

POLITICAL SCIENCE

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY / FALL 2018 / ISSUE 22

What is Political Science?

Specialists in **Comparative Politics** analyze power dynamics in communities, states and regions throughout the world.

Specialists in **International Relations** focus on the power relationships between countries and between citizens and organizations of different countries.

Specialists in **Public Policy** analyze the processes, structures and outcomes of government policies and policy-making.

Specialists in **American Politics** look at the exercise of power domestically, through American institutions and processes ranging from state to social movements.

Political Theorists address fundamental normative and explanatory assumptions, such as the nature and purpose of the state; who should have power and why; and what would constitute a



Editor: Sequoyah Lopez

Dr. Sarah Cate Joins the Department



This fall, the department welcomed a new member to the Political Science family, Dr. Sarah Cate. Dr. Cate is an Oregon native who earned her doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania, taught for two years at the University of Southern Mississippi, and is now on another tenure track here at Saint Louis University.

This semester, Dr. Cate's course POLS4930 "Race, Class and Punishment" focuses on the justice system, using it as a jumping off point for impactful and important conversations on "bigger picture" issues of broadening inequalities. Working through questions about punishment and mass incarceration, students have the opportunity to develop an understanding and critique of the American justice system.

Next semester, students can look forward to POLS1150 "American Political Systems," the introductory course for political science majors and minors. Over nine weeks, students will get "a little taste of a lot," with topics ranging from gerrymandering to Guantanamo Bay. American Political Systems is one of the most updated and current events focused courses the department has to offer, encouraging students to entertain the content in a relevant context. Dr. Cate encourages students to always return to the question of, "*so what does this mean today?*"

Alongside her teaching, Dr. Cate's research takes a critical stance on the strategy and effectiveness of types of criminal justice reforms, focusing on the negative consequences of prison reform efforts. Currently, Dr. Cate is tackling the politics of prison reform through a book project that analyzes the juvenile justice system of three states: Texas, California, and Pennsylvania.

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What do you like about SLU and SLU students?

"I like the mission and how the students operate within the mission - primarily their focus on the normative implications of how we study politics. They take seriously the task of tackling how to understand the roots of big messy social problems and then the even harder task of how to solve these problems. I really appreciate how curious and open-minded the SLU students I have had so far are - willing and even excited about being challenged about their views of the world. They are also just really *good* students -- well prepared and work very hard.

In the first hours of my orientation here an administrator said that we should not be conducting our research based on what would garner grant funding or other superficial, careerist outcomes, but rather based on what would make a positive impact on the most marginalized in our society. No administrator at any institution I have been at has even come close to saying something like that."

Welcome Back Pizza Party

Political Science majors, minors, students taking a course through the department, and friends celebrated the start of the 2018 Fall semester at the Welcome Back Pizza Party hosted by the Political Science Department.

Free pizza, dessert, and drinks weren't the only things to enjoy that day. Students, faculty, and staff got to meet each other in a relaxed and comfortable environment outside the classrooms of McGannon Hall.

On a warm Friday afternoon in September, the Pizza Party took place on the greenspace behind Pruellage Hall. The event has become a department tradition, offering a unique opportunity for students and professors to connect.



Samantha Kiss Organizes SLU's First Student Food Resource

One of the department's very own students is making a major impact on the well being of her fellow SLU students. Samantha Kiss is a senior political science and economics major who took a final research project for professor Gretchen Arnold's course, "The Structure of Poverty," just a few steps further. Cited in a November 28th SLU Newslink feature, Kiss explained how the mission to organize SLU's first student food resource, Billiken Bounty, came about. "We could do anything we wanted for a final project, [...] but she really encouraged us to start something new – something physical, a movement, an initiative. I thought this might be something hard to sell because it requires physical space, money and assets. But I didn't have to sell it at all. SLU has been fully supportive."

Along with her co-organizer and roommate, senior Madalyn Leakey from the Parks School of Engineering, Aviation, and Technology, Kiss furthered her initial research on campus food insecurity through SLU wide surveys,



Seniors Madalyn Leakey and Samantha Kiss, co-chairs

finding that about 20 percent of SLU's student body is at risk for food insecurity at some point in a college career. To inform their planning process, the two co-chairs learned more about other food resource centers like the one at Indiana University-Purdue University Indiana. Their goal was to ensure that Billiken Bounty would be sustainable and undertaken with care and consideration.

