During the summer of 2010, political science major Jordan Blanton had the opportunity to participate in a cross cultural experience—learning about a different culture, area of the country and way of life. Professor Annette Watson, geographer in the political science department, has been conducting research in Alaska for the past six years studying the politics of natural resource management. Jordan and Dr. Watson were awarded a SURF grant that allowed Jordan to travel to Alaska for 10 weeks during the summer to study controversies and practices of managing king (Chinook) salmon in the Yukon River drainage system. He and Dr. Watson spent almost all 10 weeks in the small Athabascan village of Huslia, Alaska, off the road system and on the Koyukuk River.

Under the guidance of Professor Annette Watson, Jordan was able to collect original research, conducting participant-observation to learn about the subsistence practices of the Koyukon Athabascan community, and specifically how king salmon is a part of their economic and spiritual lives. He kept field notes on his activities such as checking fish nets, building a smokehouse at a remote fish camp, and helped an elder build a winter sled.

Their collaboration was fruitful; Professor Watson and Jordan shared their field notes. Dr. Watson said that Jordan provided a “different perspective in a place I’ve been doing research for a long time, because he had access to individuals I did not. There are strong gender roles in this indigenous community, so it was often not possible for me to talk with men of a certain age, so Jordan really helped my own research, too.” Jordan and Dr. Watson have continued their collaboration beyond data-gathering, and are working on a paper on the geography and politics of salmon management in Alaska.

Blogging Research Project

This past summer, political science major Sanaz Arjomand conducted research on blogs with the help of a SURF grant and guidance from Professor Kea Gorden. After travelling to Iran to see extended family in 2009, and having cast her vote for the first time in the American presidential election that year, she observed how different the process was in Iran and kept a blog during her visit.

She discovered in her preliminary research that the first Persian blog was written in 2001 and the Persian blogosphere had grown to be the fourth most widely used language in blogging. This peaked her interest and Sanaz hoped to discover who the Persian political bloggers were, what sorts of topics they discussed, if and how this changed because of the elections, and what role these blogs played in mainstream or traditional media sources. She used a combination of surveys and read through four blogs (two in English and two in Farsi) written by Iranians for a period of one year before and one year after the election to collect data. She had hoped to conduct interviews of a few media sources that used blogs in their reporting but none agreed to an interview.

Professor Gorden helped guide Sanaz through these challenges and said that “working with Sanaz on her research project was a very valuable experience for me. I improved my ability to mentor undergraduate research by helping Sanaz to focus her research questions, choose appropriate methodologies, and consider the implications of her findings. It was really exciting to see this project unfold!”

Sanaz reported the following findings, “I learned about the research process and Iranian blogs. From the survey, I learned that Iranian political bloggers have about the same demographics as Iranian bloggers, being largely young, educated, middle-class males living in the city. In the open-ended responses, the most common reason for reading blogs was to gain information, and the less common reason was to make connections with like-minded people. Spreading awareness, self-expression, and political involvement were equally likely responses to the question about why the bloggers wrote blogs. From the long-term analysis of the four blogs, I found that there are a variety of viewpoints being expressed in the blogosphere and that it is not just a tool of reformists. Each of the blogs showed a change after the election: overall, they focused more on political events and posted more frequently.” Sanaz hopes to expand this research to determine how the Iranian blogosphere relates to Iranian civil society.

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Professor brings political candidates to classroom

Three of the five third party candidates for the first congressional district of South Carolina accepted an invitation to speak to students in Professor Dave Gillespie’s Political Parties and Interest Groups class before the election in November. Mac McCullough, United Citizens Party Nominee, represented a Bi-racial Party organized in South Carolina in 1969, Keith Blandford ran as the nominee of the nationally-organized Libertarian Party, which was founded in 1971, Candidate Rob Groce’s Working Families Party is union-connected and most influential in New York, but it is also active in Connecticut, South Carolina, and a handful of other states.

Although the three carried a remarkable and diverse array of ideological and policy viewpoints, they expressed a solidarity with each other based upon the problems which each of them, like all third-party candidates face in a system designed to narrow meaningful voter choices to just two. No other of 435 Congressional districts in 2010 featured as many as seven general election candidates: Republican, Democrat and the five third-party nominees.

In November, after the election, Tim Scott, the Republican candidate who won the first congressional district election agreed to speak to this class as well. Scott entertained questions from the students for nearly 45 minutes, answering some tough questions ranging from healthcare and medicare to social security, defense spending, and his position on earmarks and representing his community. Scott, one of two African-American Republicans elected to the 112th Congress, defeated Paul Thurmond, son of the late Strom Thurmond, for the GOP nomination in the First Congressional District.

Student Highlights

College of Charleston’s South Carolina Student Legislature (SCSL) delegation of twelve students attended the organization’s Fall Session Oct. 14-17, in Columbia. During the three-day session, two days of which were held in the S.C. Statehouse’s House and Senate chambers, delegates presented and debated bills and resolutions using Robert’s Rules of Order.

