

North Hall News

For Alumni and Friends of the Department of Political Science

December 2023



New Year, New Heights

From the Desk of the Chair



Jon C.W. Pevehouse is chair of the Political Science department and Mary Herman Rubinstein Professor of Political Science and Public Policy. His research is in the area of international relations including the politics of international trade, human rights, and democratization.

Greetings from North Hall! This is our second newsletter to our wonderful graduate alumni and we hope you are doing well. The fall semester is quickly winding down and we are thrilled to share some updates with you about our graduate program and the Department.

This year, we welcomed two new faculty members to our ranks: Genevieve Bates (PhD, Chicago) and Marty Davidson (PhD, Michigan). Genevieve works in International Relations and Marty's scholarship is in the field of American Politics. We are thrilled to have both join the Department and contribute to our graduate program. We are currently hiring two positions in Comparative Politics: political violence and political economy. It is always exciting to be hiring and reading work from the best young scholars in the field.

As you will see throughout this newsletter, our graduate program is thriving. Our placement record, for faculty positions, post-doctoral positions, and the private sector, is excellent. Our students continue to win research and teaching awards in the discipline and here at the University. They publish their work, win research grants, conduct experiments and field work, and generate important data. Our Department continues to be at the leading edge of graduate training in Political Science.

This training takes resources. As the competition for top graduate student talent has intensified, UW-Madison has worked hard to keep pace. An essential part of this has been support from alumni like you. Three years ago, we launched a graduate funding campaign to raise funds for our graduate program – including fellowships, summer funding, and funds for research. Thanks to the help of our alumni Board of Visitors and other graduate alumni, that campaign has raised more than half-a-million dollars. It has helped us stay competitive with graduate funding as we increasingly compete with programs like UC-Berkeley, Columbia, Duke, Cornell, Chicago, and Michigan for students.

As the year comes to a close, please consider supporting our Department and our graduate program. Your contributions make a significant difference. Even modest contributions can help a student finish their field work or attend a professional conference. Please contact me (jcpevehouse@wisc.edu), our UW Foundation representative Katie Rather (katie.rather@supportuw.org), or visit our web page for more information.

Thank you for reading and On Wisconsin!

-Jon Pevehouse

Seminars, Speakers, and the Search for Associate Professors

From the Desk of the Associate Chair

In September, we were delighted to welcome a cohort of 12 new PhD students! We are hard at work to help integrate the new class into the department, kicking off the year with a welcome picnic, math camp, a series of social events, and of course classes.

A significant aspect of our graduate training is a one-credit seminar that introduces students to political science as a discipline and profession. As the Director of Graduate Studies, I lead this seminar, bringing in different professors each week to cover various aspects of political science, from broad topics like professional development to specific matters like research grants and ethics. We aim to guide students through the unspoken norms of academia, offering insights into the "hidden curriculum" of graduate school, and providing a platform for student-faculty interaction.

Over the summer, we made improvements to common areas in North Hall, including new flooring and furniture in shared grad student spaces like the Joel Dean Reading Room and grad lounge. We also refreshed several rooms with new paint. On the first floor, we introduced an accessible Undergraduate Student Lounge to bring our majors together, especially during challenging times like midterms and exams. These changes aim to create a more inclusive and lively community, fostering connections between students and faculty.

This semester, our intellectual life—which centers on five weekly workshops in American and Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory and Methods—is being enriched by eight job talks for faculty searches for assistant professors in comparative political economy and violence. These talks feature some of the best candidates from around the world, presenting cutting-edge research on matters ranging from the effect of new technologies on European politics to the long-term effects of aerial bombings in Cambodia. The talks provide valuable learning opportunities for our graduate students and offer insights into the faculty hiring process, an experience they'll encounter when interviewing for faculty positions on other campuses.

As I write this note in mid-November, I am thankful for our dynamic community of political scientists. I look forward to Thanksgiving, upcoming job talks, and the Department Holiday Party after the break.

On Wisconsin!

-Rikhil Bhavnani



Rikhil R. Bhavnani is a Professor in the Department of Political Science. He serves as the department's Associate Chair & Director of Graduate Studies. Rikhil is a comparatvist, and his research and teaching focus on the political economy of development and democracy in India.

Committed to the Work

Notes on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

"Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for the Department of Political Science at UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The political science department fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. We commit ourselves to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment in our learning spaces and workspaces."

