Homo Politicus
The Newsletter of the Political Science Department at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York
Fall 2020, Volume 6 Issue 1

Contents
Letter from the Executive Officer........Page 3
Life Online........................................Page 4-6
Letter from the M.A. Advisor.............Page 7
Faculty profile..................................Page 8
Faculty news..................................Page 9-10
In memoriam.................................Page 11
Letter from the social media fellow......Page 12
Scenes from the street.....................Page 13
Notes from the frontline....................Page 14
Student spotlight............................Page 15-18
Student news................................Page 19-20
In memoriam..................................Page 21
Letter from the M.A. Writing Fellow.....Page 22
Alum spotlight...............................Page 23-24
Alum news.......................................Page 25
Fall 2020 deadlines & Spring 2021 courses..............................Page 26
Department events..........................Page 27
Warm and fuzzy..............................Page 28-29
Satire..............................................Page 30

Like us on Facebook
Subscribe to our YouTube channel
Follow us on Twitter
The Political Science program at the Graduate Center, CUNY consists of a community of scholars dedicated to the tasks of acquiring, expanding, and transmitting reliable knowledge about political phenomena. Its essential function is to educate professional political scientists, capable of independent research and qualified for careers in academic institutions, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector.
Dear Colleagues, Students, and Alums,

Figuring out how to begin my letter for this edition of Homo Politicus was a challenge. These days, it is a bit too easy to fall back on one of the many clichéd renditions about our “unprecedented times.” On the one hand, such accounts acknowledge how all our lives have been disrupted by the pandemic, by increasing economic precarity, by the brutal assault on Black and Brown bodies that reignited a reckoning with systemic racial injustice, and by the relentless news cycle produced by the reality TV star in the White House. On the other hand, these accounts quickly switch to a recuperative mode about individuals’ demonstrated “resilience.” Resilience discourse occludes vulnerability and suffering, by recasting adversity as an opportunity to hone various forms of self-management and self-optimization. Many members of our program have endured extraordinary hardships over the last many months, and demonstrated their resilience. More importantly, I think, is how we’ve come together to support one another through various acts of solidarity and caregiving, and to mourn our individual and collective losses. I am honored to serve as the EO of a community of scholars who seek more than individuals’ adaptability, and aim instead to work together to bring about desperately needed change.

In August, we welcomed a new cohort of 21 M.A. and 14 Ph.D. students to a program that presently occurs entirely online. You can learn more about our new students in the “Student Spotlight” section of this edition. And, to see a snapshot of the diverse range of virtual program events, please refer to our “Life Online” feature in this issue. We were delighted to be able to host our 2020 annual Awards Night, which was postponed this past spring, during October. Our coverage of that event will appear in the Spring 2021 issue. In an effort to preserve the camaraderie that distinguishes our program, our elected EC student reps — Rebecca Kriese, Harry Blain, and Dean Schafer — organized two outdoor socially-distanced gatherings, one in Central Park, the other in Prospect Park. Some photos from these picnics are included in the “Scenes from the Street” section of this edition.

In conjunction with the Comparative Politics Workshop, our Department Colloquium hosted a conversation with Lisa Weeden (University of Chicago) about her book Authoritarian Apprehensions’ Ideology, Judgement, and Mourning in Syria. Our Department Colloquium also welcomed Corey Brettschneider (Brown University) alongside the Center for Global Ethics and Politics and Political Theory Workshop, to discuss his recent work “Democratic Punishment.” Both in medium and content, the Department’s Virtual Election Series, “Election 2020: Unprecedented Politics, New Challenges for Political Science,” took a dynamic approach to the election by interweaving speakers, debate watch parties, and post-election reflections. Finally, the Department and Polity co-sponsored the panels “Theorizing Race and Capitalism” and “Mechanisms and Institutions: Comparative Studies of Race and Capitalism” at the Northeastern Political Science Association virtual conference in November.

This semester also marked the inauguration of the student-led and faculty-supported Society & Protest Workshop (SPW) Born out of a merging of the Politics & Protest Workshop, which was first developed by preeminent scholar of social movements, the late Charles Tilly, and later continued by GC faculty Jim Jasper and our own John Kkenesky, and the Civil Society workshop, which was initiated by Ph.D. candidate Merrill Sovner, the SPW creates a new space for social movement scholars to share and receive feedback on their research. The schedule this fall included presentations from both internal and external scholars such as Heath Brown (John Jay), Zitian Sun (NYU), and David Sorge (Penn), among others.

As terrific as these events have been, however, they’re not quite the same as meeting in person. Online learning and living is taking a toll on us all. Most report a significant increase in their hours on screen and hours at work. This context makes it all the more remarkable the sheer number of events we’ve held this fall, to say nothing of the robust turnout.

Our students continue to excel, as you will see on pages 19-20. We are proud that Ph.D. candidate Phillip Johnson was awarded a Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Dissertation Fellowship and a visiting fellowship from the UCSD Center for US-Mexican Studies for his work on criminal communication in Mexico. We also celebrate Ph.D. candidates Jenna Russo and Aniel Meeker on receiving this year’s John E. Fried Memorial Fellowship in International Human Rights. We also had a chance to learn more about the fascinating research our students and recent alum are working on during the virtual student conference in December.

In this newsletter we memorialize the loss of Tom Waters, Burton Zwiebach, and Melvin Richter. In the next edition we will honor Drake Logan’s memory more fully.

I want to thank the Homo Politicus staff — Claudia Benincasa, Zachary Conn, Maxwell Fuhrer,er, Alana Pagano, Carly Randsell, Caroline Sigler, and our incredible editor-in-chief Rebecca Kriese — for their excellent work on this newsletter. As always, the program office — DEO Charles Tien, M.A. Advisor Michael Fortner, APO Earl Fleary, and I — remain available to support students and faculty.

