A Century of Political Science at Iowa

With the 2000-2001 academic year, the Department of Political Science enters into a second century at the University of Iowa. Politics were taught almost from the University’s start, but only 100 years ago the University established a School of Political and Social Science that housed Political Science as one of three departments. The new department was headed for a remarkable forty years by Benjamin F. Shambaugh.

The founding in 1900 made Iowa a leader in developing the American discipline. This predated by three years the establishment of the APSA, the national professional organization for the discipline. At the time, there were probably fewer than a dozen such departments in the country; and only two major universities granted Ph.D.s in political science, Columbia and Johns Hopkins.

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A Century of Political Science

The Iowa Department enrolled 418 students in its very first year. Shambaugh was a founding member of the APSA and eventually its 25th president. Widespread civic consciousness in Iowa, including keen interest in the history of the State and its government, attracted students and gave the Department its early prominence. In 1925, the first survey of departmental quality put Iowa in the tie for ninth in the nation. Between 1928 and 1945, Iowans educated the sixth highest number of political science Ph.D.s in America.

Faculty governance grew increasingly democratic with this rotating leadership; and the Department has come to include a great range of interests, although it still features American politics.

The Department's second head, Kirk H. Porter, served more than twenty years. Comparative government and international relations attracted increasing attention after World War II. Yet studies still concentrated on local, state, and national government in America.

In the forty years since Porter's retirement, the Department has been chaired by fifteen different faculty members, usually serving three-year terms. Faculty governance grew increasingly democratic with this rotating leadership; and the Department has come to include a great range of interests, although it still features American politics its members helped pioneer survey research to study voting behavior, first in the United States and then in Asia, Latin America, Europe, Russia, and the post-Soviet states.

The Department became known for comparative research on legislatures, training in research methods for graduate and undergraduate students, and exceptional success in scholarly publication. Its emerging strengths include studies of democratization, political communication, and political economy.

Iowans' prominence in the early history of political science in the United States has a parallel in Iowa's standing for the larger field of political science departments since the Second World War. In the last forty years, Iowa rates persistently in the top 25 departments, among over 100 that grant Ph.D.s in political science. It rates even higher for the specific quality of its graduate and undergraduate programs. Small as department with major programs of scholarship go, it uses that intimacy to engage many of its students in their own projects of political action and research.

The principal historian of the Department has long been Russell M. Ross. A faculty member for more than forty years until his retirement in 1993, he continues to provide expert commentary on Iowa's politics. His work on the Department of Political Science at the University of Iowa, first appeared fifteen years ago. A few copies are still available at $6 posted from the State Historical Society, Inc., Suite S18, Iowa State Bank Building, 1025 Clinton Street, Iowa City, IA 52240.
Russia's 1999-2000 Elections

Conferences discussed the understandable weakness of voter attachment to particular parties along with the strong influence of personalities and mass media in the election campaign. These show that Russian politics exhibit the volatility typical of new democracies. The weakness of parties was invoked to explain why Vladimir Putin, a relative unknown six months before the election, could win the presidency by a majority vote against better known rivals. Putin enjoyed support from the outgoing President Boris Yeltsin and his cronies. That and highly favorable TV coverage proved more influential than existing parties.

These developments provoked serious concerns about prospects for Russian democracy. Yet reasons for optimism were also noted: the declining importance of the Communist Party, the peaceful transfer of power from Yeltsin to Putin, and the impressive ability of the new president to deal constructively with the Duma, Russia's parliament.

Ten faculty and graduate students from Iowa's Department of Political Science served as discussants at the two-day conference. Survey research by Iowans has traced democratization in Russia for a decade. Initiated by Professor Arthur Miller, along with Reisinger and Hess, it has become the basis for Iowans' strong programs on democratization and politics in formerly Communist countries. Iowa participants included Professors Clark, Hall, Luevenberg, Miller, Morton, and Powers as well as graduate students Bryon Mornisak and Bogdan Nica. The conference papers will be published next year.

