Doing Our Part: Civic Engagement in the Iowa Political Science Community

The famous French chronicler of early 19th-century American life, Alexis de Tocqueville, called us a nation of joiners. We were constantly forming groups, he said, to advocate interests and meet social needs. Our commitment to active citizenship remains strong today with millions of us volunteering in a myriad of ways every year to improve our society.

In recent decades, however, there have been disturbing trends away from civic engagement. Voter turnout is down, participation in service groups is down, church attendance is down, and even informal socializing among friends is down—Americans are withdrawing from civic life in growing numbers. These trends are unhealthy and need to be reversed.

Here at Iowa, in the Department of Political Science, we have always been committed to practicing and teaching active citizenship. The lead article in this year’s Poligram highlights the civic activities of some of our professors and alumni. After reading their stories, I think you will agree that civic engagement is alive and well in the Iowa political science community.

Tom W. Rice
Chair, Political Science Department

Different Politics, Shared Activism

Professors Tim Hagle and David Redlawsk may be on different sides of the political aisle, but they share a passion for political involvement. And, their partisan differences have not kept them from working together to engage hundreds of students in the political process.

Hagle, a strong Republican, first got involved in politics as the faculty advisor for a student group supporting Bush in 2000. By the end of the campaign, he had helped more than a dozen students gain valuable political experience. His efforts to involve students grew in 2002 and 2004, and he also became personally involved by working in campaigns and serving on the Johnson County Republican Committee. After the 2004 elections, a former student (continued on page 2)

Alumni Help Build Better Communities

We recently sent an email survey to a sampling of our alumni asking them to tell us about their lives, including their civic activities. The response was overwhelming, both in the sheer number of replies and in the variety of ways that our graduates are helping their communities. Let us share with you the activities of four of our alumni.

Richard Sevcik (82) has been active in Chicago area nonprofits since he arrived in the city as a young lawyer. He serves on the boards of directors of the Lincoln Park Zoo and the Chiaravalle Montessori School of Evanston, Illinois. He is a member of the Illinois Attorney General’s Charitable Advisory Council, the Lincoln Park Zoo Planned Giving Advisory Council, the Northwestern... (continued on page 3)
who had gone on to work in the White House asked Hagle to come to Washington. Happily, it worked out and he is currently enjoying a two-year leave from Iowa to work at the Justice Department as chief of staff in the Office for Victims of Crime. Redlawsk, a strong Democrat, first got involved in politics in his native Pennsylvania when he was appointed to a local planning commission. A year later he was chairing the commission, and a couple of years after that he was elected to the Township Board of Supervisors. In his thirties he decided to pursue a Ph.D at Rutgers University in New Jersey where he immediately got involved in local politics. He first served as the chair of the local Democratic committee and then was elected and re-elected to the City Council. Here in Iowa City, Redlawsk has served as the chair of the Johnson County Democrats and is currently the treasurer for a congressional campaign.

Electoral time finds both professors busy supervising students who are interning with campaigns. As you might expect, Hagle supervises the students who work for Republicans, while Redlawsk supervises those who work for Democrats. There is a bit of friendly competition between them, but they agree that students benefit from hands-on political experience, regardless of the party they support. Over the years, the two of them have worked together to ensure that the internships are of the highest standard.

For example, is volunteering in the Healing for the Blind and Dyslexia Program while he is in D.C., and Redlawsk is vice president of the Iowa City Babe Ruth Baseball League and board member of a local theater group and the local chapter of Sertoma International. Truly, it would be hard to find two better civic citizens.

Memorial Foundation Professional Council for Philanthropy, and the board of directors of the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He also chairs the pro-bono committee of his law firm and is secretary of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Donna Rogers Green (’66, M.A. ’72) was named volunteer of the year in her community. Her many local activities have included serving on the Library Advisory Board and assisting the local Boy Scouts. She has also served as the state officer and local president of the Exchange Club, a civic organization committed to the prevention of child abuse. Politically, she has dedicated time and money to several local and state campaigns, and she is a member of her county Republican Executive Committee.