"I always say that food isn't a difficult cause to get behind, but I didn't want it to be a thrown-together project – I wanted it to be a place of dignity. Just seeing a friendly face of a peer at a food resource may make a difference." The program's mission statement echoes Kiss' remarks. As published on SLU's website, "The mission of Billiken Bounty is to provide a sustainable on-campus resource to help alleviate food insecurity among SLU students. The project is guided by the values of privacy, professionalism, respect and dignity."

Since opening in September 2018, Billiken Bounty has been serving up nonperishable food items as well as hygiene and self-care products in a retail-like space where shoppers don't have to demonstrate need and can come and go anonymously. All that is required to access Billiken Bounty's stores is a SLU photo ID.

Partnered with the Dean of Students Office, and run in the name of *cura personalis*, the student food resource is a program that all of the SLU community can get behind. Mona Hicks, Dean of Students, reflected on the impact of Kiss' project: "This campus community doesn't mess around. Once you create a path to what's right, they do what's right."

Billiken Bounty is located in Room 311 of the Busch Student Center and is open on Mondays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Tuesday and Fridays from noon to 6 p.m. The program encourages more volunteers and donations for Spring 2018.

Fall 2018 Pi Sigma Alpha Induction

This September, Pi Sigma Alpha gained seven wonderful new members. Pi Sigma Alpha is a national political science honor society that recognizes students with outstanding performance in political science. Saint Louis University has had a PSA chapter since 1969, and was most recently led by Dr Strikwerda, before Dr. McCormick took over this fall. This year SLU's PSA chapter inducted 7 new members: Dominic Biffignani, Thomas Horgan, Margaret Kenney, Shana Kinnane, Margaret Purtell, Tommi Poe, and Colin Thierry. There will be a second induction in the winter.



Dr. McCormick pictured with 2018 inductees.

Constitution Trivia Day



United Plates of America
Established on November 26, 1789, the first national "Thanksgiving Day" was originally created by George Washington as a way of "giving thanks" for the Constitution.

On September 17th, the Department of Political Science and Amicus Curiae-SLU's Pre-Law Society held the Sixth Annual Constitution Day Trivia contest. Constitution Day commemorates the signing of the Constitution on September 17, 1787, and is celebrated nation-wide. The purpose of Constitution Day is to consider and honor the Constitution of the United States. In addition to being the primary legal text for our country, it also contains many innovative features that deserve serious study. Additionally, it is the oldest written

Constitution in the world that is still in use and has helped shape many constitutions around the globe.

The Constitution Day Trivia event involved teams of students from multiple departments showing off their knowledge of the Constitution and competing for prizes. The questions touched on many different areas of expertise regarding the Constitution, including the content and interpretation of the text of the Constitution and amendments; biographical information regarding the framers; and, attributes of the Constitution in a comparative context.

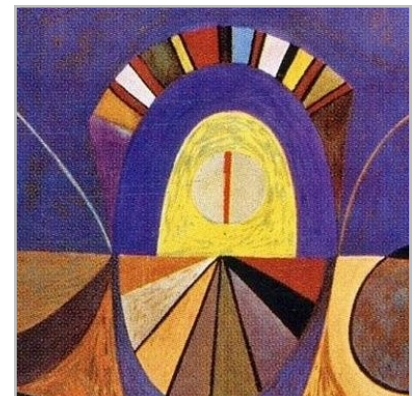


The winning team members Sarah Brown, Alice Chicani, Hayler Gutrich, and Matthew Chambers.



Dr. Groff Organizes International Meeting Critical Social Ontology Workshop, 2nd Annual Meeting

The 2nd Annual Meeting of the Critical Social Ontology Workshop (CSOW), organized by Dr. Groff, was held at SLU, Oct. 13-14. Over 20 participating scholars came from Germany, Spain, Canada and Lithuania, in addition to the US. In a larger environment in which "thinking outside the box" is often institutionally constrained, CSOW is an interdisciplinary venue designed to bring social scientists and philosophers together to share and develop critical analyses of social reality. The conference was supported by SLU Spark Funding. Check out CSOW on Facebook, under the full name of the group.



