



The Filibuster

**Spring/Summer
2016**

News from the Department of Political Science

“Once a member of the Political Science Family, always a member...”

Alumni News:

- Kurt Jefferson, BA 1988, was chosen for the Innovation Award in Internationalization during a recent international education conference.
- Sean Murray, BA 1998, is a partner at Anesi Ozmon Rodin Novak & Kohen Ltd.
- Nathan Munier, BA 2009 and MA 2011, is teaching at The American University of Afghanistan.
- Bradley Hix, MA 2010, is monitoring legislation in all 50 states and the federal government for a medical association.
- Christopher Solger, BA 2011, just graduated from Southern Illinois University School of Law and became engaged to Ariel Edwards.
- Tracy (Mueller) Ball, BA 2011 and MA 2013, just had a baby girl.
- Stephen Taylor, BA 2013 and MA 2015, is the Central Division State & Local Government Relations Manager for the International Council of Shopping Centers.
- Anthony Ginn, MA 2015, will be going to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to provide support for Community in Action.
- Kyle Davis, MA 2016, is pursuing his doctorate at The Ohio State University.

From the Chair

Greetings from the Department of Political Science! Like much of the rest of the country, our faculty and students have been riveted by the ongoing presidential contest. We have joined together to watch two of the presidential debates, and many faculty are appearing in the media and other venues to comment on the election. Department members also speak on other relevant topics at the university and throughout the tristate area, ranging from immigration to Latino participation in politics to police-community relations to the “Brexit” controversy.

Our engagement with the larger community exemplifies our commitment to defining our educational mission in the broadest possible terms. Along these lines, we continue to emphasize simulations and experiential learning activities both inside and outside of our classrooms. This commitment extends to placing our students in internships locally, at the state level, and in Washington, D.C.

Two of our faculty achieved career milestones this year, as

Dr. Gregory Baldi and Dr. Jonathan Day were promoted to Associate professor. In addition Dr. Julia Albarracin received the 2016 Provost’s Award for Internationalizing the Campus. Dr. Casey LaFrance was named the First Year Experience Instructor of the Year for 2015-2016.

One of our alumni, attorney Ernest Codilis received the WIU Distinguished Alumni Award at the spring graduation ceremony. Mr. Codilis has also generously endowed a scholarship for pre-law students. We appreciate the loyalty of all our alumni, and their commitment to helping our students pursue their career and other goals. I visit with many former WIU students throughout the year, and always enjoy hearing about their experiences at Western and beyond.

Political science department office manager Gail Ault edits The Filibuster. We thank her for keeping track of all our department’s activities, as well as for her skill in writing and design. Please let Gail know if you have news to share – a new job, promotion, advanced



Dr. Keith Boeckelman

degree, honor, or any other significant experience. We love to hear from our alums about memories old and new.

Gail can be reached at 309-298-1055 or gd-ault@wiu.edu. If you can help our students with internships or other experiential learning opportunities, please contact me at ka-oeckelman@wiu.edu, or call the department office at the number listed above.

For the latest events, please visit our web page at www.wiu.edu/PoliticalScience or connect with us on Facebook.

Follow-up to the Mock Presidential Election



Participants at the WIU Mock Presidential Election

Given the dramatic 2016 presidential race, WIU's mock election simulation, "The Road to the White House Begins at Western Illinois University" received more than normal attention after it took place last year. Outlets ranging from national TV shows, such as ABC's "The View," to radio stations, print media, and blogs were intrigued by the results, which showed Vermont Senator Bernie

Sanders as the choice of student attendees. Given the simulation's strong track record in predicting presidential election winners of the past, many wondered whether Sanders' MPE victory previewed a similar outcome in November 2016.

We now know that there will be no President Sanders in 2017. Prediction is only a fun side effect

of the MPE, however. The real point is to get students engaged in elections and the political process. By that standard, the Mock Presidential Election was a resounding success.

Alumni Spotlight



Sean Stegall

Illinois native and Political Science alumnus Sean Stegall (1995) was recently appointed town manager of Cary, North Carolina. The Town Council unanimously appointed Stegall after a nine-month search. Cary mayor Harold Weinbrecht said, "We had a lot of excellent applicants and to find someone finally that we can all get 100 percent behind and

we're all excited about, that's what makes me happy. It's a relief to be able to find somebody that good."

