and this year will be hosting its second Westminster High School Model UN Competition.

The Sociology faculty continue to work diligently to help students craft outstanding Capstone research projects. Tra-Linn Scott and Brittany King will present their research at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research.

Dr. Robison has been quite active in taking students to important events in the area, including a speech by Dr. Cornel West at Baldwin-Wallace College.

Dr. Rhoads supervised another successful and exciting Mock Presidential Nominating Convention in 2007-08.

In sum, the PSS faculty are as active, engaged, and productive as they have ever been, across the areas of research, teaching, mentoring, and advising.

At this point, I will leave you to the more detailed articles in the rest of the Newsletter. I should note, however, that President Dorman has begun a sustained project to fund and complete a renovation of dear old Patterson Hall.

We look forward to being able to report on the results of this exciting project, though that will likely be the job of a future Chair! In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the exciting news you will find in this issue.

Best,

Dr. Edward S. Cohen

Associate Professor of Political Science
Chair, Department of Political Science and Sociology
While many of our Sociology classes offer comparisons with other societies, two of my classes, both offered this semester, almost exclusively focus on other contemporary societies.

In SOC 105: Cultural Anthropology we spend much of the course examining the situations of contemporary indigenous people living in various degrees of assimilation with their non-indigenous neighbors. The course is cross-listed as a Film Studies course this semester and case studies include recent feature films on the Guarani of Paraguay (The Mission), the Maori of New Zealand (Whale Rider), the Aborigines of Australia (Rabbit Proof Fence) and the Spokane of the Washington/Idaho border region (Smoke Signals). The many similarities in how indigenous peoples have been viewed and treated around the world derive from their common experience of European colonization.

SOC/GS 215: Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective focuses on women’s institutional roles and social status in contemporary developing countries in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Topics such as child brides, female genital cutting and polygamy require us all to grapple with cultural relativism and where its limits should lie. Student term projects include service learning with local fair trade shops and planned educational programming for the campus on violence against women at the local, national and international levels. Another student run program will examine issues around adopting Chinese girls.

My recent scholarship includes collaboration with a sociologist at Penn State, Dr. JoAnn Chirico. She and I developed a 100-page workbook of annotated resources and class exercises for sociologists to use to integrate international material in their classes. The workbook is under consideration as a supplement to a globalization textbook that Dr. Chirico is writing. We also have conducted several workshops on this topic at sociology and social science conferences.

You may have noticed that I’m not around this year. Instead I’m carrying out research interviewing women lawyers in a major metropolitan area who finished law school by 1975.

The purpose of the study is to see what happened to these women in the 34 or more years since law school. Why did they go to law school in the first place, how successful have they been, how satisfied are they, when did they change positions and why, was this the right choice for them, how did they manage career-family issues, how many dropped out of law—these are the questions I started with. I ended up interviewing 65 women, usually for an hour or so. Now I’m reading (and listening to) all that information and trying to analyze it.

This has been a magical year for me to go back to the past. I’ve wondered about these women ever since I interviewed a number of them in 1975 for my dissertation research. They are some of the first of the many women who started going to law school in the 1970’s.

Now women make up half of the students in law school. When they graduate, they are recruited by prestigious firms and other desirable employers. Their predecessors now head law schools, work at high levels in major corporations and even sit on the Supreme Court. But the women who went to law school before 1970 were the pioneers. They were often the only women in their law school class. When they graduated, few positions were open to them.

Even those who graduated a few years later were still very much a minority and very visible. They often became the only woman in the firm or in the district attorney’s office or in the corporation.

It has been a major change for the profession of law to have this massive influx of women and I’m fascinated by the chance to see what has happened to that early group of women.

I will be leaving Westminster to teach at Washington and Jefferson this Fall. They have invited me to design and teach (in addition to several Sociology courses) an interdisciplinary course for incoming freshmen.

I’ve chosen the topic “Media Violence” and I look forward to discussing and deconstructing popular media messages (in film, tv, the internet, music and literature) and their influence on cultural norms and ideals.

In my “spare” time, you can find me this semester at the Byham Theater in Pittsburgh. My daughter Alex has a part in “Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” which runs until the end of March. She also scored the part of the orphan “Tessie” in Annie which opens at the Byham in May.
Rhoads Publishes

Dr. James Rhoads used his Spring 2009 sabbatical to continue his research into the interconnections between popular culture and American politics, as well as to finish work on an article with a colleague at Syracuse University on the 2008 Democratic Presidential nomination campaign. In this research, Rhoads used Q Methodology as his primary tool. Q Methodology, invented by the British physicist/psychologist William Stephenson in 1935, is a means by which one can scientifically study the subjectivity associated with any topic. Rhoads is past president of The International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, the leading group of Q methodologists.