This diversity statement guides the Political Science Departments' efforts to be a welcoming place for people of all backgrounds, and the broad participation of our North Hall community in a great many efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) has shown that these are not empty words. There is no question that much work is yet to be done, but also that DEI has become a major priority for the department. It informs our hiring priorities, graduate admissions, undergraduate programming, and intellectual life, to name just a handful of areas. Our efforts are led by an active DEI committee that is chaired by the Associate Chair for DEI, whose position was newly established in the fall of last year. Of crucial importance, however, has been that faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergrads are showing up to do the work.

As a department, we have hosted ice cream socials for our undergraduate students of color and for first-generation students, to provide majors and prospective majors with opportunities for community building and to improve students' sense of belonging. We have implemented a carefully conceived process for holistically and inclusively reviewing applications to our graduate program, which reflect best practices and lessons from relevant empirical research. To learn from research that asks questions or relies on evidence that focus on underrepresented or marginalized groups, we

launched the Diversity, Equity, Justice and Power Lecture Series, which featured 23 presentations during the 2022-23 academic year and 14 presentations so far this fall semester. We've been able to diversify our group of graduate students, with a new cohort that is 50% female, 33% eligible for Advanced Opportunity Fellowships, 17% international, and 7% first-generation. And we are thrilled to have recruited new faculty who add excellence, much-needed expertise on race and ethnic politics, and diversity to our ranks: Genevieve Bates and Marty Davidson, along with political scientist and department affiliate Andrene Wright in African American Studies, currently hold postdoctoral fellowships on our campus and will join the faculty in 2024. Ana Oaxaca Carrasco will come to Madison the following academic year.

DEI work involves pursuing institutional change that helps break down structural inequities, programming that enriches our intellectual discourse, community-building that creates a sense of belonging, and forward-looking actions that aim to build a better future. But it also involves individual daily acts of empathy and inclusion, of being there for one another so that every member of our community can succeed professionally while living a good life in North Hall, on our campus, and in our city. This work is never "done" – it depends on a conscious and continuous commitment to the values expressed in the diversity statement above.

-Nils Ringe



Nils Ringe is Professor, Robert F. and Sylvia T. Wagner Chair, and Associate Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Department of Political Science. His research and teaching interests center on democratic political institutions, European Union politics, populism, elections, legislative politics, political parties, policy making, and political networks.

The Road to the 2024 Election

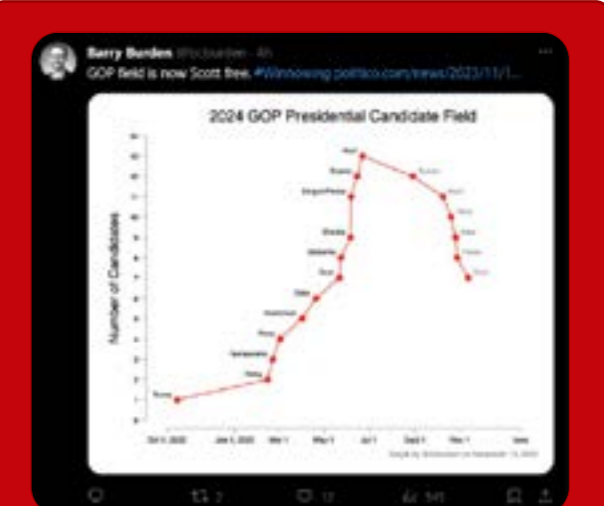
from the Director of the Elections Research Center

At a time when partisan talking points are so widespread, the Elections Research Center continues in its role as a nonpartisan source of understanding and analysis of elections. Supported by donations from alumni and other supporters, the ERC provides independent expertise that is all too scarce.

ERC affiliates are regularly being sought out by journalists across the country for their expertise and being invited to appear on podcasts, give community presentations, and engage with students during election seasons.

The ERC hosted two topical events during the fall semester.

In September a panel of experts shared their insights about the 2024 Republican nomination for president. ERC Director Barry Burden observed how unusual it is for a party to rally around a nominee after losing a presidential election. GOP consultant Liz Mair and Marquette University professor Julia Azari argued that Donald Trump's visibility has made him the focus of coordination among anti-establishment Republican voters. New York Times reporter Reid Epstein noted that many former Republican voters left the party over Trump and the abortion issue. Yet Frontloading HQ founder Josh Putnam described how the path to the nomination has been smoothed for Trump by changing delegate selection rules in his favor.



