Our Department recently embarked on a significant and exciting revision of our courses and majors. To refresh our curriculum at this point made a lot of sense. The study of politics is as dynamic as its subject matter, and political scientists have increasingly turned their attention to timely questions about political leadership, globalization, democratization, public policy, localism, and human rights in the United States and cross-nationally. We wanted our students to connect to these new themes and approaches. At the same time, our faculty has changed dramatically over the past three years with the hiring of four instructors at various stages of their careers. Our revision of the curriculum reflects the fresh ideas and energy of these new Calvin faculty.

The curriculum change, which the Faculty Senate resoundingly endorsed earlier this year, was top-to-bottom. Perhaps its most conspicuous features are three innovative “concentrations” within our two majors. Students majoring in political science now have an option to focus their learning on “Policy Studies and Civic Leadership,” which highlights the role of local government and public and nonprofit administration, while also honing skills of policy analysis. We offer two new concentrations within the international relations major: “Comparative Politics, Governments, and Globalization” and “International Cooperation and Conflict.” The former focuses on cross-national comparison of such topics as democratization, terrorism, courts and constitutions, ethnic conflict, human rights, and civil war and revolution; the latter tackles international institutions, diplomacy, trade, conflict, and foreign economic and security policy. Our hope is that these concentrations will help students see more clearly how their study of political science relates to the wide range of opportunities for public service after graduation.

In addition to these concentrations, we have introduced a host of smaller changes. We’ll be rolling out two new courses in 2014-15 (“Governments and Globalization” and “Institutions, Civil Society, and Revolution”), as well as several other established courses that have been reinvented. Students will encounter a bit more emphasis on methods (including in-demand skills of quantitative analysis and visualization) and better integration of co-curricular options such as internships and study abroad into the curriculum. While any single change may appear minor, taken together they represent a reinvigorated vision for Calvin College Political Science – a vision that combines strong roots in the liberal arts with a commitment to relevance, flexibility, and a distinctive Christian perspective.

If you’d like to see some of the changes for yourself, please explore the “Academics” section of our website – www.calvin.edu/pols. We’d also love to hear from you about the changes as we continue to refine and renew what it means to follow Christ through education for public service.

—Kevin den Dulk

Student Reflects on Class Trip to Detroit

Whenever I hear someone using a skill or talking about a subject I learned in class, I get so excited. Interacting with people who use the things I am passionate about every day makes all of the class interactions worthwhile. Our Urban Politics trip to Detroit had us doing exactly this – learning from and interacting with community, government, and economic leaders in the city, and putting all of our classroom time in perspective. From the start of the day at the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation until our last stop for dinner at Mercury Burger, we were introduced to the positive gains being made in the city, but also the many challenges that still exist. What was especially exciting, however, was the optimism we were met with by everyone we talked to, and their willingness to not give up on the city despite obstacles. We were also fortunate enough to get to visit the Detroit Future City office, which was especially exciting for our class because we are analyzing the plan ourselves and discussing how to best implement it. Now that we have some background and insight on the city, we are better able to understand and strategize the project. This trip was an invaluable opportunity to discuss the practical applications of different political theories in a real life context. It got our entire class excited to keep working – both in class and hopefully in our future lives – on difficult problems. By Natalie Patterson

Prof. Pelz’s Urban Politics class visits Council Member James Tate
Student Research Assistants Develop Community & Scholarship

This semester, the Department of Political Science and the Henry Institute are cultivating a learning community by sponsoring six research assistant positions for first- and second-year students. Each student is teaming up with a faculty member to develop technical and analytical skills and to gain insight into how political scientists conducts research. In selecting first- and second-year students, the department intends to mentor students early in their college careers. The students will also connect with the Center for Social Research to learn more about data collection and have the opportunity to write for Shared Justice, an online journal established by the Center for Public Justice. Such invaluable experience will prepare them for future research opportunities.

Brooke Bonnema, an international relations major from Grand Rapids, will be working with Prof. Becca McBride to examine how international adoption advocates influence countries’ policies toward allowing or restricting intercountry adoption. The goal of the study is to identify ways that adoption advocates “teach” governments about adoption in general and adoption to certain countries in particular.

