

POLITICS AS YOU(SUAL)?

A Newsletter Published in the Fall and Winter by the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan-Flint

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

••••

In this newsletter, we feature an abridged version of Steve Whitman's Commencement Address. In addition to working full time as an electrician, going to school, and spending time with his family and friends, Whitman has over the last decade undertaken major projects at a Christian boarding school in Kentucky and worked with a shelter in Flint. He is headed towards a master's degree with teaching certification. The Department nominated him for the Maize and Blue Award not only for his outstanding academic performance, but also because of his deep commitment to rebuilding the public world and his demonstrated willingness to take risks and be changed by his education. We feel fortunate that he has spent so much time in the Department.

The Department welcomes a new tenure-track faculty member, Dr. Jason Kosnoski. Dr. Kosnoski is briefly profiled on page 8, and we describe the three courses he will be teaching this Fall.

A great deal has occurred in the public world since our last newsletter over a year ago, and faculty comment upon some of this in this newsletter. We welcome old and new students to the Department, urge majors to consult with their advisors as registration approaches, and hope that many students will become active in the political science honor society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and the newly forming branch of Amnesty International.

—Peggy Kahn

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Commencement Address | 1 |
| Amnesty International | 2 |
| Politics and the 2004 Tsunami | 3 |
| Does "W" Stand for "Waffling"? | 4 |
| What Faculty are Reading | 5 |
| Pro-Outsourcing Nonsense | 6 |
| Pi Sigma Alpha | 7 |
| New Faculty Member Courses | 8 |



POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT DELIVERS DECEMBER 2004 COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Steven Whitman delivered the Commencement Address at the University of Michigan-Flint December 2004 Graduation Ceremony. He received a Bachelor of Applied Sciences, with a concentration in Political Science, and is currently finishing a B.A. in Political Science. The following is an abridged version of his speech.

My name is Steven Whitman. Though I am about to become a college graduate, I was a high school drop-out. My journey to this day has been a long and winding road. Like many 17-year-old drop-outs, I knew everything, so I sought escape and adventure in the Army in 1969. When I returned home from the service in 1972, I worked at odd jobs until I found a good one at the C&O railroad here in town. After the OPEC oil embargo in late 1973 and early 1974 shut down most

COMMENCEMENT (Continued on page 2)

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER RECOGNIZED AT UM-FLINT

••••

Students and faculty are currently leading in the organization of a chapter of Amnesty International at UM-Flint. Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights. Amnesty International is independent of any government, political ideology or religious creed. It does not support or oppose any government or political system, nor does it support or oppose the views of the victims whose rights it seeks to protect. It is concerned solely with the impartial protection of human rights, to stop torture, free prisoners of conscience, and positively affect legislation and policy.

The organization will be open to all students, faculty and staff at UM-Flint, and interested members of the community. For further information, contact Erin Zike ezike@umflint.edu or Derwin Munroe dmunroe@umflint.



COMMENCEMENT (Continued from page 1)

of the industry in town, I was laid off and started taking classes at Mott College in 1974 and eventually earned an Associate's Degree. I leveraged this into a career as an electrician at Buick. I had often dreamed of earning a Bachelor's Degree, and in fact have been passed over for promotions because I did not have one. I credit the Hamady Sack with my academic achievements today.

If you don't know what a Hamady Sack is, you are not a native of Flint who grew up in the 50s and 60s. To the majority of a generation of Flint area citizens, a paper bag will perhaps always remain a Hamady sack. The Hamady stores were the most prominent groceries in town and the first supermarkets that I remember. All of their paper bags had a huge Hamady logo on them for marketing purposes, and the name soon became the bag.

Of course my generation has learned that this is not true for the rest of the world. My rude awakening to this fact was at the age of 17, in Germany, living in the same military barracks as soldiers from all over our nation. Most of them, especially the black soldiers, were every bit as foreign to me as the people whose country we were occupying. When I asked a fellow soldier to throw me the Hamady Sack next to his foot, I discovered that he had no idea what I was asking for. He was just as astonished to hear the name I called this sack, as I was to learn that he called it simply a paper bag. It soon became clear to me that I was looking at our world through an incredibly small and narrow focus.

