Calvin professors have been very prolific this semester, as three books hit the shelves this semester bearing the name of different Calvin professors. Dr. Corwin Smidt, professor and director of The Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics, and Dr. James Penning, professor of American politics with a focus on state, local, and urban politics, wrote *Divided by a Common Heritage: The Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America at the Beginning of the New Millennium*. They worked alongside Drs. Don Luidens and Roger Nemeth, two professors of sociology at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

In this book, they studied the divisions and characteristics of the RCA and the CRC, once a unified domination. The funding for this book came through The Paul B. Henry Institute by way of the Bradley Foundation, which funds projects on citizenship and scholarly studies. This book is a product of decades of research from these four professors—the two from Hope on the RCA and Calvin’s on the CRC.

Mark A. Noll, McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame praised, “Ecclesiastical introspection can lead to banal, partial analysis. But not in this book from four social scientists who have taken a long, discriminating, but also loving look at their own denominations. “For members of the CRC and RCA, the book offers sympathetic insight into the present character of both denominations and their prospects for the future.”

Dr. Amy Patterson, professor of international politics, published *The Politics of AIDS in Africa*, her first book. In it, she explores AIDS pandemic in Africa and how health is always connected to politics. Patterson examines how and why some states have had more success than others in combating AIDS and the relationship between African governments and their relationship with civil society and international donors. Robert L. Ostergard, Jr., associate director at the Institute of Global Cultural Studies, at the State University of New York, Binghamton, praised, “Patterson’s welcome book reveals how the unique characteristics of the modern African state both

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Student Senate

This year, the Student Senate Executive Office is replete with political science majors. The President of Student Senate is Paul Davis, a senior political science major, and the Vice President is junior political science major, Paula Simoni. The Executive Team Assistant, Jonathon Hirte is a junior political science major and president of Calvin’s chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha. After serving one year as Vice President and Secretary, respectively, Paul Davis and Paula Simoni have transitioned nicely into their new roles.

For the executives, this position gives them great experience within the realm of politics. They face balancing the views and wishes of administrators, the student body, and others, such as any other elected official. They also gained valuable knowledge in campaigning, as their quest into office for this year was the most highly visible and active election in Calvin history, as well as the most expensive one.

Published Professors, cont.

help and hinder the battles being waged against the AIDS epidemic on the continent.”

Patterson has always been interested in the politics behind AIDS, particularly in Africa. However, a interim class she taught at Calvin inspired her to explore this topic more, resulting in this book, because her students presented such challenging information in their reports on Africa.

The third Calvin professor to publish a book this semester is Dr. Simona Goi, who was the co-editor of Between Terror and Freedom: Philosophy, Politics, and Fiction Speak of Modernity. This was also her first book. The other editor is Frederick M. Dolan, associate professor of rhetoric at the University of California, Berkley.

Together, they compiled a collection of essays in many different disciplines, illustrating the importance of fiction in understanding issues of philosophy and politics.

Dana Villa, professor of political theory at the University of Notre Dame praised: “Between Terror and Freedom is a remarkably diverse set of thematically linked essays, all of which strive to make sense of the dangers and possibilities of politics in the late modern age. The authors develop the resources of philosophy, literary criticism, and legal and political theory with attentiveness to text and context and a lightness of touch rarely encountered in a work of this kind. This book is eminently readable and thought-provoking throughout.”

Professor Goi and Dolan decided to work on this project many years ago when they were on the same panel at a conference. Since then, the two have been gathering works on this subject, a task that Goi said was very challenging, but rewarding to see the book completed.

Congratulations to these four professors for their hard work in the research and writing field of political science.

Calvin Model United Nations Wins Award

Seventeen students traveled to Chicago from November 18-22 to participate in the American Model United Nations. This year the school represented the Caribbean country of Haiti, with teams of delegates on all the general assembly committees, the international court of justice, UNESCO, ECOSOC, and the ECOSOC commission for social development.

Dr. Patterson, the faculty advisor, said that this was one of the most participatory groups she has ever taken to Chicago. Every delegation played a major role in their committee, either in leading resolutions, setting the agenda, or writing important documents. Three students even participated in press conferences for the daily newsletter.

Senior Nick Cunigan and sophomore Aaron Walizer won an award for one of the best delegations on UNESCO. It was Cunigan’s second time at MUN and Walizer’s first.
Kyle Brennan: Athletic Compliance Director

Kyle Brennan just seems to fall into situations. After a year of community college in his hometown of Lynden Washington, his father told him he had to go to either Calvin or Dordt. Not really knowing anything about either college, he picked Calvin, because it was in a city. He studied his first year here without much direction.

After a year off, he took a political science class with Dr. Charles Strikwerda, and Brennan just could not believe that he could major in this subject that was so interesting. Dr. Strikwerda encouraged him to pursue this major, but he didn’t really know what to do with it. Again, Dr. Strikwerda advised him that law school opens many doors.

