

Political Science Department Newsletter

Fall 2021: Near Normal!

One of the best sounds in the world is the noise of students talking in a crowded classroom or hallway just before class begins. As we professors set up the computer at the front of the room, organize our books and notes, it is such a joy to listen to snippets of student conversations or, better yet, to be in on some class inside jokes. That's been missing for over a year now: students have been fully or partially online, classrooms have been super-sized to allow for distancing, office hours are online, and nothing has been normal. We feel it. And we know you feel it.

But Fall 2021 is just around the corner, and it promises to be as near to normal as we've seen since March 2020! We could not be happier about this, because it means you will be back in the hallways, back in the classrooms, and back in our department. We miss your voices, your excitement, your questions -- we just miss YOU. Please don't hesitate to pop up to the department in the fall, to stop us in the hallways, or to chat with us before or after class.

YOU are the reason we are here, and after months of talking to screens, we can't wait to have you in our classrooms in person again. So stay safe and healthy this summer -- we can't wait to see you in September!



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Changes to Department: Simmons and Waller Retire!

It is with joy tinged with sadness that we announce the retirement of two of our department's integral members: **Jim Simmons and George Waller**. Both have a long list of accomplishments and made a positive difference for many students. Here are some highlights.

Jim Simmons taught at UW Oshkosh for 32 years. He was elected Faculty Senate President four times and led our department as chair for 12 years. He taught nearly every American Government, Political Theory, and Public Administration class in our repertoire. He co-authored the oft-cited book *What Government Can Do* with Northwestern University's Ben Page. His list of other publications and conference presentations is a mile long. Jim got his Ph.D. at Indiana University after service in the US Army.

George Waller taught at our two-year access campuses for over two decades, teaching the full range of political science classes offered there. Many of his students went on to become our students at the Oshkosh campus and remember the fine foundation in political science George provided. He was the recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence and the award for outstanding contributions to political science awarded by the UW Colleges. Waller helped effectively knit our campuses together through his committee work.

George and Jim, we thank you for your years of service and wish you a very happy retirement!

2021 PI SIGMA INDUCTEES



Two students will be inducted this spring into the National Political Science Honor Society. Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, is the only honor society for college students of Political Science and government in the United States. The inductees are juniors or seniors in the Political Science major with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and above and a Political Science major grade point average of 3.3 and above. Congratulations to the following students for their great work: *Karoline Sanders and Cole Schmidt!*

Emerging Scholar Winner

Every year the Political Science Department designates an outstanding student below the senior level for our Emerging Scholar Award. This year's Emerging Scholar Award goes to Shawn Poole. Shawn is an exacting thinker, who is equally at home discussing theories and descriptive realities. This year the department chose the award by a blind examination of the best papers in the political methods class, PS 245. Shawn's paper plotted out how to determine the effects of voter identification policies on college student turnout, a very timely topic. We congratulate *Shawn Poole* and commend him on his excellent work!



Political Science Graduating Seniors

Join us in congratulating the Spring 2021 Political Science graduating seniors: *Michael Baumann, Zoe Dahse, Andrew Flood, Alyssa Gruse, Austin Hammond, Peter Hermann, Coleman Korb, Ian McDonald, Abigail Merrill, Madison Renard, Dakota Swank, Isaac Swartz, and Ava Tryon!*

Outstanding Student also wins Isaac Kayando Award



Ava Tryon is the recipient of two awards given in the Political Science Department—Outstanding Student Award and Isaac Kayando Award for Student Leadership, the former given to a senior who has a distinguished record in the classroom, and the latter given to a student for leadership contributions outside the classroom.

Isaac Kayando was a Political Science major who graduated from UW Oshkosh in the 1970s. He returned to Uganda after graduation to work in opposition to the dictator Idi Amin. Isaac disappeared during this work and is presumed to have been murdered at the hands of Amin’s henchmen. We’ve named our student leadership in his honor to acknowledge his sacrifice. Students who win this award are among the most engaged, devoted student leaders on campus. Their efforts exemplify a model of integrity and servant-leadership for the betterment of their peers and the broader campus community. Ava fits this profile perfectly with her involvement in the Oshkosh Student Association and the Women’s Advocacy Council.

Ava will be attending UW Madison in the fall, where she will begin her master’s studies in counseling. She hopes to build a practice around children with autism, which is inspired by her current job doing in-home play therapy with children on the autism spectrum.