In isolationship,
Alyson Cole
Life online

Every year brings new experiences and changes to our program, but few in recent memory have constituted so great a change as 2020, amidst a global pandemic. The abrupt end to in-person teaching, learning, program events, and interactions was sudden and immediate. Though schools within the CUNY system took up to two weeks (and in some cases longer) to “recalibrate,” this transition was felt by all, and difficult for many.

Nevertheless, our ever-creative faculty and students have adjusted to “Life Online,” as one can call it. This feature is dedicated to highlighting the events, experiences, and successes shared by those in our program — to take note of the positives we have garnered along the way.

As we move forward, with upcoming events and classes that will likely be held online for the foreseeable future, we must keep reminding ourselves: we are still learning and teaching to the best extent possible. Most importantly, we can still have fun while doing so. Though in-person interaction is on pause, passion and joy for what we do is ever-present.

“Synchronous Teaching is Tough”

Teaching remotely, whether synchronously or asynchronously, takes some practice. However, in the case of Professor Till Weber and CunyCorn, the real toughness lies in teaching synchronously, a teaching process achieved through videocorno-frencing (and yes, this is correct spelling!). But, as in all cases, CunyCorn has risen to the challenge, and continuously given us a lesson in upholding the morale!

Visit Cunycorn’s blog to follow all of Cunycorn’s adventures.

(Photos credit: Till Weber)
In place of the usual end-of-semester events like department socia l and conferences, members of the GC Political Science community participated virtually in the “No Talent” Talent Showcase, featuring a lineup of students and faculty alike. Despite the title, all performers showcased outstanding talent!

(Photo Credit: GC Political Science)

**Hard White Presentation**

**Richard Fording and Sanford Schram, September 2020**

Going virtual has not stopped the production of and attendance at our department events. As part of our “Election 2020: Unprecedented Politics, New Challenges for Political Science” speaker series, Professors Sanford Schram (GC/Hunter College) and Richard Fording (University of Alabama) presented their new book, *Hard White: The Mainstreaming of Racism in American Politics* (Oxford 2020), which (among other claims) explores how Donald Trump’s demagoguery—and race-baiting, help exploit anxieties about a changing society in an age of globalization, making race a key factor in the 2016 election. Further, they believe the challenge to combat growing levels of outgroup hostility will likely persist beyond the Trump presidency.
"How I Got Zoom-hacked by Neo-Nazis, and What I Did About It"

With public presentations via online video services such as Zoom constituting a “new normal,” they have unfortunately been accompanied by attempts at hacking. In the worst cases, these hackings have been perpetrated by extremist groups. While he was guest speaking at a live webinar hosted by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) titled “On the Need for Radical Activism at the Present Moment,” then Ph.D. candidate Drake Logan’s presentation was hacked by Neo Nazis, who scribbled Nazi insignias on the presentation. In spite of the actions perpetrated, Drake calmly diffused the situation by ignoring the actions of the hackers, making an important point in the process: “Their goal is to disrupt. Ours is to stay the course.” Drake documented this experience in a blog post on PublicsLab, and encouraged others to use his advice for their benefit.

With subfield workshops being conducted online, in addition to other events, attendance and participation in these workshops has still remained high. The Comparative Politics Workshop co-hosted a Department Colloquium featuring a book talk with author Lisa Wedeen for her book, Authoritative Apprehensions (Chicago Press 2018). One of the benefits of hosting events online is the opportunity to invite guest speakers and attendees from outside New York, like Dr. Wedeen who joined us from Chicago.
Dear M.A. students,

I am honored and excited to welcome you to another academic year at the Graduate Center! As M.A. Advisor, my goal is to support your academic and career goals and to assist your progress toward completion of your degree. Feel free to reach out to discuss any questions or concerns, ranging from program requirements and guidelines for completion of the Master’s Thesis, to potential advisors.

My office hours are Wednesdays, 3:00PM to 5:00PM, or by appointment, via Zoom. But feel free to email me anytime at mfortner@gc.cuny.edu. Though the current COVID-19 situation prevents us from having in-person interactions, I hope that you will feel comfortable and take the opportunity to reach out!

Suna Buse Agkoc is your M.A. representative. Her email is sagkoc@gradcenter.cuny.edu. As your elected representative, she is a member of Team Pegasus — a liaison between the M.A. students and the program’s student governing association. She is available to discuss any questions about the department or the M.A. program, and I encourage you to reach out to her about any concerns. She is also part of the planning committee for Team Pegasus events, so she would be glad to hear your ideas for other virtual or in-person, outdoors, socially-distanced events.

For assistance in transitioning from undergraduate to graduate-level writing, or for further support on a working paper, please see our M.A. writing fellow, Osha Smith-Gittelman. His email is osmithgittelman@gradcenter.cuny.edu. Osha’s Fall 2020 Office Hours are held online via Zoom by appointment only. However, writing consultation via email is available throughout the year.

On October 15, we invited current students in the M.A. program to a professional development workshop, focused on providing M.A. students advice for pursuing doctoral studies and applying to doctoral programs after the completion of an M.A. degree. This was a great opportunity for students to pose questions about applications, and for former M.A. students to provide insight on the application process for doctoral studies. We will host a similar workshop in the Spring 2021 semester focused on all things related to developing the M.A. thesis.

Finally, these times can try your soul. As a black man in the United States, these times have exhausted my spirit. Even so, the righteous indignation of young activists in the streets, including many of our students, has, as they say, given me life. Amid great personal tragedy, Philonise Floyd, George Floyd’s brother, marveled at the “People of all backgrounds, genders and races [who] have come together to demand change.” Yes, we have. Honoring this moment, I will do what I can as your M.A. Advisor.