Dr. Sarah Cate Joins the Department

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Dr. Cate's work has been published in *Punishment & Society* and *Theoretical Criminology*. In the former, her 2016 article, "Devolution, not decarceration: The limits of juvenile justice reform in Texas," takes a critical look at the increased "popularity of deinstitutionalizing juveniles from state-run corrections institutions and increasing programming and control of offenders at the local level [that is] animating the landscape of criminal

justice policy across the country. [A] Texas case suggests that this narrow approach further consolidates the extensive role of the justice system in U.S. society."

The entire Political Science department looks forward to the great work and growth Dr. Cate has to offer students and the Political Science program.

Visit Dr. Cate in McGannon 139.

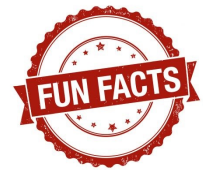
What got you into political science and, specifically, your focus on the American criminal justice system?

Political science classes I took in HS and college were my favorite and most "fun" classes -- they made me feel like what I was studying mattered and connected to real concerns people experience. I was an English major first and then tacked on PS as a second major just "for fun." I have always been interested in issues of inequality and if you look at the treatment of poor people in the US you will inevitably come across the issue of the criminal justice system -- which is what happened to me when I was in college. When I learned the basic facts about mass incarceration I was totally and completely blown away and enraged. I didn't understand how such horrible things were happening to people in the US on such a large scale and I had never even really heard about it. I did an honors thesis about prisoner writings and it got a lot of positive feedback and one of my advisers recommended I apply for the master's program. I did on a whim, got in, and when I found out they would pay me to continue to be a student I was totally sold.

What are some of your favorite works of political science and why?

All of my favorite works (below) are my favorite because they are incredibly groundbreaking insights on important topics and their arguments have really important normative implications.

I just finished reading Gordon Lafer's *The One Percent Solution* and I highly recommend it. I will be assigning portions of it in POLS 1150 next term. He also wrote a book called *the Job Training Charade* that is excellent -- he is a great leading researcher on issues related to labor. If you want to learn about the criminal justice system Marie Gottschalk's work is invaluable. The best work being written on issues of race is Adolph Reed Jr., Cedric Johnson, and Preston Smith.

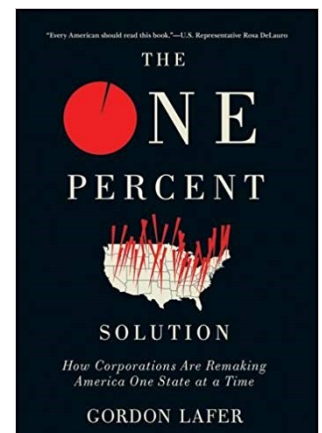


Dr. Cate studied abroad in Paris.

Dr. Cate likes Chinese food. There is a Chinese restaurant in St. Louis called, "Cate Zone."

Coincidence?

I think not.



Reflections on 70th SCUSA Conference

Angela Gomez

On October 24-27 I visited West Point Academy for the 70th Student Conference of U.S. Affairs (SCUSA). Annually, the conference focuses on promoting dialogue about U.S. foreign affairs between students and military officials. This year's theme, "Cooperation Reimagined: American Influence in an Increasingly Complex World," reflected the decreasing international leadership role of the U.S., especially with the rise of China and increasingly relevant Russia. We discussed the country's hegemonic decline and its impact on domestic affairs on an international level. The current administration has changed global cooperation and influence with decreased credibility and increasing isolationist policies.

