

## Professors Sound Off

**Attorney General Eric Holder recently announced that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four other 9/11 terror suspects will face a military trial at Guantanamo Bay due to Congress placing restrictions on the Justice Department's ability to bring the men to New York for civilian trials. Would just be better served in a civilian trial? Why or why not?**

Past experience has shown that convictions are more likely in civilian trials than military tribunals for defendants charged with terrorism related crimes. If all of these defendants actually committed the crimes of which they were accused, then justice does seem to be better served with civilian trials. As it turns out, and not surprisingly, the likelihood of conviction does not seem to have been the driving force behind the decision to try these individuals in a military tribunal.

–Prof. Oxley

It is shameful that the US will not try the terror suspects in civilian courts. This is a state based on the rule of law, not a military regime. Civilian courts would bring greater legitimacy to the proceedings and Americans would be able to hear the evidence. This means a greater justice would be served.

–Prof. Hislope

I do think that justice would be better served in a civilian trial. In the universe of legal cases, trying some defendants in military tribunals and others in civilian courts is unfair. I think it is unfair and contrary to justice, because the decision regarding which venue and process is appropriate is

based on in part upon conjecture about the nature of the crime – but the nature of a defendant's role in that crimes has not been "proven" yet, hence the need to a trial! Indeed, Congress's resistance to trying these suspects in a civilian court is shaped by a presumption of guilt. That's not merely resistance to a civilian trial – it's resistance to a trial of any kind. That motivation is not just, and will not promote justice.

–Prof. Xydias

**Recently there has been debate as to whether or not to arm Libya's rebels. Would this action have a positive or negative effect on both the conflict in Libya and the people of Libya and why?**

The mainstream media has not educated the American public enough on the Libyan conflict. We are led to believe that the conflict can be reduced to Qaddafi against "the rebels." But little consistent information is provided concerning who the rebels are, besides their shared hatred of Qaddafi. We have to be prepared for the possibility that the bloodshed and brutal in a post-Qaddafi world will surpass what we have witnessed thus far, and haphazardly providing arms to "rebels" simply on account of being rebels is not a good idea. We have to hope that there are well-informed area experts with a voice in guiding policies like these. I'm afraid, however, that our government does not have a good track record.

–Prof. Dallas

### Annual Pi Sigma Alpha Dinner

Stockade Inn  
May 19, 2011

5:30 Cash Bar  
6:30 Dinner

Stay tuned. Formal invitations will be issued soon!

## Letter from the Department Chair

I always look forward to spring term, and not only because it signals the end of the long winter. It is also the time of year when we celebrate many important accomplishments. We profile two in this newsletter: selection into Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society, and selection into Phi Beta Kappa. If you see any of the students elected to one or both of these please pass on your congratulations for this significant academic accomplishment! The newsletter also contains a list of upcoming events, updates from PS faculty and important details about Fall Term courses. Finally, this is the last of my newsletter chair's messages, as my term as department chair is ending. Professor Cliff Brown will be stepping into this role over the summer. —Prof. Oxley

**Congratulations** to the Political Science students who were recently elected into Phi Beta Kappa!

### Seniors

Alexander Brockwehl  
Andrew Churchill  
Saghar Hamidzade  
Sky Kochenour  
Kathryn Leary  
Nicholas Poli

### Junior

Kelsey Mulvihill

And congratulations to Caroline Tulp who was elected to Phi Beta Kappa last year!

## Faculty Updates

### **Prof. Phil Nicholas**

Professor Nicholas is working on a journal-length manuscript with Andrew Churchill (Class of 2011), and they hope to submit it to a journal soon. The tentative title is "The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the States, and the Origins of Modern Drug Enforcement, 1950-1962." This article examines how

local and state governments came to adopt tough drug laws and build stronger bureaucracies. ([nicholap@union.edu](mailto:nicholap@union.edu))

