

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SUNY GENESEO

Greetings Political Science and International Relations Alumni!



We congratulate the class of 2019 as this academic year ends and they move on to the next chapter of their life. This past year has again been a very busy year for the department. We currently have the largest number of Political Science majors in Geneseo's history, 244 at last count in addition to 190 International Relations majors. As you will see, the Geneseo faculty and students have been remarkably busy. We hosted a variety of speakers to address some of the hot topics in domestic and international politics. Students attended Model U.N. games, some students made research presentations at the Midwest Political Science Association Annual meeting in Chicago, other students presented research at GREAT Day. On May 3, the department hosted its annual Senior Dinner at the Big Tree Inn, providing us with an opportunity to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our students. We held a screening of the documentary "Who Speaks for Nature", a documentary on the research of Geneseo Political Science **Professor Karleen West** and her co-author Todd Eisenstadt. The movie was held at the renovated Riveria Theater in Geneseo. Professor West and Documentary Film Producer Larry Engel fielded questions from audience members following the film.

The Department conducted a search to hire a scholar with a specialization on International Political Economy, an ability to teach social science research methods, as well as make other contributions to the Political Science curriculum. We received 144 applications for this position, inviting four candidates to campus for an interview. We hired **Andrew Hart**, a rising scholar who received his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

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Senior Dinner at the Big Tree Inn



Professor **Eunju Kang**



Professor **Anand Rao**

The Department held its annual Senior Dinner at the Big Tree Inn on May 3rd. We are grateful for the generous alumni contributions that make this event possible. Almost 100 students, faculty, and alumni were in attendance. A record. In addition to a wonderful meal, humor, and the opportunity to give attention to each senior in attendance, the department gave special recognition to a number of students for exceptional accomplishment. **Mallory Mzrozinski** was recognized as the Outstanding Senior in Political Science, while **Enid Brady** and **Lucien Sigal** received the award for Outstanding Senior in International Relations. The Jesse Rogers Award for Outstanding Junior in Political Science went to **Michael Badalmenti**; **Jimmy Connolly** won the Ambassador Apartments award as the Outstanding Junior in International Relations.



Professor **Jeffery Koch** (standing) with students at the Big Tree Inn Senior Dinner



Dr. Robert Goeckel



Professor Koch delivering the Top 10 speech

The Ed “Dr. J.” Janosik Award for leadership was given to **John Magnan** (President of the Political Affairs Club), **Caitlyn Best**, **Melissa Hartlipp**: (President of Model U.N.), **Thasfia Chowdry**. **Kylie Griffith** and **Melissa Hartlipp** shared the **Kenneth Deutsch** Award in Legal Affairs. Finally, the Award for Outstanding Internship was given to **Madeline Stoklosa**.



Professor Grace delivering Award



Professor **Carly Herold** with students



Professor **Aaron Herold**

(cont'd from cover page).

The Department also conducted a program review this past year. A program review is a thorough, rigorous assessment of the quality of an academic program done every five years. The external reviewers stated “The Department of Political Science and International Relations at SUNY Geneseo is widely regarded as one of the strongest among the SUNY comprehensives, and our findings from the external review we conducted March 14-15, 2019 strongly reinforce this perception. The department is on solid footing in terms of curricular offerings, faculty and staffing (though in need of another line in American Politics), and leadership.”

In this newsletter, you will find highlights of Geneseo faculty and student accomplishments. I hope you will enjoy. And that if you are ever in Geneseo you will visit us in Fraser Hall.

Speakers 2019

Dr. Raslan Ibrahim Discusses Israeli Politics

On April 4th, Dr. Ibrahim of the Political Science and International Relations department spoke with students in an installment of “Politics and Pizza”, an informal discussion of issues of interest. The topic was the Israeli presidential election, which took place the following week. Dr. Ibrahim is an Israeli citizen and a scholar of Middle East politics. Main issues of the election included concerns over the incumbent Netanyahu’s possible corruption, Israel’s rising power, and economic inequality throughout the country. Ibrahim remarked that for the first time, the issue of Palestine was not the foremost issue at hand in a national election. Though the political landscape of Israel is further right-wing than that of the United States, people in the enclave of liberal technocrats in Tel Aviv have been known to skew to the left. The objective of these occasional talks by faculty members is to give undergraduates an idea of the research conducted by their professors and the content of their presentations at conferences, while also giving an opportunity for students to give feedback.



Assistant Professor Anand Rao - Soft Power, Hard Gains: Japan's New "Rich Nation, Strong Army?"



