



Department of Political Science UC San Diego

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2014

Issue 1

A Message from Our Chair, Philip Roeder

With this first departmental newsletter we are reaching out to you—our current students, prospective students, and alumni—to share news of remarkable accomplishments by our current students and opportunities for all. As we have long recognized, our students' success is one of the most important metrics of the quality of our programs. As the stories and announcements in this newsletter attest—whether it involves community engagement, social networking, or academic awards—these successes provide us many opportunities to boast.

Since we hope that this is the beginning of a much more intense engagement with you, we ask you to take the time to keep us informed of your accomplishments, to suggest new initiatives for a fuller student experience in Political Science at UC San Diego, and to support these initiatives. (To get in contact with us, use the suggested contacts on the final page of this newsletter.)

Finally, a special “thank you” goes to our Student Affairs staff and to the student who composed this newsletter. It would still be just a dream if they had not taken the initiative to reach out to you.

An Interview with Nathan Fletcher by William R Foster

This year Political Science became the first department on the UC San Diego campus to appoint a Professor of Practice—Nathan Fletcher, a veteran (USMC) and former California Assemblyman. According to UC San Diego guidance, Professors of Practice are professionals/practitioners who contribute to academic programs by providing students with a deeper understanding of the practical application of a particular field of study and helping promote the integration of academic scholarship with practical experience.

I spoke with Professor Fletcher in his office in June, shortly after the conclusion of his first two quarters at UC San Diego.

How has your experience in politics and the Marine Corps prepared you for your new position at UCSD?

The experience of the Marine Corps prepares you for life. It gives you a lot of those intangibles, [such as] perseverance, dedication. . . . It also gives you a real perspective, and I think that's something I will carry with me forever. You know, when you've gone through those combat experiences it changes you, and you kind of view the world differently.

The legislature prepared me well to bring a practical aspect of how it actually works. I really enjoy in our classes when we go through . . . the history of a topic--and we can dive into that--and then . . . the academic research on that topic, and then . . . three case studies that explain how it actually works.

When I'm preparing lectures I really think about: how do I provide the history of a topic, how do I provide the rigorous academic [content] that you would expect from a UC course, and then, consistent with the Professor of Practice, how do I say this is how it works and here are some case studies where I was directly involved.

What are the highlights that you have taken from your experience and engagement with undergraduates here at UCSD?

I've had a blast. I feel like every class has been fun. I was warned, before I started, by a dean from a different school, who said, “undergraduates are terrible, they aren't paying attention, they never show up to class, they're texting and doing all these other types of things.” That hasn't been my experience. I've

had two classes now and students show up; they're prepared and engaged.

I've found it to be a really rewarding experience. Also, [I have prized the opportunity] to connect so many students with opportunities outside, such as internships. I think the most rewarding thing will be five or 10 years from now [when] there is some member of Congress, who had been a student in one of my classes, who I see interviewed somewhere and they go, "I had this professor in college and I can't even remember his name, but he got me interested in politics and that's why I'm here today." That would be the best.

What would you say to alumni considering a Professor of Practice position or simply just getting more involved with the department?

I think it's good. Obviously there has to be a balance, you want a well-rounded education experience. I would never propose a university should have all former legislators and that's the only teaching you get. I think that there is a balance of some of the purely analytical academic, empirical side versus some of the practical case studies.

Whether it's someone who says, "hey, I want to teach a whole class in a Professor of Practice type position," or someone who says, "I'm available to guest lecture or I can come in for a discussion period," I think there is always a way to engage students and get involved.

UCSD alumni should be proud of the university and what they are doing, particularly the Political Science department, which is so strong and recognized nationally as one of the best. They should participate in whatever way they can.

Graduate Student Bio



Blake McMahon

Blake is a fourth year Ph.D. student who studies international relations. In particular, he "is interested in how political leaders defend against different types of threats to their regimes. This research will be useful for policymakers who want to develop armed forces that are both strong and loyal, attributes that are important for political stability within countries".

Blake has served as a Teaching Assistant for POLI 12: Introduction to International Relations on two occasions. He adds, "Working with UCSD undergraduates has been an enjoyable experience. I have been able to talk with students about some of the challenges facing the world today. These interactions often yield interesting and novel ideas for tackling issues like war and human rights. Teaching has also forced me to think more deeply about international relations in ways that have benefitted my research".