Iowa Ph.D.s Rate among Best in Political Science

Research presented in April at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association shows that political scientists who received their Ph.D.s from the University of Iowa constitute a national among the nation's most productive publishers. A paper by James M. McCormick at Iowa University and (Iowa Ph.D. ) Tom N. Rice at University of Northern Iowa also finds that the relative productivity of Iowan's has increased in the last two decades. Their paper analyzes "Graduate Training and Research Productivity in the 1990s." It traces the Ph.D. sources of articles from 1994 to 1998 in the top five journals of general interest to the discipline of political science: the American Political Science Review, the American Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Politics, Policy, and the Political Research Quarterly.

In overall productivity, regardless of program size, Iowan ranks seventh in the country. The top ten programs are Michigan, Berkeley, Chicago, Rochester, Indiana, Yale, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Stanford. The authors note that even higher rankings in this time around McCormick and Rice explain that such raw scores can underestimate the productivity of graduates from small programs. Taking into account the numbers of recent graduates from each program, the authors produce an index of productivity per Ph.D. granted of Iowa ranks third nationally on the adjusted roster. Its ten top has Rochester, Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Iowa, Michigan State, Stanford, Washington at St. Louis, Indiana, Cal Tech, Minnesota, and SUNY at Stony Brook.
Awards to Undergrads at Iowa

Again in 2000, the Beta Chi Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha convened students, parents, and faculty in Political Science to present awards for work exceptionally well done. Pi Sigma Alpha is the discipline’s national honorary society. Its reception in the South Room of the Iowa Memorial Union was organized by Kedron Bardwell. The new initiates to Pi Sigma Alpha are David Ames, Melissa Baker, Kristin Barnette, Jason Gann, Jennifer Jaehling, Meghan Martin, and Michael Roston.

Professor Doug Dion chaired the faculty awards committee and gave a rollicking keynote address. The chapter named Professor Chuchi Shihpan as its teacher of the year. For the first time, the Department was pleased to present the Jerusalem and Georgia Bender Scholarship — twice, since it came on line just after last year’s ceremony. The recipient for 1999–2000 is Kathryn Hotman; and the winner for 2000–2001 is Emily Hojai, who also earned the William Jennings Bryan Scholarship.

The Donald Bruce Johnson Fellow for 2000–21 is Katherine Bushman, and the Donald Bruce Johnson Scholar is Jaime Teahan.

Exchange Programs with Ukraine and China

Iowans in Political Science are initiating two international exchange programs. One links Iowa to Taras Shevchenko National University (TSNU), the leading institution of higher education in Ukraine. The other connects Iowa to Stashov University in China.

The Ukraine exchange is supported by a $100,000 grant won by Professor Vicki Hasi from the United States Information Agency. It engages faculty from Iowa’s Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies in exploring democratization, rule of law, and educational reform. Scholars from both universities are collaborating to identify obstacles to legal and political improvements and to generate new university curricula.

Also Hills of Iowa’s College of Law visited TSNU this year to help develop courses in law and government. New offerings encompass comparative politics, electoral systems, political parties, the U.S. legal system, corporate law, conflict law, insurance and contract law, and securities law. Full faculty members also assist with outreach and programming in Ukraine. They are offering seminars for university officials on budgets, professional ethics, program administration and management, organizational structures, and legal regulations for public and private education.

Two TSNU faculty are at Iowa this summer. One is doing research with Professor John Reetz in law. The other, Professor Lada Kovalchenko, is teaching for Political Science on Ukrainian “Politics in Literature.”

The Stashov exchange begins in the fall. It arises from a year-long visit by Professor Ming Zhang, who used his time at Iowa to write a book on political theories of international relations. With support from the Dean of International Programs, Political Science is sending a faculty member in the fall to Stashov, known as the Venice of China for its striking waterways. Another visitor will come to Iowa in the spring to contribute to undergraduate courses and graduate seminars.

Hall and Redlawsk Tackle New Topics

Rod Hall and Dave Redlawsk are bringing new dimensions to political learning at Iowa. This year five teachers joined Iowa’s permanent faculty in Political Science. Three are veterans, Al Domico has taught political theory for more than thirty years, Tom Rice has interpreted American politics for twenty, while Doug Dion has done formal models of political development for ten. Hall and Redlawsk, by contrast, are beginning their faculty careers at Iowa.