I look forward to getting to know all of you.

Best wishes,

Michael Javen Fortner
Faculty profile

Paisley Currah is a Professor of Political Science and Women’s & Gender Studies at the Graduate Center and Brooklyn College. He is the 2019-2021 Endowed Chair of the Women’s & Gender Studies Program at Brooklyn College, the founding editor of *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* and author of the forthcoming *Sex is as Sex Does: Transgender Identities, Sex Classification, and the State* (NYU 2021).

Alana Pagano: What led you and Susan Stryker to found TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly?

Paisley Currah: In the 90’s, there had already been this growth of transgender studies in a bunch of different disciplines but what Susan and I realized was that a lot of people doing that kind of work lacked credibility. A lot of people who were doing really great work weren’t necessarily finding publication homes. The point of doing TSQ was to be a venue for the new interdisciplinary area but also to signify to other journals that transgender studies is a credible academic area of inquiry.

AP: Can you share a bit about what you’re doing as the 2019-2021 Endowed Chair of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Brooklyn College?

PC: A chair position allows you to do some programming with the faculty and students of Brooklyn College around your area of expertise. This year, the second year, is going to be organized around a tripartite of knowledge, policies, and activism. I want to show how activism leads to policy change and knowledge can be in the service of policy. Policy isn’t necessarily some top-down, technocratic approach. A lot of the activism I did earlier led to policy changes and it wasn’t about elites giving the right answer, it was coming from the ground up.

AP: Can you comment on how activism has shaped your work?

PC: Yeah, I think it’s really helped me. To be involved in activism and actually talk with policy makers about what they think is clarifying. Activism and advocacy has helped me figure out, on a theoretical level, what is going on. If you read too much theory, you can get caught up in all its permutations. Meanwhile at the level of policy it’s much more clear what’s going on and it makes you think that perhaps we don’t quite need to split so many hairs over these theoretical debates. For me, being grounded in what is concretely happening to people is really useful for my project.

AP: What is your forthcoming book about?

PC: Coming from my work as an advocate and activist, I’m making this argument that advocates are always looking at what sex is and governments are always looking at what it does. I came to this book trying to understand these contradictions – why is someone male in one jurisdiction and female in another. After a while, I realized that while they’re unfortunate for the individual, they’re not really contradictions but effects of the fact that states do different things and so your legal sex classification does what government needs it to do. I talk about this in relation to marriage, identity documents, incarceration. It also addresses the question of identity politics. In some sense, providing a justification for it and, in another sense, talking about the dangers of transgender identity politics.
Faculty news

Professor George Andreopoulos published “Whole-of-Nation” Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Closing of Civic Space in the Philippines” in *global-e*. In June, he delivered a paper on “Human Rights during the COVID Pandemic: Challenges and Responses” at the International Congress of Human Rights organized by the School of Judges of Tocantins and the Federal University of Tocantins in Brazil.


Professor Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner was named the Global South Caucus’ Distinguished Scholar for 2020-21. Professor Braveboy-Wagner was also interviewed for the Oral History Archive of the “Women and the History of International Thought Project” conducted by the University of Sussex (U.K.), sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust, and hosted by *Oxford University Press*.

Professor Susan Buck-Morss published *Year 1: A Philosophical Recounting* (MIT Press 2020)


Professor Forrest D. Colburn published “Nicaragua’s Surprising Response to COVID-19,” in the *Journal of Global Health*.

Professors Alyson Cole, Charles Tien, and Robyn Marasco were named the new editors-in-chief of *Policy*.

Professor Michael Fortner was appointed senior fellow at the *Niskanen Center*, where he published “Reconstructing Justice: Race, Generational Divides, and the Fight Over ‘Defund the Police.’” Professor Fortner also published “The Backstory: Comparing the uprisings of 1968 and 2020,” in *Politico* and was quoted in “Trump Doesn’t Know Why Crime Rises or Falls. Neither Does Biden. Or Any Other Politician” in *Five Thirty Eight*.

Professor Julie George was awarded a $250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State and US Embassy in Georgia for the University Research Program for Georgian Ph.D. Professors.

Professor Stephanie Golob was named Director of the new Initiative for the Study of Latin America (ISLA) at Baruch’s Weissman School of Arts and Sciences (WSAS), which launched this fall.

Professor Janet Gornick moderated a public event co-hosted by Graduate Center Public Programs and the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality titled “Reducing Inequality Now” and featuring Darrick Hamilton, Eduardo Porter, and Paul Krugman on June 16. Professor Gornick also worked with her colleagues at the Stone Center to convert the Center’s annual inequality workshop to video. The Center’s sixth annual weeklong summer workshop on inequality research and methods – “Inequality by the Numbers” – was scheduled for June 2020 but had to be canceled. The live workshop was replaced by a set of 14 lectures recorded on video. The whole set is available for viewing on the Stone Center website.


Professor Thomas Halper published “William O. Douglas and the Assault on Objectivity,” in the *British Journal of American Legal Studies*.

Professor John Krinsky received a CUNY Research in the Classroom grant for his undergraduate classes to research networks of activism in New York City, and how these were changed by COVID-19. He also published “New York City’s movement networks resilience, reworking, and resistance in a time of distancing and brutality,” in *Open Democracy*. The Community Change Studies program that Krinsky directs received a grant from the Oak Foundation for operational support and to introduce a Grassroots Leader Fellowship, which brings in leaders from community organizations around the city to our community organizing courses for college credit and a small stipend.
Professor Keena Lipsitz published “Where are people less likely to obey coronavirus restrictions? Republican counties,” in The Washington Post.