There was an ugly side to the Hamady Sack, the received, narrow, taken-for-granted ideas I grew up with. I and countless others were taught to be wary of blacks, homosexuals, and assertive women. Of course, we made convenient exception for people in these categories if we knew them on a personal basis. They were the "good ones", the exceptions. If it is true, as Rich Mullins, the late Christian songwriter said, that "we are forged in the fires of human passion", then we are most certainly "choking on the fumes of hate and fear" when we live our lives with heads stuck in our Hamady Sacks. Far from declaring that I am cured of this affliction, I stand before you, sure only of the fact that being aware of this phenomenon has helped me to avoid some of the major pitfalls of the Hamady Sack View.

So much that I have studied since 1997 has had a profound influence on my ability to understand our world. I have fallen in love with the whole process of learning, and this passion is driving me towards a second career as a teacher. I would not have planned this drastic of a career change for this stage of my life, but as John Lennon said "life is what happens to you while you are busy making other plans."

I am confident that you younger graduates will be able to move on from here with a great foundation to help you in ways that you can't even imagine today. Traditional success, however, is not what I wish for you, the class of 2004. It occurs to me, from my own experience, that the pursuit of traditional success leads to very large houses that generally shelter very small lives. I would encourage you to alter your focus from traditional success seeking, to one of seeking meaning in your lives and in your work.

POLITICS AND THE 2004 TSUNAMI

By Peggy Kahn, Professor of Political Science

These comments are abridged from a longer presentation at a University of Michigan-Flint symposium, Washed Away: The After-Effects of the 2004 Tsunami, Jan. 26 2005

The tsunami that struck the Indian Ocean rim on December 26, 2004 was, according to the New York Times, a devouring and unforgiving wall of water that destroyed all in its wake and, according to the United Nations, a catastrophe of Biblical proportions.

Did this disaster, as so many other apparently "natural" disasters, have an element of human and social construction? In these mainly poor countries on the rim of the Pacific Ocean, the toll of the tsunami was related to the absence of an early warning system, destruction of coral reefs and the deforestation of mangrove swamps (these habitats buffer land against tidal waves), and high population levels on the coasts.

This terrible "natural" disaster has attracted huge amounts of sympathy and assistance, the mobilization of many private and public global resources, but many of the ongoing human and social catastrophes in other parts of the world do not seem to receive such a focused response. These attract little attention and relief.

Why do we focus on spectacular natural disasters while we have difficulty focusing on what we could call routine catastrophes and suffering? Perhaps the human catastrophes of AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa (600 people a day die in South Africa alone, life expectancy is falling) or civil war and famine in Darfur are regarded as made by people and therefore their fault, rather than an undeserved natural catastrophe. Perhaps it is also the case that routine catastrophes in complex political systems are more difficult to intervene in because of forces on the ground that make negotiation of the social and political space of the disaster more difficult. Will this natural disaster refocus us on the routine social catastrophes of poverty, disease, and little education in the countries in which the tsunami struck and other countries around the world?

In the aftermath of this kind of disaster there is a need both for immediate humanitarian relief and longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, much of the world focused upon the immediate needs for food and shelter of the populations affected. The UN has identified several areas of long-term rehabilitation required in the area:

Environmental restoration. The UN estimates that the tsunami's damage to the Indonesian natural envi-

ronment alone is a loss of \$675 million—loss of mangrove swamps, coral reefs, seabed greases, and that there is a tremendous need for investment in the environmental capital of natural resources, which both buffer land settlements against such disasters and provide a basis of livelihood.

Trade and employment. The UN has declared a dire need of a "coherent, comprehensive, long term package of policy and action to support and revive economic activity". This might include policies such as making employment-intensive job creation and livelihood-restoration integral to the reconstruction effort. From the beginning, Oxfam was training local people to clean up and rebuild and paying them to do so, and the UN is working with traditional seafaring networks to restore traditional fishing in Aceh. Major global lenders discussed suspension of repayment of the national debt of these countries, allowing countries to use resources to rebuild rather than to service debts to wealthy countries. There was also a proposal to open the economies of other countries to imports from the devastated area, removing duties and tariffs and other trade restraints (anti-dumping restrictions).