Hall’s first degree came from Iowa — in physics, under James Voss, Allen. After advanced study and corporate work in that field, he earned a Ph.D from Penn and won a post-doctoral fellowship from Brown in international relations. Now Rod has returned to Iowa City to teach international organizations and regimes. This is the first time Iowa has enjoyed courses on these topics increasingly in the news.

Already Rod has published a handful of articles. His first book analyzes Israel and the Collective Identity (Columbia University Press, 1999), and a second is well underway.

Redlawsk comes to Iowa fresh from back-to-back electoral triumphs in the New Jersey township where he gained a doctoral degree from Rutgers. Dave, too, is an amply published editor. He has edited a collection about Nate Speech on Campus and placed an article in the American Political Science Review. Soon he will have another in the Journal of Politics. Dave brings to Iowa experiences that study political cognition, in particular how voters decide among candidates. Often this work engages students as subjects or experiments. It recently won Dave money for more rounds of experiments. Dave has recreated the course on local politics that lapsed when Russell Ross retired from the faculty, and Dave spent the Iowa Caucus season in another grant-supported project to study effects of soft money on advertising and other aspects of political campaigns.

A Year of Iowa Scholarship

What do the faculty do? Most scholars love their work. Studies show they devote some sixty hours a week to it. More than half goes to teaching activities. At research universities such as Iowa, the rest covers administrative duties and original research. Iowa’s faculty in Political Science are an exceptional group that proves this rule.

Rather than rely on graduate assistants, faculty members teach virtually every course in the Department. This makes them nearly unique at Iowa and in political science as a discipline. They also conduct extraordinary numbers of tutorials for undergraduate and graduate students. Yet they remain among the most productive researchers in the country and call on those inquires in their teaching.

Take the past year, when our 23 faculty members in Political Science published or had accepted for publication 13 books, 35 journal articles, 22 chapters in collections, and 17 book reviews or professional reports. They also wrote 68 new papers for professional presentation. They edited one learned journal and three series of scholarly books, and they appeared 17 times on editorial boards for learned journals. To finance initiatives in teaching and research, Iowa faculty in Political Science won 19 new grants from agencies and foundations. These augmented 12 continuing grants, 2 more for multi-department endeavors, and handfuls of competitive awards from the University.

And administrative duties? Faculty responsibilities for running the Department and helping with the University involve offices that take several pages to list in tiny print. In the discipline, Iowa political scientists served last year on four governing boards, four program committees, nine special groups, and ten reviews for promotion or tenure. One ran a disciplinary center, another an annual workshop. Iowa faculty in Political Science directed seven interdisciplinary programs, served nine times on such governing boards, and worked with thirteen more campus organizations. They also engaged scores of community organizations.

Honor's follow these efforts. Joel Bobkin became a Senior Visitor Fellow of the International Forum for Democratic Studies in Washington, DC. Doug Dion became a Dean’s Scholar in Liberal Arts, making Political Science the only department with more than one winner in this prestigious new program. A rare second Old Gold Fellowship went to Denise Powers for research on developing tolerance in Eastern Europe. And so on and on. The scholars called graduate assistants contributed as well, making Political Science one of the University’s few departments this year to boast two winners of its top award for teaching assistants: Kedron Bardwell and Jeff Kash.
Politics of Health Policy

After two years on a Robert Nood Johnson Foundation Fellowship at the University of Michigan, Associate Professor Charles Shipan returned to Iowa in 1998 to add inquiries into health policy to the curriculum. One of Shipan's topics is the regulatory activity of the Food and Drug Administration. He is examining how Congress and the President influence the agency's willingness to monitor food and drug companies. Chucks's research has made its way into his Iowa courses on American politics, public policy, and government regulation.