When asked what her greatest achievement on campus has been, Ava said it has been working for women’s equality. Not only does she serve as the Women’s Advocacy Council representative on OSA, but she champions women’s issues such as advocating for keeping the blue-light safety system on campus when there were talks of doing away with it. That she considers this her greatest achievement speaks volumes because her grade point average assures that she will graduate *summa cum laude*.

We are enormously proud of Ava’s achievements and wish her well in her future endeavors!

Chancellor’s Award for Excellence

The Chancellor’s Award for Excellence recognizes graduating seniors who “possess high academic and leadership qualities, demonstrate a commitment to the ideals of excellence and service to others”. This year, three Political Science majors won Chancellor’s Awards: **Andy Flood, Ian McDonald, and Ava Tryon**. What does it take to win this award? Andy served as the Director of UWO’s Office of Legal Services, Ava served in several roles in Oshkosh Student Association (OSA) and was involved in student-faculty research, and Ian served as President of OSA.

Dr. Scribner's two-year term as President of Faculty Senate (2019-2021) has coincided with the leadership of a number Political Science students on the Oshkosh Student Association (OSA), including graduating senior Ian McDonald, who is the outgoing OSA President. Faculty Senate and OSA are two of four collective bodies on campus that share in the governance of the university. These elected bodies participate in the study, development, implementation and review of university policy and bring the voice of faculty, students and staff to university processes and administration. Scribner and McDonald also represent faculty and students respectively at UW System and work with other representatives from around the state to bring a faculty and student voices to UW System policy and process. At UWO, shared governance leaders additionally meet weekly with the Chancellor and Provost just to share their experiences, ideas, and opinions. During the pandemic, an already strong tradition of shared governance proved essential for bringing diverse voices to the table to problem solve amid uncertainty.

In reflecting on why shared governance matters for students, McDonald highlighted the role of OSA in "creating meaningful change that affects all students on campus" and representing and "protecting student interests." For example, in the last two years OSA developed a ride share service called UWO Go, a campus-wide food pantry, and a relationship with Rent College Pads. OSA also worked hard to protect the Blue Lights on campus. These efforts led to a re-evaluation of how to use blue lights on campus, increased funding, and a new camera system to ensure the campus remains safe. "The university's commitment to shared governance allows for a clear line of communication between students and the administration to ensure that they are included in the conversation," McDonald shared.

A big "thank you for serving" to the 2020-2021 Political Science OSA leaders and Senators: Abbie Merrill, College of Letters and Science Academic Senator 2020; Andy Flood, Student Legal Services Director, 2019 - 2021; Austin Hammond, Senator, Vice President 2019 - 2021; Ava Tryon, Women's Advocacy Senator, Vice President Pro Tempore 2019 - 2021; Ian McDonald, Vice President, President 2019 - 2021; Kenya Kaldunski, Senator 2020; and Sydney Devitt, Vice President 2020.

And congratulations to incoming OSA President for 2021-2022 and Political Science major, Jacob Fischer!

Scribner Wins Political Science Teaching Award

During the Spring 2021 semester, Academic Department Associate, Angelee Hammond gave all Political Science majors an online ballot to select a faculty member for the department's annual teaching award. This year the winner was: **Dr. Druscilla Scribner**

Dr. Scribner began teaching in the Political Science department in 2005. Her research interests are in Comparative Politics, Comparative Law and Courts and Women and Politics. Druscilla is currently teaching courses and serving as Faculty Senate President. She has also served on many university searches, involved on many university and departmental committees. Along with these many accomplishments Dr. Scribner chaired the Political Science Department from 2015-2019 and has won many awards and grants. *Congratulations Dr. Scribner!*



Krueger Chairs College of Letters and Science Deans Search

The College of Letters and Sciences has begun a search for a permanent replacement for Dr. John Koker (now Provost at UW Oshkosh). The hope is to bring candidates to campus in September, and for the new Dean to start no later than January 2, 2022.



Dr. James Krueger, chair of the search committee, shared his thoughts about the importance of hiring a permanent Dean to students: “Deans control many of the most important processes for student success—determining which departments get new faculty, how many courses each department can offer—both of which are critical to helping student graduate on time and have access to a wide selection of classes. The Dean can also start conversations on larger issues to improve the quality of the student experience, such as streamlining degree requirements and improving instruction by returning faculty to the 3 courses per semester teaching load.”

For students on campus in September 2021, the open forums will be a great opportunity for students to meet the candidates, ask questions, and share their priorities for the incoming Dean.

