High Impact Learning

Increasingly, the College emphasizes high impact learning opportunities. A number of faculty in the political science department regularly work with undergraduates on Bachelor’s Essays and independent studies. In Fall 2012, political science students were registered for 18 Bachelor’s Essays and 16 independent studies.

Over the past year, Professor Helen Delfeld has worked with several students to expand their independent research experience to include presentations at conferences. Here is what Helen Delfeld and political science senior Will Coffman had to say about the experience.

Helen Delfeld: “I regularly work closely with promising undergraduates on Bachelor’s Essays, but often these can feel like practice pieces, as “mere” student work. In order to add value to these already valuable research experiences, I have been experimenting with a model of urging students to present at carefully-chosen professional conferences. Building from the Department’s model of having students present at our new annual Moore Conference, I’m taking the show on the road.

I choose conferences with student needs in mind -- they are small, focused carefully on the field in which the student is engaged. Liza Wood traveled to Amsterdam to present her work at the Anti-Commodities Conference hosted by Wageningen University. Liz Figliola will present at the ASIANetwork Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. And Will Coffman went to the Council on Thai Studies conference hosted by Ohio University to present his work on "The Marketing of Need", based on work done around Thai refugee camps this last summer.”

Will Coffman: “By presenting at the conference, it felt like the work and research had more meaning behind it than just another paper for a class. By presenting in front of other scholars in the field, it gave a feeling of validation to the work I had put in to produce my argument. It makes you feel as if you are contributing to the literature and providing a new source of information for others, as part of the conversation not an observer.”

Helen Delfeld: “While some may question whether undergraduates are ready for this opportunity, we have to recognize that it is too tough for some. I wouldn’t say this is right for every student -- too much self-imposed pressure can be bad for some students. But for those who thrive on challenges, a conference presentation can be a real teaching moment.”

Will Coffman: “I thought that the graduate students at the conference were great -- I felt more like a colleague. I didn’t feel crushed by their intellect. In fact, I had some things that I added to the conversation!”

Helen Delfeld: As Will’s professor, I agree. He asked terrific questions during other people’s research presentations, showing that he was clearly part of the scholarly community. That's what this sort of opportunity can do -- turn people from students to budding researchers.”

Students participate in Regional Model UN

For the first time, political science students Liz Figliola, Justin Allran, Lesley Ramey, Roberto Jones, Sarah Beth Mentrup, and Benjamin Davis attended the SouthEast Regional Model UN in Atlanta accompanied by faculty supervisor Helen Delfeld. This Regional Model has been going on for more than 10 years and this year about 700 students from over 70 schools participated. The CoFC team represented Kuwait. Sarah Beth enjoyed gaining more experience in public speaking in a formal setting and learned how to negotiate with someone who doesn’t agree with you.

These seven CoFC students were selected to attend the Regional Model because they were part of the “leadership team” that helped organize the 200 student Model UN held at the College of Charleston in early November.

The leadership team hopes to incorporate some of the aspects of the Regional Model UN into the College of Charleston’s Model UN to improve it and encourage students to participate from year to year.
**Dissecting the 2012 Election with Joe Trippi**

Author, political strategist, and television news commentator Joe Trippi spoke at the annual Convocation of Majors on November 12. Less than a week after the 2012 election, Trippi dissected the results and discussed future trends with students and faculty. Author of the 2005 book, *This Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything*, Trippi highlighted the importance of political mobilization in the 2012 contest and the growing role of social media. He discussed the enormous strategic advantage enjoyed by the Democrats in 2012 and referenced specific micro-targeting strategies used by the Obama campaign. As an example, Trippi noted that Obama’s team would see which potential supporters liked the movie, *Ocean’s Eleven*, and then sent these individuals personalized correspondence from the movie’s star, actor George Clooney. Trippi also discussed the country’s changing demographics and the challenges for Republicans in future elections. According to Trippi, as the white population continues to decline, it is more important than ever for the GOP to expand its base and reach out to minority voters. He argued this will be a challenge for Republicans but pointed to George W. Bush’s success with Latino voters in Texas as an example of successful outreach to nonwhite constituencies. Trippi concluded by answering a range of questions from students and faculty.

**Student highlights**

The Political Science club hosted an event featuring Republican National Committee woman, Cindy Costa and South Carolina New Democrats President, Phil Noble. Each guest spoke to students about the 2012 presidential contest and then took questions. The club also helped organize a Mock Presidential debate with three other clubs on campus.

As part of a course assignment, 97 students in Tom Chorlton’s classes conducted exit interviews with 970 Charleston voters on Election Day. What did they discover? Students noted how eager people were to talk about the election. One student wrote that the experience made the election seem so much more real and personal to me.” Another student stated that “this experience really surprised me and showed me how passionate the American people really are.”

Kevin Keenan organized field trips for his “Suburbia: People, Place and Politics” class. Students toured the Pulse Dome Project at the Halsey Gallery, created by artist and architect Don ZanGagna to help students think about the future of suburbia. Students also took a bus trip with the Mayor of North Charleston, Keith Summy, to see the Noisette project and elements of sustainable design in the Lowcountry.

**Alumni Highlights**

Shelby August (2011) is a Charleston County City Police Officer.