Abbie Schutte, who is from Kansas City, is majoring in political science with an emphasis in policy studies and civic leadership and a minor in urban studies. She will be studying charter school policy with Prof. Mikael Pelz. They will examine how different states’ regulations on charter schools impact the particular characteristics of charter schools in that state. The aim of the project is to identify which regulatory factors differentiate between high-performing and low-performing charter schools.

Jisoo Kim, an international relations major and French minor from Seoul, is collaborating with Prof. Joel Westra in his research on nation-states’ efforts to reform the existing global security order through attempts to alter and/or build upon the UN Charter framework through creating and modifying security institutions. The goal of the study is to ascertain the manner and extent to which the institutional designs entailed within proposed reforms affect the likely success of those efforts.

Matthias Struble, a political science major (with a pre-law emphasis) from Charlotte, Michigan, will examine how independent campaign expenditures impact the tone of candidate communications with Prof. Kurt Pyle. They will study the relationship between increasing numbers of allied outside groups in election campaigns and candidates’ abilities to air a more positive set of advertisements than they might have otherwise.

Josh Nederhood, an international relations major from Oakland, California, and Jenny Lamb, a political science major from the Chicago area, will be working together with Prof. Kevin den Dulk to examine religious persecution and liberty worldwide. This project, which was commissioned by the Christian Reformed Church, will help churches better understand the political and social challenges facing co-religionists abroad and develop strategies within their own congregations for addressing religious persecution.

The political science department is intentionally pursuing strategies that introduce unique opportunities for students to grow. It is the department’s hope that these students will end this semester not only with the necessary skills to conduct research but also with an invigorated passion for the field of political science.

Westra Receives Lectureship Award

Congratulations to Professor Joel Westra on receiving the Calvin College Faculty Lectureship Award! Westra, along with two other Calvin faculty members, was chosen by the Provost and academic deans to present a lecture on a topic of general interest giving him an opportunity to share his research with the broader Calvin community.

On March 18, 2014, Westra presented his lecture, titled “Global Security Governance in a Changing World: Institutional Legitimacy and Prospects for Reform,” which focused on the problems and challenges that nation-states address when attempting to reform the global security order. The global security order is based upon the security institutions created after World War II, such as NATO and the UN Security Council. These institutions no longer correlate to today’s global structure, so states are faced with the task of either reforming these organizations or designing completely new ones. Westra’s topic corresponds with both his current research project as well as the subject matter of his courses here at Calvin. In POLS 304, International Peace and Security, Westra leads discussions on topics such as intervention, arms control, and war termination, all of which concern international security, and in POLS 309, International Organizations and Law, much of the focus is on the design and function of global institutions.

However, Westra believes that such discussions should not be limited to scholars of political science; rather, he hopes this conversation will also reach the general public. Because these institutions greatly shape and constrain global politics, their design is a major concern to citizens of the United States and of the world. It is important that we understand the institutional structure, so that we can better grasp global politics and prospects for future change.
Facility Publications and Conferences

Publications

- Prof. Becca McBride wrote a 3-part series on “International Efforts to Regulate Adoption” for The Center for Public Justice, published on Nov. 8, 15, and 22, 2013. The third article was co-authored by student Brooke Bonnema. Read the articles here:
  
  http://www.capitalcommentary.org/adoption/international-efforts-regulate-adoption

  http://www.capitalcommentary.org/adoption/state-efforts-monitor-corruption-intercountry-adoption

- Prof. Kevin den Dulk wrote an article titled “Citizen Education and the Christian School” for Christian School Education, a magazine for Christian school educators. Read the article here:
  
  http://pubs.royle.com/article/Citizen+Education+and+the+Christian+School/1605983/191574/article.html

- Prof. den Dulk also co-edited Christianity in Chinese Public Life: Religion, Society, and the Rule of Law, published by Palgrave Pivot in January 2014

Conferences


- Prof. Kurt Pyle presented “The Effect of Outside Expenditures on Candidate Advertising Negativity” at the Midwest Political Science Association’s Annual Conference in Chicago from April 3-6.