In the last year, Rhoads has published three articles tied to his sabbatical work. The first, “‘Death of a President’: Understandings of a Political Film,” examined the subjective views of students in Rhoads’s Political Films class, after seeing the controversial film. “Death of a President” depicts the fictional assassination of President George W. Bush (while in office), and explores many political themes in post 9/11 America. Students rank-ordered a series of statements about the film, drawn from reflective essays, and the data were subjected to factor analysis. The resulting two factors demonstrated that some students saw the film through the prism of the Bush Administration’s handling of the war on terror, while another group of students concentrated on the film as a mystery thriller. The article was published in The Journal of Human Subjectivity.

The second article, also published in The Journal of Human Subjectivity, followed a suggestion by Stephenson to present film watchers with a set of photo stills from the movie just seen and have them rank-order the stills according to a condition of instruction, e.g., “most entertaining,” “most frightful,” etc. In this study, Rhoads had students view the film, “The Believer,” a forceful account of a young Jewish man who becomes a neo-Nazi skinhead. Students sorted the stills from “Most Interesting to Most Uninteresting,” and then again from “Most Disturbing to Most Undisturbing.” The data were analyzed separately using factor analysis, and two factors emerged in each condition. The second factor in both cases was defined by the same individual and depth interviews were conducted with the subject to better understand that view.

The third article, “2008 Democratic Campaign: Perceptions of the Obama-Clinton Nomination Struggle” was published by Operant Subjectivity. The article was co-authored by Rhoads and Professor Dennis F. Kinsey of Syracuse University. Rhoads and Kinsey presented statements from the popular press about the Obama-Clinton race to self-identified Democrats and asked them to rank-order the statements from “Most Agree to Most Disagree.” Rhoads discovered three factors in his study at Westminster College, while Kinsey found two factors at Syracuse University (statistically related to two of the Westminster factors). The third Westminster factor, which was labeled, “Wronged and Not Satisfied” was not discovered at Syracuse. “Wronged and Not Satisfied” were Democrats concerned that neither Obama nor Clinton could win the November election, and that the prolonged struggle between them was severely hurting the party’s chances.

Model UN Program Continues to Expand Activities

Dr. Michael Aleprete

The members of Westminster’s Model United Nations program have had a busy year. The program has added several new activities this year, including participating in its first international conference. The year began with the group preparing to return to the American Model UN Conference in Chicago. Westminster sent a delegation of 12 students, lead by head delegate, sophomore political science major, Kate Moga. Westminster represented Malawi at the four day conference which took place the weekend before Thanksgiving. Then, in January, a delegation of six students travelled to Montreal Canada to participate in a conference hosted by McGill University. Senior Ethan Frey, senior international politics major, served as head delegate for this delegation which represented Rwanda. McGill’s conference is known for its creative committees and crisis simulations. Kate Moga had the opportunity at McGill to participate, as a member of the Pakistan’s cabinet, in a crisis committee simulating the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. The Model UN group will be participating in its last off campus event on April 10th when they travel to Mercyhurst College for a one day scrimmage with area schools.

Also, this year, the College approved a one credit Model UN course PS 204. This course covers parliamentary procedures, the structure of the United Nations system, and contemporary global issues and is designed to help students prepare for Model UN competitions. PS 204 is offered every semester and students may take the one credit course up to four times. Credits earned in PS 204 count towards the Political Science and International Politics majors.

The final Model UN event of the year will take place on May 3rd, when Westminster hosts its second annual conference for area high school students. Approximately 200 high schools students will participate. Westminster Model UN President and senior International Politics major, Meredith Smith, will be the Secretary General for this year’s conference. Topics include piracy in the Horn of Africa, the treatment of aging war armaments, long term development for areas impacted by natural disasters and promoting better access to education for women.

Students from any major are welcome to join the Model UN @ Westminster student organization. If you are interested please contact the group’s faculty advisor, Dr. Michael Aleprete, Assistant Professor of Political Science: alepreme@westminster.edu
Welcome Ms. Dr. Kristenne Robison

It has been a whirlwind past few years for me including getting married, finishing my doctoral work at Syracuse University, moving, buying a house, dealing with medical issues of close family members, and getting my job at Westminster College. Needless to say I am so relieved to be settled into my two new communities of Niles, Ohio and Westminster College! Westminster is a great fit for me! It appears to me that Westminster is in a period of change where great things are on the horizon, I am excited to be a part of that change.

