

# Department of Political Science

## Newsletter



Fall 2018

### Message from the Chair

Dr. Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha

The Department of Political Science at the University of North Texas remains an engaging place for faculty, students, and alumni. We boast award-winning faculty who have been recognized for excellence in both teaching and research. Our research productivity places us in the top 20 of all political science departments in the nation. We graduate scores of majors each year, many of whom go onto law or graduate school. We are simply one of the best departments at the University of North Texas.

Please take a moment to read through this newsletter for highlights of some of our students, alumni, and faculty... and keep in touch.

### Department News

Another Fall semester, another year of new developments in the Department of Political Science.

First, **Idean Salehyan** has been chosen to serve as the next Executive Director of the Peace Science Society. This international organization facilitates scholarly research on peace analysis and conflict management, fitting squarely in what UNT political science is already known for. Although his four-year term will not begin until November 2019, he will begin transitioning into the position very soon.

Second, **John Ishiyama** is not only the next Toulouse Scholar at UNT, he has also won a national award: the Frank J. Goodnow

award offered by the American Political Science Association.

Third, we welcome two new faculty to the department. **Alex Duff** (Notre Dame PhD), who is an expert on Heidegger, joins us as an Assistant Professor. He will teach political theory courses .

**Catherine Borck** (Notre Dame PhD) joins us as an Lecturer. She will help to teach several of our online courses offerings in American government, contributing as well to our courses in political theory.

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Finally, we would be remiss if we did not mention good 'ol Wooten Hall. Just as it evokes

fond memories for our alumni, it is being renovated (however slightly), bringing it a little bit closer to a 21st Century building. We still have no windows, alas!

## Faculty Travel

This summer, Professors Diego Esparza and Jim Meernik, visited the nation of Colombia to teach and begin to plan for a Study Abroad location for UNT students.

Professor Ko Maeda participated in the "Bridge the Divide" program to visit Seoul, Republic of Korea, and meet with Korean politicians, scholars, and journalists. The program included visits to the President's residence, the DMZ, and even a K-pop concert!



Professor Jim Meernik receives the UNT Foundation Leadership Award

## Faculty News

The department's successful run on UNT awards continued during the 2018 academic year!

**Bethany Blackstone** has won the President's Council Teaching Award. This award recognizes a UNT faculty member for a record of teaching excellence. Professor Blackstone has also won Teaching and Mentoring Award given by the Law and Courts Section of our national organization, the American Political Science Association.

**Michael Greig** was named the 2018 J. H. Shelton Excellence in Teaching award winner. This prestigious award recognizes excellent teaching at UNT and marks the department's second winner of this award in a row!

**Jim Meernik** won the UNT Foundation's Leadership Award, which recognizes his numerous contributions to leadership and service to the University.

The department also instituted its own slate of awards, recognizing **Jim Meernik** and **Kimi King** for their research on the International Criminal Court, **Bethany Blackstone** for her excellence in undergraduate teaching, **Regina Branton** for her dedication to graduate education, and **Gloria Cox** for her outstanding service to the department.

Congratulations to **Idean Salehyan**, who was promoted to the rank of Professor in May, and to **Tony Carey** who has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

All of our award-winning faculty will be honored at the Salute to Faculty Excellence Dinner in October.



Bethany Blackstone

Connect with UNT Political Science!



## Student Spotlight

Brenton Browne is one of our best students

**Brenton Browne** (BA, 2018) has had a remarkable four years at the University of North Texas. He served as treasurer of the University of North Texas Moot Court team, as well as President of Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Fraternity while at UNT. As an invaluable member of Moot Court, he won over 10 speaker and team awards, regularly advancing at invitational tournaments including to the national tournament. He also served as both research a research assistant for the Castleberry Peace Institute and as a Teaching Assistant for an introductory political science class. He excelled in his classes, too. Brenton was an Honors College student, who graduated Magna Cum Laude. During his final year in college, the Department of Political Science recognized him as "Outstanding Student in Political Science," an honor well-deserved. Brenton recalls that his most memorable experience was the "amazing opportunity to study abroad in Germany, England, and France for a semester and serving as an intern in Cape Town, South Africa during the summer of 2017." He will be taking a gap year working at a law firm before heading off to law school.

### Scholarship Winners

**Domingo Garcia Scholarship**

Taylor Willis

Catherine Aziz

**Steven Poe Scholarship**

Eden Derby

**Frank Feigert Scholarship**

Dakari Hill



Brenton Browne

### Student Awards

**Clovis C Morrison Award  
for Best Pre-Law Student**

Linda Ferretiz

**Sam B. McAllister Award for  
Most Outstanding Graduate  
Student**

Ron McGauvran

**Pender Award for Best  
Graduate Student Paper**

Sebastian Graham

## Support Political Science

Please consider giving to one of the following funds to help students and our research.

\* **Steven C. Poe Scholarship** Honors the late Steve Poe former professor at UNT, and provides scholarships to students interested in human rights.

\* **Domingo Garcia Scholarship** A fund to honor Domingo Garcia and provide scholarships to students of political science.



## Alumni Spotlight

Kristina Mitchell (BA, 2006) shows what a UNT student can do with political science

Kristina Mitchell arrived at UNT in 2003 took her first introduction to government course with Dr. John Books, which made an immediate impression and left no doubt that she wanted to study political science. She enjoyed her time as a UNT Eagle, but the experiences she valued most were with her political science professors. They challenged and pushed her to understand new concepts previously thought to be too difficult to master. Perhaps other alums can relate, but she never realized that she was good at math until she took a Political Research Methods course at UNT. (The course so many majors love to hate!) It was these experiences in political science classes, more than anything, that inspired her to become a professor so that she, too, could inspire young men and women to learn and challenge themselves. She is currently the Director of Undergraduate Studies for Political Science at Texas Tech University. We welcome her back to UNT this fall to visit and present her research.

## Faculty Spotlight

Opportunities for student engagement are fueled by our dedicated faculty

Professor **Kimi King** serves as the primary advisor for University of North Texas Moot Court Program. Under her leadership, the Moot Court Program has grown larger and more successful. Moot Court is a competition-based organization aimed to involve undergraduate students in debates on current legal issues addressed by appellate courts. In 2016, the UNT Moot Court won a national championship in the writing award category. Additionally, the Moot Court team grew to 24 members in 2017 (the largest number ever). Since 2000, more than 225 students have participated in the Moot Court Program.

The program, which is currently nationally ranked, has also placed students individually at national events. UNT Moot Court exemplifies the dedication our faculty have for UNT students and reinforces the department's commitment to its educational mission.

## Fall Semester Events



### Constitution Day Debate

Free Speech on Campus

September 20, 2018



### Homecoming

Mean Green v. Rice

October 27, 2018

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