In another installment of "Politics and Pizza", Professor Rao discussed his preliminary research into the rise of soft power in Japan. In his work with the Japan Studies Organization, Rao has had the opportunity to confer with other Japan specialists in policy and society meetings in Honolulu. Japan, sometimes called a 'soft power superpower', has emerged economically over the last 75 years while showing military restraint. Rao cites cultural attraction as a prominent example of soft power in the case of Japan; lighthearted highlights of his

presentation included references to Marie Kondo and pictures of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe dressed as the Nintendo character Mario. Abe is best known for championing the growth of Japan's hard power through military assets and the reform or repeal of Article 9, the constitutional measure that renounces Japan's military. Rao argues that soft power promotion is linked to achieving gains in hard power. Moving forward his research will include contact with politicians, bureaucrats, and organizations in an attempt to link politics and soft power.



Students at **Profesor Rao's** presentation

Dr. Ariel Ahram Speaks on Separatist Movements

On April 23rd, guest speaker Ariel Ahram presented his research to students in Newton lecture hall. His book, *Break All the Borders: Separatism and the Reshaping of the Middle East*, attempts to explain regime defection and secessionist strategies. Through examining separatist movements in Egypt and Libya, Ahram reimagines the norm of statehood. According to his book, separatists take advantage of the regime's weakness and appeal to the international community on political and moral grounds. During a question-and-answer session with students, Ahram pointed out examples of the increasing trend in breaking territorial sovereignty norms. His conclusions suggest the international community's response should be based on the de facto rather than de jure regional powers. Ahram is an associate professor in Virginia Tech's School of Public and International Affairs; *Break All The Borders...* was published by Oxford in 2019.

Dr. Melody Crowder-Meyer of Davidson College spoke on February 20th in Doty Tower room. In the last 50 years, 76 countries have had a female head of state. Even after 2018 groundbreaking election, the US Congress is still 76% male and 24% female. The women are also disproportionately Democrats. 52% of American women are Democrats but 83.5% of congresswomen are Democrats; Republican women are especially poorly represented. Crowder-Meyer's presentation entitled, "Who Run the World?" explores factors inhibiting women's representation in America. The presentation outlined her research design, controlling for factors such as candidate supply, potential candidate ambition, party cultures, and voter behavior. Optimistically, her research shows that while the supply of female candidates is decreasingly important, political ambition in women is activated when they are encouraged by peers and colleagues to run for office.

Additionally, **Professor Sarah Burns** from the Rochester Institute of Technology spoke on "The Politics of War Powers: The Theory and Practice of American Constitutionalism". George Washington University **Professor Corrine McConnaughey** spoke on "Black Men, White Women, and Demands from the State: How Race and Gender Jointly Shape the Public's Expectations of Protesters and Legitimate State Response."

Dr. Melody Crowder-Meyer & "Who Run the World?"



Students at the at **Prof. Crowder-Meyer** lecture



Prof. Crowder-Meyer with students



Professor Corrine McConnaughy delivering a talk on Race and State Response to Protest

Geneseo Students at Model UN



Career Panel

Prior to the Department's May 3rd Senior Dinner, we held a career panel for Political Science and International Relations majors. Assistant Professor of Political Science Aaron Herold organized the panel. Participating in the panel were Attorney **David Case** (Partner, Fein, Such & Crane, L.L.P.), **Thomas Brandt** (Chief Risk Officer, Internal Revenue Service), **Kate Wastl** (Associate Program Manager at Moog Space and Defense Group), **Jaime McCay** (Transportation Safety Planner, WSP (embedded within Maryland Transit Administration's Office of Planning and Capital Programming)), **Chris Hanse** (Press Coordinator, New York State Assembly), and **Matthew Walter** (President, Republican State Leadership Committee).

**Jaime McKay, Matt Walter,
Chris Hanse, and Kate Wastl**
(pictured left to right)



(above) **David Case and Tom Brandt**



Alums **Tom Brandt, Kassie and David Case**, and **Prof Goeckel**



Alum **Chris Hanse** and **Professor Rao**

Political Humor

"I was not lying. I said things that later on seemed to be untrue." —President Richard Nixon, reflecting on the Watergate scandal in 1978

"Sure, there are dishonest men in local government. But there are dishonest men in national government too." —President Richard Nixon