Health and education. The World Health Organization has argued that it is essential to act to prevent communicable, water-borne disease epidemics and to restore the structure of health care in these devastated areas. There were 15,000 pregnant women in Aceh alone, at great risk. Similarly, in Aceh alone, most of the schools have been destroyed and teachers killed. When whole communities are devastated, community leaders, professionals, and service providers are removed from the community, and the local human and social services infrastructure needs to be rebuilt.

The United Nations and its office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been central to coordinating the short-term and longer-term efforts on the ground. There are also many international NGOs, such as Oxfam, Christian Aid, the International Red Cross, that have experience and already had a presence of some sort in the areas. There are also states that have rendered various degrees of assistance accompanied by various sorts of rhetoric. The lead was taken by Japan, the regional great power, and a country which itself has been devastated by earthquakes. The Bush administration initially pledged only \$35 million, but increased the pledge substantially to \$350 million and sent military vessels and personnel to help with immediate relief. The U.S. very publicly declared that this would help show the world that "we cared about Muslims." This

TSUNAMI (Continued on page 4)

DOES "W" STAND FOR "WAFFLING"?

By Stephen Rockwell, Assistant Professor of Political Science

George W. Bush would like Americans to see him as a great leader in the mold of Lincoln and FDR: a man whose dedication to purpose and principle echoes Lincoln's unshakable commitment to the Union, and FDR's unshakable commitment to defeating fascism. With John Kerry effectively portrayed as a flip-flopper in last year's campaign, Bush's support entering a second term seems to rest overwhelmingly on the perception of Bush as a man whose focus and dedication mean that we "know where he stands". Even if he's wrong, even if you disagree with him, at least you know where he stands.

Too bad it just ain't so. Bush has flip-flopped on some of the most serious issues of our time. Bush opposed creating the 9/11 Commission, then supported it. He refused to let National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice testify before the commission-- on

a principled argument for separation of powers-- then he discarded the principle and allowed Rice to testify. Bush said he would not go forward with an invasion of Iraq before taking a vote in the Security Council; staring at a potential defeat at the UN, Bush flip-flopped on that one, too. For months Bush opposed creating a Department of Homeland Security, then he came out in favor. He's flip-flopped on patients' right to sue and on a patient's bill of rights, on the merits of a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, on free trade and steel tariffs, on the merits of science, and on the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill.

There are other problems with knowing where Bush stands. In *The President of Good and Evil*, philosopher Peter Singer examines the inconsistencies in Bush's ethics. For example, the president claims to support a "culture of life" that spares innocents-- this is the foundation of his policy against

WAFFLING (Continued on page 5)

TSUNAMI (Continued from page 3)

had the effect of suggesting that the U.S. was not primarily interested in alleviating the suffering of the affected populations but in advancing strategic foreign policy goals.

How foreign relief plays out "on the ground" in relation to local and regional politics is always an important question. In Indonesia, where the tsunami took the most lives, immediate relief politics was colored by Indonesia's long historical quest for independence, the specific history of Aceh and its secessionist politics, and by the problem of the army in Indonesian politics and in Aceh. Indonesia is a complex former Dutch colony, which fought long and hard for independence and tried in the 1950s to lead a non-aligned movement. In general, there is mistrust of foreign presence for historical reasons. Australian troops are regarded as having played a central role in the secession of East Timor from Indonesia in 1999. Many Indonesians have a concern that foreign troops may not only trample on Indonesian sovereignty but also may assist in the dismemberment of the state.

Aceh has long history of resistance to the Dutch, the Japanese and the Indonesian state itself. Today, several factors drive independence cause. Islam for many centuries has been central to Acehnese identity. Separatists have wanted to implement Sharia law; the province's rich natural resources, especially natural gas and bauxite have been controlled by foreign companies and the central Indonesian state; and there has been brutal repression of a minor insurgency. In the past decade 2000 people have been killed by the armed forces in what they claimed

were security operations and many others have been tortured, raped and imprisoned. Human Rights Watch has documented many of these abuses.