Professor Frances Fox Piven was interviewed by Jacobin Magazine to discuss why disruption must be central to protests, the questions of violence and property destruction, and how organizers should and should not see their role in the streets. Professor Piven and Richard Cloward spoke with the New Book in Political Science podcast about their relationship as long-time collaborators. She was also quoted in the Rolling Stone Magazine article “Protesters Reject De Blasio’s NYPD Budget, Continue to Occupy City Hall.”

Professor Emeritus Peter Ranis published “Worker Cooperatives: The Default Alternative to Predatory United States Capitalism” in Socialism and Democracy. He also chaired a panel in June 2019 on “From Employee Participation to Workers’ Self Management” at the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics at The New School.

Professor Stanley Renshon published The Real Psychology of the Trump Presidency (Palgrave 2020) and The Trump Doctrine and the Emerging International System (Palgrave 2020).


Professor Peter Romaniuk contributed a short retrospective to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the UN and introduce a special issue on that topic in Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations.

Professor Helena Rosenblatt published “No, there isn’t a constitutional right to not wear masks,” in Newsday.

Professor Sanford Schram co-authored Hard White: The Mainstreaming of Racism in America (Oxford University Press 2020).

Professor Jillian Schwedler was elected to the APSA Council, the chief governing body of APSA, for a three-year term starting September 2020.

Professor Julie Suk published “Op-Ed: Now, as in the 1970s, it’s men, not women, who will defeat the Equal Rights Amendment,” in the Los Angeles Times.

Professor Charles Tien edited the PS: Political Science & Politics “2020 Presidential Election Forecasting symposium” and also published “The Political Economy Model: A Blue Wave Forecast For 2020” in the same issue.

Professor John Wallach published “Plato” in the Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy (Springer 2020).

Professor Till Weber published “Discreet Inequality: How Party Agendas Embrace Privileged Interests,” in Comparative Political Studies.


Professor Ming Xia published The Right to Vote: How History Created an American Inequality (Boston Review 2020) and “Quadruple Fears In the Perfect Global Storm,” in CUNY Forum & for Corona Conversations: East & West.
In memoriam

Burton Zwiebach

Professor Emerita Burton Zwiebach passed away on April 3rd, 2020 in the presence of his family. As a beloved member of our community, many colleagues and alum shared heartfelt tributes. Below is one from his close friend and colleague, Professor Emerita Irving Leonard Markovitz.

When Burt’s wife Sally called to tell me he had died, I was not surprised but I was shocked. Our lives followed parallel planes, in a sense. Not totally similar, but intersecting. We started our careers at Queens College in the mid-sixties, wearing the same Harris Tweed jackets, with tie and shirt, smoking pipes and cigarettes. We were both demanding teachers, tough with our students, serious in our intellectual interests, and intent on our scholarship.

During the time that his children were growing up, he wrote what has become a major work in political theory, Civility and Disobedience (Cambridge 1975). A few years later, to the cry of his son Peter, “Watch out Lord, Dad is getting ready for a new book!” Burt produced The Common Life: Ambiguity, Agreement, and the Structure of Morals (Temple 1988). No political theorist could make as strong and thorough an argument as Burt. That was his forte: stating a clear proposition that flouted a broad consensus, and then elaborating and defending that contention — in endless detail — remorselessly, and with chutzpah. He was indefatigable.

Burt was a good friend whom I miss greatly.
Lenny Markovitz

Melvin Richter

Professor Emerita Melvin Richter passed away on March 14th, 2020, shortly before his 99th birthday. He died peacefully at home after a long life, rich in ideas, shared generously through his teaching, writings, and intellectual enterprise. As a beloved member of our community, many colleagues and alum shared heartfelt tributes. Below are some from his closest colleagues.

“When I arrived for my interview dinner late from Laguardia Airport, I sat down next to Mel who promptly started talking to me in Chinese. He was a trained linguist in the military during WWII. He also advised me to sign up for the Welfare Fund’s Legal Aid benefit, which I have used numerous times!” - Professor Charles Tien

“It was always a pleasure to have Mel stop by my office (next door to his), knock, and chat for a bit about his classes, his writing, and political theory. He always was full of knowledge about what’s current and important to read.” - Professor John Wallach

“To me, Mel was a gem of a colleague and a distinguished scholar to be admired. When I arrived at Hunter, he was warm and welcoming. I always thought of Mel as a scholar’s scholar, appropriately appointed twice to the Institute for Advanced Study, deeply committed to his research projects, but at the same time generous and curious about the work of his colleagues. My condolences to all of the Richters.” - Professor Cynthia Roberts

“Besides being a very productive scholar, Mel carried deeply about his students. A number of them commented to me over the years how much they appreciated his interest in their work.” -Professor Andy Polsky
Letter from the Social Media Fellow

B Stone is a doctoral candidate and the Social Media Fellow for the Political Science Department.

Dear Students, Alum, and Faculty,

With much of our personal and professional lives moving online in the last six months, it is more important than ever that our digital identities are accurate and up-to-date. I invite all students to review the slides from the Professional Development Workshop I held last fall, on “Developing Your Academic Digital Identity.” The workshop was an introduction to several key platforms, including CUNY Academic Commons – where you can create our own personal website (for free!) – as well as ORCID, Google Scholar, CUNY Academic Works, WordPress, Twitter, and more.

