



# Department of Political Science UC San Diego

**NEWSLETTER FALL 2016**

*Issue 6*

## A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR, THAD KOUSSER



This fall, UC San Diego is welcoming its largest and most diverse class ever, bringing new energy and fresh perspectives into political science classes. Our campus is welcoming 8700 new students, a third of whom are the first in their family to attend college. Because so many of these students want careers that will make a difference in their communities and in the world, the number of political science majors had risen dramatically and nearly all of our fall classes are full.

In this newsletter, you can read about some of what we are doing to feed our new students' infectious energy and ensure that all of them have the support they need to succeed at UCSD and beyond. Whether it is the kind of internship experience in San Diego, Sacramento, or DC that sent Joe Hicken ('06) on a path to the Obama Administration, the classes taught by deeply engaged professors like Tom Wong, fresh from his stint in the White House, or the rigorous new Data Analytics for Social Sciences course that we'll be offering in the winter, our department seeks to nurture the variety of interests and goals that our students possess. And our excellent staff is ramping up the number of student events this fall, including the fifth edition of Election Night: A Political Party. Come join us on November 8th at 7pm in the Great Hall to be part of the excitement!

### **UCSD Political Science department partners with HBCUs to introduce political science research to talented undergraduate students**



In a continuing effort to increase diversity in our political science graduate program, Professors Claire Adida and David Lake partnered with Professors Gregory Hall and Fatemeh Shafiei, chairs of the political science departments at Morehouse College and Spelman College (respectively), to pilot an eight-week summer research program for talented undergraduate students from historically black colleges and universities this summer. Together with UCSD political science faculty mentors and graduate students, the department hosted five undergraduate students from Morehouse College, Spelman College, and San Diego City College: Thomas Broadwater III, Lauren Fleming, Modester Kamupinda, Suma Massaley, and Kennedy Middleton.

Each student paired up with a political science faculty member to pursue individual research projects on climate change, education inequality, human rights, water quality, and military intervention in failed states. Our summer UCSD faculty mentors included Professors Karen Ferree, Seth Hill, Thad Kousser, David Lake, and Molly Roberts.

Our graduate mentors, Mona Vaklifathi and Abigail Vaughn, provided our students support and feedback along the way, including a series of workshops designed to introduce students to current research topics and basic concepts in research design.

**An Interview with Joe Hicken '06  
(Political Science)**

*Political Appointee, Obama  
Administration*

*Chief of Staff to the Senior Technology  
Advisor and Top Political Executive in the  
GSA's (US General Services  
Administration) Pacific Rim Region*

**What were you involved in while you were  
here on campus (in- and out of the  
classroom)?**

I attended UCSD from 2002-2006, and I loved every minute of both my academic and student life experience. I co-founded the Foosh, Muir's improvisational comedy group, and was one of John Muir's residential HAs. In the classroom, I took advantage of a couple 199s in both psychology and political science.

**What were your experiences like in Poli Sci?  
Which courses/ faculty/ opportunities made  
an impact on you?**

Game theory with Professor Slantchev, Political Psychology with Professor Schreiber, and Politics of Warfare with Professor Magagna immediately come to mind, but frankly there were too many terrific courses and professors to list them all. UCSD's political science "bench" is tremendous with experience and talent.

**Describe your transition after graduation?  
How did UCSD prepare you for this transition?**  
One of the best decisions I ever made was to do an internship via UCSD with Congresswoman Susan Davis in my final quarter. Through that experience: 1) I was able to begin applying theory and studies in a real-world context, and 2) I was able to begin networking and identify opportunities for employment. I owe a great deal to her Chief of Staff, Lisa Sherman, and her then-Intern Coordinator, Ricardo Flores, for mentoring me for my roles in DC, and continuing to mentor me to this day.

