Notes from the Chair

Higher education is facing a range of challenges, but I have no doubt that Calvin Political Science will adapt well to the moment. The primary reason I have that optimism is the group of people we’ve assembled here. You’ll see a lot of good news and heartening profiles of students, alumni, and others connected to the Department in these pages. But here, on the front page, let me highlight some of the work of our faculty and staff:

* Joel Westra is in the final steps of translating a large, multi-year data-gathering effort into a significant stream of published research. His work focuses on ongoing efforts to reform the global security order in the wake of World War II.

* Mikael Pelz has developed his research on both public health and education and on innovative course projects, including an interim in Detroit that invites our students into a near-local space. I like to think of the Detroit project as the leading edge of more engagement of Calvin College in the Motor City.

* Micah Watson is not only coming off a very successful book on the politics of CS Lewis, but he’s developing a gathering on Christianity and liberalism that promises to make a splash in the fall. You can also catch him writing, speaking, and podcasting on all kinds of hot-button issues, including the latest Avengers film.

* Doug Koopman is on the cusp of bringing together his extensive experience as a practitioner with his scholar’s curiosity in both coursework and research on politics as vocation. He also just returned from leading our Semester in Washington, DC program, which by all accounts was a deeply meaningful and vocationally helpful experience for our students.

* Tracy Kuperus and I (I say shamelessly) have received separate three-year grants to explore global affairs. Dr. Kuperus, whom we recently welcomed officially into our department, will be exploring citizenship in sub-Saharan Africa, while I’ll be exploring tensions between internationalism and populism among American evangelicals. I also continue to work with a research team focused on access to services for men and women returning from prison.

* Margie Styf, our department assistant, is the master at finding ways to make things work better, almost always well before we realized we could have worked better. She also spearheads our Model UN program.

* Ellen Hekman is juggling multiple roles of planning and facilitating for the DC Semester, Henry Institute, and Pre-Law. She just completed work as chief wrangler for an international conference about Abraham Kuyper.

* We are looking forward to the great opportunity to bring Karie Cross Riddle, a recent Ph.D. graduate from Notre Dame, as a new voice in the department. Dr. Riddle will start with us in the fall.

Nearly every high ed institution faces headwinds, Calvin included. But I’m grateful we can push back with these accomplished people and their commitment to faith seeking understanding.

All the best,

Kevin den Dulk
As a 2010 graduate with a degree in Political Science, Chris Postema currently resides in Washington, DC and works in the Federal Relations Office for Aflac (as most know it, the insurance company with the duck mascot).

Initially, Chris enjoyed everything about college except the studying. During a “wake up” conversation with an advisor his senior year, he decided to intern at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) during Calvin’s Semester in Washington, DC. According to Chris, 2010 was an exciting time in Washington. Democrats were in the majority; the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, and House Democrats were about to face a disaster in the mid-term elections. “It was my time in Washington that provided a real-life context of the political system we had read about in the classroom.”

On a more personal note, Chris felt that the guidance and resources provided during his time at Calvin gave him a solid foundation to making a smooth and successful transition in a profession that is constantly changing. His internship experience with the DNC influenced his future more than he had anticipated. “Although I didn’t know it at the time, I was given an internship opportunity that would set me up for every professional step I have taken since. I would be remiss if I didn't recognize that my Calvin advisor and other professors in the Political Science Department played a major role in where I am today.”

Chris’ professional involvement in the political world has continued ever since his participation in Calvin’s Semester in Washington D.C. program. He worked for the Michigan Democratic Party, on Capitol Hill, has been actively involved in a number of political campaigns, done fundraising for congressional candidates and has worked in political consulting.

**2018 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Ronald Buikema Memorial Scholarship - Samuel Poortenga  
Jacob and Rena Van Dellen Scholarship - Joshua Bulten  
Bernard Zylstra, S.J.D. Memorial Scholarship - Kelly Looman  
Peace and Justice Scholarship - Sarah Vroegop  
Dr. James Penning Memorial Scholarship - Hans Lieisman  
DeKryger-Monsma Memorial Scholarship - Olivia den Dulk  
Johan and Wilma Westra Scholarship - Kelly Looman  
Charles Strikwerda Scholarship - Ben VanderWindt  
John Feikens Memorial Pre-Law Scholarship - Debora Haede
Ewura Esi Brookman-Amissah  
Working for a year before attending school to earn a J.D. - M.B.A degree

Mark Boersma  
Active duty in the U.S. Army, stationed in South Korea

Billy Fredericks  
Hoping to work in a policy nonprofit, a marketing firm, or enter into sales