The imperative for a lively digital presence applies equally to the Political Science Department, and our website has been updated with the latest resources and contributions of our students, alum, and faculty. Some highlights include:

- A catalogue of funding opportunities for graduate students, including tips for researching and applying to external funding sources
- Archived interviews with faculty, students, and alum from the pages of Homo Politicus
- Prof. Michael Fortner’s interview with Politico, comparing the uprisings of 1968 and 2020
- An interview with Ph.D. candidate Philip Johnson, who received two external fellowships this year to fund his research on violence in Mexico
- A full archive of Homo Politicus from 2015 to the present

You can always find the latest information about department events and accomplishments by our faculty, students, and alum on our social media platforms:

- On Twitter we are @GC_PoliSci, and be sure to consult our faculty, student, and alum lists so you can follow everyone in our extended community.
- On Facebook consult our Events tab for all upcoming colloquia, workshops, and seminars, and sync your Facebook calendar with your Google calendar or iCal so you can be sure not to miss any events.
- Our LinkedIn Alum-Student Network is a valuable resource for alums and current students alike, all are encouraged to join!
- And be sure to keep an eye on your email for links to recordings of our events available on YouTube if you are unable to join live.

If you have any questions about what was covered in the Professional Development Workshop, how to stay connected through our social media channels, or if you have updates for the Political Science Department website, please contact me at estone@gradcenter.cuny.edu.

From a social distance,

B Stone

@BStone_ABD
Scenes from the Street

Bruce Bernstein’s wife and stepdaughter at a BLM march in Queens. (Photo credit: Bruce Bernstein)

Unable to travel to Colombia, Sally Sharif instead conducted field research in Skaneateles Lake to find out why some horn coral fossilize after Earth’s conflicts and some don’t. (Photo credit: Sally’s partner)

Sally Sharif attending APSA 2020 in a sad, new world of virtual scholarship. (Photo credit: Sally’s right arm)

Students meet in Central Park to welcome the incoming cohort and to celebrate a new academic year. (Photo credit: Rebecca Krisel)

Student and GC union chapter vice-chair Harry Blain speaking at YDSA Defend CUNY! Rally. (Photo credit: rank and file action)

Professor Charles Tien lobbying for full funding of CUNY with faculty, staff, and students in Albany. (Photo credit: Charles)

Students meet in Prospect Park to relish in some in-person socially-distanced fun! (Photo credit: Rebecca Krisel)
Notes from the frontline

Bruce Bernstein (M.A.) is a grants developer at NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H). Below are his notes from his experience at Elmhurst hospital at the height of the pandemic in New York, in April 2020.

Until this past March, most New Yorkers who are not from Central/Western Queens had only vaguely heard of Elmhurst Hospital, my workplace for the last 7 years. Formally named New York Health + Hospitals/Elmhurst, the sprawling facility sits at the borderline of Elmhurst and Jackson Heights, the epicenter of immigration in New York City, and arguably the U.S.

In the spring, we became the epicenter of the early stages of the COVID pandemic. There were lines around the block every morning for our special COVID testing tent; news crews from around the world lined the streets, and a young Emergency Room (ER) resident (MD) made a video inside the ER that was featured on The New York Times website. She broke the rules by bringing a camera inside, but suddenly, we had all the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and ventilators we needed.

NYC’s public hospital system, NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H), the largest public system in the country outside of the VA, served as the backbone of NYC’s COVID response. On March 1st, we had zero COVID inpatients; by April 1st, we had 3,700 in the system. I have heard Elmhurst alone peaked at 575 COVID patients, which is beyond our usual total capacity of 545 beds; all in all, we were operating at 200% capacity at the height of the crisis.

As a grants development professional, I have limited patient contact, and once the COVID lockdown started, I had none. Nevertheless, I came in every day through the lockdown, considered an “essential worker.” My wife, who works as an admissions clerk in an Elmhurst ambulatory clinic, was assigned to register patients in the COVID tent 2-3 times a week, garbed in full PPE. I caught a very mild case of COVID; I was unaware of it until my antibody test came back months later as positive. My wife, also a current CUNY student at LaGuardia Community College, has been fine. Elmhurst’s PPE worked!

The virus affected the staff as well, and we lost a number of colleagues in non-provider (doctor, nurse) positions, perhaps because we were not wearing masks at the start. Sadly, and typical for the course of the disease, every staff I know who died was African-American, although African-Americans make up a minority of Elmhurst employees. It has not been shared how many patients or even staff at Elmhurst lost their lives. At the height, we had several 18-wheel refrigerator trucks in the loading area, filled with bodies that the funeral homes could not take. But we saved many thousands of lives.

H+H is basically a socialist enterprise, owned in whole by the City of New York, with a mission of enhancing public health, serving the poor, and addressing health disparities. For those M.A. students who will be entering the job market, or even Ph.D. students who are having a hard time finding a place in academia, you might want to look at H+H as a career path. It can be bureaucratic – even more so than CUNY – but it is not a profiteering enterprise. The pay is probably just as good as elsewhere in healthcare, but the benefits, including a defined benefit pension and, at least for now, full healthcare upon retirement, are very good. If you are interested in finding out more, or wondering where you could fit in, please contact me at bruce@bruceb.us.
Student Spotlight

Juan Pablo Acevedo (Ph.D.):
Juan is interested in identity, soft power, China-Latin America and U.S-Latin America relations. He draws comics for his students when he teaches and is also a frustrated pilot.

Claudia Benincasa (Ph.D.):
Claudia is interested in the nexus of ideology, affect, and labor as constituted through intimate relationships like friendship and mothering. She spends lots of her time scrolling on the bird site, organizing with tenants, and sitting in the sun.

Julie Benson (M.A.):
Julie’s main academic interests include comparative politics of Europe and the Middle East, international relations, international organizations, conflict theory, and politics of the global economy. Other interests include sewing, animal crossing, and documentaries.

