

SIENA COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Dear Political Science Majors, Minors, Alumni, and Friends,

As we expected, the 2018-19 academic year has been an exciting one for us here in the Siena Department of Political Science & International Relations. On campus, we've had an exciting array of events including faculty book releases, visiting lectures, and student research presentations. Last Fall, students developed and executed a campus voter mobilization strategy that qualified Siena as a Voter Friendly Campus, a nationally recognized designation by nonpartisan organizations Campus Vote Project and NASPA. Students are continuing to work on this voter engagement effort, with planning already in the works for the 2020 national elections. This Spring we've been fortunate to welcome Dr. Lilly Goren to campus for a talk on American visions of dystopia and the connection to Superhero genres. We also cosponsored a Black History Month Keynote Address by Nyle Fort on "Being Black Men in America."

Of course, we're continuing to offer intriguing and cutting edge courses in all areas of political science. This semester students are enrolled in classes on Congress; Citizen Advocacy & Lobbying; The Politics of Minority Rights; Nature, Technology, & Politics; Women & Revolution; as well as a capstone seminar in International Human Rights Law. Indeed, our students have been engaged in the most salient and pressing political issues of the day, both in the classroom and in the community.

So, please take a few minutes to peruse this semester's newsletter. You'll be able to read all about our programs, faculty, students, and alumni. It includes Fall 2019 course descriptions, news from our affiliated clubs, student experiences, faculty news, and updates from our alumni. Whether you're preparing to register for classes or just checking in to see what's happening with the department, it's a great read! Of course, please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas you may have. And, I'm always happy to hear the latest news in return from our amazing alumni!

Cheers,
Dr. Daniel Lewis

Table of Contents

Academic Showcase- 02

Scholar at Risk- 03

Voter Friendly Campus
- 04

Club Updates- 05-07

Washington Semester
- 08

Electives- 09-11

Lobbying Class- 12

Guatemala Research- 13

Capstones- 14

Faculty Updates- 15-17



Find us on Facebook!

Academic Showcase

Political Science Schedule of Events



Time	Location	Event
11:00am-1:00pm	Marcelle Athletic Complex	Political Science Capstone Posters
1:30-2:30pm	SSU 241	Political Science Alumni Mixer
2:30-3:30pm	Siena Hall 308	Pi Gamma Mu Induction
2:30-3:30pm		Diversity in Society Panel
2:30-3:30pm		Engaged Work in Gender Studies
4:10-4:20pm	Siena Hall 218	Pi Sigma Alpha Induction
4:20-4:30pm	Siena Hall 218	Phi Alpha Delta Induction

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us in a celebration of our students' achievements on the last Friday in April (April 26th). The day includes a Poster/Project/Artwork Session, a wide variety of talks given by students and faculty, and a host of honor society inductions and award ceremonies at various locations on campus throughout the day.

Siena College Scholar at Risk

"Ahmed is teaching here this academic year through Scholars at Risk, an international network of colleges that host academics who are in danger in their home countries because of their teaching, writing or beliefs. The organization's mission is to "support and defend the principles of academic freedom and to defend the human rights of scholars around the world."

Ahmed, a native of the Kurdish region of Iraq, is a visiting assistant professor of political science here until May.

[...]

"Space is something I have been searching for most of my life," he said. "If you don't feel at home, you lose the ability to speak, think, and daydream. Many refugees and women have this same experience; being constantly aware of the gaze of others deprives you of your personhood."

Ahmed emigrated for political reasons from Iraq to Canada in 2001. After earning his doctorate there, he taught in Turkey. Fired for his work with marginalized groups, he and his colleagues were persecuted for signing a petition asking for peace. This was shortly before the 2016 coup attempt, when there was a crackdown on Kurdish people living in the country.

"We signed a petition asking for peaceful resolution, but long before that the police were watching me very closely," he said. "I was very worried about my students. I still avoid contacting them."

[...]

"My impression of students here is good," he said. We've had good debates about a lot of topics. Generally, they are more politically correct than previous generations, and are very careful about how they express their opinions."

[...]

"There is such a sense of oppression, of 'othering' that is reflected in every area of university life," he explained. "There is a great deal of awareness of anti-racism, anti-sexism, feminism and resistance to political oppression and students tend to be very active in spite of the dangers they face."

[...]

