Moore Student Research Conference

On Friday, April 8, 2011 more than thirty students representing a half-dozen majors and several high school seniors presented their research to peers, colleagues, students, and community members as part of the inaugural William V. Moore Student Research Conference.

Students presented research on panels moderated by Political Science faculty. Examples included: Barriers to Women’s Access to Local Politics; U.S. Foreign Aid to the Middle East; Immigration Reform; Intercountry Adoption; Evaluating Nuclear Perceptions; and The Effect of Right to Work Laws on Unions, the Economy and Job Creation in the U.S.

Dr. Creed, who supervised a number of these independent research projects, feels that “the value of the conference was that it afforded students an opportunity to share their research findings with peers and faculty in a professional yet safe environment and it allowed them to obtain meaningful reactions and feedback as they were finishing their thinking and writing. The sessions showcased some of the best work Political Science students were engaged in and provided the presenters an opportunity to improve their work through scholarly exchanges and conversations. Students eagerly anticipated presenting their research and were often more excited about their own ideas after their panel discussions.”

Jason Ling, an Academic Magnet High School student who participated in the conference, had this to say about his experience. “It was an absolute privilege to have been able to attend the conference, especially as a high school student. In a self-centered sense, it was a huge confidence boost for my faith in my quality of work. But it was also an enriching opportunity to look at the work of brighter and more ambitious projects as well. Some of them blew me away whether by unconventional hypotheses or international scope. Furthermore, I know now that I should not shy away from an academic challenge just because it pushes me out of my comfort zone, but I should try to meet that challenge head-on. Going off to college, I know that these lessons will prove invaluable to me over the next few years as I try to improve my intellectual understanding. Being proud of my work, appreciating the efforts of others, and taking chances will all make me a better scholar in the future.”

The conference closed with a keynote address by Dr. Luther F. Carter, President of Francis Marion University at a luncheon where participants were recognized and best paper awards were presented. Planning for the April 2012 William V. Moore Conference has begun and Dr. Carter, a longtime friend and colleague of Professor Moore, kicked off fundraising for future conferences with a $4,000 gift from Francis Marion University.

New Faculty to join department

Two new faculty are joining the department of Political Science.

Jo Ann Ewalt will direct the MPA program and teach courses in public administration, public policy and research methods at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Ewalt earned her Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky (Jo Ann Ewalt pictured left).

Jordan Ragusa earned his Ph.D. from the University of Florida. His research interests are in American Politics and research methodology. He will teach courses on Congress, research methods, and American government . (Jordan Ragusa pictured right).

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Connecting through Community

In Fall 2011, Dr. Brian Fisher offered a new course on Sustainability that examined interrelated problems at local, regional and global scales around the theme of sustainability. Students were asked to use applied experience from their own sustainability projects and to create videos on practical ways to foster sustainability such as air drying laundry, no meat November and changing driving habits.

One of the assigned books, *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan was particularly inspirational. The book discussed the cultural aspect of eating and the importance of how we eat and with whom. Students organized and enjoyed potluck dinners during and after the semester.

For Andrea DeSantis, the course was about self discovery, “Dr. Fisher encourages you to figure out what you think and define the problem and how you can be a part of the solution. I learned the importance of connecting through community and how you can incorporate it in all aspects of your life.”

Another student, Libby Conwell, had this to say about her unique course experience, “Dr. Fisher is passionate about the subject and he gave us confidence in our ability to do something to help.”

POLS 2010-2011 Theme Recap: Consumption and Survival: The Politics of Everyday Living

Consumption and Survival: The Politics of Everyday Living served as this year’s theme for Department of Political Science events. Anna Cummins and Dr. Marcus Eriksen, co-founders of The 5 Gyres Institute, presented at the Political Science Convocation of Majors on February 15, 2011. Their presentation included video clips of the plastic they have found in the ocean. They discussed the global distribution, ecological impacts, and the potential health effects of plastic pollution in the world’s oceans and on human health.

Strategies on how to eliminate this pollution through legislation, consumer education and advocating new materials were also explored.

“Marcus Eriksen and Anna Cummins lecture educated us about more than the problematic impact of plastics in the oceans and about the negative environmental consequences of our "culture of disposables" by offering a window in the ways in which grassroots activism, education and research can shift our dialogues about personal practices as well as policy decisions.” said Kea Gorden.

Alumni Highlights

Sanaz Arjomand (2011), was awarded the Bishop Robert Smith Award, the highest undergraduate honor at the College.

Alexandra Keenan (2011), Annie Pease (2011), Courtney Hereford (2009), and Jessica Edwards (2007) are serving in the Peace Corp. Alexandra is serving in Benin, West Africa as an English and Health Instructor while Annie is teaching English as a Foreign Language volunteer in Azerbaijan. Courtney is serving as an environmental educator in San Vicente, El Salvador while Jessica is serving in the education sector in the Dominican Republic.

Stefanie Christensen (2008) is working in the media department at Politico.com in D.C.

Morgan Harrell (2003) is a project manager for readySC.

This fall, Carly Clement (2011) and TJ Fielder (2011) will teach in the Mississippi Delta for two years as part of Teach for America.

Keri Hunigan (2010) interned with the Guatemalan Embassy in 2010. She has received a Rotarian Ambassadorial scholarship and will be working in Bogota, Columbia starting in January 2012.

Tammie Hoy (1996), is the Community Development Manager, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond in Charlotte, NC.

