Welcome to the latest issue of the Political Science Department Newsletter. We have all had a productive an interesting year as we await the move back to a renovated Patterson Hall in time for Fall 2012 classes. We are all excited to move back to Patterson, which promises to be a showcase on campus.

As the pages of this newsletter show, both faculty and students in the Department have enjoyed a successful year. Our students have excelled in the classroom and beyond, and have made lasting contributions to two of the Department’s signature activities – the Mock Convention and Model United Nations, while our faculty have continued to show dedication to their classes and to their respective research agendas. The Department places special pride in the scholarly activity of our faculty, and our faculty are regularly presenting and publishing their work.

While I have enjoyed my brief time as Chair this semester, I will be especially glad to welcome Dr. Cohen back from his sabbatical in the Fall, so that he can resume these duties with which he is more familiar.

I hope everyone enjoys hearing about the recent activities of the Department and that you enjoy a safe and productive summer.

Cheers,
Dr. James C. Rhoads
(Acting) Chair, Political Science Department
Westminster College

Rhoads earns 2012 Henderson Lectureship

Dr. James C. Rhoads, Professor of Political Science, was recently selected to deliver the Henderson Lecture in October 2012. The Henderson Lectureship was established over 25 years ago by Dr. Joseph Henderson, a former Westminster Professor of Education. Dr. Henderson wanted to provide an opportunity for Westminster faculty to share their research with the entire campus.

Rhoads is currently conducting depth-interviews with partisans of various political stripes to try and better understand the political socialization process. Q Methodology will be employed as a means to probe the subjectivity associated with the development of these political attitudes. The aim of this research is to first show that single-cases can be studied systematically, with measurement procedures, and secondly, to demonstrate the inter-relationships of thoughts and attitudes to political behavior.

In addition to the Henderson Award, Rhoads received a Research Award from the College to help carry out this research.
Hello Again,

This semester, I am enjoying my first sabbatical since 2002. (Dr. Rhoads is kindly serving as Chair of the – now separated (again!) – Department of Political Science in my absence.) The main goal of this sabbatical is to begin to pull together pieces of my ongoing research into the politics of private international law, with the ultimate goal of beginning the writing of a book on the topic. This has meant many hours at the computer, but it is beginning to produce some results. By the end of March, I have accomplished the following:

- Revised and submitted a paper for the Finnish Yearbook of International Law. I’m not sure if this will be accepted, but it was a good start – I got some lingering work completed, and it enabled me to focus again on the research project.

- Wrote a proposal for my book – tentatively titled “Law and Power in Global Capitalism: The Politics of Private Law” – and submitted it to a number of publishers for consideration. I am in the process of receiving feedback at this point... most publishers will not make a commitment until they see the final manuscript, but I have had one very encouraging conversation with an editor at a prestigious university press. Writing the proposal – which added up to about twenty pages – was quite challenging, and forced me to make some important decisions regarding the direction of the research. I’ve published one book already, but this is going to be a more demanding project.

- Wrote and submitted a paper for the International Studies Association conference in San Diego, CA, April 1-4, 2012. (I will already have presented the paper by the time you read this.) The panel of which the paper is a part is one step in the development of a larger international research project of which I am a co-organizer...more below.

So, where does that leave me? Well, let’s get back to that research project...

- On June 7-8, 2012, I am co-organizing an international conference/workshop at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Onati, Spain. Dr. Claire Cutler, of the University of Victoria, Canada, and I are using this conference to bring together 17 participants in a research project to study the role of law in contemporary capitalism, tentatively titled “Law, Contestation, and Power in the Global Political Economy.” The conference includes scholars (Political Scientists, Sociologists, and Legal Scholars) from the US, Canada, UK, Spain, Germany, India, Australia, and Argentina to study these questions, and our work will result in some combination of a book of essays, a journal issue, and individual published papers. (My book project obviously fits into this category as well.) Organizing this conference has been time consuming, but (as my colleagues remind me) I can’t complain as the work is exciting and I get to visit the Basque country of Spain for the conference.

Otherwise, I will be spending the rest of the sabbatical writing the book manuscript. That will keep me busy!

- One final thing, if it counts... Prof. Cutler has invited me to give a paper for a conference at the University of Victoria in early September. It is part of another research project on the role of law in the contemporary economy, and I’ll need to write that paper as well over the summer.