"As a Franciscan institution, we deeply value the pursuit of peace and justice in our learning communities," she said. "Our students have benefited greatly from this opportunity to directly engage with Dr. Ahmed. Despite the enormous adversity he has faced, he continues to share his scholarly work with our students. He is also an activist who inspired our majors to initiate a children's book drive for recently resettled refugees."

Exerpts from The SCoop article by:

Lisa Witkowski
March 15, 2019

Read the full SCoop article:

<https://www.siena.edu/offices/marketing-and-communications/the-scoop/march-15-2019/a-siena-scholar-at-risk/>





Justin Kenyon '20 and his classmates wanted to encourage political dialogue at Siena and raise awareness of important events that impact young voters. With those goals in mind, a group led by Kenyon applied for and just received the designation of Voter Friendly Campus for 2019-2020. Siena is one of only 10 colleges in New York to hold the designation.

The national VFC program was started two years ago by two nonpartisan groups: Campus Vote Project and NASPA/Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. The purpose? To help colleges involve their administrators, faculty, and student organizations in the electoral process.

Kenyon, a political science major from Glenville, N.Y., learned about the program through a Bonner Leadership conference he attended last summer. When he got back to campus, he reached out to Daniel Lewis, Ph.D., chair of Siena's political science department, saying he wanted to get the designation process started for Siena. "We want the campus to be a place that welcomes diverse viewpoints," he said. "We want to increase cooperation and dialogue among the student political groups, and also extend the discussion outside the political sphere."

To be named a Voter Friendly Campus, colleges must outline strategies for engaging their campus in the electoral process, such as voter registration drives, absentee ballot requests, debates, and voting mobilization events.

"The students did a remarkable amount of work to connect their peers to the important issues at stake in 2018 election," said Lewis. "They exemplify Siena's commitment to building a world that is more just through engagement and leadership in the community."

Club Updates

Political Science Society

The Political Science Society has been busy since last fall. After a successful fall semester, highlighted by our Center for the Study of Government and Politics event with Congressmen Paul Tonko and Chris Gibson, we have been busy once again this semester. We have held two town hall debates this semester thus far. These are monthly debates between the College Democrats, College Republicans, along with Turning Point and YAL. In late February, the Society co sponsored an event with the Black and Latino Student Union on 'Blexit', or the movement of black people out of the Democratic Party. We discussed the interrelated stereotypes of race and political views. Lastly, we have held weekly meetings where we discuss current political topics in the news.

February 19, we, along with the Center for the Study of Government and Politics, will have held a discussion with representatives from the Business Council of New York and the Healthcare Association of New York State. We will discuss ways to move New York forward with the larger business community. We will host an additional town hall debate in April, along with additional weekly meetings and poli-chats of political issues of the week. Looking forwards to next year, we are in the planning stages of organizing another trip to Washington D.C. Stay tuned! - Tyler Del Giudice

Alumni Update:

Chuck Young '83 is the Managing Director of Public Affairs for US Government Accountability Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress. Before this current position, he worked as a communications consultant, served as Chief of Staff for two Members of Congress, and spent 10 years as a journalist.



Club Updates

Pre-Law Society

The Pre-Law Society hopes to provide a platform for its members to discuss current issues, learn about the legal profession, and find opportunities for growth personally and professionally. This semester, we have had discussions on the Electoral College and the legalization of marijuana, which have allowed students to discuss the various viewpoints on the issues and to learn about the history and current events related to the topics. We have also held our 3rd annual Women's Panel on Law and Government and the panel included a current second year Albany Law student, a personal injury lawyer, the president of JAI Advantage, and the Dean of Western New England Law School. Our students were able to talk with the panelists and also listen to them discuss the challenges of being a woman in a male dominated field. We regularly hold LSAT Study Groups where students can come join us to practice questions to become better prepared for the LSAT exam. And, our final event in April will be a discussion on campaign finance and it will allow our students to learn more about the issue while also expressing their perspectives. We are looking forward to more exciting and informational events next year. - Dana Wakeman



Club Updates

Mock-Trial Team

The Siena College Moot Court/Mock Trial Team is a competition team through the American Mock Trial Association. Each year, the team receives a case that we prepare for trial. We have students who play attorney and witness roles. With the guidance of our coaches, who are practicing attorneys and judges, we prepare a case for the defense and the prosecution or plaintiff depending on if it is a criminal or a civil case. The team diligently worked toward gaining as much experience as they could before Regionals. In order to prepare ourselves, we competed in scrimmages against SUNY Albany, St. Rose, Williams College as well as SUNY Oneonta

The Siena College Moot Court/Mock Trial team competed at Princeton University for our Regional Competition in 2019. We competed against Brandeis University, Amherst College, Ursinus College, as well as a bye-buster team.