Brendan Davis (2002), is the Political Affairs Manager for the ambulatory Surgery Center Association.
Faculty News


Dr. Brian Fisher was invited to present at a United Nations conference in Mexico City.

Dr. Kea Gorden traveled to South Africa this summer for research and to investigate setting up a study abroad program.

Brian Grabbatin, a College of Charleston alumnus, will teach World Regional Geography as an adjunct this fall.

Dr. Guoli Liu took a class to China over the summer. He also co-edited and translated with Steven Levine from Chinese to English, *Inside China’s Grand Strategy: The perspective from the People’s Republic* by Ye Zicheng, University Press of Kentucky (2011).

Dr. Mark Long will be teaching in Trujillo, Spain this fall and heading up the program.

Dr. Kendra Stewart has been named Director of the Riley Center for Livable Communities.

Dr. Annette Watson got a faculty research stipend in support of her work in Alaska.

Dr. Helen Delfeld took a class to Cambodia and Vietnam over the summer. Both Dr. Hollis France and Dr. Annette Watson joined the trip.

Professors Helen Delfeld, Hollis France and Annette Watson with study abroad class and Hmong people in Sapa in the Vietnam mountains, Summer 2011.

Professor Brian Fisher’s Reading list

*Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things,* Michael Braungart and William McDonough (2002). In C2C, the authors argue that we must transform our linear production-consumption model to create closed-loop systems in designing, producing and ultimately consuming products.

*In Defense of Food,* Michael Pollan (2009). Pollan investigates the American diet and how our “convenience” culture has changed this diet resulting in significant health issues. His solution is one based on not only eating healthy alternatives, less meat, but more importantly, stressing how we eat and with whom.

*Unbowed,* Wangari Maathai (2006); winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (first African woman to receive it). In this memoir she describes the lush Kenya of her childhood and its devastating transformation through deforestation and other environmental disasters. The book documents her launch of the Green Belt Movement to plant trees and empower women, leading to activism that connected nature, social justice and peace.

*The End of the Long Summer: Why We Must Remake our Civilization to Survive on a Volatile Earth,* Dianne Dumanoski (2010). Dumanoski argues that climate change is inevitable and this is an important time to “redefine societal values.”

*Exposed: The Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Products and What’s at Stake for American Power,* Mark Schapiro (2009). Shapiro explores the levels of toxic chemicals that Americans are exposed to and what this means for our health.


Alumni Spotlight: Margaret Pilarski

In 2007, Margaret Pilarski was one credit short from graduating with a Political Science major and minor in Women’s and Gender Studies. Through her minor, Margaret connected with skirt! magazine and interned with them a few hours a week to earn her single credit hour. “I love skirt!,” says Margaret, “because of its commitment to feminism and involvement with the community. Depending on the page, we’re daring, serious or silly.” As the internship was wrapping up, she told them how much she wanted to work there and a week later they offered her a job.

Four years later Margaret technically holds two positions, National Editor and Charleston Editor. skirt! has a total of eight magazines across the Southeast and as National Editor Margaret manages the monthly editorial production cycles of the other editions. She says, “when I’m not wrangling copy and photos from other cities, I’m interviewing fantastic Charleston women (plus the odd man every now and then) and learning about new things going on in the city. I also work with our founder and publisher, Nikki Hardin, to produce editorial content.”

“What I so enjoyed about political science was that I was actively being pushed to look for answers, to form opinions. In political science, you become the type of person who is never done digging. That is something that I continue to use today. skirt! is an office where you’re expected to work independently and get things done without having to ask someone else.” concludes Margaret.

Margaret Pilarski (POLS class of 2007)
Attend an event
The Department of Political Science 2011-2012 theme is Cultural Change, Politics, and the Law. We are planning the POLS Convocation of Majors. Check the Political Science website at http://polisci.cofc.edu for updates.

Provide an internship opportunity for current students or volunteer to be a guest speaker.

Volunteer as a Career Mentor
Students often have questions about certain careers and are interested in ideas on how to go about finding their first job. If you would like to volunteer as a career mentor, please get in touch with us or join the C of C Alumni and Student Career Mentor Network online. The information and support you can provide is invaluable to our current students!

Join the C of C Alumni Online Community and see what your classmates are up to.

Contact Erin Blevins at blevinse@cofc.edu to volunteer or provide photos/updates. We want to hear from you!

You can donate ONLINE directly to one of these funds:

**Political Science Fund (R307)**
Support Student Awards and Student/Faculty events such as best paper awards and special learning opportunities.

**William V. Moore Memorial Fund in Political Science (R531)**
Support programs such as the William V. Moore Student Research Conference being held in April 2012. Advanced high school and undergraduate students at public colleges will have a chance to present research to peers and College of Charleston Faculty.

**William V. Moore Endowed Scholarship in Political Science (E544)**
Provides a renewable scholarship to a political science student who demonstrates a commitment to improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians.

**Donate Online**
To make an online donation to one of these funds, visit http://giving.cofc.edu, select “Online Giving” on right hand side of page, select “Other” in the designation section and indicate which one you want to contribute to in the comments section:

- Political Science Fund (R307)
- William V. Moore Memorial Fund in Political Science (R531)
- William V. Moore Endowed Scholarship in Political Science (E544).

Please contact Phil Jos, Chair, Department of Political Science with any questions about the funds at josp@cofc.edu.

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