Shipan also is studying Medicaid policy to understand the huge disparities among states in how Medicaid is set up. In some states, legislators spell out in detail how Medicaid should work; in others, administrators receive little instruction. Chuck and his co-authors are testing an exploration for this disparity. They plan to extend their work to study the use of managed care for Medicaid patients.

entering Seminars

Political Science will offer two seminars for entering undergraduates this fall. Liberal Arts awards these courses to some of its best teachers. The seminars enroll only fifteen students each, giving new students close contact with faculty members.

Professor Doug Madsen is teaching "The (Mis)information Society." It explores how our society is awash in misinformation, much of it in the mass media and dressed up as scientific. This gets incorporated into public discussions, fears, and sometimes policies.

Madsen's course teaches students how to evaluate reports of research on topics ranging from public opinion to health risks. They learn basic principles for assessing quantitative evidence and inferences derived from it.

A second seminar in Political Science concerns "Lawyers in the American Political System." Its teacher is Professor Tim Hagle, the Department's specialist on constitutional law and adviser for pre-law students. The course introduces students to roles for lawyers in America and how the legal community develops law.

FUND HONORS
Richard Hale Roberts

In memory of her husband, Helen Roberts has created a fund for special projects in the Department of Political Science. Richard Hale Roberts earned all his degrees from the University of Iowa: a baccalaureate degree in 1932, a master's degree in 1933, and a doctorate in 1935. His dissertation addressed agricultural policy. He became a Fellow of the Brookings Institution, worked for the Foreign Agricultural Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, then transferred to the Diplomatic Service and was stationed in Ottawa, Canada. The gift from Mrs. Roberts caps a year of heartening support for Iowa initiatives in Political Science from scores of generous alumni. Thanks to all!

Distinguished "Iowans" Return

The Rose Research Workshop enables faculty and students to consider research by political scientists from Iowa and around the globe. It averages a session every other week, at times from returning alumni, yet two visitors this year occasioned special pride.

In December, Frank Gilliam Jr. accepted the Department's new award for Distinguished Alumni. Frank is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Communications and Community at UCLA. The photo shows him flanked by Iowa faculty members Tom Rice and John Nelson, who both date back to the ancient times when Frank studied at Iowa, though Rice claims to have been his colleague as a Ph.D. student. Singing for his supper, Frank presented current research on "Where You Live and What You Watch: The Impact of Racial Proximity and Local Television News on Attitudes about Race and Crime."

In April, Milton Lodge joined the University of Iowa's stellar set of Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visitors. Professors he come in the midst of the year honoring him as President of the Midwest Political Science Association. Lodge is an expatriate Iowa professor who left some years ago for the State University of New York at Stony Brook. There he has created the world's foremost program in political psychology. He continues to work regularly with Iowa faculty members such as Bob Boynton.

Russell Ross by inviting a parade of area politicians to visit with students in municipal government. Foreign politicians visited as well: Nguyen Thi Thanh Thuy, staff member of the Eastern European Department of the Party Central Committee External Relations Commission in Vietnam; Irene Lipovicz, Vice Chair of the Freedom Union Party, member of the government Foreign Relations Committee, and member of the committee that drafted the new constitution for Poland; Binh Quoc Mai, Dot Hue Nguyen, Lai Phu Ngoc, and Tran Trung Nguyen, national legislators from Vietnam; and Abdul Rabbin, son of the assassinated Prime Minister of Israel and former Chairman of Dar-Shalom. Just as often, scholars held center stage: Kousar Aslam, Professor of Political Science at the University of Hyderabad in India; Rekevan Kikrane, United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia; and Ola Listhaug, Professor of Political Science at the University of Trondheim in Norway; and Njuguna Ng'ethe, Professor of Political Science in Kenya.
Greetings and Visits from Afar

Poligram has put us in touch with alumni so numerous and far-flung that we can barely begin to note them here. Many thanks to the scores who have written or emailed, checked our Web site (http://www.uow.edu/~polisci/student/ alumni/) or telephoned. Thanks also to the hundred and more who have responded to the Department's annual giving letter: as the rest of this issue tries to suggest, Iowa faculty, staff, and students in Political Science are working hard to turn every contribution into greater learning about politics.