Judith Riggs (’42) has been involved in many school board, city council, and mayoral campaigns in her hometown of Washington, D.C. She also organized the grassroots campaign for a successful congressional candidate. She currently serves on the boards of local arts and health care organizations. Her health care work led to her appointment as the consumer representative to the National Advisory Council on the Aging. She also regularly volunteers with her community hospice organization and in area public schools.

Joe Crowley (’59), who was president of the University of Nevada at Reno for 24 years, has been involved in numerous service organizations. Locally, he served the United Way for 12 years, chairing two annual giving campaigns. At the state level, he chaired the Nevada Rhodes Scholar Committee. Nationally, he was president of the NCAA (1993–95) and a board member of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. He continues to serve on the boards of the Collegiate Woman Sports Awards and of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports. The University of Iowa recognized him with the Distinguished Alumni Award for Achievement in 1994. Hats off to these active alumni and their inspirational service to their communities, states, and the nation!

Professor David Redlawsk has worked with under-graduates from his Political Campaigning class to conduct exit polls asking for voters’ opinions about political corruption and about selected local issues.

Additional Civic Activities of Alums

Here is a sampling of the civic activities of several more alumni.

Judy Turpin (’40)–board member of environmental organization Friends of the Halsebos, first vice president in charge of public policy for American Association of University Women, campaign manager for city council candidate Betty Abu-Shaida (’59)–local community Transportation Youth Commission chair.

Professor Tim Hagle has four alumni in the White House Press Room. From left to right: Mike Davis (’00, associate director of the Office of Political Affairs in the White House), Molly Scholl (’04, legislative correspondent for the Senate Finance Committee—chairman by Senator Grassley), Professor Tim Hagle (chief of staff in the Office for Victims of Crime in the Department of Justice), Jessica Hollman (’03, staff aide for Senator Grassley), and Sean Dunaj (’02, financial advisor at Stanley-Morgan).

Alumni Baker (’05)–Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, volunteer for Local Food Connection, Johnson County Sexual Assault Response Team.

Thomas Parks (’94)–Boy Scouts, United Way, board chair of Tanner Place, Cedar Rapids Symphony board president and fund-raising chair.

Timothy Fennelly (’89, J.D. ’92)–board member of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Quad Cities, board member of Villa Montessori School, member of Iowa Supreme Court Commission on the Unauthorized Practice of Law.

Cristina Gaspap (’94)–advisory board of My Sister’s House domestic violence shelter, mentor to high school students through Grant High School’s Building Dreams Mentor Program.

We are excited to welcome Professor Caroline Talbott to the faculty. After earning her Ph.D. in political science in 1994 from the University of Colorado at Boulder, she taught politics at Kent State University for nearly a decade. This fall she is teaching graduate seminars in American politics and research methods. She will regularly teach American government, state and local government, and public policy at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Talbott’s research is defined by an interest in strengthening American democracy, with a focus on participatory and reforming political institutions to create more competitive elections. She serves on the editorial board of West Politics Quarterly and is a member of the Board of Scholars of the Initiative and Referendum.

Rene Rocha

Rene Rocha, who joined us this fall as a tenure-track assistant professor, is a terrific addition to the department. He earned his Ph.D. from Texas A&M last spring. His primary area of interest is American politics, with a focus on Latino politics, education policy, and political behavior. His dissertation is entitled “Black/ Brown Cooperation and Conflict in the Educational Policymaking Process.” One of his courses will be teaching Latino Politics, which will examine the political influence and consequences of the growing Latino population in the Midwest.

Currently, Rocha is involved in two major research projects: one examines the political implications of racial segregation for the Latino community. Already having produced a paper, this project examines how segregation between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites influences attitudes toward immigration and English-language policies. The second project considers how different residential patterns between native and foreign-born Latinos affect Latino involvement in ethnic political and civic organizations. He hopes to study these effects in helping understand the consequences of different residential patterns that are emerging between Latinos and other groups.

Paloma Bauer

One of our three visiting faculty this academic year is Professor Paloma Bauer who is teaching courses on Latin American politics this fall. In the spring she will teach two other courses in comparative politics. After completing her M.A. in political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she earned her Ph.D. degree in political science from Michigan State University. Her research interests focus on political parties, public opinion, and voting behavior in Latin America. She plans to research issues of representation and accountability within the broader context of new democracies.