Stegall had previously been the manager of the City of Elgin, Illinois, starting that position in 2009. Elgin is approximately 70 percent of the size of Cary.

Stegall received his bachelor's degree from WIU, then went on

to earn his master's in public administration at Northern Illinois University. He is also a graduate of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Senior Executive Institute at the University of Virginia, and the University of Colorado's Center for Improvement of Public Management, Rocky Mountain Program.

Undergraduate Student Notes

Several of our undergraduate students were able to complete internships during the spring and summer semesters. Quincy Jones interned with Genesis Gardens, Dovile Svirupskaite interned with the Illinois House of Representatives, and Nicole Birmingham interned with McDonough County State's Attorney James Hoyle.

We are also pleased that several of our students brought home awards during the spring semester. Mock Trial Team president and captain Brielle Clark won an Outstanding Attorney award at the American Mock Trial Association regional competition in St. Louis. Lukas Urbane received an Honorable Mention award for his work as a

delegate on the Midwest Model United Nations Security Council. Also, Eva Zguri won third place in the English department's Leland Essay Contest.

The department was well represented at the University's Undergraduate Research Day on April 19th. Quincy Jones collaborated with Dr. Jonathan Day on his podium presentation "The President's Powers and Checks That Make Him Less Powerful." Thomas Juvinall collaborated with Dr. Day on his podium presentation "FDR." Benjamin Meyers collaborated with Dr. Greg Baldi on his podium presentation "Contemporary Causes of State Failure: A Case Study of South

Sudan." Rasheka Norwood collaborated with Dr. Day on her poster presentation "We the People." And Erika Ward collaborated with Dr. Day on her poster presentation "Barack Obama's Relationship with the Media." Benjamin Meyers was ultimately awarded the Phyllis Rippey Best Paper Award.

Finally, in Student Government Association elections, the team of major Dovile Svirupskaite and running mate Garret Covington were elected to serve as President and Vice President respectively by an overwhelming margin of 83.7% to 16.3% over their opponents. They officially took office on July 1st. Congratulations!



New SGA President
Dovile Svirupskaite

Special Speakers on Campus

The Department of Political Science had the privilege of hosting several special programs at the Macomb campus this spring.

Christopher Benson, University of Illinois Professor and Associate Dean, presented “Unreasonable Doubt: Emmett Till, Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Laquan McDonald and the Presumption of Black Guilt” on February 25th. Benson is co-author with Mamie Till-Mobley of her memoir “Dean of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime that Changed America” about the life and death of Mrs. Till-Mobley’s son, Emmett

Till, and the history-making changes that followed.

Benjamin Willis presented and led a discussion on “U.S.-Cuba Relations” on March 7th. Mr. Willis was involved in former Governor George Ryan’s outreach to Cuba.

Barbara Mantz Drake, retired editor of the *Peoria Journal Star*, presented “The Significance of Betty Friedan” on March 9th. The lecture was part of the activities included in the University’s celebration of Women’s History Month.

Also included in Women’s History Month was a documentary screening and discussion of “Patsy Mink: Ahead of the Majority,” the story of the first Asian American woman and woman of color in the U.S. Congress.

Mike Smiddy, Illinois Representative for the 71st District, spoke to Dr. LaFrance’s introduction to public policy class on May 2nd. He is a former WIU student of political science and has served as the 71st District Representative since January of 2013.



Representative Mike Smiddy

Codilis Recognized as Distinguished Alumnus

WIU graduate Ernest J. Codilis, Jr. (1973) received the University’s Distinguished Alumni Award at the Spring 2016 commencement exercises on May 14th. The award recognizes alumni who have brought credit to the University and themselves through exceptional professional accomplishments, meritorious service to ensure the continued excellence of WIU and through service to their communities at the national, state or local levels.

After graduating from WIU,

Codilis received his Juris Doctor degree from DePaul University. He is the founder and president of Codilis & Associates, P.C., an Illinois creditors’ rights law firm. His practice is concentrated in the area of mortgage foreclosure, creditor bankruptcy and real estate litigation, and he is licensed to practice law in Illinois, Texas, Colorado and Florida.

Having been through law school himself, Codilis wanted to help Western students graduate and enter law school without debt, so

he recently established the Ernest J. Codilis, Jr. Pre-Law Scholarship. “I established this scholarship to help students who aspire to become lawyers and who may not have the economic resources to realize their dream.” The \$10,000 annual scholarship will be awarded to a student with a pre-law minor at Western who is also a member of the Centennial Honors College.