All students were divided into different round table discussions. I was in "The United Nations, Multilateral Organizations, and the Next 70 Years" table where we discussed reforms to

the U.N., approaching it with a U.S. interest perspective. The purpose of the policy paper we drafted together was to *"To propose informed policy options for principle U.S. elite decision-makers. The U.S. has the capability to lead the promotion of security, prosperity, and liberty and can promote these interests through multilateral institutions by reforming the veto system, chartering new councils, strengthening existing networks, and creating a value based economic union."*

During the four days I was in West Point, I felt grateful and lucky for having the opportunity to interact with students from all over the country who had such a commitment to diplomacy and intense passion for their field. I learned for the first time what it was like to go to military academy and be a cadet. It made me realize how uneducated civilians can be about their military. Every morning they wake up at

6:00am or 6:30am to get in formation outside. Meanwhile, a few cadets sing out the uniform requirements and detail the breakfast of the day. I stayed with two female senior cadets who I learned a lot from and whom made me understand how hard it was to be in a military school.

Our group discussion was always engaging and active. As an international student who has only lived in the U.S. for four years, sometimes it was challenging for me to discuss these topics from a U.S. lens. In many occasions, our different backgrounds didn't lead us to agree with each other; however, we managed to draft a satisfactory policy paper inclusive of everyone's own ideas. I was able to talk to diplomats and other officials who had admirable careers in foreign affairs and who worked for President Obama or in the current administration. Some even offered us to write us recommendation letters for future graduate schools or work.

I'm very grateful for this amazing opportunity that SLU's Political Science department gave me.



Life in the Mail Room — MGN 128

Sequoyah Lopez

While sitting in class or in traffic on the way home from work, drifting off into the depths of your thoughts, you might have found yourself asking, hmmm...what is life like in McGannon 128, the Political Science Mail Room? Well, today is your lucky day because I am going to reveal to you a glimpse of *Life in the Mail Room*.

Or, McGannon 128 has never once crossed your mind. That's okay too.

First things first, the crown jewel, the source of youth (or just energy), and the thing that everyone can't wait to get their hands on...the coffee pot! Every morning, Ms. Sharilyn fills the device with about 8 cups of water, coffee grounds, and hits "on." In a matter of seconds, the pot revs itself up, excited and begging for the fruit of its labor to be poured into a leftover "international studies" mug and guzzled up by likes of caffeine-seeking scholars. It is evident that this body of educators takes two things very seriously: their student's use of credible sources and their coffee intake.

As far as the environment of people goes, there are only two souls that I would bet my life on to be in the building by (or before) 8 a.m.-- Sean, our custodian, and Ms. Sharilyn, the administrative assistant. Sean keeps this place in tip-top shape. I have never seen a single trash can too full or a lone dust bunny in any corner of the facilities. Not one!

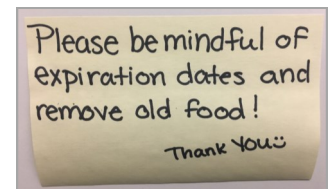
Ms. Sharilyn is the glue that holds the department. As mentioned before, she sets everyone up for success by making the coffee, but also by responding to emails in approximately negative three point five seconds, knowing every factoid about department expenses and events, organizing everyone's documents in one million specific manila folders, and always being flexible and willing to help explain, find, or figure out a problem. *No one is anyone* without Ms. Sharilyn Bazile.

After spending dozens of hours in MGN 128, I've developed a sixth sense for knowing exactly who has just walked into the small space. For example, without even looking back, I can tell when Dr. Hazelton or Dr. Carnaghan have entered. From the click-clack of their shoes forecasting their entrance, to the way they pour their coffee or work the printer. The more patient and paced beeps emitted from pressing the buttons on the touchscreen panel of the printer, reveal to me that they are indeed, the current visitors. Others don't handle the apparatus with as much consideration, myself included.

I can tell that Dr. Rogers has come in because he leads with "good morning" before I have even swiveled around to see who has just come in!

Dr. Bowen is a disciplined fridge user. Every morning, he jets into the mail room, deposits his lunch onto the second shelf of the fridge, and just like that, the leather jacket, winter hat, and backpack are but a blur. Additionally, somewhere out there, Dr. Bowen's mother is plotting the next batch of baked goods to be stacked up on top of the microwave. Those addictive little sweet fried-dough-ball-puffs (I have yet to learn of their official name), packed in a 2.5 gallon jumbo zip-loc bag, are dangerous. I don't know how to describe them more seriously other than, if you know, *you know*.