The army has long played a central role in Indonesian politics, dating back to the ongoing struggle for independence against the Dutch. The army has continued to be a major player in Indonesian politics, even with more recent moves towards parliamentary democracy. It has prosecuted a terrible war in Aceh. At first after the tsunami, Indonesian threw open what was a restricted military zone to foreign aid workers, journalists, American helicopters and Australian warships, as the army talked about suspending its offensive against the separatists of the Free Aceh movement, the GAM. This raised hopes that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono would set a fresh tone on the Aceh war. However, the army announced that GAM was stealing provisions and infiltrating refugee camps, declaring that refugee workers were not safe. Then civilian political leaders said that foreigners would no longer be allowed to leave the cities of Banda Aceh and Meulaboh without military escort and there has been some sentiment expressed that they should leave, like the militaries, in 3 months. It is difficult to see any substantial change in the local power dynamics in Aceh in particular, and the question of the army still bedevils the relief and reconstruction effort.

It will be important to follow the rebuilding effort, and not forget about these countries after the initial drama of the tsunami migrates off the front pages of the press and nightly news.

WAFFLING (Continued from page 4)

abortion and against most stem cell research. Yet Bush also supports the execution of the mentally retarded, and he's caused the deaths of thousands of Iraqi civilians. Ethically, these positions conflict. The position on stem cells rests on principle in a Kantian way: that the potential lives saved from the research cannot justify violating the principle about the sanctity of life. The ends cannot justify the means. But Bush's stance on Iraq and on executions is utilitarian, based on doing the greatest good for the greatest number. Bush sees executions, even of the mentally retarded, as a deterrent, while the killings in Iraq are justified in terms of their ultimate ends: making the world a safer place and "liberating" the Iraqi people. Unlike his position on stem cells and abortion, then, in these cases the ends *do* justify the means. These approaches are ethically inconsistent and make Bush's ethical approach incoherent. This is troubling in itself, but when a new issue arises it's going to be even more difficult to know where he stands. The torture and killings at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, for example: violations of the culture of life, or justified because they further the fight against terrorists? (Torture doesn't further the fight against terrorists, but that unfortunate fact doesn't help me-- or people working for the Administration-- know where Bush stands on torture: morally wrong, or morally defensible?)

Even Bush's reputation as a strong and unwavering commander-in-chief collapses under a little scrutiny. The widespread policies supporting torture and killing at Abu Ghraib prison, Guantanamo, and bases around the world mean either that Bush's leadership as commander-in-chief makes him a bona fide war criminal, or they mean that he is not actually in control of what his troops are doing. In the outing of an undercover CIA operative's identity, we confront the same difficulty: either Bush's people are acting under his orders-- orders which could be considered treasonous-- or he's not in control. And as we learned last fall of a reserve unit refusing orders to go on a dangerous convoy mission, Bush's ability as commander-in-chief took another hit: is he truly losing control of discipline in the armed forces, a monumentally serious problem while the country is at war? One wonders, too, about the US's decision to release kidnapped American citizen Yaser Hamdi, recently sent to Saudi Arabia after years of Orwellian custody, and one wonders about the prisoners at Guantanamo, periodically reported to be on the verge of release. If these folks were as dangerous as the commander-in-chief told us for the last three years-- so dangerous they couldn't see lawyers or be tried publicly-- why are we letting them go? And if they weren't that dangerous, why did we take them and hold them for so long, in violation of national commitments to the Constitution and the Geneva Conventions? And was it

done under the commander-in-chief's orders, or not? Either way, we have a problem.

There are many more flip-flops than I can list here, Singer goes into much greater detail on Bush's ethical difficulties, and there are books chock-full of problems with Bush's leadership written by Democrats, Republicans, liberals, and conservatives. In the end, I can't honestly say that I know where Bush stands. Fiscal conservative, whose taxcut-and-spend policies have run up enormous national deficits? Advocate against federal government intrusion into local matters, whose No Child Left Behind policy nationalizes education and empowers bureaucrats in Washington to the detriment of local teachers and administrators? Defender of America against imminent threats from nations with weapons of mass destruction and terrorist ties, or the guy who has ignored or coddled the nations that fit that description (Iran, North Korea, Pakistan) and invaded a country that didn't? Bush's approach is arbitrary, unpredictable, and ethically unsound. I wish I *did* know where he stands.

