

University of North Texas Department of Political Science

Fall 2021 Newsletter



Message from the Chair

Dr. Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha

The Department of Political Science at the University of North Texas continues to persevere even among the unique challenges that we have faced over the last academic year. We continued to meet student needs by teaching a mix of remote and face-to-face classes during the fall and spring semesters. We stayed connected with each other and with the profession through Zoom. Nevertheless, it is in the halls of Wooten and in the classrooms at UNT where we do our best work. We look forward to returning to a new normal this fall.

To our cherished Alumni: 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

Political Science remains a highly-ranked department in the field. Recognizing our PhD production and high per capita research productivity, *US News and World Report* ranks us 59 in its latest report. We remain the highest ranked department in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and are one of the highest ranked departments at UNT among those programs that compete with more than over 100 departments.

The Fall semester brings the department a bit closer to normal. Although we will

continue to teach some online classes, we return to a course schedule that looks more like Fall 2019.

We welcome one new colleague, as **Nichole Gligor** (University of Mississippi PhD)

will join us to teach courses in American politics and government.

This is **Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha's** (that's me!) last newsletter as department chair. It was a good run, with hope that I did more good than harm. I look forward to my return to teaching and researching.

The Department will be in great hands, guided by the leadership of **Kimi King** while **Lee Walker** works for another year at the National Science Foundation.

Dr. Walker will take over the chair reigns for a full term starting in August 2022.

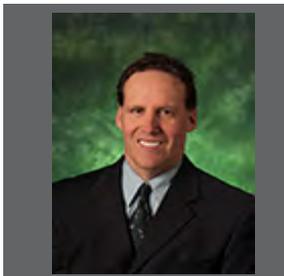
Finally, **Dave Mason**, the Johnnie Christian Family Peace Professor, will retire this August after nearly 20 years at UNT. Dave will be missed, but we wish him the very best in a well-earned retirement!

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Political Science

Faculty Grants

Drs. Alex Duff, Richard Ruderman, and Catherine Borck are actively energizing our political theory program. They successfully won a \$10,000 grant from the Jack Miller Center this summer. The grant will provide support to fund three speakers who are experts in America's Founding and who will speak on the principles of liberalism. The funds will also provide scholarships for students as members in an ongoing "society of fellows" who will meet to discuss these and other topics.



Glen Biglaiser

The Eminent Eagle keeps watch in Wooten Hall

Faculty News

The department's successful run on UNT awards continued during the 2021 academic year! Although delayed until the fall 2020, last year's award winners finally received their accolades at the annual Salute to Faculty Excellence Ceremony. What follows are our 2021 award recipients.

First, **Glen Biglaiser** was this year's winner of the President's Council Teaching Award. This is a preeminent teaching award at UNT, and it is well-deserved. He joins five other colleagues who have also won this award in recent years.

Second, **Paul Hensel** was named a finalist for the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. An impressive accolade, and we were proud to finally recognize Professor Hensel for his research contributions.



The department has honored its faculty with departmental awards for the fourth straight year.

Our winners this year are **Michael Greig** for his research on international mediation, **Glen Biglaiser** for his excellence in undergraduate teaching, **Marijke Breuning** for her dedication to graduate education, and **Wendy Watson** for her outstanding service to the department.

Finally, **John Ishiyama** will serve as the next President of the American Political Science Association, which is the national professional organization in the field of political science.

Connect with UNT Political Science!



Student Spotlight

DeAnne Roark named most outstanding graduate student for 2020-2021

DeAnne Roark enters her fourth year as a doctoral student studying International Relations and American Politics in fall 2021. Before joining UNT, she earned both a B.A. and M.A. in Political Science from the University of Texas at Arlington. Ms. Roark is currently the President of the Political Science Graduate Student Association, the official graduate organization of the Department of Political Science at UNT. Her passion for helping others also permeates through her research interests on human rights and peacebuilding in the aftermath of violent conflict. Her dissertation focuses on how sexual violence during civil war conditions the impact that transitional justice policies have on political behavior and reconciliation in postconflict settings. The purpose of her research is to shed light on the disproportionate impact that violent conflict has on women to help inform policymakers about the ways in which peacebuilding efforts can mitigate these effects both during and after civil conflict.

Scholarship Winners

Domingo Garcia Scholarship

Amerah Suleiman

Steven C. Poe Scholarship

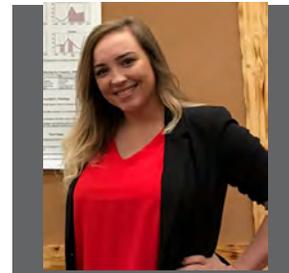
Alexa Campbell
Esmeralda Lopez

Frank Feigert Scholarship

Elizabeth Mattson
Jana Sabri

Clovis and Marilyn Morrison Scholarship

Tiffany Contessa
Michael Fish
Emily Ryter
Metti Temesgen



DeAnne Roark

Student Awards

Ralph Yarborough Award for Best Undergraduate Paper

Jeremy Ryan Price

Research Assistant Award

Hope Dewell Gentry
Michelle Ramirez

Teaching Fellow Award

Daniel Mintun

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

Matthew Lebo (PhD, 1999) learned how to become a leading political science scholar at UNT.

Professor Lebo is currently department chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Western Ontario after excelling in his positions at SUNY Stony Brook. He began his career in the Ph.D. program at the University of North Texas and appreciates the guidance and mentorship that he received while at UNT. "I didn't just learn about political science at UNT, I learned about how a department and a PhD program work...You don't need a department with 50 faculty members. You really get a PhD from less than 10 people – your committee and a handful of others. For me, Harold Clarke, Ken Godwin, Frank Feigert, and others taught me tons and made the time to help me develop research papers that got me on my way."

After publishing extensively in the areas of political parties and elections, and methodology, he hopes to translate some of his experiences from UNT into the Ph.D. program at Western Ontario. "It's probably not an accident that I've spent my career at similarly sized departments and doing administration work to make PhD programs work with 25 professors or less. UNT...taught me that the foundations of research are good ideas, good methods, and hard work."

Dr. Lebo holds fond memories of his time at UNT. "Some of my favorite memories at UNT are: Jim Meernik's class on American foreign policy – it wasn't my field but it was great; walking across campus to get my SPSS output from the mainframe computer; and turning a double play with Kimi King in intramural softball to win the game."

In Memoriam

Political Science lost two former colleagues over the past year.

Milan Reban passed way on September 13, 2020. His contributions to UNT's development as a university were substantial, especially in the areas of internationalizing the University's curriculum and strengthening the department's international studies offerings. His contributions were recognized by the University when in 1985 he was named the inaugural recipient of UNT's Distinguished Service to International Education Award. A gifted teacher, Milan was a winner of the 'Fessor Graham Award, which is "the highest honor given by the student body." After his retirement, he was a regular speaker at UNT's Osher Lifelong Living Institute.

We also mourn the passing of **Jerry Yeric**. Jerry served the department and University in many capacities. He was associate chair and was a member of the executive committee member. He was also on the university athletic council for some years. He published two books. One, with John Todd is called Public Opinion: The Visible Politics. A second is titled, Mass Media and the Politics of Change.

Rest in Peace, dear colleagues.



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
& SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of
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