Follow Professor Burden on Twitter/X: twitter.com/bcburden

An October panel cosponsored with the UW Law School's State Democracy Research Initiative shed light on the wide variety of ways that states treat people in the criminal justice system and voting rights. Panelists documented the differences in rules across states, which range from lifetime bans on voting rights for a person who has ever been convicted to allowing people who are currently incarcerated to vote in elections. The patchwork of policies is often confusing for voters and election workers, and is frequently at odds with other goals of the criminal justice system.

-Barry Burden

A People-First Economy

A Look at the American Academy of Arts and Science's Commission on Reimagining Our Economy



Katherine Cramer is the Natalie C. Holton Chair of Letters & Science and the Virginia Sapiro Professor of Political Science. Her work focuses on the way people in the United States make sense of politics and their place in it. She is known for her innovative approach to the study of public opinion, in which she uses methods such as inviting herself into the conversations of groups of people to listen to the way they understand public affairs. She is currently a co-chair of the American Academy of Arts and Science's Commission on Reimagining Our Economy.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences was founded in 1780 by John Adams, John Hancock, and various other founding fathers "to cultivate every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honor, dignity, and happiness of a free, independent, and virtuous people," as stated in the Academy's Charter.

For the last two years, professor Kathy Cramer has been co-chair of the Academy's Commission on Reimagining Our Economy, a "crosspartisan commission comprised of scholars, journalists, artists, and leaders from the faith, labor, business, nonprofit, and philanthropic communities." In November, the Commission released their report, titled "Advancing a People-First Economy," in which they made 15 recommendations on ways to address challenges faced by the American people in terms of Security, Opportunity and Mobility, and Democracy.

In an interview by Alli Watters of the College of Letters and Science, Professor Cramer elaborates on how the Commission came up with their recommendations, stating "We were looking for things that were bold, that could actually be put into action, that were bipartisan and that address the problems we had identified in the economy. The problems we identified were broad basic things. For example, there's a general belief that if you work 40 hours a week, you ought to be able to support yourself, if not your family. And that's just not the case for many, many people anymore. We wanted these recommendations to directly address the basic fundamental

problems that are preventing a lot of people from thriving."

"One overarching principle that helped us identify recommendations is that all too often the economy operates as if it's operating for the sake of the economy. It's operating for the sake of greed, as many of our listening session participants told us. It's not operating for people. Ideally, an economy is created as a thing that allows people to create and exchange what they need in order to live and hopefully thrive. We are really far away from that ideal."

From the report, Kathy hopes that people "recognize that the economy doesn't just happen, it takes the shape it does because of intentional decisions, whether by policymakers or people in different sectors. It was created by humans, and we humans can create a different economy. When people feel a sense of hopelessness or feel as if it's beyond their control, it actually is not. We can decide as a country – if not more broadly than that – to actually have an economy that works better for people.

[Click Here](#) to read Alli's full interview of Professor Cramer, and view the Commission on Reimagining Our Economy's full report [Here](#).

A Peek into Political Economy

Allie Myren is a PhD Student specializing in international political economy, with particular interests in global financial governance and the politics of financial stability. She received an MA in Political Science from Harvard University in 2020, and a BA in Political Science and Spanish from UW-Madison in 2015.



Allie Myren is a PhD student whose dissertation project focuses on explaining why governments arrange and use different types of global financial insurance—IMF loans, foreign reserves, and currency swap lines—during financial crises. Allie has been studying financial crises for almost 10 years, and cares about how crises are managed by governments because of how they impact real people as well as democratic political systems.

When asked to summarize her work, Allie had this to say:

"Unemployment and bankruptcy can increase poverty and lead to bad mental and physical health outcomes. Financial crises

can also lead to increased support for far-right parties with weak commitments to democratic governance. Effective management of crises can mitigate these types of adverse outcomes, and there are an increasing number of resources available global economy to help governments manage crises. This is what's known as the global financial safety net, which has changed significantly in recent years with the rise of bilateral currency swaps, reserve accumulation, and innovations in lending by the International Monetary Fund. These new sources of financing have given rise to intriguing variation in government behavior in terms of accessing and using different options. I explain some of these patterns—like why some governments sign currency swap lines but don't

Beyond Academics

Allie is much more than just a scholar. In addition to her studies, she finds herself coaching competitive girls' youth soccer throughout the year. Her other hobbies include spending time outside, reading fiction, watching good TV, and eating great food.