Mock Trial provides real world skills even for students who are not interested in going to law school. Students learn critical thinking skills, how to think quickly, analyze materials, and make a proper argument against an adversary. Student's public speaking skills improve drastically from first day of tryouts to the last competition of the season. These are skills students are able to use in the classroom and beyond. No matter what career path a student chooses, he or she will have to advocate for their argument at some point, and mock trial gives students the skills to do so.

If students are interested in learning more about our program, they should reach out to Dr. Cutler at cutler@siena.edu. We look forward to meeting new potential members and expanding our team!

- Jenna Jewell





APPLY FOR THE FALL SEMESTER
NOW!

WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM

Pay Siena tuition (your financial aid transfers!) to spend a semester in DC. All majors welcome!

**FALL 2019 DEADLINE:
04/01/2019**

Questions? Email Dr. Collens at
jcollens@siena.edu

Fall 2019 Electives

POSC 329 (Special Topics in American Politics): American Political Development

PROFESSOR JACK D. COLLENS

The field of American political development is a tricky one in political science. Some scholars assert that it is essentially a glorified form of political history, while others view it as a method of inquiry rather than a substantive field unto itself. In this course, we will treat it as both a substantive and methodological field. We will trace the complex history of American politics and how we ended up where we are today. The semester will begin with the colonial and Founding eras, focusing on the establishment of the American political order. We will then examine the interwoven histories of the politics of slavery, the development of mass parties, the creation of a burgeoning American political culture, and the growth of the federal government. We will then examine the development of key formal and informal institutions of American politics. The remainder of the semester will focus on the development of the politics surrounding social movements in America, through examination of the temperance and Prohibition movements, the rise of organized labor, the fight for women's suffrage, the civil rights movement, and into modern debates over LGBT+ rights and criminal justice reform. (APJ track)

POSC 265: Public Policy

PROFESSOR JESSICA PIDGEON

This course is a survey of the field of public policy, with a particular emphasis on public policy evaluation and analysis. It will cover both theoretical perspectives and practical skills relevant to careers in public policy, public administration, community development, and politics. The course material will not focus on any particular policy areas (e.g., education policy), but students will be immersed in a specific policy area of their choice through the course assignments. The course is required for all Community Policy Institute (CPI) Student Fellows. (APJ and PPA tracks)

Fall 2019 Electives

POSC 235: Russia and Post-Communist Politics

PROFESSOR AUSRA PARK

We will study political changes, institutions, and current challenges (political, economic, and social) of the 15 post-Soviet Republics that were once part of the Soviet empire. We will begin with Russia; then move on to the five Central Asian “stans” (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan); then the three Caucasus republics (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan--NOTE: in the spring of 2020 a travel course to this region will be offered as a new elective!); then Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, and wrap up with the amazing success stories in political and economic development--the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania)--which after the breakup of the ex-USSR, transformed so rapidly and successfully that they became members of the European Union and NATO in 2004. This course will be a true eye-opener to those who are interested in the post-communist region and its astounding diversity. (IR track)

POSC 349 (Special Topic in Comparative Politics): Popular Protest

PROFESSOR VERA ECCARIUS-KELLY

This course explores a variety of socio-cultural and political grassroots movements throughout North America, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East to examine the role of civil society in the public sphere. The focus will be on how young people use popular protests to advance democratization. Our discussions begin with clarifying the conceptual and definitional issues surrounding notions of civil society in the public sphere. We then examine the causes for the rise of civic associations, the transformation of mass media, the impact of the Internet, and popular protest activities since the end of the Cold War in 1991. Our goal is to understand the rise of civil society and its role in democratization in a variety of countries.