Time to Write: Dr. Tracy Slagter's Sabbatical Project

Dr. Tracy Slagter is the most recent member of our department to complete one-semester sabbatical during Fall 2020. Dr. Slagter is writing a textbook on international law, based on a book that she has used for many years in PS 308 (International Law). The original book, *Fundamental Perspectives on International Law*, was written by William Slomanson; indeed, Dr. Slagter used the book herself when she was an undergrad. After she became a faculty member, she used later versions of the book in her own classes, and built a solid relationship with Slomanson, a law professor in California. When he decided to retire in 2017, he asked Slagter if she would take over the textbook, fully rewriting some chapters and overhauling others to update them (the book was last updated in 2011). Slagter was also tasked with finding a new publisher for the book. After some initial reluctance, she agreed.



"I think I've written more during the time of my sabbatical than I've written since I wrote my dissertation," Slagter said. "Though I missed my students and teaching, having the time to focus on research and writing was amazing. I learned so much and am now bubbling over with new ideas for future projects." The book, the first draft of which is due at the end of May, will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2022 under the title *Slomanson's Fundamental Perspectives on International Law*.

Slagter has been fortunate to have had not only the support of her colleagues and the University's Faculty Development Program during various phases of this massive project but has also been able to employ students. Elyssa Hochevar (B.A., 2018), Coleman Korb (2021), and Dakota Swank (2021) have all contributed valuable work on some aspect of the book. She also has a coauthor on three chapters, Dr. John Van Doorn, formerly of Troy University in Georgia. "This book has been a true team effort," she says. "Having a sabbatical to push this project to the finish line has been immensely rewarding. I can't wait to hold the final, published book in my hands."

Updates from Political Science Alum

Get connected to our alumni on LinkedIn! One of the best ways to prepare for your post-UW Oshkosh life now is to network with our alumni working in fields that interest you, and learn from them how they got where they are today! You can connect with UW Oshkosh Political Science on LinkedIn, then reach out to alums to start building your professional network today!

Rachel Nutini (2009): *Business Intelligence Analyst, Plexus Corp.*
Aaron Campbell (2011): *Business and Specialized Services Specialist, UW Credit Union*
Thomas Demailly (2012): *Senior FP&A Analyst, EMEA, Paris, France*
Zac Janda (2012): *Senior Strategic Sourcing Lead-NPI, Polaris Inc.*
Madeleine Suess (2013): *Acting Operations Manager, DevTech Systems, Inc.*
Nick Baus (2014): *Senior Development Program Manager, United Rentals*
Kent Ellis (2014): *Advanced Program and Policy Analyst, State of Wisconsin*
Jessica Erkitz (2014): *Medical Social Worker, Froedtert Health*
Lindsey Newhauser (2015): *System Staff Attorney, ThedaCare*
Hallie Turnberrez (2015): *Law Clerk, Milton A. Kramer Law Clinic, Cleveland OH*
Jordan Belanger (2017): *Facility Service Sales Representative, Cintas*
Austyn Boothe (2017): *Treatment Court Coordinator, Kenosha County WI*
Ben Stepanek (2017): *UW Oshkosh Public Administration Master's Program*
Taylor Ambrosius (2018): *Law Clerk, Anastopoulo Law Firm*
Brandon Holmes (2018): *Shift Supervisor, Oshkosh Defense*
Na Lee Lee (2018): *Accountant, Milwaukee County*
Ken Lippold (2018): *Global Supply Chain Analyst, Mercury Marine*
Aislinn Bauer (2019): *Campus Organizer, Democratic Party of Wisconsin*
Brandon Colligan (2019): *Business Development, J.J.Keller & Associates, Inc.*
Zachary Vetter (2019): *Industrial Security Contractor, Oshkosh Defense*
Aaron Wojciechowski (2019): *Aftercare Site Coordinator, Oshkosh Area School District*
Alyssa Adamus (2020): *UW Milwaukee Graduate Program; Rogers Behavioral Health*
Bryan Carter (2020): *Executive Coordinator, Simply.Be Agency, Chicago IL*
Zachary Collins (2020): *Northeast Chapter Support Coordinator, Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity*

Fall 2021 Course Offerings

Contact Angelee Hammond at hammond@uwosh.edu or (920) 424-3456 with questions on registering for Political Science courses.

For a list of our **Fall 2021** course offerings visit us on our **website: <https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/>**

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