Mette Christiansen (Ph.D.):
Mette is interested in democratic theory, Frankfurt School tradition Critical Theory, Critical Race Theory, Afrofuturism, and in trying to de-academize scholarship and knowledge production by bringing non-canonical and academically unconventional ideas and forms of expression into her research. She also enjoys hanging out with her dog, running, baking, and watching movies.

Nicholas Edwards (M.A.):
Nicholas is interested in Hegel and his successors in Marxism and critical theory. He also finds the comparative study of right wing movements around the world fascinating. Nicholas loves cooking for his family, podcasts, RuPaul’s Drag Race and had a model UN career in undergrad that he will miss dearly.

Guney Demir (Ph.D.):
Guney is interested in authoritarian regimes and regime transition, particularly local level dynamics of regime transition. He also loves sports of all kinds and European cinema.

Xufeng Fang (M.A.):
Xufeng is interested in the American attitude toward China and the Chinese attitude toward the US. He also likes traveling and photography.

Elizabeth Foley (M.A.):
As a recent graduate of GC’s MALS program, Elizabeth wrote a thesis about post-civil rights era narratives that attempted to link Octavia Butler, Toni Morrison, Ayn Rand, Paul Ryan, and Barack Obama. She hopes now to back her arguments with hardcore social science data to apply them to real-world public policy.
Student Spotlight

Samuel Goodson (Ph.D.):
Samuel is interested in how the politics of both the radical right and radical left have changed over the past two decades, especially in Europe, particularly the “anti-capitalist” new right. He also likes biking, learning about and drinking wine, and greatly misses baseball.

David Patrick Gallagher (M.A.):
David is interested in political ideologies, especially of the far left and far right, and the roles of happiness and art in politics. He absolutely loves to read (fiction, non-fiction of all kinds, cereal boxes if he’s in a pinch).

Astrid Wik Hallaraaker (Ph.D.):
Astrid is interested in how capitalist logics materially, culturally, and epistemologically frame peoples’ lives and how the organization of space impacts our conception of “I” versus “us.” She loves and depends on conversations with people with time and attention, and gravitates towards spaces where she can find them.

Ian Kaufman (Ph.D.):
Ian is interested in right-wing authoritarian governments, “populism,” and anti-corporate social movements and weaves his background in economics and business into his research. He enjoys history books, listening to music, and both playing and watching sports.

Pearl Leff (M.A.):
Pearl will be studying international relations, especially in the Middle East. She is particularly interested in the ways that the political systems of rentier states with autocratic regimes are affected by today’s world of declining natural resource revenues. She is an avid reader.

R. Tiger Li (M.A.):
R. Tiger is excited to continue studying human rights. In the past, he has focused on measuring the rights of indigenous peoples, but hopes to learn more about critical perspectives on human rights norms. He also likes playing music, making art, and can pour perfect latte art.

Justin Lornia (M.A.):
Justin is interested in law and the creation of new legislation — he’s always been interested in how the House of Representatives creates new bills and hopes to introduce some in the near future. He also loves nature, whether camping or...
Student Spotlight

Lukas Louwagie (M.A.):
Lukas is interested in social justice, reform, and public policy. He is also a dual citizen of the US & Belgium and loves games of all sorts! Board games, video games, social games, trivia, party games, and card games.

Tyler Lowell (M.A.):
Tyler is interested in elections and campaigns, neofascism and the American alt-right, democratic performance, religion in electoral behavior, Black American politics, democratic socialism, political communication and thought, and mass media consolidation. He also likes Twitter, candy making, cable news, and his cats.

Cassidy Morales (Ph.D.):
Cassidy is interested in American politics and public policy, particularly issues like income inequality and voter suppression. She also likes cooking, writing poetry, watching documentaries and playing with her 4 year old Husky, Luna.

Benjamin Morse (M.A.):
Ben—who is a twin—is interested in judicial politics and the Supreme Court and spends most of his free time listening to the airwaves of WNYC and reading the pages of The New Yorker, The New York Times, and The New York Review of Books.

Alana Pagano (Ph.D.):
Alana is interested in theories of state violence, nationalism, and loss, with a focus on assimilatory forms of consuming narratives of warfare, and aesthetic theory and social theory. She loves making and viewing art, reading, and especially reading in nature.

Tshala Pajibo (M.A.):
Tshala is studying educational policy and discovering progressive solutions to problems and issues preventing children and teens from having accessible, quality education. Specifically, she is interested in completely reimagining the way we, as a nation, teach children to read. She also loves reading, writing fantasy, pop music, and female rap.

Jasmine Pybas (M.A.):
Jasmine’s academic interests mainly center around international affairs. She has spent most of her academic career learning about global and national problems but her true interest lies in finding solutions to these problems. She loves many forms of fitness, ranging from powerlifting to animal flow and yoga.
Student Spotlight

Carly Ransdell (Ph.D.):
Carly is interested in American Politics and Public Policy and wants to produce work that leads to conversations and policy changes involving prison abolition, restorative justice, and communal support systems. She is also a painter and poet and loves art in all of its forms.

Nadina Resulani (M.A.):
Nadina studies international relations, specifically migration issues and what role the diaspora plays in the international economic development. When her time is not sanctioned by parenting or career responsibilities, she likes to read, eat, cook, and travel.

Damla Senlik (M.A.):
Damla is interested in studying colonialism, globalization, revolution, authoritarianism and democracy, and war and peace. She enjoys literature, playing drums, painting, and hiking.

Ken Silverman (Ph.D.):
Ken is interested in political demography, transnationalism and citizenship, migrant political incorporation in new receiving states, and international security issues and policies in Japan and Latin America. He is an omnivorous foodie, and counts insects (especially Japanese inago and Colombian hormigas) among his favorite foods!