All of this work will reinvigorate my teaching over the coming semesters. The sabbatical is providing the necessary space to really focus on and pull together my thinking and writing over the past decade, and I am confident there will be much to show for it. (I just hope Drs. Rhoads, Smithey, and Aleprete don’t create too much chaos in my absence.) Hope to see some of you in the newly remodeled Patterson Hall next year!

The Political Science Department congratulates all the Political Science and International Politics students who presented at this year’s Undergraduate Research and Arts Celebration!

Miltiadas Constantine, “Public Relations and the Media—A Double Edged Sword: How Media Power was used to Affect the Outcome of the Yugoslav Civil War”

Katelyn Moga, “Uncovering the Educational Experiences of Incarcerated Women”

Rebecca Ray, “Peruvian Cocaine Politics”

Robert Vavrinak, “Use of Self-Involving Statements in Correctional and Non-Correctional Settings”

Model UN@ Westminster and PS 204 students, “American Model United National International Conference”
Aleprete’s Research Notes

In addition to all the things that have been going on with Model UN and in my classes, I have managed to do a bit of research this year.

Most significantly, I was able to publish an article on the development of transportation networks along land borders. A project I have been working on with Aaron Hoffman, colleague from Purdue University. Some of the data used to check the results in the paper was collected by Steven Fawcett, a recent political science graduate. Thanks to Steve for all his help. Steve has continued to collect additional data that will be used by Dr. Hoffman and I as we continue to work in this area. But if there are other students interested in political geography or international relations who might want to get involved stop by and see me!

The citation for my recent article appears below:


I am also working to assemble and edited volume about the persistence of authoritarian regimes in the Former Soviet Union. This project, which I am working on with a colleague from Wheaton College, Rachel Vanderhill, explores the international influences which help sustain authoritarianism in the region.

Finally, Dr. Rhoads and I continue to remain engaged with our colleagues in the political science department at Western Galilee College. We are putting together a study comparing the attitudes of political elites in the United States and Israel. This project came out of the recent Bridges Conference hosted here at Westminster last September as part of the relationship between Westminster College and Western Galilee College. I am also helping two international politics majors, Kelcey Baily and Teresa Whetstone, with some comparative public opinion research they are conducting. Through the partnership with Western Galilee, Kelcey and Teresa hope to be able to gather data in both the United States and Israel.

Finally, I won this year’s CIEE faculty travel award, so I will be heading off to Italy in June looking for good material for my fall syllabus. I’ll be offering PS 232: Comparative European Governments and Politics. Given that the CIEE seminar topic is on global and local food production and regulations in Italy, those of you signed up for PS232 next fall can expect to see something about these issues on the syllabus.

With all this going on, I am expecting to have a busy summer!

The Clinton Global Initiative

Katelyn M. Moga ’12

This past fall, I embarked on a project at Cambridge Springs Correctional Facility in which I helped teach a Sociology 101 Course to 25 female inmates. My experience was incredibly beneficial not only to the women taking the course, but also to myself. The experience taught lessons about the importance of diversity and service that I could have never learned on campus. Essentially, this research opportunity was able to show me the direct positive effects that social research can have on a person and on a community. I wanted a way to continue this project so that more women would have the opportunity to get an education and other students could have an experience like mine. To help achieve this end, I applied to the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGI U). CGI U challenges college students to address global issues with practical, innovative solutions. CGI U members do more than simply discuss problems – they take concrete steps to solve them by building relationships, creating action plans, participating in hands-on workshops, and following up with CGI U as they complete their projects.

My commitment to action is to create a sustainable partnership program with Westminster College and Cambridge Springs Correctional Facility. Through this partnership, students and faculty help offer the education opportunities that the women at Cambridge Springs are denied in prison. Through introduction level college courses with a general focus on the idea of more education creating a greater chance for success in the world once released, the women and students themselves will learn the importance of civic engagement. The educational opportunities will range from full classes rewarded with college credit, monthly book discussions and reading groups, career finding training and language tutoring.