WHAT FACULTY ARE READING

• • • •

Peggy Kahn:

I've been interested in the European responses to developments in Iraq and the splits between Europe and the U.S. and within Europe. I began by reading Hans Blix's Disarming Iraq, a straightforward account of great integrity based upon Blix's experience as the Chair of the U.N. Monitoring, Inspection, and Verification Commission. I also recommend Gordon and Shapiro's Allies at War, a book that argues that the split between the U.S. and Europe arose simply because of the Bush administration's specific foreign policy doctrine rather than because of fundamental differences in societies and politics. Ivo Daalder and James Lindsey's America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy is a good complement to Gordon and Shapiro. On the other hand, Andrew Gamble (Between Europe and America: The Future of British Politics) has a more structural, long-term explanation of why it was that the UK government ended up backing the U.S. and isolating itself from the majority of its population, the Prime Minister's own party, and much of continental Europe. Eric Hobsbawm, world historian, jazz lover, and long-time Communist Party member, has written a wonderful memoir, Interesting Times: A Twentieth Century Life. As someone who spent a great deal of time in the left milieu in England in the 1980s where Hobsbawm was an important intellectual and as a Europeanist, I found it an extremely rewarding read.

Khaled Hosseini's Kite Runner is a beautiful

READING (Continued on page 7)

PRO-OUTSOURCING ECONOMIC NONSENSE IS DISASTROUS FOR FLINT AND UNITED STATES

By Albert C. Price, Professor of Political Science

NOTE: This article was rejected by the *Flint Journal* as a response to an IF YOU ASK ME column.

In 1759, Voltaire's novel, *Candide*, was published. The main theme of the book is unjustified optimism regarding the prospects for a peaceful Europe at a time when colonialism and protracted warfare laid waste to the continent. One of the central characters of the novel is Dr. Pangloss, who would constantly justify the horrible conditions visited upon people with the phrase, "This is the best of all possible worlds." It appears that the philosophy of Dr. Pangloss is alive and well in Flint, with the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs to low wage environments being presented as the best of all possible worlds ("Outsourcing hysteria not justified by realities of business in U.S.", *Flint Journal*, 5/5/2004 p. A12).

Flint, Michigan is at the epicenter of a national economic disaster caused by de-industrialization. De-industrialization refers to the process by which manufacturing facilities are moved by corporations to impoverished countries where labor and environmental standards are so low as to be virtually non-existent. The result is that middle income, highly trained and well-educated workers in Flint are laid off and their replacements in Mexico and China are paid low wages with few benefits. Often they work in sweatshop conditions that are dangerous and inhumane. The net effect is that GM-UAW employees, who for generations made highly profitable vehicles for the company and a living wage for themselves, are discarded to compete for minimum wage jobs without health benefits.

In Flint, job outsourcing has been done largely through attrition, with early retirements allowing people once employed by G.M. to survive. The real problem exists for the next generation of workers who have little chance for a livable wage job here. Flint in particular, and Michigan in general, have seen an exodus of talented young people, seeking decent jobs, migrating to growth areas of the country.

In 1979, the Flint area had 79,000 G.M. hourly workers. Today with the outsourcing of UAW jobs to Mexico and beyond, there are approximately

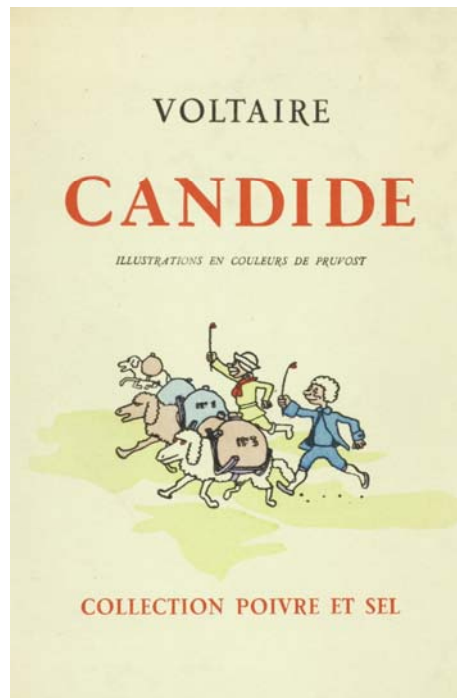
15,000 such jobs available. The high wage environment that once made Flint the envy of the nation has been replaced with low wage service work with few benefits ("County residents without health insurance up 11 percent", *Flint Journal*, 5/11/2004 p. A5). The outcome of this decline is obvious to everyone except Dr. Pangloss-type economists, free trade ideologues and executives in corporations who have benefited greatly from the lower labor costs and reduced environmental standards.