John C. Evans

The second visiting faculty member we welcomed this fall is Professor John Evans, who recently completed his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is teaching courses in public law this year and advising students interested in attending law school. He has a particular interest in First Amendment law and will be offering a course on that subject in the spring semester. His research focuses on public law and political theory with a secondary interest in religion and politics. His dissertation examines the political and constitutional thought of John Adams in the context of early American political thought. Evans received a B.A. in mathematics and political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an M.A. from McGill University in Montreal, Canada. While in Montreal, he developed an academic interest in the study of Quebec nationalism. He grew up in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and is a passionate Green Bay Packers fan. His hobbies include running, basketball, racquetball, and soccer (where he is the goal-keeper). He also speaks Spanish and enjoys volunteering.

Amy McKay

Another visiting faculty member, Amy McKay, comes to us from Duke University where she earned a Ph.D. in 2006 in American politics and methodology. Her dissertation, "The Effects of a Competitive Lobbying Environment on Policy Outcomes," examines the ways lobbying effects lobbyists, policymakers in Congress and federal agencies, and policy outcomes. Additional research centers on the impact of money in politics and the role of the executive in the policymaking process.

UI Alumni Association Presents Distinctive Alumni Awards

We are extremely pleased that two of our graduates were recognized this year by the University of Iowa Alumni Association. Dr. Greg Ganske (’75, M.A. ’76) was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Service Award for his commendable public service. Professor Shanto Iyengar (M.A. ’71, Ph.D. ’72) was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award for Achievement. The award recognizes his significant professional accomplishments and contributions to public service and scholarship.
Autumn brings many changes to campus. Stately trees are set ablaze, morning frost blankets the Pentacrest, and an eye turned skyward just might spot geese flying south. The new season also brings students back to campus by the thousands.

Undergraduate enrollment is at an all-time high at the University and in political science. We have more than 215 majors, making us one of the most popular departments on campus—and one of the busiest. Our growth is due in part, I’m sure, to pressing political events such as the continuing war in Iraq, but another reason is certainly the quality and commitment of our faculty. Despite the heavy demands of research and graduate student teaching, department members never lose sight of their primary responsibility—undergraduate education. Last academic year, for example, many professors coauthored scholarly papers with undergraduates. Three of these papers were presented at the prestigious Midwest Political Science Association Convention in Chicago. Another example is the creation of a social science research center to provide students with hands-on experience in designing, executing, and analyzing public opinion surveys. Yet another example is a special seminar where students conduct policy research for the Iowa legislature.

To help us with our teaching, the department welcomed five new professors this fall. This year we are searching for two more faculty members, one to teach comparative politics and the other to teach gender politics.

On the research side, the department enjoyed another very productive year. Books, chapters, and articles were published, grants were won, and professional papers were presented at conferences. The list of specific faculty accomplishments is simply too long to detail here, but you will read about some of them in the Fall newsletter. I also urge you to check out the faculty pages on our website (www.polisci.uiowa.edu) to see what we have been doing.

Finally, I want to thank all of our alumni who have donations to the Political Science Development Fund last year. Your generosity helps make possible a wide array of programs and activities that directly benefit our students.

Best wishes!

—Tom N. Rice
Chair, Political Science Department

Faculty Awards: Dean’s Scholar

Frederick Boeckhke, a newly tenured associate professor, has been named a 2006–07 Dean’s Scholar. This award honours faculty who have demonstrated excellence in both teaching and scholarship early in their careers. Dean’s Scholar awards are made possible through the UI Alumni Association’s endowment of the Dean’s Chair in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The endowment, managed by the UI Foundation, provides funds for the dean to use for special projects in the college. Dean’s Scholars receive a $5,000 discretionary fund for each of two years, to be used for support of their teaching and research initiatives. Congratulations to Professor Boeckhke!