- Prof. Mikael Pelz and Prof. den Dulk will attend the Christians in Political Science Conference at Azusa Pacific University in California from May 29-31. Their respective presentations are titled “Social Media and Support for Same-Sex Marriage Among Millennials” and “Engaging the Church Over Religious Persecution.”

Alumni Update: Kelly Larson Organ

Having graduated from Calvin with a degree in international relations and a minor in congregational and ministry studies, Kelly Larson Organ is committed to integrating her faith into her work. The combination of her two passions has helped her explore a Christian response to the political, historical, economic, and cultural systems that we see in the world, both personally and ecclesiologically. After graduation, Organ worked for the CRC Office of Social Justice, spearheading their campaign for immigration reform from the angle of public education and advocacy. She wrote curriculum and developed and led workshops around the United States on the historical and current state of the US immigration system, the Biblical teachings on immigrants and hospitality from the Reformed tradition, and the political and personal potential for response as engaged citizens and believers.

In January 2013, she and her husband, supported by Christian Reformed World Missions, moved to rural Romania to work for a non-profit organization called New Horizons Foundation (NHF/ Fundatia Noi Orizonturi). Their previous experiences in Eastern Europe encouraged them to return to the region, and they will remain there for a minimum of two more years. NHF does community development work with youth, mostly through the lens of informal and experiential education—all with the goal of building social capital and civic engagement in young people who have grown up in this post-communist country. Organ specifically works with a youth program called IMPACT (Involvement, Motivation, Participation, Action, Community, Teens), which developed in Romania but is now spreading internationally. It is Organ’s job, as Program Coordinator for International Development and Capacity-Building, to oversee the international growth of the program on the strategic and operational levels. Organ says, “It’s been a really interesting ride, allowing me to examine cultures and the needs of their youth through the eyes of development workers in places as disparate as Armenia, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Moldova—while also remaining based and immersed in this particular Eastern European cultural, social, and political context. It find it fascinating and challenging and really enjoy it!”

Working in a country that is still relatively new to democracy, Organ found Dr. Amy Patterson’s Global Democratization class to be useful. “She opened the door for me to understanding the connections between the ‘big picture,’ systems-focused study of international relations and the context-focused study of international development, and the important and illuminating overlap between those two fields. That class introduced me to the concept of social capital and the many-faceted issues of corruption, two issues with which I now work closely,” Organ said. “Professor Patterson personally gave me a glimpse into how the world of international relations could be humanizing, a place where we can authentically live as followers of Christ as we work to better broken systems, end corruption, and promote human flourishing.” Organ appreciates how the classes and professors with whom she interacted helped her wrestle with issues of living cross-culturally, as a Christian in a world full of broken and intertwined systems, dealing with moral culpability for systemic brokenness and striving for humanizing interactions, and pursuing redemption.

Kelly and her husband, Jack, hiking in the Carpathian mountains.
THE PAUL HENRY INSTITUTE

Joshua DuBois speaks for 18th Annual Paul B. Henry Lecture

On April 28, 2014, the eighteenth annual Paul B. Henry Lecture featured Joshua DuBois, the bestselling author of the recently released The President's Devotional, and former Executive Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Mr. DuBois was the youngest-ever head of a White House department, and he has become a top leader, speaker and writer on spiritual values. Called President Obama’s "Pastor-in-Chief" by TIME magazine, DuBois spearheaded President Obama’s outreach to religious organizations and his commitment to fathering, mentoring, community support, and anti-poverty strategies. He helped the President navigate difficult issues at the intersection of religion and politics -- from race in America, to cultural and religious freedom, to the need for reconciliation between countries as well as individuals.

DuBois is the religion and values columnist for the Daily Beast, and is co-founder and CEO of Values Partnerships, a consulting firm that helps the public, private, and nonprofit sectors come together in faith-based partnerships to solve humanitarian challenges. He has written several Newsweek cover stories, and his work has been profiled in the New York Times, the Washington Post, ABC News, PBS and CNN.

See Prof. den Dulk’s interview with Joshua DuBois at http://vimeo.com/93398523.