On March 31st-April 1st I attended the CGI U 2012 Conference in Washington, DC with students from 300 different colleges from 30 different countries and all 50 states. The helpful information that I learned from the conference along with the support of CGI U, I am confident that I will see my initiative become a reality at Westminster.
On April 30, 2012, Westminster College was pleased to induct 7 new members into its chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honorary for Political Science. This year’s inductees are

- Christopher Hilbeck
- Rachel Sherman,
- Gregory Zivkovich
- Kelcey Bailey
- Caitlyn Falatko
- Jeremy Hoover
- Cody Trudeau

This year’s induction featured a speech by distinguished Westminster Political Science alumnus Russ Mills (currently with the Federal Aviation Administration) who spoke on the subject "Accountability in the Era of Governance Networks: Lessons from Emergency Management following Hurricane Katrina." The presentation is based on a recently published article by Dr. Mills, and two co-authors, which won the prestigious Marshall Dimock Award for the best article in the field of public administration in 2011.

**RUSSELL MILLS, Ph.D.,**
*Federal Aviation Administration*
*2005 Westminster College Graduate*

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**Rhoads to serve as host for international conference**

Dr. Rhoads will serve as conference host when the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity holds their annual meeting in September, 2012. The four-day event will be held at the Sheraton Station Square in downtown Pittsburgh and will attract roughly 150 scholars from all parts of the globe. Papers will be presented and panels and workshops held that highlight the use of Q Methodology in the work of these researchers. Dr. Job van Exel from Erasmus University in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, will serve as Program Chair for the Conference. In 2013 the Society will meet again in Amsterdam.
This spring has been a busy semester for Model UN. After winning four awards at the American Model United Nations conference in Chicago last November, we sent a group of our most experienced delegates to the Harvard National Model United Nations Conference in Boston, Massachusetts. This four day conference was held at the Park Plaza Hotel in the back bay area of Boston, over 3,500 students from all over the world competed at the Harvard Conference making it one of the largest Model UN events in the world. Westminster send a delegation of twelve students including political science majors, Katelyn Moga, Alex Scull, Jared Palonis, Jeremy Hoover, Nicole Tesla, Scott Francis, James Beaudry Mitti Constintine, and Brandon Shallenberger and International Politics majors, Rebecca Ray and Shane Swigart. Westminster represented the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRM) at the conference with Rebecca Ray serving as head delegate.

In addition to competing at Harvard’s model UN, Westminster hosted its first collegiate competition. Students from seven area colleges and Universities came to the McKelvey center on Saturday March 31st for a Mid Atlantic Consortium Model UN scrimmage, hosted by Model UN @ Westminster. It was the first MACMUN event to be held on campus. Two committees were simulated: the United Nations Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC, and a G-20 Summit. As hosts, Westminster’s model UN team served as the committee staff. Senior political science major, James Beaudry chaired the G-20 summit and senior international politics major Shane Swigart, chaired the ECOSOC committee. The topic for the event, was the Establishment of Global Labor Standards and the Incorporation of Labor Standards into the Governance of the World Economy. Westminster students representing the United States won awards in each committee. Senior, political science major Jared Palonis, won a superior delegate award in the G-20 Summit and junior political science major, Jeremy Hoover, won an outstanding delegate award in the ECOSOC.

The Model UN’s last event, it 4th annual high school conference will take place on Monday, April 23rd. This conference continues to grow, and this year’s registrations have once again set a record. For the first time more than 300 area high school are registered to attend. The conference will simulate four United Nations committees as well as a historical event. This year the historical simulation will be of the 1945 San Francisco conference. It was at this conference that the Charter was signed by the original 50 members of the United Nations. Senior political science major and President of Model UN @ Westminster, Katelyn Moga will once again serve as Secretary General of the Westminster High School Model UN. This will be Katelyn’s second and final year as Secretary General. More than 20 Westminster students will participate as staff members. The high school Model UN is supported by funding from SGA, the Political Science Department, the Drinko Center for Experiential Learning and Global Solutions Education Fund- Pittsburgh.

Model UN is open to any Westminster Student, regardless of major. Interested students should contact Dr. Michael E. Aleprete, Assistant Professor of Political Science. The Model UN @ Westminster student organization is active throughout the academic year, and is in-

Left to Right: Jared Palonis, Katie Moga, Alex Scull and Dr. Michael Aleprete
Rhoads Presents Research and has article accepted for publication

In September 2011, Dr. Rhoads presented a paper, along with Dr. Dan B. Thomas, Professor of Political Science at Wartburg College (IA), at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, at the University of Birmingham in the UK. The paper, “Exploring the ‘Inner Game’ of Video Game Enthusiasts”, examines the meaning that gamers give to their experiences while playing. Dr. Thomas & I decided to engage in this research as we know this activity occupies a good deal of time for our students.