For those of you who don’t know much about me, I thought I would share a little about my teaching, research, and service interests. I was hired in the Department of Political Science & Sociology to teach in the criminal justice concentration so I will be teaching courses such as juvenile delinquency, deviance, and criminology. In addition, I teach in the sociology capstone series, and will be teaching a new course to Westminster, sociology of sport.

My dissertation “Gender at Work on the Force” investigates the ways gender shapes the work experiences of women police officers. This summer I will be presenting a paper emerging from my dissertation work at the Gender, Work, and Organization Conference at Keele University in Staffordshire England entitled “The Ethical, Political and Pragmatic Implications of Hiring Police-women to ‘Care’ in the Department.” I am also finishing an article with my colleague Tre Wentling entitled, “Suspicious Looking Women”: “The Contradictory Policies of the IOC.” This paper highlights the contradictions in IOC participation policies between intersex and transgender athletes while challenging the gender and biological sex binary.

I also consider myself an activist on a number of levels. On campus I am advising the Allies group, am a member of the diversity symposium planning committee, and am a volunteer for the Sexual Assault Awareness Task Force. Off campus I volunteer at the Sojourner House in Youngstown, Ohio which is a domestic violence service provider.

In my spare time I play any and every sport I can find. After watching the winter Olympics I am contemplating a future career in snowboarding and curling. I also love traveling with my husband, Ryan. We are contemplating trips to Australia and Korea to visit my cousins.

Students & Alumni Notes

Congratulations to DR. ROBISON (4-6-2010)

In the past two years, our students and recent alumni have also demonstrated great achievements.

A number of students were active in the 2008 Presidential Campaigns, including:

Ethan Frey, who took off a semester to work full time for the Obama campaign in Ohio.

Katelyn Moga, a sophomore Political Science major and Sociology minor, attended the PA Women’s New Leadership Institute and was an intern at the National Conference of State Legislatures.

We have supervised some excellent honors research projects.

On the alumni side:

Russell Mills ('05) is pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science at Kent State University. Last spring he was able to teach a section of American Government at Westminster while Dr. Rhoads was on sabbatical, and has recently been awarded a prestigious “Business of Government” scholarship (sponsored by IBM) to support his dissertation research.

Nawal Rajeh ('06) is pursuing a Master’s Degree in Peace Studies at George Mason University.

Colby King (PS ’07, Minor in Sociology) is continuing his studies at the University of South Carolina towards a Ph.D. in Sociology, with a focus on Urban Sociology.

Many graduates are pursuing careers in the law, including:

E. Richard Ogrodowski ('98), who was our Distinguished Alumni speaker in the Fall semester.

Mary Huebert ('05), who was a discussant for a talk by Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy at Pepperdine University in California.

Stephanie Boyle (Intercultural Studies '08) is enrolled in a Master’s Degree program in Cultural Sustainability at Goucher College.

Rebecca Marquette Blackwood (Sociology '02) recently completed her MSW degree in University of Pittsburgh’s program and is now a Licensed Social Worker. She is a clinician for an adult community treatment team at Western Psychiatric Institute in Pittsburgh. Rebecca was one of the speakers at the March 25 Sociology Career Night

Melissa Cooper (SOC/CJ ’02) works as a District Manager for Altegrity, a company that does background investigations and handles fraud and government contractors overseas.

Damon Neal (Sociology-Criminal Justice '09) works as a Juvenile Probation Officer for Beaver County Juvenile Services and has been accepted to the University of Pittsburgh’s Master of Social Work program.

On the more “practical” side, our recent alumni are pursuing a variety of paths:

Ryan Trunk (SOC/CJ ’07) recently completed his Master’s degree in Public Administration from John Jay School of Criminal Justice and will be working with the New York City Transit Authority in the Safety System Department.

Other recent alumni include an assistant producer at CNN, director of the US Secret Service webpage, director of public relations at a major international business lobbying group, co-hosting a morning political talk radio program in Las Vegas, and directing research in Asian politics and security at a Washington, DC think tank.

Of course, we wish we could take full credit for all of these accomplishments, and the many more we don’t have room to list, but at least we know that we are helping prepare our students for all variety of careers after graduation.
Professors Present Research

Dr. Michael Aleprete presented two papers at conferences this year.

The first was "Anticipating Conflict and Integration, the Strategic Development of Border Areas: Explaining Variation in Interaction Opportunity across Land Borders" presented at the 7th Annual Central and East European International Studies Association held at St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia, September 1-3, 2009.


Dr. Edward S. Cohen is continuing his research on the politics of private international law.

Last Spring, he presented papers at the International Studies Association Meetings in New York and the Socio-Legal Studies Association Meetings in Leicester, UK.