Department Pick

Saving Mr. Banks directed by John Lee Hancock

“Saving Mr. Banks” is a movie that chronicles the months at the end of Walt Disney’s twenty year mission to buy the rights to the book “Mary Poppins” from British author P.L. Travers. For those who love Disney lore, this movie is a magical journey. The story alternates from negotiations between Travers and the Disney creative team over the making of the movie to flashbacks to Travers’ tragic childhood. It is easy to identify with her anguish over surrendering Mary Poppins to a Disney crew that she believes unable to understand the significance of the story.

Early on in the movie, Walt Disney mentions that Mary Poppins came to save the Banks children. P.L. Travers storms out of the room, yelling that he knows nothing about the story if he thinks Mary Poppins came to save the children. It becomes clear through Travers’ flashbacks to her relationship with her father, that Mary Poppins was a character that Travers created to save Mr. Banks, the father. In saving Mr. Banks, Travers attempted to redeem the memory of her own alcoholic father.

For me, the most compelling portion of the movie came from Tom Hanks’ monologue as Walt Disney, as he talks about the goal and mission of storytellers. Disney pleads with Travers to sell him the rights of the book. He promises her that:

In every movie house, all over the world, in the eyes and the hearts of my kids, and other kids and their mothers and fathers for generations to come, George Banks will be honored, George Banks will be redeemed. George Banks and all he stands for will be saved. Maybe not in life, but in imagination. Because that’s what we storytellers do. We restore order with imagination. We instill hope again and again and again.

I was so inspired by the idea of restoring hope through telling a story. When we construct our classes as professors, we choose readings, build a syllabus, and plan classes that tell a story about the political world. For those of us who teach classes about particularly distressing trends in politics, we seek to weave together a picture of the political world that can restore hope when confronted with pain. It is an important part of our job to help our students understand how to approach the political world with hope instead of cynicism. This movie truly inspired me to think carefully about how my classes can be used to honor those most profoundly impacted by pain in the political system.

Prof. Becca McBride
## Graduating Class of 2014

### Political Science and International Relations Majors

The Political Science Department congratulates all the graduating seniors and wishes them the best!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Plan Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Adams</td>
<td>Looking for temporary work before making a career decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayleigh Bosmeijer</td>
<td>Hoping to find an analysis job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Coffman</td>
<td>Hoping to do development work that deals with policy change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron De Jong</td>
<td>Working in the Chicago area on campaigns and field work for clients and non-profits. Also, wants to promote renewable energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Eisen</td>
<td>Coordinating educational programs in East Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Greidanus</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Harper</td>
<td>Starting a career in August 2014 in marketing and outreach for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Hazlett</td>
<td>Becoming certified as a personal trainer this summer &amp; attending grad school this fall for a Masters in teaching elementary language arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyung Sung (Greg) Kim</td>
<td>Working at Calvin College’s Center for Social Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinkwan Kim</td>
<td>Working for a university in its international programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan Kinney</td>
<td>Applying to foreign policy-related think tanks in D.C. and to governmental agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lan Hei (Priscilla) Lin</td>
<td>Working for two years as a Communication and Logistics Assistant for World Renew in Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HaEun Nam</td>
<td>Hoping to work in Washington, D.C., either on Capitol Hill or working on agricultural policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara Overweg</td>
<td>Teaching English in the Japanese school system as part of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosalind Scoular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea Stewart</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Struyk</td>
<td>Interning with Langer Research Associates, the official pollster of ABC News and the Washington Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachery Thayer</td>
<td>Attending West Virginia University for a Ph.D. in political science in the fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Van Geest</td>
<td>Planning to enroll at the University of British Columbia’s Masters of Information Systems/Library Science program starting in January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Wood</td>
<td>Hoping to work as a legislative aide in Congress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Political Science Department Scholarships

*The political science department would like to congratulate the following 2014-2015 scholarship winners:*

- **DeKryger-Monsman Memorial Prize Scholarship:** Ian Graham
- **Peace and Justice Scholarship:** Ben Bilgen
- **Dr. James Penning Scholarship:** Abigail Schutte
- **Charles Strikerda Scholarship in Political Science:** Alden Hartopo
- **Lyle and Barbara (Duimstra) Voskuil Family Scholarship:** Jae Eun hang
- **Johan and Wilma Westra Scholarship:** Colin Chesla
- **Dr. Bernard Zylstra Memorial Scholarship:** Alicia Smit