International Peace Science Society Meeting

In November 2005 the University of Iowa Department of Political Science hosted the International Peace Science Society meeting. Professors Kelly Kaderas, Brian Lai, Sara Mitchell, and many of our graduate students worked hard to make it a great conference. More than 100 scholars from around the world attended. The conference was generously sponsored by International Programs, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Political Science.

Benjamin F. Shambaugh Conferences

Two research conferences sponsored by the Department of Political Science and made possible by funds made available to the department in memory of Professor Benjamin F. Shambaugh were hosted in fall 2005 and fall 2006. Professor Shambaugh was the department head from its founding in 1930 to his death in 1940. He also served as president of the American Political Science Association in 1930. The Shambaugh memorial fund has permitted the department to sponsor a series of lectures and conferences. Shambaugh lectures have been given by such distinguished political scientists as Karl Deutsch, Charles S. Hynemann, Dayton O. McKeon, Arnold Rogow, Sheldon Wolin, and Herman Finer. Since the adoption of the Shambaugh conference format in 1947, 22 research conferences have been held. These lectures and conferences have been the genesis of many scholarly publications. Professor Benjamin Rod hosted a November 2005 Shambaugh conference entitled "Straddling State and Society: Challenges and Insights from Ambiguous Associations." The conference focused on citizen associations that are linked to governments in various ways. Participants presented research on the functions and effectiveness of these "stumbling" organizations, drawing on examples from around the world. Special attention was given to the question of whether citizen associations with government connections can foster civil society as successfully as those that operate independently of government. Professor Sara Mitchell organized a 2006 Shambaugh conference entitled "Building Synergies: Institutions and Cooperation in World Politics" that was held in October 2006. This conference brought together members of the International Treaty Research and Analysis Group (ITRAG), an interdisciplinary collection of scholars who are assembling data on international treaties and organizations. Conference participants shared information about their data and discussed ways that the data sets, either individually or in combination, could be used to understand how international agreements and organizations can influence the likelihood of cooperation among nations. Topics covered included environmental agreements, security institutions, military alliances, territorial agreements, multilateral negotiations and treaties, executive agreements, and commitments to the International Court of Justice.

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

The University of Iowa Council on Teaching honored political science graduate student Dong-Hun Kim as an Outstanding Teaching Assistant for 2005–06. Dong-Hun, who accepted a faculty position at Oakland University in Michigan this fall, was a teaching assistant in a variety of classes from American politics to international relations. Congratulations to Dong-Hun!

Another Successful Year for Our Ph.D. Job Candidates

We are very pleased to report that, once again, our Ph.D. students enjoyed considerable success in the tight academic job market—all six students who were looking for jobs accepted good positions. Five of the six are staying in the Midwest. Tracy Slagter accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh teaching comparative politics. Scott Cody and Ken Moffett accepted tenure-track positions teaching American politics—Cody at Saint Louis Community College and Moffett at Southern Illinois University. Ed Holly accepted a one-year visiting position at University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point teaching terrorism, American politics, and methodology. Dong-Hun Kim accepted a tenure-track position at Oakland University teaching international relations. Daniel Moen will be moving the furthest for his job. He has a tenure-track appointment at University of Kentucky teaching international relations. Good luck to all of these fine students!

This year, we have four students seeking academic positions: Christina Bapst’s area of study is American electoral politics, with a specific focus on the electoral behavior of minorities, especially Latinos and women. Alex Chang’s major fields are methodology, formal model theory, and comparative politics. Andrew W. Cvetkovich’s work examines the way that affect structures what we look for and what we know about political candidates. Clayton Thayne’s research focuses on civil conflict, including the causes and consequences of civil wars.

Undergraduate Workshop

Presented by Alumni

The department wishes to share alumni experiences with our undergraduates as they choose future careers. Please contact Professor Tom Rice if you are interested in donating time and experience in a workshop with our students. You may contact Tom at tom-rice@uiowa.edu or call 319-335-2249.
Journeys in world politics workshop

In early March Professors Kelly Kadera and Sara Mitchell hosted the Journeys in World Politics workshop. Bringing together junior and senior scholars working in international relations, the workshop featured two senior scholars—Professors Brett Ashley Leeds from Rice University and Wendy L. Hansen of the University of New Mexico. The weekend experience was highlighted by junior scholar research presentations, feedback on research from conference participants, sessions on career and gender topics, and one autobiography by senior scholars.