In fact, according to recent estimates, human beings across the planet currently devote some three billion hours a week to playing what have been collectively termed “video games.” Commercially, there can be little doubt that the manufacture and sale of these games has enjoyed phenomenal success, sustained by rapidly expanding cohorts of young consumers in every corner of the world ready and willing to shell out the sixty-plus dollars for the latest game or the hundreds for the latest game-playing hardware. Accompanying the vast expansion in the scale of the video games industry and the youthful customer base that supports it, not surprisingly, is a host of commentary — much, but not all, of it skeptical — about the pro-social or potentially educational effects of protracted involvement with the vast array of variations within the video gaming universe. Given the dearth of research exploring the meaning to gamers themselves of their gaming experiences, much of the literature on gaming as a whole has taken on a “dialogue of the deaf” cast, with pro-gaming advocates, convinced of the positive derivatives of gaming, advancing enthusiastic claims while the critics, worried by the massive opportunity costs incurred by a generation less interested in reading or drawn to the self-enhancing forms of play that call upon and are catalyzed by one’s own imagination. In this research, we sample from the often polemical concourse on video-gaming and its personal and social effects and discover four distinct versions of the “inner game” of gaming as experienced by college students who designate themselves as “serious gamers.” All four factors demonstrate consonance with play theory as outlined by Huizinga and amended by Stephenson.

A revised version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Far West Popular Culture Conference held in Las Vegas in February 2012. The article was recently accepted for publication by Operant Subjectivity: The International Journal of Q Methodology, and will appear in the journal in a forthcoming issue.

Side Note from Smithey

Dr. Shannon Smithey

Dr. Shannon Smithey is currently working on several research projects that involve the intersection of law and politics. Emerging from some of the work done during her sabbatical in the fall of 2010, and her African Politics class in the spring of 2011, Dr. Smithey has begun exploring the impact of crime and public perceptions of trial courts on support for democracy in Africa. In April, she presented a paper at Faculty Forum and at the Midwest Political Science Association convention in Chicago, entitled “Crime and Public Support for Democracy in Latin America and Africa,” which she wrote with Prof. Mary Fran T. Malone of the Univ. of New Hampshire. Additionally, Dr. Smithey is working with Dr. Kristenne Robison of the Sociology Dept. to establish patterns of success and failure among individuals on probation with a local probation office. She is travelling to Israel with the Westminster delegation to Western Galilee to develop a comparative project on US and Israeli probation practices in June. And, she continued her practical political work by winning re-election to the school board for the Northgate Independent School District in Allegheny County in November, 2011.
Mock Convention 2011

The 19th Mock Convention was held this past November, continuing a Westminster College tradition begun in 1936. Over 800 students registered for the two-day event that was kicked off by the Keynote Address given by two-time U.S. Senate candidate Christine O'Donnell. The Mock Convention was planned by a group of Westminster students led by Executive Chair Jared Palonis.

Students debated four issues at the Convention: the national debt, the budget, same-sex marriage, and the war in Afghanistan. Four campaigns were represented on campus: Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann (Katie Moga); Congressman Ron Paul (Tony Tammaro); Governor Rick Perry (Alex Scull); and Governor Mitt Romney (Tyler Dever). Delegates at the Convention ended up selecting a Romney-Bachmann ticket on the third ballot.

Dr. James C. Rhoads, faculty advisor to the Mock Convention, remarked, "I am extremely proud of the work that our students put into the Convention and I think the end result was a great learning opportunity for the campus."

Students who served on the Executive Committee were: Jim Beaudry, Miltiadis Constantine, Todd Corey, Nick Delessio, Tyler Dever, Steve Fawcett, Morgan Hanes, Ryan Johnston, Troy LaCorte, Katie Moga, Jared Palonis, Emily Saulsberry, Alex Scull, Rachel Sherman, Becca Stitt, Tony Tammaro, Cody Trudeau, Robert Vavrinak, Rachael Webster, Teresa Whetstone, and Ally Womack.

The Westminster Mock Convention is the third-oldest in the nation, and is a great opportunity for students to learn more about our democratic process. The next convention will be held in the 2015-16 academic year.
We Are Moving Back!

The Renovation of Patterson Hall is complete and we will be moving back after Commencement, May 2012. Please come and see us up on the 3rd floor!

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