Sitharthan Sriharan (M.A.):
Sitharthan is interested in political theory: Hegel, Marx, and Marxism; modern Indian anti-caste thought; identity politics and its critique. He also enjoys watching anime and playing Magic: The Gathering and other strategy card games and has been to over 30 countries in his lifetime.

David Wall (M.A.):
David hopes to learn everything he can about American political history and public policy to refine a skill set that would allow him to pursue a career in government. He is also a writer/producer for TV and film in his spare time.
Student news

Ankita Aggarwal (level II) co-authored “Time to act on MGNREGA,” in *The Indian Express*.

Fernando Aquino (level III) received the Urban Studies Dissertation Award for *Dominican Political Mobilization in New York City from 1991 to Present*.

Andres Besserrer (level II) discussed how immigrant-serving nonprofits are essential for fighting COVID-19 in a report by *New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE)*.

Harry Blain (level III) published “The War Always Comes Home: The American war machine has always been integral to American racism. It’s time to tear it down along with those Confederate statues,” in *Foreign Policy In Focus*.

Philip Johnson (level III) received a Dissertation Year Fellowship for his project, *Narcommunication: The Marketing and Messaging of Organized Crime*. Johnson also received a dissertation fellowship from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and a visiting fellowship from the Center for US-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego. Johnson published two short pieces for *NACLA: “Narco-terrorism charges against Maduro and the ‘Cartel of the Suns’”* and *“The Jakarta Method Comes to Latin America.”* Finally, Johnson published “In Defense of Zombies” in *Political Violence at a Glance*.

Rebecca Krisel (level II) published “Consent-Based Social Dancing Spaces and the Right to the City,” in *Metropolitics*.

Jessica Mahlbacher (level III) received the David Garth Award for *One Country, Three Interpretations: Grassroots Mobilization and Autonomy in Post-Colonial Hong Kong*. Mahlbacher also appeared on the Ralph Bunch Institute’s *International Horizons* podcast to discuss developments in Hong Kong.

Conner Martinez (M.A.) published “Arizona Has Lost Control of the Coronavirus Pandemic” in *Jacobin Magazine*.

Kyong Mazzaro (level III) was named a 2020-21 Public Fellow by *PublicsLab*. Mazzaro also published “Orchestrating silence, winning the votes: Explaining variation in media freedom during elections” in *Electoral Studies*.

Ariel Mekler (level III) was co-awarded this year’s John E. Fried Memorial Fellowship in International Human Rights. She was also appointed to the International Studies Association-LGBTQI Caucus Graduate Student Member-at-Large.

David Monda (level II) was awarded two grants from *Climate Across the Curriculum* and the *US Foreign Policy in the Sub-Saharan Africa Project*. Monda published “Why Kamala Harris is a risky pick for Joe Biden as his running mate” in *Daily Nation* and “Why Kenya’s membership on UNSC in 2021 is meaningless without UN reform,” in *The African Courier*. He was also interviewed about the impact of the RNC on the 2020 election in *Voice of America*, and discussed the establishment of diplomatic ties between Israel and UAE for *Deutsche Welle*. Monda was invited to guest host *CUNY’s Gotham Center for New York City History*, interviewing New York Times bestselling author Sam Roberts on his new book *New York City in 44 Buildings* (*Bloomsbury 2019*).
Student news


Heidi Andrea Rhodes (level III) was awarded the Graduate Center's Harrison Award for Dissertation Completion for this year. Rhodes also published "A Decolonial Feminist Epistemology of the Bed: A Compendium Incomplete of Sick and Disabled Queer Brown Femme Bodies of Knowledge" in the Decolonial Feminisms issue of Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies.

Jenna Russo (level III) was co-awarded this year’s John E. Fried Memorial Fellowship in International Human Rights. Russo also published “R2P in Syria and Myanmar: Norm Violation and Advancement,” in Responsibility to Protect.

Sally Sharif (level III) published “How Robust is the Authoritarian Social Contract? Social Dissent during Iran’s COVID-19 Outbreak” in POMEPS Studies. During the summer, she was a teaching assistant for two courses at the ICPSR summer program at the University of Michigan: Causal Inference and Maximum Likelihood Estimation. Finally, Sharif was awarded the Carrell Dissertation Fellowship, Center for Place, Culture and Politics Dissertation Award, and Dissertation Year Fellowship for Demobilizing and Reintegrating Ex-Combatants: Explaining Success and Failure on the National and Subnational Levels.

Merril Sovner (level III) was awarded the Braham Dissertation Fellowship for When Does Civil Society Sustain Democracy? Case Studies from Central and Eastern Europe.

Mike Stinavage (M.A.) was awarded a 2020 Fulbright Fellowship to research the legislation and implementation of organic recycling programs in Northern Spain.

Anh Tran (level III) received a Dissertation Year Fellowship for The Invisible Hand of Networked Repression. Tran also received the APSA Dissertation Improvement Grant.

Michael Villanova (M.A.) published “CUNY cuts endanger education and adjunct professors’ livelihood,” in City & State New York.

Asher Joseph Wycoff (level III) published “Between Prophecy and Apocalypse: Buber, Benjamin, and Socialist Eschatology” in Political Theory.