Roberts Fund Supports Two Projects

Two research projects were sponsored by the Richard Hale Roberts Fund this year. The fund was established to support faculty research by Helen Roberts in memory of her husband, Richard Hale Roberts ('32, M '35, Ph D '35). After receiving his Ph D, Roberts was selected as a Brookings Institution fellow and worked for the Foreign Agricultural Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He later transferred to the Diplomatic Service and was stationed in Ottawa, Canada.

The Roberts Fund helped provide financial support for Professor David Redlawsk’s ongoing project to understand the effects of early voting on challenger campaigns. Redlawsk hypothesizes that early voting disadvantages challengers, especially in low-information campaigns such as state legislative races. In states like Iowa, where people may begin voting weeks before Election Day, early voters will not be exposed to as much campaign information as later voters. Without information, challengers, who are usually less familiar to voters than incumbents, will presumably be disadvantaged.

Professor Michael Lewis-Beck’s project on the impact of the double ballot was also helped by financial support from the Roberts Fund. An example of the double ballot is the French system where the top two presidential candidates on the first ballot compete on a second ballot. Lewis-Beck recruited students to participate in one-ballot and two-ballot experiments. The results will help answer the question of whether elections using the double ballot generate more candidates, greater ideological distance between top candidates, or greater ideological distance between the median voter and the winner of the election.

Joseph Domke Memorial Scholarship

This is the first year that the Joseph Domke Memorial Scholarship has been awarded. Kate Cigrand was the recipient. John and Jean Domke created the scholarship in memory of their son, Joseph. One annual award will be given to a senior majoring in political science who has attended law school and who demonstrates a focus on education and compassion for those in need.

Political Science Faculty RECOMMEND GOOD BOOKS

Once again, here are some reading recommendations for you. The first, from Professor Kelly Kadera, is “Vloggies: A True Story of Courage by James Bradley. In the latter days of World War II, nine American Navy and Marine aviators were stranded on the Japanese island of Chichi Jima. One of them, George H. W. Bush, was rescued by submarine while the other eight were captured, imprisoned, and then executed by the Japanese. The author tells the gripping story of these nine young men, but he also tells the larger story of the war from the American and Japanese perspectives.

Professor Benjamin Read suggests Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China by John Pomfret. Pomfret, Beijing bureau chief for the Washington Post, is described as a "one of the most impressive Chinese correspondents of all time." In the book, Pomfret analyzes China's 35 years of tumultuous and dramatic change through the lives of five young Chinese he met while on exchange student in Nanjing in 1981. He comes to a sobering conclusion: the current social contract in China is unraveling. A third recommendation, made by Professor Sara Mitchell, is Defending the Holy Land: A Critical Analysis of Israel’s Security and Foreign Policy by Zeen Moz. The book is heralded as the most comprehensive analysis to date of Israel's national security and foreign policy. Moz describes "the harrowing detail of the tragic recklessness and self-made traps that pervade the history of Israeli security operations and foreign policy."

Professor Caroline Tolbert recommends Reforming the Republic: Democratic Institutions for the New America by TodNor and Shaun Bower. This book discusses possible election reforms and speculates how the American political system would change if they were adopted.

Finally, Professor Douglas Madsen makes two book recommendations: Damned Lies and Statistics: Untangling Numbers from the Media, Politicians, and Activists by Joel Best, and Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide by Shanto Iyengar and Jennifer McGrady. The first is a short, non-technical book dealing with the blizzard of dubious statistics that surround us today. The second book examines how the media affects American politics and the ways politicians use the media for their own purposes.
Please visit the department's website: (www.polisci.uiowa.edu). It provides a convenient clearinghouse for information about the department, its students, and alumni. In addition to working papers, we post a newsletter about four times per semester. And we want to hear from you: about the website, about yourself, about current events. We are happy to receive e-mail from alumni at polisci@uiowa.edu. Or, complete the enclosed Alumni Information Sheet and mail it to us.