The CofC student delegation presented bills with a wide variety of purposes, including eliminating blue laws, establishing a system for checking immigration status, requiring motorcyclists to wear helmets, decriminalizing adultery, reducing trans fats, and allowing men to terminate parental rights. They interacted with over 100 students from about a dozen colleges and universities across the state. Three CoC delegates received nominations from their peers for the Carlisle Award, given to an outstanding senior, and the Blake Alexander Campbell Memorial Award, given to an outstanding freshman Representative or Senator.

The College of Charleston Mock Trial team performed extremely well at the University of Florida Mock Trial Annual Growlin’ Gator Invitational in November. Despite it being the first competition for five of the seven team members, the team placed fourth out of 21 teams. The CoC team competed against Emory, University of Florida, and Florida State. Laura Timmons, the only freshman on the team, received an award for Best Witness. The team looks forward to regionals this semester.

Alumni Highlights

Adam McConnaughhay (December 2010) is in Santa Ana, Baru, Columbia teaching English for a year.

Charlie Bausman (December 2010), commissioned as a second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corp.

Kim Anderson (2010) is attending the George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs.

Caroline Allen Fowler (2008) is interning for 10 weeks with the U.S. State Department in the Bureau of African Affairs. She will graduate with a Masters in International Development from Tulane University in 2011.

Meaghan Strickland, (2008) is currently in Chicago doing improv with a theater called IO. Megan said that “the first piece of advice given during orientation for the first Chicago improv program I enrolled in was to ‘read the newspaper every day—know what is going on in the world.’ Majoring in Political Science was, in short, perfect preparation for my current improv / performance pursuit. More importantly, though, Political Science (my professors, the classes and fellow students) endowed me with a passion to pursue— the passion to think, to provoke thought and to promote positive change.”
Faculty News

Dr. Brian Fisher’s Sustainability class completed group projects on campus transportation, food, water bottles and campus vulnerability. Each group put together a video. You can view them here: http://astepback.com/sustainability/vids.html

In October, Dr. Mark Long curated the Brazilian photographer Pedro Lobo’s exhibit “Favelas (shantytowns): architecture of survival” at the City Gallery at Waterfront Park.

Kevin Keenan’s Reading list

Allan Cochrane, Understanding Urban Policy: A Critical Approach (Blackwell) traces the rise of urban policy as a distinct focus of scholarly inquiry and professional practice, revealing compelling issues such as the “management of racial strife” and “community engagement” as drivers of policy.


Nancy Kleniewski, ed., Cities and Society (Blackwell) This anthology reviews the major theoretical perspectives on the city and urban society, from globalization to urban policy choices.

Jonathan Kozol, The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America (Three Rivers Press) provides an insightful critique of the role of geography in shaping the educational opportunities for American urban youths. Part ethnography, part discourse analysis, and part archival research, Kozol presents a compelling case that apartheid schooling continues to exist in the U.S.

Becky M. Nicolaides and Andrew Wiese, eds., The Suburb Reader (Routledge) provides a collection of both primary source documents and critical essays that chronicle and interpret the rise of American suburbs and their associated politics.

Alumni Spotlight: Olga Chajewski

Olga Chajewski is currently a third year AP/CP Pathology resident at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, MA. After graduating from the College of Charleston in 2003, she attended the Medical University of South Carolina. She graduated with an M.D. in 2007 and moved to Connecticut for a one year surgical internship at a small community hospital in Waterbury, Connecticut. The internship was a valuable learning experience in both patient care and personal endurance.

After the surgical year, Olga moved to Springfield, Massachusetts where she changed specialties and started a Pathology residency at Baystate Medical Center. In her first two years she rotated through many interesting areas in anatomic and clinical Pathology. The highlights include Surgical Pathology (processing and microscopic examination of surgical specimens), Cytopathology (liquid-based specimen analysis such as Pap tests and fine needle aspirations) and Autopsy (both medical and forensic), as well as the clinical lab rotations of Chemistry, Microbiology and the Blood Bank.

She is currently in her third year of her four year Pathology residency and in the process of applying for fellowships. Olga is interested most in Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine. This specialty involves processing and distribution of blood components, as well as treating patients with antibody-mediated diseases by apheresis. She is excited to have found the unique branch of Pathology that connects the “behind-the-scenes” laboratory and diagnostic side of Pathology with the clinical realm of patient care, allowing her to be both a science nerd and a social butterfly.

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Attend an event
The Department of Political Science 2010-2011 theme is Consumption and Survival: The Politics of Everyday Living. Please join us on February 15, 2011 for our Convocation of majors “JUNK-n GYRES: Plastic Pollution, Oceanic Health and Environmental Activism” about how plastic pollution affects oceans and what we can do to stop it. For details about the speakers and the project visit: http://www.5gyres.org

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 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.

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 2011. Advanced high school and undergraduate students at public colleges and secondary schools 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 “How to Make a Gift” on the left hand side of page, select “Online Donations”, select “Other” in the designation section and indicate which one you want to contribute to in the comments section:

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**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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**Stay Connected**

**Check out our new website** at http://polisci.cofc.edu

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