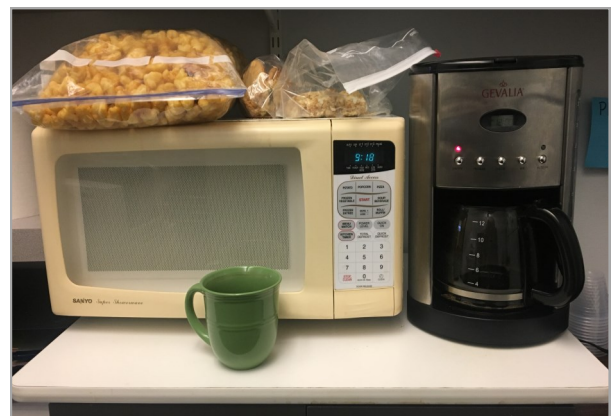
Sometimes when I need a change of pace and a small adrenaline rush, I like to open the fridge and play a game of "How many things in here are very very expired?" Here in the political science department, everyone must be so busy that they forget to eat their food! There is not a food category more forgotten than dairy products. Even with the little yellow note on the fridge that reads, "Please be mindful of expiration dates and remove old food! Thank you :)," it is inevitable that there will be six or seven thoroughly expired, single serving yogurt cups at the end of every semester. Do you enjoy Yoplait? Chobani? Oikos? Dannon? Activia? Well, sorry, Charlie, you're out of luck. In all fairness, everyone is doing their best to keep up with life and at least expiration-date hunting gives me a small rush on a long Wednesday morning. Regardless—a message to everyone—please don't forget to eat! It's important!



In all seriousness, I am very grateful to be a student worker in the political science department, or more specifically, in MGN 128. There is a humanizing element to seeing your professors scurry out to their next class, set their lunch from home in the fridge, or talk about their kids waking up at 3am last night. I also scurry to class. I also bring my lunch from home. I do not, however, have kids. Instead, I only wake up at 3am when I realize that I forgot to do an assignment.

Far too often, there's a disconnect between students and their professors whose experience and knowledge feel out of a student's reach. However, my time in the office (mail room) has been rewarding and has effectively bridged the student-professor gap. I enjoy the people of McGannon and--boy oh boy-- do I know how to work a printing and copying machine now. :)

Thank you for reading! Watch out for more *Life in the Mail Room* in Spring 2019.



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The Department of Political Science is home to outstanding faculty members and engaged and thoughtful students who are eager to serve in solidarity with others to address sources of injustice in our community and the world. The discipline of political science provides analytical tools to better understand the structures of power that produce inequality and oppression and also the knowledge to build systems more likely to heighten liberty. Through graduate and undergraduate programs in political science and international studies, the department trains students to meet the challenges of public service, to take active roles as citizens, and to address critical challenges in the world today. Faculty research examines questions of citizenship, representation, law, urban and international development, national security, democratization and other topics vital to communities and countries around the world.

Department hosts Internship Open House

This semester, the Political Science Department collaborated with the Center for Service & Community Engagement and Career Services to present Internship Open House. The event, held on October 3rd in McGannon Hall, highlighted the benefits of completing an Internship before graduating. Internships provide valuable work experience and makes students more competent and competitive for entering law school, graduate and professional programs, and jobs after their time here at SLU.

Speakers at the event included Dr. Leah Sweetman, Assistant Director, Center for Service and Community Engagement, Ms. Diane Devine and Mr. Floyd Welsh from Career Services, and Mr. John Korpecki, a student who had recently completed an internship. Dr. Bob Cropf, coordinator for undergraduate internships for Political Science, moderated the discussion.



John Korpecki was a student presenter at the Political Science Department Internship Open House

I worked at the HIPAA E-Tool with two experienced lawyers, one of whom practiced at the supreme court level. The company's goal was to help other medical practices become HIPAA compliant. I worked with the sales team in helping market and sell the product at medical conventions in the Greater Saint Louis Area. Additionally, I also wrote blogs for the company website. Overall, I really enjoyed working there and I would recommend it to anyone.