**What was your career trajectory?**  
Rep. Davis's Chief Lisa connected me with a campaign-related opportunity in DC brokering communications for a firm called Stones Phones for the 2006 election cycle. From there I took an unpaid internship with former Representative Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX), which then connected me with an entry level position on the staff of the House Armed Services Committee. The Democrats lost control of the House in the 2010 mid-terms, so I did a quick stint doing analysis at Bloomberg, and then landed a political appointment with the Obama

Administration--first at the Pentagon, and now with one of the federal government's more innovative technology groups in San Francisco. All due so far to a combination of excellent mentorship, luck, & persistence--but mostly the former items are to credit for this terrific adventure.

**What are you most proud of professionally?**  
My role was very minor, but I managed the floor script and time for House Democrats when the House passed the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell (the law that had prohibited LGBTQ individuals from serving in uniform). Compared with some of my other work on law and politics, it was a relatively administrative contribution--but being a small cog in this historic step in the struggle for civil rights and equality for all Americans is what excites me about public service; everyone has a role to play, no matter how small.



*Joe Hicken  
pictured at  
left*

**What are your future professional goals?**  
At this stage in my career, I'd like to jump into the private sector in tech--this frontier is fascinating. The leaders of these companies have created their own "public policy" largely outside the pressures of Washington, and further, they have tools to make a more accessible and transparent digital government. We'll see. I might just start up a burrito shop instead.

**What are some of your favorite things about UC San Diego?**  
The Chancellor's Undergraduate Diversity and Leadership Institute, John Muir College, the cliffs over Blacks, Sun God, and, of course--late night at Earls.

**Any advice for Poli Sci students?**  
If you've ever lamented that government is too slow or doesn't make the right decisions, I have this thought: the only unchangeable thing is the United States Constitution; all other laws, regulations, and policies are directed by voters and more intimately, the public servants that implement those elections (...and actually as you know, even the Constitution can be changed--it just requires rare consensus). There's little popularity in being the champion of process and policy, but it's the only way to continue to improve upon the greatness of American governance. So look no further--be that public servant!

**CONGRATULATIONS!**



The Senior Honors reception was held on June 9, 2016 and honored Political Science majors who completed a thesis in the Senior Honors Program.

Alison Bildsoe was the recipient of the 2016 Senior Honors Sandy Lakoff Prize and Anissa Badea was the recipient of the 2016 Senior Honors Dewitt Higgs Prize. Pictured left to right, the students who were honored include: John Marillo, Anissa Badea, Henry Agee, Alison Bildsoe, Yuki Naruoka, and Hana Rosenfeld. Congratulations!

Read Honors Theses from recent years posted on our website:  
<https://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/departments/political-honors-and-pi-sigma-alpha/index.html>.

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Marisa Abrajano's and Zoli Hajnal's book *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics* has been awarded the 2016 Ralph J. Bunche Award for the best scholarly work in political science that explores the phenomenon of ethnic and cultural pluralism by The American Political Science Association. Congratulations to two outstanding scholars and nationally recognized leaders in the study of race and ethnicity!

**Job Market!**

PhD Placement Candidates:  
<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/grad/hire-a-phd/index.html>

## ORDER IN THE COURT!



In the spring 2016 quarter, the department offered a unique course. According to co-instructors Matthew Bergman and Nazita Lajevardi, POLI 104F was a novel approach at solving an old problem: how to foster intensive research, writing, and oral skills among UCSD undergraduates. To solve this problem, they developed a new class called "Appellate Advocacy" and modeled it off of traditional moot court style law school courses.

As compared to other law classes, enrollment was limited, permitting only those who demonstrated previous public law success to enroll in the course, and utilized a seminar-style class that relied on teamwork, discussion, and self-critique to foster persuasive writing and oral advocacy skills.

In a span of 10 weeks, students were provided with hands-on training and mentorship, to ultimately teach them how to read cases, brief cases, write persuasive appellate memoranda and give appellate orals arguments in front a panel of judges. By the end of the course, students had received one-on-one mentorship, had learned how to participate in teams, and most importantly, were equipped with a writing sample they could use for future employment.