Free and fair trade with countries that have high labor standards and strong environmental protections is not the problem. The example of the Flint Journal's new presses being purchased in Germany is not job outsourcing. Instead it is a classic example of the concept of comparative advantage between equal trading partners. Job outsourcing, in contrast, is the moving of the manufacturing facility itself to a country where only the conditions of poverty, environmental degradation and governmental repression of labor unions represent the comparative advantage.

Corporations and the executives who run them are the primary beneficiaries of de-industrialization of Flint and the United States. While the inflation-adjusted wages of workers has remained stagnant since 1973, the pay and benefits of the CEO's have increased exponentially. The inevitable outcome of this process has been the growing disparity between the rich and the

poor in Flint along with the attendant social problems that poverty engenders.

"This is the best of all possible worlds," Dr. Pangloss constantly reminds Candide in Voltaire's novel. Anyone who has lived in Flint for 25 years or longer should be outraged at the idea that Flint is somehow better off with increased poverty, violence, poor health statistics and unemployment. Exporting industrial jobs and importing products made in sweatshop conditions distorts the economic theory of free trade and degrades the living standards of working people in both countries. How long does it take to realize that for free trade to be sensible, it must be predicated upon human rights and environmental protection? We can follow the advice of Dr. Pangloss only by avoiding the obvious reality and sacrificing the future for short-term corporate profits.



READING (Continued from page 5)

novel about children, families, class, ethnicity and politics in Afghanistan and among Afghani immigrants in the U.S.

Stephen Rockwell:

The Bush Administration has invaded my reading space. I recommend Against All Enemies, Richard Clarke's review of counter-terrorism policy since the Reagan Administration: Clarke's militaristic suggestions would make the situation worse, but his review of what's been going on for the last couple of decades is a good read. Peter Singer's The President of Good and Evil: Questioning the Ethics of George W. Bush is outstanding, adding something significant to the laundry lists of Bush's problems by examining the moral and ethical dynamics in play. The Price of Loyalty, Ron Suskind's book with Bush's first Treasury Secretary, follows thoughtful conservative Paul O'Neill as he is ostracized by Bush's political advisors and their commitment to popularity, rather than to responsible policy. Iraq, Inc., by Pratap Chatterjee, is a fast read about the Iraq occupation that describes the disastrous results of trying to privatize war and reconstruction. On DVD, The World at War series from the 1970s, about WWII, offers good insight into how fascist regimes get started when people don't pay attention, how good rhetoric obscures dangerous policies, how wars get out of control, and how we're still better off today. So far, Super Size Me is a lot more fun.

Derwin Munroe:

William Sheridan Allen's 1973 classic The Nazi Seizure of Power tells of rise of the Nazis in a single small town, but also why and how everyday people participated in a totalitarian movement. In Eyewitness to a Genocide from 2002, Michael Barnett blames a bureaucratic culture at the UN and the willful neglect of the powerful states for the 1994 atrocity in Rwanda. Finally, Carlos Forment's 2003 book Democracy in Latin America 1760-1900 considers the social organization of political life in Mexico and Peru, and highlights the role of civic groups in forging a kind of democratic ethos.

Albert C. Price:

Imperial Hubris by Michael Scheuer addresses the ongoing conflict that U.S. Foreign Policy engenders for the world. The Brass Check by Upton Sinclair, originally published in 1920, is a consideration of the meretricious role of journalism in the United States.



Chapter Goals:

- **academic excellence**
- **promote political action**
- **participate in community service activities**

Pi Sigma Alpha Alpha Tau Chapter was organized in March, 2003.

2004-05 Activities

New Radio Show: "Alternative Politics"

This bi-weekly radio show initiated by Pi Sigma Alpha first aired on December 8th, 2004. Its purpose is to focus on current issues not covered by mainstream media sources, thus the title "Alternative Politics." Airing Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. on 94.3 FM Kettering Radio, the shows address topics that reflect the divergent interests of Pi Sigma Alpha members, ranging from health care to the humanitarian crisis in Sudan to the Iraqi elections.