### **Prof. Mark Dallas**

This term, I chaired and acted as discussant for a panel at the Association for Asian Studies Conference in Hawaii, where I also presented a paper. I also completed a chapter in an edited volume entitled "Industrial Dynamics in China and India: Firms, Clusters and Different Growth Paths." Finally, towards the end of last term, I attended a conference hosted by the Council on Undergraduate Research, called CUR Dialogues 2011, in which government funding agencies met with faculty and administrators across the country to discuss opportunities for funding faculty-undergraduate research projects. I'll be teaching "Wealth and Power among Nations" once again in the fall. Have a nice summer! ([dallasm@union.edu](mailto:dallasm@union.edu))

### **Prof. Lori Marso**

In the first week of spring term, I presented an article called "Simone de Beauvoir and Hannah Arendt: Judgments in Dark Times" at the Bard College Hannah Arendt Center for Ethical and Political Thinking. This is an article I've been working on for awhile comparing Arendt's famous writing on Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem in 1961 to Beauvoir's writing on Robert Brasillach's trial in France in early 1945. These are fascinating cases about how to deal with war criminals and what is at stake in holding them responsible for their unique crimes. This article is also part of a book I'm writing on Simone de Beauvoir's political thought called *Simone de Beauvoir: Politics in Situation*. I also just signed a contract to write a very different kind of book, which is a sort of dictionary of important feminist thinkers. This book called *Fifty Key Feminist Thinkers* is part of a series published by Routledge Press, for students, scholars, and even the public, that informs about major ideas and thinkers. Though

many books have already been published in this series (*Fifty Major Political Thinkers*, *Fifty Key Thinkers on the Holocaust and Genocide*—you get the idea), there has not been one published on feminism or feminist thinkers. The big challenge for me in writing this book is that I have to limit myself to only 2000 words on each thinker! Finally, I'm excited to report that I'm participating in a faculty development seminar this June where I get to travel to Salvador da Bahia, Brazil for two weeks. The seminar is called "Salvador Da Bahia: Identity, Race and Culture in the Afro-Brazilian Heartland" and I'm looking forward to learning so much from this experience. Sadly, it means that I won't be able to attend graduation, but I'll be thinking of all our seniors and wishing you all the best. ([marsol@union.edu](mailto:marsol@union.edu))

***Prof. Christina Xydias***

In my research this spring I'm focusing on revising a manuscript for submission to a journal, as well as embarking on some data-gathering for a new project that I'm co-authoring with a political scientist at Notre Dame, Shannon Drysdale-Walsh. For this project ("The Limits of Intersectional Representation"), we're examining how particularly marginalized women gain access to political decision making. We're comparing the strength of women's organizations in Guatemala and Germany in order to make claims that are generalizable to a wide range of political contexts. In addition to these projects, over the summer I will be working with Calder Phillips-Grafflin (a computer-engineering major with minors in math and political science) on designing computer-aided processes for analyzing European Parliament debates. This summer project is funded by the Campus-wide Computation Initiative. ([christina.xydias@gmail.com](mailto:christina.xydias@gmail.com))

***Prof. Zoe Oxley***

At the end of Winter Term, I attended a small conference titled New Research in Gender and Political Psychology. While there, I presented my findings from a study of media coverage of women in state executive election contests. I also served as a Senior Scholar, providing professional development advice and mentoring of junior faculty who were in attendance. This summer, I will be completing (I hope!), my project examining press coverage of state executive contests as well as revising my public opinion textbook for a second edition. ([oxleyz@union.edu](mailto:oxleyz@union.edu))

**PSC Major Research Requirement**

All PSC majors are required to take two research-focused courses:

- An R course (the R indicates that the course is research-intensive)
- Either a 2<sup>nd</sup> R course, a seminar or a research methods course (PSC 220, 222 or 223)

PSC Interdepartmental (ID) majors must take one R course to fulfill the research requirement.

Finally, students are strongly encouraged to complete this requirement before the end of the junior year, as preparation for the senior thesis.