This course provides a deep understanding of social science theories, concepts, and introduces methodologies for analyzing civil society, the public sphere, and social movements. To help students develop strong analytical and writing skills, this course requires intensive class discussions and writing exercises. (IR and APJ tracks)

Fall 2019 Electives

POSC 374: Introduction to Criminal Law

PROFESSORS LEONARD CUTLER AND VINCENT BONVENTRE (2 SECTIONS)

It is probably a truism to suggest that the criminal justice system in the United States today is undergoing profound change. Many states, including New York, have revised and enacted new codes to apply to the most recent trends. It is very important to note, however, that the resulting statutory approaches are characterized by diversity rather than uniformity. This semester a major focus of the course will provide a basis for understanding the distinct variation in the legal concepts and why state legislatures, and the United States Congress have been moved to make changes. Specific areas of examination will include offenses against the person (homicide, rape, the death penalty), offenses against habitation (burglary, arson), offenses against property (larceny, robbery, embezzlement, theft), and immutability with respect to the commission of a criminal act. (APJ track)

POSC 489: Internship in Public Service Studies

PROFESSOR LEONARD CUTLER

The course is designed to prepare and expose students to public policy making in New York State and allow them to participate in public policy formulation and execution at the state, substate and not-for-profit level. Students will serve as Public Service Interns 120 to 150 hours during the semester performing duties and responsibilities as determined by the agency supervisor in consultation with the faculty director. Students will be graded based upon the joint evaluation of agency supervisor and internship professor. (May be applied to any track with approval)

* Written permission of the internship supervisor is required. Students may also apply for an independent study, POSC 499.

Citizen Advocacy & Lobbying Class

This semester, Dr. Lewis is again teaching a course on Citizen Advocacy & Lobbying. The course is a unique, applied learning experience, designed around the Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation (ENACT) model developed at Brandeis University. The course covers legislative process, lobbying theory and tactics, and grassroots advocacy, and requires students to apply these concepts to the real world by lobbying and advocating for the passage of a bill currently being considered in the New York State Legislature.

There are five teams of students advocating for a wide range of bills, including:

A2153/S1952, a bill to require NYC Civil Courts documents to be provided in the native language of the litigants;

A90/S1477, bill to limit plastic straws use in restaurants;

A1763, a bill to ensure that adults with mental disabilities are given necessary due process protections in the criminal justice system;

S1170, a bill to provide for opioid abuse prevention and overdose training in college housing;

A1430, a bill to create Alzheimer's disease education and outreach programs for health professionals and public awareness campaigns.

To prepare for their lobbying and advocacy efforts, the class toured the New York State Capitol and met with Assemblyman Phil Steck (D-Colonie) as well as Senator Neil Breslin (D-Albany). The students have also met with Siena alumni working as professional lobbyists. Kathleen Digan '10 and Evan Sullivan '12 from Ostroff Associates discussed their experience working in a lobbying and government affairs firm. Former Assemblyman Jack Quinn '00 discussed his experiences as a legislator and now as Northeast Director of State Government Affairs for Sanofi, a pharmaceutical and vaccine company in Saratoga Springs. (APJ and PPA tracks)



2020 Capstone

POSC 497 (Capstone Seminar): The Politics of Memory Fall 2020 Dr. Laurie Naranch

This course addresses the politics of memory particularly in relationship to violence, patriotism, visibility, and justice. While memory is an ordinary human faculty, it is also the site of political contestation since memory is a way of articulating identity, prioritizing who or what matters and how, and addressing in democratic societies how we can live together as equals or in the aftermath of violence. From the monuments in Washington D.C. to confederate monuments, to the aftermath of the Holocaust, dictatorships, or civil rights struggles, this course allows for a variety of methodologies and topics both domestic and international especially lending itself to case study analysis, political histories, legal and cultural analysis, qualitative research, ethnographic studies, and some survey work.

POSC 497 Capstone Seminar - Global Social Justice: Human Insecurity Spring 2020 Dr. Ausra Park



This capstone seminar will focus on several thematic areas within the broad topic of Global Social Justice and Human Insecurity. These theme include human trafficking, poverty, access to water and food, and environmental consequence of development and modernization.

Guatemala Research Travel



Conor Graham and Gloria Rosario interviewed Guatemalan artisan women who use lightweight, potable solar lanterns (Sun King Pro) in their households. The Fair Trade and Social Justice Steering Committee provided the lanterns to Mayan communities last academic year. The purpose of the study was to test assertions that providing solar lanterns to women in poor countries will have positive communal outcomes such as increasing literacy rates among children and providing women with a chance to earn additional income through their involvement in cottage industries (such as weaving, basket making, etc.)

The IRB approved ethnographic study confirmed our initial findings that both women and children in indigenous communities benefit from access to solar technologies. Conor Graham and Dr. Eccarius-Kelly have applied for a Summer Scholar stipend to continue to pursue their research and to jointly publish their results.