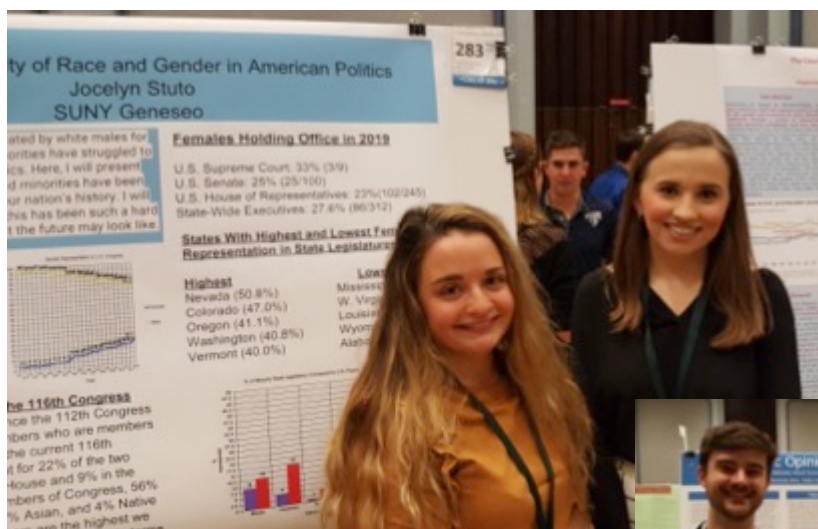
"Politics gives guys so much power that they tend to behave badly around women. And I hope I never get into that." — Bill Clinton to a woman friend, while he was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford

"Vote: the instrument and symbol of a freeman's power to make a fool of himself and a wreck of his country." **Ambrose Bierce on Voting**

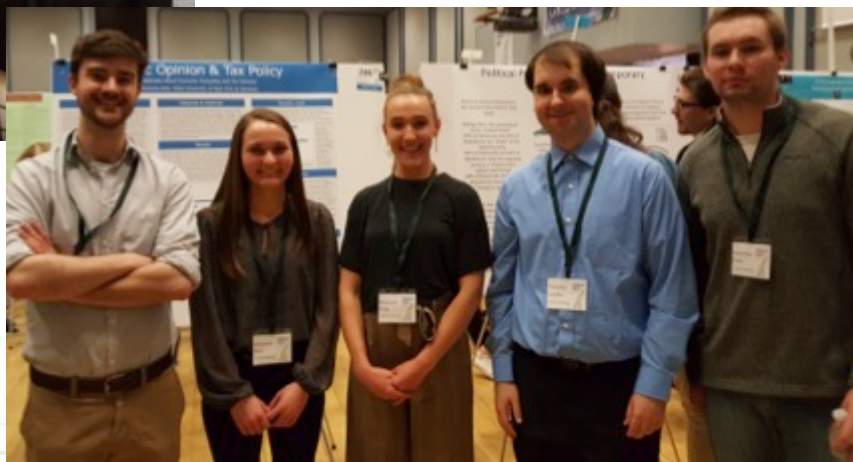
"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt." **Abraham Lincoln on Silence**

"If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?" **Abraham Lincoln on Being Two-Faced**

"Sometimes I feel like the fire hydrant looking at a pack of dogs. For six years I had declined to tell those kinds of jokes, because I have been told it is not presidential. But I feel kind of outdoorsy today." —**Bill Clinton at a party honoring the 150th anniversary of the Interior Department**



Students presenting research at GREAT Day



Who Speaks for Nature

On March 29th at 4:30 at the Riviera Theater the Department of Political Science and International Relations presented a showing of **Who Speaks for Nature?** by Larry Engel of American University. The documentary is based on the book by Todd A. Eisenstadt and **Geneseo Professor Karleen West.**

In the Ecuadorian Amazon, a war rages. Its indigenous peoples battle big mining and oil over control of ancestral lands. At stake are the people's human rights and the fate of the Amazon. Even the Ecuadorian government seems to side with extraction. The film examined how three different groups have fared in their efforts to save their land, the environment, and their culture. Following the film Professor West and Mr. Engel discussed the making of the documentary and answer questions. As you can see from the accompanying pictures, there were many students, faculty, and other from the public in attendance. We thank our alums for the support that enables us to have these opportunities.

Larry Engel is a member of the Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America–East, and the Potomac Appalachia Trail Club–Mountaineering Division. He is passionate about environmental and conservation issues and works with many regional nonprofits with students in CB-designated course.



Professor Karleen West and Mr. Larry Engel discuss documentary



Students at Riviera Presentation of Who Speaks for Nature

Political Knowledge Contest

This past year the student-lead Political Affairs Club held a knowledge of politics contest. The event was partially supported by a grant from Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honor society for Political Science majors. Eight teams of students (mostly but not entirely Political and International Relations majors) entered with a chance to win a cash prize. The Championship match was held prior to the Senior Honors.



When making a contribution to Geneseo, please make sure to specify Political Science or International Relations Department



Poli Sci and IR Dinner