Codilis is also active in his community and is involved with many charities.



Ernest Codilis, Jr.

Graduate Student Notes

Six of our graduate students participated in the 3rd Annual Graduate Research Conference on March 4th in the University Union. Kyle Davis presented “The Future Generation: A Look at College Students’ Political Activity” as part of the Health, Psychology, and Political Participation session. Brian Johnson presented “Realism and Constructivism in the Middle East” as part of the Perceived

Cultural Identity and Stereotypes session. Jacob Tomlinson presented “Is Congress Still Regionally Divided?” as part of the Health, Psychology, and Forecasting session. As part of the International Perspectives and Issues session, Hashim Al-Rikabi presented “Counter ISIS Strategy,” Abdirizak Diis presented “How Corruption Undermined the Effectiveness of Somali Federal Government,” and Daniel

Ramirez presented “International Development Through the Images of International Relations and American Foreign Aid Policy.”

Hashim Al-Rikabi published the op-ed piece “Competing Perspectives on Countering ISIS” in *Perspectives on Terrorism*, a journal of the Terrorism Research Initiative, Volume X, Issue 2 in April.



Participants at the Graduate Research Conference

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Higher Values in Higher Education



Socializing at the bi-annual faculty/graduate student picnic in May.

Be sure to check out our website at www.wiu.edu/cas/Political_Science/

And “like” us on Facebook - www.facebook.com/wiupolisci

Western Illinois University
Department of Political Science

Faculty Activities

Julia Albarracin has been chosen as the College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Faculty Award winner for Internationalizing the Campus.

Julia Albarracin presented “At the Core and in the Margins: The Incorporation of Mexican Immigrants in Rural Illinois” on March 29th as part of WIU’s celebration of Women’s History Month. The lecture was based on Albarracin’s book on the integration of Mexican immigrants in Beardstown and Monmouth, Illinois, and discusses the ways immigrants negotiate their cultural incorporation into the host society.

Julia Albarracin published the book *At the Core and in the Margins: The Incorporation of Mexican Immigrants in two Rural Midwestern Communities* on May 1st, 2016.

Julia Albarracin presented “Participation and Civic Engagement among Mexican Immigrants in Central Illinois” at the Cambio de Colores 15th

Annual Conference in Columbia, MO held June 8-10, 2016.

Greg Baldi has received tenure and been promoted to Associate Professor.

Greg Baldi published “A Return to Fashion: Revisiting the German Model” in the spring 2016 edition of *German Politics and Society*.

Greg Baldi presented “Brexit: Causes and Consequences” on August 8, 2016 at the Rotary Club of Muscatine, Iowa.

Greg Baldi presented “The Welfare of Education: Schools and Politics in Postwar Britain and Germany” at the Workshop on the Politics of Education at the University of Konstanz in Konstanz, Germany on June 30, 2016.

Jonathan Day has received tenure and been promoted to Associate Professor.

Janna Deitz presented “Latina Political Participation” to the WIU Macomb chapter of Lambda

Theta Alpha sorority on March 21st. She also led a discussion about the increasing rates of Latina participation in voting and running for office.

Janna Deitz provided commentary on Women in Politics and a preview of the Ready to Run Illinois program April 30th on Tri States Public Radio.

Janna Deitz presented a program on contemporary American politics and the upcoming presidential election to Rødding Højskole folk high school in Denmark in May.



Casey LaFrance has been named the Western Illinois University First Year Experience Instructor of the Year.

Casey LaFrance was quoted in “The Rise of the Sagebrush

Sheriffs” by Jonathan Thompson, High Country News, February 2, 2016.

Jongho Lee with **Keith Boeckelman**, Rick Hardy and Kyle Davis presented “What Makes People Seek Political Information? Seeking or Avoiding Information About Political Candidates” at the Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting in April.

Jongho Lee with **Keith Boeckelman**, Rick Hardy and Kyle Davis presented “Does Further Consideration Change Attitudes Towards Presidential Candidates?” at the Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting in April.

Jongho Lee was awarded a summer stipend to develop an advanced research methods class entitled “Applied Statistics for Political Analysis.” This course may be offered as early as Spring 2018.