James E. Carroll (1978) was elected in November to a four year term on Isle of Palms City Council.


William G. McDowell (2005) received his Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources from Penn State in 2012 and is the Learning & Development Specialist at Butzel Long, a Detroit-based law firm.

Hugh A. MacLean (1992) received a Master of Divinity degree with high distinction from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA in 2012. He is a clergyman of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Cheryl Nichols (1980) is currently the Grants Administrator for the City of Fernandina Beach, Florida.

Elyse Nicole (2012) is attending Georgetown University Nursing School.
Faculty News

Hollis France was appointed the Interim Director of the soon to be established Gender Resource Center. The Center’s mission will be to enhance personal, professional, and intellectual growth of all members of the CofC campus by fostering community, improving gender relations and equity, and facilitating awareness of sexual and gender diversity.

Additionally, the manuscript “Cuba Study Abroad: A Pedagogical Tool for Reconstructing American National Identity” that Hollis France co-authored with Lee Rogers (’08 POLI graduate and now a PHD Candidate at UCLA) was published in November in the journal International Studies Perspective.

Jordan Ragusa's political blog, Rule 22 (http://rule22.wordpress.com) is getting national attention; one of his recent posts: “Jim DeMint’s Retirement: Good news of Bad News for Lindsey Graham?” was mentioned in the Washington Post, The Post and Courier and the influential political science blog, The Monkey Cage.

Annette Watson received a $10,000 grant from the Alaska Conservation Foundation for her project “International Tribal Diplomacy for Food Security.”

JoAnn Ewalt was elected to the Executive Council of NASPAA.

Gibbs Knotts provided commentary and analysis for a number of outlets during the 2012 election season. He conducted interviews for ABC News 4 and Live 5 News and was an election night in-studio guest for ABC News 4. He was also a guest on BBC’s Newshour, broadcast live from Charleston to over 40 million listeners, and contributed op-ed pieces to The Post and Courier and the Asheville Citizen-Times.


Jordan Ragusa Reading list

Why Congressional Reforms Fail (by E. Scott Adler). This book explores why the House of Representatives is so resistant to institutional change. Adler’s research pays careful attention to reforms targeting the committee system.

The U.S. Senate: From Deliberation to Dysfunction (edited by Burdett Loomis). Loomis’ edited volume addresses the topics of obstructionism, deliberation and polarization in the contemporary U.S. Senate.

Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State (by Andrew Gleman). Gleman’s book examines why poor states tend to vote for Republicans while poor voters tend to vote for Democrats (and vice versa for rich states and Democrats).

Esteemed Colleagues: Civility and Deliberation in the U.S. Senate (edited by Burdett Loomis). This edited volume contains research on norms of civility and decorum in the U.S. Senate. In particular, the book explores the decline of civility and decorum in the Senate.

Congress in Black and White: Race and Representation in Washington and at Home (by Christian Grose). This book examines the simple, yet important question of whether a lawmaker’s race has any effect on their representation in Congress. Grose also examines whether majority-minority districts affect the passage of public policy.

Alumni Spotlight: Karen Moldovan

Karen Moldovan’s wealth of experience and overseas journey in the Peace Corps prepared her for a career that impacts public policy. After graduating from CofC in 2001 with a B.A. degree in Political Science and minor in Women’s and Gender Studies, Karen worked at My Sister’s House. This nonprofit introduced her to the concerted national efforts to promote effective prevention and intervention of both domestic violence and sexual assault. After that, Karen pursued a Masters of Arts in Teaching and became the lead Teacher at the Florence Crittenton Program of SC for pregnant or parenting teen girl students.

In 2007, Karen and her husband became U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers in the Kingdom of Tonga. She became concerned about the lack of training and policies in response to Peace Corps Volunteers who were victims of sexual violence during service. After her Peace Corps posting, Karen became a founding member of First Response Action, which advocated for a stronger Peace Corps response for Volunteers who are victims of physical and sexual violence. The efforts resulted in the passage of Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act.

Karen now works for the Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA) as the program manager where she develops and implements strategic planning in the areas of advocacy, public policy, and coordinated community response to sexual violence. She reviews state policies concerning sexual assault survivors, services and offender management practices. She also tracks relevant bills each legislative session, routinely testifies or coordinates testimony before legislative committees, and provides advocacy-specific training.

Karen Moldovan, (POLI class of 2001) Program Manager, Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault in Denver, CO
Attend an event
The Department of Political Science 2012-2013 theme is Political Mobilization: Past, Present and Future. Please join us for one of our upcoming events this spring. On Thursday, February 7, 2013, Peter Beinart, author of *The Crisis of Zionism*, will speak about American Zionist Movements.

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!

Department of Political Science 66 George Street Charleston, SC 29424 Phone: 843-953-5724

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 on March 29, 2013. 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 [https://alumni.cofc.edu/netcommunity/sslpage.aspx?pid=1639](https://alumni.cofc.edu/netcommunity/sslpage.aspx?pid=1639), select “Other” in the designation section and indicate which one you want to contribute to in the Other 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 H. Gibbs Knotts, Department of Political Science with any questions about the funds at Knottshg@cofc.edu

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