Fall 2011 Offerings:

PSC 223: Critical Comparisons (Hislope)  
PSC 358R: Wealth and Power (Dallas)  
PSC 359: Seminar: Human Rights (Lobe)

Winter 2012 Offerings:

PSC 260R: US Policy Making (Nicholas)  
PSC 349: Comparative Politics Seminar (Angrist)

Spring 2012 Offerings:

PSC 242R: Challenges to Democratization in Latin America (Seri)  
PSC 331R: Ancient Political Thought (Scherer)  
PSC 339: Theory Seminar (Seri)

### **PSC Major Foreign Experience Requirement**

All PSC majors, including ID-PSC majors, need to fulfill a foreign experience requirement. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement:

1. Complete a three course language sequence (only two courses are required if the sequence is begun beyond the first introductory course in the language)
2. Participate on a full-length term abroad (mini terms do not qualify)

Please plan carefully to fulfill this requirement. For many languages, the introductory course is only offered in the Fall Term, so you cannot necessarily begin your language study any time in the year.

### **UPPER-LEVEL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR FALL TERM 2011**

#### **PSC 216: African Politics- Angrist**

This course introduces students to the essential political history and political dynamics of contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa. Topics covered include the processes through which the states of contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa emerged; the types of political systems that have evolved in these states; ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Africa; inter- and intra-state wars on the continent and their impact; the challenge of economic development in and securing prosperity for Africa; and gender and politics in Africa.

#### **PSC 223: Critical Comparisons-Hislope**

What does a convincing explanation in political science look like? This course will focus on how to make good comparative

explanations in political science. We will explore how to do this by studying and applying key concepts, such as culture, social movements, elites, institutions, hegemony, and the state. This course will help prepare students for writing the senior thesis.

#### **PSC 243: Latin American Politics-Seri**

This course offers a working knowledge of Latin America's current politics, trends, and challenges. Years after democratization, regular elections are in place, and support for democracy in the region seems widespread. Still, as local traditions infuse the principles of liberal democracy, politics in Latin America reveal unique traits. Exploring the political as an interpretive endeavor, the course's readings, assignments, and class discussions will help to identify key political institutions, traditions, and cleavages, as well as forms of agency and leadership, both in specific countries and at the regional level.

#### **PSC 276: US Drug Policy- Nicholas**

The course provides an examination of United States drug policy, and focuses on the public policies that address the non-medical consumption of opiates, cocaine, and marijuana. Learning objectives include the reasons why certain drugs became illegal and what our nation's first public policies were. The second section of the course explores how drug policy became a more developed policy area with a large number of active participants including presidents, Congress, courts, government agencies, and interest groups, and ways they influenced the modern 'War on Drugs'. The course will evaluate the successes and failures of drug enforcement, and also assess public health approaches that certain states and local governments have adopted. We will discuss what makes drug policy similar or different from other policy areas like environmental politics or national defense. The course concludes with a comparative examination

of how and why drug policies differ throughout the world.

**PSC 277: Local Political Internships-Hislope**

Places students in internships in local political organizations and in offices in local and state government. Students draw on their internship experience and related academic work to reach a better understanding of the complexities and dynamics of politics and the state or local level.

**PSC 278: Politics of Food-LaViena**

This course critically examines the global agro-food system. In general terms, we will follow the commodity chain of food, beginning with food production and agriculture; move on to processing, transport and marketing; and then finally to the politics of food consumption and the rise of a “foodie” culture obsessed with chefs and food trends.

**PSC 332: American Political Thought to WWI-Brown**

Political thought in America from the colonial period until World War I with an emphasis on evolving political, social, cultural, and intellectual perspectives on enlightenment values, nationalism, slavery, the rise of the industrial economy, the political machine, and America’s changing role in the world.

**PSC 358R: Wealth and Power Among Nations-Dallas**

An examination of the tensions between developed and developing countries in the global political economy. First, the course traces the genealogy of thinkers on the issues of development, such as Smith, Marx, Keynes, Modernization theory and Development Economics, as a way to understand the enduring debates within the field. Second, it examines historical transformations in the international economy, such as in trade, global finance

and periodic economic crises, in order to understand how the structures and opportunities for developing countries transform. Finally, although there is no focus on any single region of the world, the course touches upon the oil boom in the Middle East in the 1970s, the debt crises in Latin America and Africa in the 1980s, the rise of Japan and the East Asia tigers, and the new giants, China and India. . Note: This course was previously numbered PSC 259. Students who have taken PSC 259 cannot take PSC 358R.