Sarah Hoff  
Hoping to find a policy formation or advocacy job working with immigration, refugees, or women and minorities

Joanna Jaimes  
Attend graduate school to obtain a MSW, and hopefully work in the criminal justice or immigration field

Geon Woo Kim  
Attending graduate school in South Korea

Sung Woo Lee  
Working in e-commerce for Vista IT

Brittany Mathison  
Hoping to work for a member of parliament in Ottawa, Ontario

Andrew Oppong  
Working in criminal justice reform and advocacy for a year before attending law school

Jordan Pool  
Attending the University of Michigan for a Masters of Accounting before pursuing a CPA and career in tax policy

Kathryn Mae Post  
Taking a gap year internship at Sojourners Magazine before attending law school

Todd Postma  
Attending Loyola of Chicago Law School

Chase Roher  
Undecided

Nathaniel Ross  
Planning to move to Washington D.C. and work in public policy on Capitol Hill or at a think-tank

Kagenza Sakufi Rumongi  
Working at the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the U.N. as a Communication Officer in New York

Matt Seafield  
Attending Michigan State University for a J.D. - M.B.A degree

Garrett Serstad  
Hoping to find a job in Washington D.C. working in U.S.-Asian relations

Tim Sheldon  
Working as a youth ministries intern before joining Americorps in the fall

The Political Science Department congratulates all our graduating seniors and wishes them the best!
CALVIN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS KOREAN ASSOCIATION

In 2013, a group of Calvin’s Korean International Relations students began the Calvin International Relations Korean Association (CIRKA). The group is composed of 41 members, both current International Relations students at Calvin and alumni working in International Relations fields or doing Master’s and Doctorate work.

CIRKA members are spread throughout the world, but they stay connected through providing job interview and graduate school application advice, supplying future career connections, and through sharing information about International Relations-related events and affairs. The group meets regularly throughout the year - twice every semester in the Grand Rapids area, and one time every summer in Seoul, South Korea. Large and small meetings have also been held in London, Geneva, Seoul and Washington D.C.

CIRKA is quickly growing and welcomes new International Relations students every semester. If you would like to learn more about joining this unique group in Calvin’s International Relations community, contact Daniel Kim at daniel.jinkwan@gmail.com / (805) 863 5152 or Chanmi Moon at cm34@students.calvin.edu.

IDS PROGRAM JOINS POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Beginning in the Fall of 2018, Calvin’s International Development Studies (IDS) program will be moving from North Hall to the DeVos Communication Building, joining the Political Science Department. The faculty members who will be contributing most to the IDS program, Tracy Kuperus and Karie Cross Riddle, are both trained as political scientists, and the move will allow the two faculty members to continue teaching and advising IDS students while also closely engaging with the Political Science Department and teaching some Political Science courses.

The transition will also enable IDS faculty to work more closely with students on career possibilities related to international development and political science, including public policy, human rights, promotion of civil society, international law and human rights. While the IDS program experiences a physical shift from North Hall to DeVos, there will be no real changes to the program’s structure or curriculum.

Prof. Kuperus noted that in the past IDS students have lamented the lack of a clearly designated physical space on campus, and hopes that the DeVos Communication Center will provide that space.
Nate Knapper
Knapper has worked as a law clerk for the U.S. Department of Energy, was an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Michigan, and ran for the Michigan State House of Representatives for the 43rd District. He currently is a special agent with the FBI, assigned to the Human Trafficking and Violent Crimes Against Children squad in Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. David Hooker
Hooker is an expert in post-conflict community building, environmental justice, public policy, social justice, negotiation and mediation. He has previously worked with international NGOs and civil society organizations, in addition to serving as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Georgia. Dr. Hooker currently is an Associate Professor with the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Sarah Berg
Berg is a graduate of Calvin and Georgetown University's School of Continuing Studies. She previously worked with the State of Georgia Governor's Rural Development Council to promote community and economic development, and currently works as a principal of Ponsonby Partners, a consultancy firm that provides philanthropic advising and strategic planning for families, nonprofits and foundations.

Dr. Melissa Rogers
Rogers is a distinguished church-state lawyer who served as a special assistant to President Obama and led the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships from 2013-2017. She is currently a senior fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C.

Sarrah Buageila
Buageila is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University and currently is the Project Manager for the Institute of Social Policy and Understanding's Research Department there. She has 11 years of experience as an Interviewer, Research Assistant and Project Manager at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan and the National Center for Health Statistics.

Stay Connected With the Calvin College Political Science Department:

The Paul B. Henry Institute at Calvin College

Calvin College Political Science and International Relations Group

@henry_institute

www.calvin.edu/academics/departments-programs/political-science/