From the east, for example, a range of alumni have responded. Hilary Hall ('99) is pursuing a Washington career in politics and communication. Nicole Lake ('99) has worked on foreign affairs in New York City, and in the fall, she's bound for Harvard Divinity School. Kate Larsen ('98) has returned from Fulbright efforts in the Balkans to start law school by summer's end. John Hemwegwy ('Ph.D. '78) sends regards from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Robert G. Lehnen ('Ph.D. '88) does the same from Indiana University in Indianapolis.

From the south, we learn that Jewel Prestage ('Ph.D. '54), the first African-American woman to gain a Ph.D. in Political Science, continues to distinguish herself. She is serving on the National Executive Council of Phi Sigma Alpha. She's recently received honorary degrees from Loyola University of Chicago and Spelman College in Atlanta. The Southern Political Science Association has presented her the Manning Dauver Award, and the American Political Science Association celebrated her achievements with the Fiske Goodhue Award. Jewel points out that Edward Jackson, a 1966 Ph.D. from Iowa, now serves as Chancellor of Southern University in Baton Rouge.

To the west, Joanne Leffeste ('80) writes with reminiscences of teachers Don Johnson and Jim Murray, both honored at Iowa with awards in their names. Bob Lynch ('Ph.D. '67) shares experiences with Hugh Kelso, as does Joseph Crowley ('Ph.D. '59) for Kelso and Vernon Van Dyke. Special thanks to Crowley for sharing his book on No Equal in the World; it offers an instructive interpretation of the Academic Presidency based on his years at the helm for the University of Nevada at Reno. And Dan Gallagher ('86) writes to complain again, we may hope affectionately, about too much assigned reading in the current chair's classes. Then to the north, well, there's Minnesota.

The last year has been especially enjoyable for visits by several alumni. Ph.D.s Linda Beaul and Rhonda Kinney took a seminar each from directing women's studies in California and Michigan to teach Iowa courses again. Special funds in recognition of faculty grantmanship helped us create a series of advising workshops, and the March session on exploring career opportunities brought back to campus three recent grads: Thomas Whitehead ('79), Assistant Parliamentarian for the United States House of Representatives in Washington; Stacie Falke ('93), President and Founder of the Women Under Forty Political Action Committee in Boston; and Jeremy Johnson ('96), lower with Kate Waterman in Davenport. And in the fall, Peter Jeffries, Iowa journalism graduate and new political communication director for the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, spoke with students taking the Introduction to Political Communication.
In 1999-2000, Peverill Squire held the John Marshall Chair in Political Science at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences. Pev is lead author of a major text on American Government, often teaches Iowa's introduction to American politics, and has taught outside the United States several times. We asked for his observations on teaching that subject in Eastern Europe.

Having taught American politics at Iowa since 1985, I have a pretty good handle on how students in the United States approach the subject. Politics is usually not central to their lives; but, beyond simply learning about their own country, they share a common assumption that the United States is the only superpower in the world and that understanding its governmental system and politics is important. When I taught an American politics course at Meiji University in Tokyo in 1990, my students were deeply interested in the subject for the same reasons.

My experience as Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer over the last academic year has, however, been very different. Although my Hungarian students are every bit as bright as their American or Japanese counterparts, they are much less interested in American politics. This initially surprised me. After all, Hungarians are surrounded by American culture. The theaters are full of American movies. The TV channels are dominated by American shows. The radios blare American music. And McDonalds, Coke, and Pepsi are found everywhere. Yet, despite their immersion in American culture, Hungarians are remarkably uninterested in American society and politics. During the presidential nomination battles, for example, almost no Hungarians asked me about them.

I spent several months puzzling over this paradox. My explanation evolved slowly, a product of gaining more insight into the realities of life in a small Central European country. Hungarians know America is the most powerful country in the world. But for them, it is too distant to be central in their lives. Events in their own neighboring countries matter more. Getting into the European Union is critical to them, so they care about politics in the EU countries. Despite America’s prominence and power, it is for Hungarians and many others peripheral to their lives. And I suspect that is an important lesson for many Americans, myself included, to learn.