Allie Recommends:

TV

For All Mankind on Apple TV

Books

Fiction - *A Discovery of Witches* (trilogy) by Deborah Harkness

Nonfiction - *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* by Timothy Snyder

IPE - *Trade Wars are Class Wars* by Mathew Klein

Local Food

-Osteria Papavero - a cozy Italian restaurant near Lake Monona

use them, or why others go to the IMF and accept policy conditions, but don't draw down their loans—with a theoretical framework that looks at the domestic distributional effects of different types of insurance, as well as the signals they send to investors about economic and political risk."

In addition to working on her dissertation, Allie is currently teaching a junior and senior lecture course that explores the interaction of politics and economics around the world titled "International Political Economy." The course studies the causes and consequences of globalization, variation in national economic policies, and major events in the world political economy.

"We have just wrapped up a rapid-fire, five-week module on the history of the modern world economy from 1500-2000, and are now moving into my personal favorite module: two weeks on the politics of financial crises. After that, we will discuss current issues in the global economy, including climate change, the Russia-Ukraine war, the rise of China, and American national economic policy. Beyond substance, I care most about teaching students to think critically, write clearly, and support claims with evidence. I love taking questions from students and hearing what they find interesting about IPE. I especially love seeing students try to fit what we're learning with their courses both within and outside Political Science—observing their active learning process,

how other courses enrich my own, and experiencing their curiosity.

In a reference to Taylor Swift's latest tour, Allie hosted an "IPE Eras Tour" in her class, where she played 2-3 songs for each historical era of the global economy that they were discussing.

"I was very happy to see many Prince fans among my students but very disappointed that I had no takers on Motown or Willie Nelson!"

As the semester winds down, Allie continues to work hard as she prepares to defend her dissertation proposal in the coming weeks.

Journeys in World Politics 2023



Allie, together with Professor Jessica Weeks, helped organize and host a small workshop titled Journeys in World Politics for women IR scholars in mid-October. They brought in junior scholars and several senior mentors from all over the country for two and a half days of research presentations, professionalization panels, and community-building.

*"It was an incredible experience to get to know this diverse group of impressive women, especially knowing how male-dominated the discipline of Political Science and International Relations has been until recently—and in some places still is."
-Allie Myren*

*"It was amazing to work with Allie bringing this incredible group of scholars to UW Madison. Allie is dedicated to making the field of international relations, and political science more broadly, accessible to a wide variety of scholars. Her insights were central to every part of the planning, from what readings to assign to how to organize the schedule to what food to serve -- not to mention, asking provocative questions about how to succeed in academia and giving extremely insightful comments to workshop participants on their research. Without her, the workshop would not have been the smashing success that it was. I am so excited for 10 or 20 years from now when she is the senior faculty member helping the next generation succeed."
-Prof. Jessica Weeks*

1050 Bascom



1050 Bascom is the official podcast of the Political Science Department. Each episode, the student hosts bring in experts who specialize in everything from politics, to climate, to particular regions across the world, and dig deep into the political and human implications of what is happening around the world.

[In the latest episode](#), Ph.D Student Jessie Munson joins the hosts to discuss power struggles that have made headline news around the world over the last several months as well as some of the key issues that Congress faces as the 2024 presidential primary season gets underway

North Hall History



A View of North and South Halls from atop Bascom Hill c. 1890

In 1851, three years after the founding of the University of Wisconsin, North Hall was constructed near the top of what was then known as College Hill. The hall hosted all University functions for the first four years of its existence, later being joined by South Hall in 1855 and what would go on to be known as Bascom Hall in 1857. In its long history, North Hall has hosted many departments, but has been home to the Department of Political Science for many decades.

[The University of Wisconsin Political Science Department](#) is one of the nation's oldest and most respected programs. Our Department is highly ranked in national surveys, and our award-winning faculty are known for innovative research on the discipline's most current and important questions. Our dedication to teaching is also apparent: we are one of the largest majors on campus, with a commitment to excellence in undergraduate instruction.

Our sincere thanks to the many alumni and friends who have generously supported the University of Wisconsin's Political Science Department. Private gifts are increasingly critical to ensure that the Department maintains its stature as one of the nation's premier political science programs. Your donations help us to assist promising undergraduate majors and provide them with a range of extracurricular and leadership opportunities, host a stimulating series of talks and other scholarly activities, and attract and support the research and teaching of top faculty and graduate students. Gifts of any size are most welcome and gratefully received.

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