**Fair Trade
Guatemala
Research
Travel:
February 23-
March 4,
2019**

Faculty Updates

Dr. Laurie Naranch

Laurie Naranch will present research at the Western Political Science Association in San Diego, “Craft Time, Sustainability, and Political Resistances.” One example comes from Guatemala where she travelled with Dr. Eccarius-Kelly and two fantastic students over February break on a research trip with Mayan Hands. In May she will present research at a specialized conference with the University of Bologna Zone Moda conference “Be Cool!: Aesthetic Imperatives and Social Practices in May, “Could Old Be the New Cool?: Shifting Aesthetics of the Aging Body” which will be published in August in the Zone Moda journal.



Alumni Update:

Megan Blasig '17 is a Research & Writing Assistant at J Strategies, a public affairs firm in Albany.

Dr. Daniel Lewis

Daniel Lewis has continued to work on a large survey project on public opinion toward transgender rights with his colleagues from “Team Kansas.” Current working papers include a studies of attitudes toward transgender military service, athletics, and public sex-segregated spaces such as bathrooms. The team is also working on an experimental study on the effect of perspective taking in reducing transphobia.

This Fall, Dr. Lewis will be on sabbatical, embarking on a new research project examining how direct democracy institutions shape public and political agendas in the American states.

Faculty Updates

Dr. Jack Collens

Jack Collens has begun work on a number of interesting research projects. First, he is presenting work at the 2019 American Elections Symposium at St. Anselm College in Manchester, NH on the field of 2018 Democratic primary candidates for the U.S. House. He is also in the beginning stages of a book project on the political response to the opioid epidemic at the federal level. He will present early work from this project at the 2019 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, with the help of Summer Scholar Dana Wakeman ('21).

Alumni Update:

Josh Fitzpatrick '94 is the Director of Communications and Policy for NY State Senator Daphne Jordan. He also served as the Campaign Manager and Spokesman for Senator Jordan's successful campaign in 2018 and has over twenty years of experience working the NY State Legislature.

Alumni Update:

Kaitlyn Krolik '16 is Communications Director for Battle Born Progress, a progressive communications non-profit organization in Nevada.

Dr. Len Cutler

Len Cutler is working on his next volume for publication on the Trump presidency with the working title, "President Donald Trump's National Security: Theory Versus Practice", and he will be undertaking a research project this summer with Summer research Scholar Gabby Agostino on Trump's Intractable Conflict in Syria. He is currently supervising two Senior Honors Theses: Shelby Davis, "The Haqqani Network: Success in the Shadows," and Laura Durham, "Are Celebrities Able to Have a Fair Trial of A Jury of their Peers: The Cases of O.J. Simpson and Bill Cosby."

Faculty Updates

Dr. Vera Eccarius-Kelly

Vera Eccarius-Kelly is currently completing an edited volume with Peter Lang publisher titled *Kurdish Autonomy and U.S. Foreign Policy*. The volume features 11 well-known Kurdish scholars who discuss policies of continuity and change by comparing the George W. Bush administration and Barack Obama's two terms with the first 24 months of the Donald J. Trump administration's interactions with various Kurdish movements. In addition, Eccarius-Kelly has a chapter under contract with Edinburgh Press that examines the role of museums in the larger MENA region (Middle East and North Africa).

Eccarius-Kelly took two students (Conor Graham and Gloria Rosario) to Guatemala over February break to continue a study on the use of solar lanterns within indigenous communities. Dr. Naranch also pursued research in Guatemala related to Maya women's efforts to protect their indigenous designs under collective intellectual property rights. Finally, Dr. Eccarius-Kelly will be serving as department chair during Fall semester 2019.

Alumni Update:

Rob DeFillippo '17 is a Programmatic Analyst working on targeted advertising and at Starcom Worldwide, an advertising agency in Manhattan.

Dan Renwick '17 is a Legislative Aide for New York State Assemblyman Michael Miller (D-Queens).

Gabrielle Trieling '17 is Junior Associate at the Pace Law Review and a legal intern at the Westchester County, NY District Attorney's Office.

John DiNuzzo '77 is AVP of Crisis Management, Global Corporate Security for MetLife in Manhattan.

He previously worked in emergency management for several financial firms and in the New York State Emergency Management Office.