Upon graduation from law school, he went to work in the real estate and probate litigation, quickly realizing that was not for him. Brennan really wanted to be involved in the university level, because of the impact college had on him. He was going go to school for his Ph.D., but with his wife pregnant, he explored other avenues. He heard that many dissatisfied lawyers were turning to athletic compliance.

Brennan went to Northern Illinois to do a graduate assistantship. There he gained the experience necessary to make the transition from law to athletic compliance. He applied to work in the office of athletic compliance at Texas Christian University in April 2005. In October of 2006, he left his job as Director of Athletic Compliance at TCU to become the Director of Athletic Compliance at Ball State University.

Brennan really enjoys his work with the student athletes, because in the process of making sure they are able to compete academically, he gets to know the students and their backgrounds. He really respects the students and enjoys the challenges of his job. Most of all, he considers himself fortunate to help students take advantage of college, just as Dr. Strikwerda helped him.

Calvin Alumni Win in West MI Elections

Three Calvin alumni will serve in the Michigan or United States House of Representatives or Senate for the West Michigan region. Mark Jansen will be serving the 28th Senate district in his first job in the state Senate. He has served, among others, on the Appropriations Committee, and the Family Independence Agency subcommittee in his six years in the State House.

Gerald VanWoerkom will be serving the 34th Senate District in his second term as Senator. He is the chair of the Chair of Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism, as well as a member of the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs committee.

Vernon Ehlers again won the West Michigan region in the United States House of Representatives for his eighth consecutive election.

He will continue to lead the Republicans on the Committee on House Administrations, a position that has him working closely with the democrats to facilitate federal elections, day-to-day House functions, and institutes such as the Library of Congress. It is quite an honor to have these men representing West Michigan.
**Upcoming Paul B. Henry Institute Events**

**Feb. 26, 2007:** Boston University’s Professor of Sociology of Religion, Dr. Nancy Ammerman will speak at Calvin. She focuses on religious congregations and her many works include her newest one, *Pillars of Faith: American Congregation and their Partners* among others. She has also testified for the U.S. Department of Justice and Treasury and a Senate Judiciary Committee. Her presentation is at 3:30 p.m. in the Meeter Center Lecture Hall.

**July 22-28, 2007:** Pollsters and Parishioners: A Workshop of Survey Research and American Religion.

This is a weeklong seminar at Calvin for graduate students and recent Ph.D. graduates in Political Science, Sociology, and related disciplines to study religion in America using survey methods. Tentatively, it is to be presented by Corwin Smidt (Calvin College), James Guth (Furman University), and Lyman Kellstedt (Wheaton College).

For more information about any of these events, please visit the Paul H. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics at [http://www.calvin.edu/henry/](http://www.calvin.edu/henry/).

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**Professor’s Picks**

**Beasts of No Nation**—By Uzodinma Iweala.
This book, written by a Nigerian doctor, follows the plight of a child soldier in Africa. “It is incredibly depressing, but also unfortunately very accurate about how children and civilians are treated during war.”
-Dr. Amy Patterson

**The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power**—By Robert Caro.
“This book, the first in a series, is on one of our most controversial presidents; written by one of America's foremost biographers.”
-Dr. James Penning

**Defending Human Dignity**—By Derek Jeffreys.
“This shows the philosophical personalism of Pope John Paul II and shows how it has worked to transform both realism and idealism in international relations.”
-Dr. William Stevenson

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**Doug Koopman to Return**

After a year and a half at Hope College, Professor Doug Koopman is going to return as an active faculty member at Calvin. He contracted with Hope’s department of political science to work for the past year and a half as an administrator, but Calvin is very happy to see him return. Next semester he will be teaching the class, Political Science 317: Parties and Elections.

Although Koopman has enjoyed his time at his alma mater, he felt like it was time for him to return to Calvin. About coming back Koopman says, “I am excited to get back to studying Christianity and politics. Calvin allows for that in ways that Hope does not.”

Accordingly, he is returning to Calvin in the position of the Spoelhof Chair, just so that he can focus his studies on the topic of Christianity and politics. The Spoelhof Chair is an endowed chair that rotates and allows the chair holder to do research on a certain topic while also lecturing on it. Many faculty and senior and junior students, who had him as a professor two years ago, are eager for his return.

He is seen as an invaluable resource for both the students and faculty alike, as he is the only professor who has spent a significant amount of time in the field of politics in Washington, D.C. That is his specialty in teaching, as well. He is also very interested in the lives’ of his students, which many students really appreciate.

As a Hope graduate, he enjoyed the time at his alma mater, but he enjoys the specific emphasis that Calvin places on a reformed worldview through teaching.