## Tom Wong: Serving as an Advisor in the White House



*Professor Tom Wong representing UCSD in the White House*

I recently had the honor of serving as an advisor to the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI). I worked on the immigration portfolio, which is also the core of my academic research. One of my roles was to bring data into the discussion in order to make real the idea of evidence-based decision making and outreach to underserved communities. From increasing uptake in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to encouraging those who can become citizens to do so, my time at the Initiative reaffirmed the value of data, and made clear that our next generation of policy experts need also be data fluent.

The work was not only intellectually stimulating, but it also provided a view of the federal government that not many are able to see. My first week included an event in which the President gave remarks, as well as several White House meetings and briefings with administration officials and other stakeholders. There remains much to be done when it comes to immigration policy—as political scientists, we have much to contribute to getting this work done.

## Welcome Class of 2020!



Welcome incoming Political Science freshmen! On September 21st, the department hosted our first ever Political Science Freshmen Orientation. Over 50 students came out to enjoy breakfast, mingle with each other, and hear Professor Maureen Feeley, Director of Political Science Undergraduate Studies, and Ariane Parkes, Political Science Undergraduate Advisor, speak about the department, the major, and student opportunities. Best wishes to our incoming class of 2020!

## Congratulations to our Graduate Students!

Several graduate students from the Department have received awards this past year. Please join us in honoring and congratulating them on their service and achievements!

**Frontiers in Innovation Award:** Sara Kerosky and Stan Oklobdzija

**Fulbright:** Deborah Seligsohn and Brian Tsay  
**Joseph Naiman Fellowship from the Program in Japanese Studies:** Garrett Bredell

Congratulations to 2016 graduating Ph.D. students: Konstantin Ash, Megan Becker, Matthew Bergman, Nicole Bonoff, Nathan Combes, Maya Duru, Micah Gell-Redman, Scott Guenther, William Hobbs, Alex Hughes, Jeffrey Kaplow, Dong Lee, Justin Levitt, David Lindsey, Adeline Lo, Nicholas Obradovich, Justin Reeves, Weiyi Shi, and Zachary Steinert-Threlkeld.

Pictured left to right are: Matthew Bergman, Nathan Combes, Konstantin Ash, Adeline Lo, Alex Hughes, Justin Levitt, and Zachary Steinert-Threlkeld.



## UPCOMING UNDERGRADUATE CAREER AND INTERNSHIP EVENTS

- October 14<sup>th</sup> Undeclared Majors Open House in Political Science
- November 7<sup>th</sup> Graduate School in International Affairs Information Session
- November 8<sup>th</sup> Election Night Party: 7 p.m. in the Great Hall

Current Political Science students should be on the lookout for more career and alumni events in 2016/17. Notifications will be sent to your @ucsd.edu e-mail account.



## UNDERGRADUATE CORNER

### EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT

#### INTERNSHIPS

*Local Internship Research Program. For more information visit:*

[polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/internships](http://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/internships)

#### RESEARCH

*Research Apprenticeship Program. For more information visit:*

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/research-apprenticeship/index.html>

#### RESOURCES FOR CURRENT UNDERGRADES



*Like our Facebook page “Political Science Department at UCSD” for consistently updated information on internship and career opportunities.*

### Bon Voyage!

The Department hosted an End of Year party on June 1<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the end of the year and bid “bon voyage” to our retiring faculty.



### CONTACT US!

Email: [askpolisci@ucsd.edu](mailto:askpolisci@ucsd.edu)  
OR visit: [polisci.ucsd.edu](http://polisci.ucsd.edu)



### ★ STAFF CORNER ★

The Political Science department is pleased to announce that our Fiscal Supervisor, Elizabeth Brost, has welcomed her first child, Calvin Rossi, on August 4th, 2016.



### Happening NOW: Board of Pre-Law Advisors



Board members are attorneys currently enrolled in the doctoral program in political science and are available for individual appointments to discuss careers in law, selection of appropriate law schools, or any other concerns you may have about this career path.

<http://prelawboard.ucsd.edu/>

### UCSD Political Science – International Relations Rankings!

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*Scholars recently ranked the top 25 International Relations programs for undergraduate and graduate programs in the world. UCSD was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in the world to study International Relations on the undergraduate level and 7<sup>th</sup> in the world on the graduate level.*