

Alumni Newsletter for Political Science and International Relations Majors,

April 2004



I write this letter to establish and maintain contact with our many Geneseo political science and international relations graduates. I want you to be informed about departmental activities and other important changes that have occurred since you left Geneseo. The department welcomes the contributions you can or have made.

I became chair of the department September 2003 after serving as a Fulbright lecturer in Shanghai, China at East China Normal University. My wife and children (Justin and Elias, ages 9 and 5) accompanied me. We had a wonderful time, in spite of SARS. It was fascinating to live in a foreign country, especially

one as exotic as China. It was fun to observe its political, economic, and academic system. I have shamelessly included a picture of myself at a Pagoda in Shanghai for your pleasure.

When many of you passed through Geneseo Alan Shank served as chair of the department. Dr. Shank retired in December 2001, having chaired the department for seventeen years. I am sure you wish him a most enjoyable retirement.

State fiscal difficulties have prevented us from filling the position vacated by his retirement. For the 2004-2005 academic year we will hire Phil Nicholas as a visiting assistant professor to teach courses in American politics. An improved state economy, and increased support for SUNY, should enable us to hire a regular, full-time faculty member for the 2005-2006 academic year.

This past year members of the faculty made significant accomplishments, as has been the case for many years. Dr. Kenneth Deutsch was recognized by the state for his numerous research accomplishments with a *Chancellor's Award*. He is nearing completion of a book-length manuscript on the political leadership of Abraham Lincoln. Dr. Robert Goeckel received a Chancellor's Award for Internationalization for his efforts to take students to places around the world (some of whom he is able to bring back). Dr. Goeckel also participated in discussions with potential partners with Geneseo in Mexico for an exchange program. Dr. Drachman has assumed temporary responsibility for the department's internship program. At the urgings of his publisher, he will soon begin work on the second edition of his book *You Decide!*. Additionally, he has begun a program for Geneseo students interested in mentoring inner-city Rochester youth. His goal is to



encourage these students to consider pursuing a college degree. Dr. Karla Cunningham continues her research on terrorism, certainly a hot topics in today's world. Professor Jeremy Grace has been involved in recent elections in Kosovo and may go to Iraq this summer to contribute to that country's first democratic elections. He has also made trips to West Africa and Liberia. Sue Federico continues as department secretary, keeping things moving as smoothly as is humanly possible. The professional and teaching activities of the department are too numerous to mention here. I can only mention a few here.

You will also note the department has changed its name from the Department of Political Science to the Department of Political Science and International Relations. The addition and growth of the International Relations Major has greatly increased the number of majors we service, adding tremendously to our advisement responsibilities. At the beginning of the Spring 2004 semester there were 96 International Relations Majors and 193 Political Science Majors. Both majors have experienced tremendous growth in recent years.

This past academic year students traveled to places as varied as Boston, Washington, D.C., and the Netherlands to participate in simulation exercises. Students and faculty work very hard to prepare for these events, and find them most satisfying. Of course, for some students trips to Washington and Boston may seem short sojourns. For their study-abroad experience, students are venturing to places as far off as Vietnam and Russia, not to mention



Spain, Ireland, and Germany.

At the beginning of the semester the department hosted a pizza mixer in its office area. The faculty enjoyed the opportunity to meet students in a less formal setting than the classroom.

This past year I gave a presentation on my experiences living and teaching in Communist China, Professor Grace gave a talk on building democracies in post-conflict societies, faculty members with an expertise in foreign affairs conducted a forum on issues in current U.S. Foreign Policy, and Assemblymen Joseph Morelle (a Geneseo Political Science graduate) from the 132 Assembly District gave a talk on New York State Politics. On March 2nd Professor David Ost from Hobart and William Smith College visited Geneseo to give a talk on labor movements in Poland. And on April 6th David King from Harvard University gave a talk on the political attitudes of current college students, providing students with the first data results from his most recent survey. We plan to provide our students with many additional activities in the future.

This past year the department conducted a program review mandated by SUNY. Some of our alumni graciously gave of their time by completing a web-based survey. I want to take this time to thank you for doing so and that we greatly appreciate hearing from you. The purpose of the program review is to improve the quality of our offerings. We are now attempting to initiate several changes in our curriculum as well as make a number of other modifications.

On April 2nd a dinner was held to Honor graduating seniors in Political Science and International Relations. Additionally, students were admitted to the Honors' Society in Political Science and International Relations and many other students were recognized for their achievements. This dinner, the pizza party held by the department, recognition of students achievements, and invited talks are made possible by the contributions of our alumni. Without your help none of these events would occur.



We would be most appreciative if when the Geneseo Alumni Foundation calls to solicit support you designate your contributions to the Department of Political Science and International Relations. The contributions we have received from many of

you have allowed us to provide important learning opportunities to our current students. Indeed, we would like to increase our offerings, but that is difficult to do in these trying budgetary times. Alternatively, you may complete the attached form and send your contribution to the Geneseo Fund directly. I hope to provide letters to our alumni on the department's activities on a yearly basis. I also plan to update the department's web page to enhance your experience of a "virtual" visit. Of course, if you are ever in the upstate New

York region we would be very pleased if you could provide us with a “real” visit. Please drop by if you are ever in the area.

Best regards,

Jeff Koch

Chair and Professor of Political Science and International Relations



Senior/Honors Dinner