Establishment Clause Teaching Forum

Held in February 2005, this discussion examined the significance and implication of the Establishment of Religion Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution from various academic perspectives. This event was attended by over 100 students and faculty, as well as by members of the Flint community. The panelists included:

Richard Myers, *Ave Maria Law School*
Robert Sedler, *Wayne State Univ. Law School*
Dr. Bruce Rubenstein, MLS Director,
UM-Flint Department of History
Dr. Albert C. Price, MPA Director,
UM-Flint Department of Political Science

Winter 2005 Induction Ceremony

Our new members were inducted into PSA on March 10th, 2005.

PSA Activities "In Planning"

We will be volunteering with local high school students in community service projects on April 12th-14th.

Would you like to join or to participate in the activities of Pi Sigma Alpha? Stop by the Political Science Department for more information.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, FALL 2005

JASON KOSNOSKI

The Department of Political Science has hired a new faculty member with primary expertise in the field of political theory, the study of great ideas and key texts in politics, writings which involve imaginative vision, in the words of Sheldon Wolin, about that which is public or shared. Dr. Kosnoski has a PhD in Political Science from the New School for Social Research and an MA from the University of Virginia. He has taught undergrads at a number of colleges in New York City and southern California. His research has been focused upon the American thinker, John Dewey. We look forward to his joining us. In the Fall, he will be teaching the following three courses:

POL 120: American National Government and Politics (Other sections will also be available)

This course will explore the institutions, social forces, and cultural norms that shape contemporary American Politics. It will begin historically, investigating the intentions of the framers of the Constitution and how they molded these intentions to address the pragmatic obstacles they faced. It will then discuss the historical development of important American political institutions such as the congress, presidency, courts, the media, and the bureaucracy on both the state and local level. Next it will introduce some of the major social and cultural themes that have shaped American public life. Such themes include economic volatility, racial discrimination, consumerism, and the impact of religion on public life. Finally it will acquaint students with some of the contemporary challenges facing the American polity.

POL 261: Contemporary Ideologies (Introduction to Political Theory)

This course will accomplish two distinct yet interrelated goals. First it will acquaint students with some of the major themes and concepts that characterize the history of Western political thought. It will ask questions such as "is politics more like science or art," and "what is the difference between public and private activity?" Students will also be introduced to methods of theoretically analyzing political phenomena. They will accomplish these goals through examining selections from classic texts such as Plato's Republic and Hobbes's Leviathan. They will also discuss contemporary books and articles that endow these philosophical writings with concrete political significance.

POL 361: Modern Democratic Political Thought

Democracy, although regarded as the only viable and desirable political system in the contemporary geopolitical environment, faces many challenges. A full understanding of these challenges depends upon an understanding of both the reality and possibilities of democratic politics. This course will explore the theoretical nature of democracy and how actual democratic regimes compare to this understanding. Students will begin by reading selections from classic democratic theorists and critics such as Aristotle, Rousseau, Marx and Dewey. They will also explore contemporary theorists such as Robert Dahl and Carole Pateman. Using these texts students will address issues such as whether or not voting comprises the best tool for expressing democratic preferences, which skills citizens must acquire to act as effective democratic citizens, and which areas of society should citizens be able to influence through democratic practices.

SCHEDULE CORRECTIONS:

Spring 2005:

- POL 100 was left out of the printed schedule. Derwin Munroe will be teaching the course on M, T, W, R from 10:30am to 11:45am in 262 FH.

Fall 2005:

- The dates and times for POL 320 were incorrectly listed in the printed schedule. Stephen Rockwell will be teaching the course on Thursdays from 7:00pm to 9:45pm in 207 FH, not on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- POL 537 was left out of the printed schedule as the graduate level crosslist with POL 437.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- POL 100: Introduction to Politics has been renumbered as POL 190: Introduction to Comparative Politics, beginning Fall 2005. The renumbering does not reflect any changes in the content of the course but is an effort to better align the course number with student perceptions of level of difficulty. If you took the class as POL 100, it will still count toward graduation. If you have not yet taken POL 100, you will need to take POL 190. The Department will continue to offer this course frequently, both in live sections and in an online format.
- The Political Science Department will be participating in the Capital Campaign Kick Off Open House on Saturday, April 16, 2005 from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. Please join us!
- Peggy Kahn's co-edited book, Shut Out: Low Income Mothers and Higher Education in Post-Welfare America, was published in July 2004 by SUNY Press.