**Congratulations** to the New Members of  
Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science  
Honor Society!

Seniors

Gordon Butler  
Jordan Goldman  
Saghar Hamidzade  
Meghan Hartnett  
Sky Kochenour  
Maryssa Mataras  
Samuel Merlin  
Andrew Trochanowski

Juniors

Elizabeth D’Agostino  
Sarah Gagnon  
Aaron Glosser  
Tyler Kelly  
Elizabeth Lehmann  
Michael Lewis  
Kelsey Mulvihill  
Kevin Nowaskey  
Kelsey Parks MacElroy  
Lea Tessitore

### **PSC 359 Seminar: Human Rights-Lobe**

This course mixes a basic historical and theoretical investigation of the contested categories of "human" and "rights," using examples of political, social, cultural and aesthetic dimensions of claims made. What are the legal, political, non-violent, and violent ways of advancing and/or enforcing those claims? The course examines the documents, instruments, and institutions of the human rights movements, and determines how important the human rights movement and human rights issues are today. The roots and growth of the human rights movements from its post-Holocaust beginnings, through the Cold War, and to issues of terrorism and social change today, are central to this course. Humanitarian intervention, the responsibility to protect are concepts to evaluate, while case studies including Somalia, Haiti, Darfur, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iraq, will be studied.

### **PSC 370: Constitutional Law- Hays**

An examination of the Constitutional tradition in the United States, focusing upon the structure and powers of the federal government. Topics and themes include the power of the courts to interpret the laws and the Constitution, the power of the federal government and the significance of "states rights," federal government intervention in matters of "commerce" or economics, and the nature and expansion of executive power, especially in the area of national security. The course proceeds mainly through close examination of Supreme Court cases, considered in their political, historical and legal context. Note: This course was previously numbered PSC 270. Students who have taken PSC 270 cannot take PSC 370.

## **Pizza & Politics**

**Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>**

**HUMN 019 12:55pm-1:45pm**

Professor Himanee Gupta-Carlson will speak about b-girls (female hip-hop artists) and political empowerment. Gupta-Carlson is a professor at Empire State College.

**Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**

**HUMN 019 12:55pm-1:45PM**

Rick Georgeson from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation will speak. Georgeson is a specialist in citizen participation.

**Minerva Fellows (TBA)**

The week of May 23rd.

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES: Fall 2011**

PSC 111: Introduction to US Politics  
(Hays) MWF 10:30AM-11:45AM

PSC 112-01: Introduction Global Politics  
(Angrist) MWF 9:15AM-10:20AM

PSC 112-02: Introduction to Global Politics  
(Lobe) TTH 9:00AM-10:45 AM

PSC 113: Introduction to Political Thought  
(Seri) MWF 8:00AM-9:05AM

### **Research Methods**

PSC 223: Critical Comparisons (Hislope)  
TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM

### **Theory**

PSC 332: American Political Thought to  
WWI (Brown) MW 3:05PM-4:45PM

**Comparative**

PSC 216: African Politics (Angrist)  
TTH 1:55PM-3:45PM

PSC 243: Latin American Politics (Seri)  
MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM

**International Relations**

PSC 358R: Wealth and Power (Dallas)  
TTH 9:00AM-10:45PM

PSC 359: Seminar: Human Rights (Lobe)  
TTH 1:55AM-3:40PM

**US Politics**

PSC 276: US Drug Policy (Nicholas)  
MWF 1:50PM-2:55PM

PSC 277: Local Political Internships  
(Hislope) TBD

PSC 278: The Politics of Food (LaVenia)  
TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM

PSC 370: Constitutional Law (Hays)  
MW 3:05PM-4:45PM