After UCSD, Blake hopes to find a job as a professor: "getting paid to study things about which I am passionate is really an ideal situation. The ability to share this insight with others as a teacher adds to the appeal. In the meantime, I plan to keep working on my dissertation and hoping that the Los Angeles Kings win another Stanley Cup".

Undergraduate Corner

New Opportunities in the Department!

Internship

Local internship Research Program: visit <http://local.ucsd.edu/> for more information.

Research

New Research Apprenticeship Program: visit for more information.

<http://weber.ucsd.edu/~proeder/ResearchApprenticeship.htm>

Resources for Current Undergraduates



Like our Facebook page "Political Science Chair's Desk at UCSD" for consistently updated information on internship and career opportunities.



2013-2014 Graduate Recognitions & Awards

Konstantin Ash received the 2013-2014 Herbert F. York Global Security Dissertation Fellowship.

Matthew Bergman received *The Italian Club of San Diego Graduate Student Fellowship*. The Italian Club of San Diego was established to foster Italian cultural values, including the support of study and education.

Julia Clark received the *Gramercy Fellowship in Emerging Markets*.

Jeffrey Kaplow received the International Nuclear Security Dissertation Fellowship.

Justin Reeves has been designated as a principal candidate under the FY 2013 U.S. Department of Education, *Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) Fellowship Program* in Japan.

Michael Rivera will be representing UCSD at the *5th Annual UC Graduate Research Advocacy Day* at the state capital on March 12, 2014. Michael's Dissertation Title: *Immigration, Public Opinion and State Policy Responsiveness* focuses on legislative responsiveness to public opinion on the issue of immigration. He looks at the role immigrants play in shaping policy.

Weiyi Shi received the 2013-2014 Herbert F. York Global Security Dissertation Fellowship.

Liesel Spangler received the *2013 Summer Competitive Edge at UC San Diego*. This interdisciplinary program provided a head start at UC San Diego to gain familiarity with the campus, department, and resources available to graduate students.

UCSD Political Science Department 40th Anniversary

We are currently preparing to celebrate UC San Diego's Department of Political Science's 40th anniversary! Founded in 1974, our department has graduated more than 10,300 students and is recognized as one of the best undergraduate and graduate programs in the nation.

Read about distinguished alumni:

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/alumni/index.html>

Stay tuned for the next **Lunch with the Chair** SPRING QUARTER. All current undergraduate majors are welcome and there is no need to RSVP!

NEW Student-Run Political Science Club

Like their Facebook Page: "UCSD Political Science Club"

Fall 2013 Sanford Lakoff Award Recipients

The Lakoff Fellowship, established in honor of Sanford Lakoff, the founding chair of the Political Science Department at UCSD, is designed to support graduate student dissertation research.

- Kai Ostwald
- Zachary Steinert-Threlkeld
- Kathryn Dove
- Maya Oren
- Scott Guenther
- Rupal Mehta
- Neil Visalvanich
- Don Lee
- Konstantin Ash
- Nicole Bonoff

Senior Honors Program!

Read Honors Theses from recent years through our website:

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/undergrad/honors-program/index.html>

2013 Senior Honors Sandy Lakoff Prize Recipient: Arik Burakovsky

2013 Senior Honors DeWitt Higgs Recipients: Brian Daigle and Haley Devaney

(Left to Right: Nujavi Bardales, Aletha Vassilakis, Samson Mai, Haley Devaney, Brian Daigle, and Arik Burakovsky.)



UC, Sacramento

AIP offers internship opportunities in Sacramento, working in the State Capital.

Please visit

<http://aip.ucsd.edu/programs/uccs.html> for more information or contact the AIP office.

Funding Opportunities!

Find more information about graduate grants and fellowships!

graduatefunding.ucsd.edu

POLI SCI Travel Reimbursement:

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/grad/financial/index.html>

Job Market!

PhD Placement Candidates:

<http://polisci.ucsd.edu/grad/hire-a-ucsd-phd.html>

UCDC!

Intern for a quarter in Washington while earning academic credit! 20 students are currently participating in UCDC! For more information, visit:

<http://aip.ucsd.edu/programs/ucdc/>

Go to the UCDC Info Session on February 12 at 10am in the PC West Eleanor Roosevelt College Room! The Fall 2014 deadline for UCDC is Feb. 28.



CONTACT US! Email: askpolisci@ucsd.edu OR click: polisci.ucsd.edu