In the Fall, he attended a meeting of the US State Department’s Advisory Committee on Private International Law in Washington, and this February observed a meeting of the UN Commission on International Trade Law in New York.

In June, he will present a paper at a meeting of the European Consortium for Political Research at University College in Dublin, Ireland, and is currently working on an edited journal issue and book with Prof. Claire Cutter of the University of Victoria, BC, Canada.

Dr. Danielle Ficco presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society: "The Meanings of Welfare: Battered Women Tell All."

The paper is a piece of her research on battered women and the unique obstacles they face while negotiating the welfare system. The session that she participated in was called: “Comparative Perspectives on Poverty and Wages.”

Dr. Phyllis Kitzerow presented preliminary results of her sabbatical work in a session on Gender, Work and Organization at the 80th Annual Meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society which was held in Boston, MA March 18th-21, 2010. The title of Dr. Kitzerow’s presentation was “Career Choices and Outcomes: Women Who Entered the Legal Profession by 1975.”

As part of her work this year, Dr. Kitzerow has interviewed 65 women lawyers from a major metropolitan area. Her sabbatical work has been supported by both a Faculty Development Research Grant and the Watto Award.

Dr. Kristin Park was the Organizer and Presider and a Participant in a panel discussion called “Learning Through Service: Designing a Quality Experience for Students and Faculty” at the Eastern Sociological Society meetings from March 18-21 in Boston.

Her presentation was titled “Using Bloom and Kolb in Preschool Service Learning Classrooms.” She discussed how her Spring, 2009 “Social Inequality” students wrote journal entries about their service with Lawrence County Community Action Partnership’s early learning program. The students worked with different types of knowledge and different cognitive processes as elaborated in Bloom’s revised typology.

She also discussed how students moved through the various stages of Kolb’s experiential learning model by working with, for example, “concrete experience” as well as “reflective observation” and “abstract conceptualization.”

This scholarship comes out of Dr. Park’s Spring, 2008 sabbatical that focused on readings in and applications of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to her classes.

Dr. James Rhoads and Dr. Steven R. Brown of Kent State University presented, “The Quantization of Subjectivity” at the annual meeting of The International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, held in St. Louis in October 2009. The paper used an earlier approach by Rhoads to study the authoritarian personality using Q Methodology as a pretext to revisit the parallels between Q methodology and quantum theory.

The study uses, for illustrative purposes, a single (conventionally defined authoritarian) operating under a variety of conditions of instruction, sorting self-referent statements. As the abstract explains: “The results are characterized by uncertainty (as to the number of factors and the meanings attributed to statements), complementarity (of different factors, which represent states of mind), a strong force (that holds statements together in a certain order), and entanglement (of statement scores). Factors are also shown to have more resemblance to strings than to point objects as in scaling theory. Despite parallels, however, Q methodology does not depend on quantum theory as such, but is a natural outgrowth of the Spearman school of factor theory.”

Rhoads and Brown will present a revised version of this paper at the 2010 Scientific Meeting of The International Society of Political Psychology in San Francisco in July, as part of a panel devoted to Q Methodology.

Dr. Shannon Smithey traveled to Beijing and Wuhan University in Hubei Province in the summer of 2008. While there, she witnessed the first ever negotiated plea bargain in Hubei province.

That trip inspired research into legal rights and practices in China. She delivered a paper on this research, entitled: “Property Rights, Courts and Democracy in the People’s Republic” at the 2009 annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago. At that conference she also served as a discussant on the panel on Comparative and Transnational Law.
**Special points of interest:**

The program in political science is designed to provide the student with a knowledge of political theory, of the American political system, of the political systems of other areas of the world, and of international politics and institutions.

Sociology is the scientific study of human behavior as interpreted and experienced in groups. The department emphasizes multicultural perspectives and material to broaden the outlook of its majors. The aim of the major is a general introduction to the dominant sociological theories, substantive areas, and methods of inquiry, with students acquiring competency in important analytical and technical skills.

**AKD (Alpha Kappa Delta)**

Induction of new members to the Sociological Honorary Society was held on April 7, 2010.

AKD inductees of 2010 are:
- Emileigh Drylie
- Alan Baldwin
- Brett Glavey

Previous inductees include:
- 2009
  - Lindsey M. Guthrie
  - Stephanie A. Lyons
  - William W. McCaIlion
  - Nicole A. Zappa
  - 2008
    - Brian C. Leonhard
    - Devon M. Patton
    - Heather L. MacKenzie
    - Kathleen A. Teagarden

Congratulations to all for your achievements.