---

### Fall 2020 Ph.D Graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sumru Atuk, Angela Borozna, Humayun Kabir, Sari Krieger, Drake Logan, Nader Sadre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Fall 2020 M.A. Graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tatiana Browne-Kai, Walter Fields, Ayse Obali, Christopher Putney, Samuel Goodson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Level 1 to Level 2

| Ankita Aggarwal, Stephon Boatwright, Nigel Cambridge, Peter Carlino, Louis Charbonneau, Julie Goldberg, Rebecca Krisel, Giovanna Marques Kuele, Matthew Mautarelli, David Monda and Haya Zuberi |

### Level 2 to Level 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asher Wycoff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
In memoriam

Our colleague and friend, Tom Waters, age 57, passed away due to complications from COVID-19 on April 4th, 2020. Tom epitomized the special qualities of our program, particularly in his dedication to using social science analysis to dissect the sources of inequality and exploitation in urban society and to address them by fostering social justice through community organization and progressive legislation. His ethnographic study of decision-making in a Manhattan community board deftly explored how the interplay between bureaucratic expertise and community engagement limited the scope of debate around land use. Through a quantitative study of neighborhood trajectories across New York City, he developed a more nuanced understanding of the forces driving neighborhood change. His not-yet-completed doctoral dissertation examined how the decisions and practices of city housing policy and program administrators played an important role in the disparate development paths of two comparable low-income New York City neighborhoods. A pillar of his many communities, Tom’s friends, colleagues, and family often describe him as beloved – below are some of our memories.

“Tom was the first Political Science student I met on my first trip to the department lounge on my first day of classes. He was busy working, but still made time to welcome me and introduce himself and explain helpful things to a new student. He was friendly, kind, and made me feel welcomed and like I’d made the right choice in choosing the Grad Center. Over the next years, I learned that this is who Tom was: always engaged in the work of helping others, in the most genuine and caring ways. Although Tom can longer share his compassion and guidance directly, everyone who was fortunate enough to know him knows that his contributions have helped so many people, and will continue to, for decades to come.” - Elena Cohen (Ph.D., 2020)

“When I was first looking at the possibility of completing a Ph.D. as an older student, I came across a promotional video about the Political Science Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Out of everyone on the video, I was especially struck by Tom Waters who was praising the program for its ability to create opportunities for nontraditional students. It’s quite strange, but it almost felt like he was speaking directly to me. He also picked up the phone, even after I shamelessly cold called him at work after watching that video. In fact, he gave me – a total stranger – a good 45 minutes of his time to discuss all the ins and outs of the program. It was obvious from this first encounter that he was a person of great integrity, honor, and genuine humility. Although we only crossed paths briefly, Tom’s genuine character was clear as day and I am fortunate to have known him, however briefly. He certainly made an impact on me and my life. May his memory be for a blessing.” - Josh Keller (Ph.D., 2014)

“I bonded with Tom when we first met, as we both were older students and both had backgrounds in left-wing organizing and activism. Tom had a warm, accepting personality but also an incredibly deep knowledge of and insight into a wide range of policy issues. He often answered questions with an array of references and wonderful book suggestions. I recall introducing prospective public policy students to Tom at the annual Poli Sci Open House. A conversation with Tom was a sure-fire way to sell our program! Tom had a special love for housing issues and was a major force in the affordable housing movement in NYC. His practical and academic work were both significant. His voice and passion will be sorely missed. I hope others learn from his example and rush in to take up his banner.” - Bruce Bernstein (M.A.)
“Something is always born of excess: great art was born of great terrors, great loneliness, great inhibitions, instabilities, and it always balances them.” ~ Anais Nin

Excess, according to Merriam Webster, is a state “surpassing usual, proper, or specified limits.” Without getting into the ambiguities of propriety, this past year has been replete with excess, to say the least. The confluence of crises that have strained our institutional fabric, the environment, and our public well-being, have undoubtedly forced us past what is usual. In surpassing such limits, the tumultuous times we inhabit have also strained our capacities for bearing pain, for mutual aid, and for collective imagination.

The structural abstractions of systemic crisis are refracted into individual experiences as acute forms of suffering and despair that we have all had to confront in our own ways. And yet, as Anais Nin reminds us, the excesses of terror, isolation, and instability, are not merely oppressive; such excess is itself a foundation of generativity.

I do not mean to traffic in blithe optimism. The weight of the present moment lies heavily on us all. Yet, as we are asked to carry on as though things are normal (even as we acknowledge they are not), we must find avenues through which we can harness the generative potential of the present moment (even as we acknowledge its heaviness). Writing is one such avenue.

Writing in the best of times can be a difficult process. In the current circumstances, it can feel like an impossible task. Nonetheless, writing can also be a source of inspiration and solace, and beyond performing normality, it can transform the weight of excess into the experience of generativity.

As the M.A. Writing Fellow for the 2020-2021 academic year, I hope I can be a source of support for students, especially in the M.A. program, in navigating their own writing process. I am available to provide feedback on drafts, talk through ideas, as well as share resources, strategies, and suggestions for how to cultivate your writing practice. A second pair of eyes, or the perspective of a mind that is not our own, can be crucial to giving our ideas written form. Writing is often a lonely process, now more than ever, it is important to seek out the spaces of mutual support. Whether you are working on a course paper, a grant application, an article, or are just having a difficult time establishing a consistent writing habit, please get in touch.

I hold virtual office hours on Wednesdays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm, and am available throughout the week by appointment. Please email me if you would like to connect. I would also encourage everyone to engage with the wonderful folks at the GC Writing Center, who offer individual writing consultations, online workshops, and excellent writing guides.

Write often, embrace shitty first drafts, take walks, and leave room for acts of the spirit.

In solidarity,

Osha Smith-Gittelman
Doctoral Candidate in Political Science
M.A. Writing Fellow
osmithgittelman@gradcenter.cuny.edu
Alum spotlight

Michael Miller (Ph.D., 2017) is the program director for the Social Science Research Council (SSRC)'s Just Tech program and co-director for the Media and Democracy program. He began working at the SSRC as a Mellon/AHLS public fellow and program officer for the Media and Democracy program.

Caroline Sigler: Can you describe the work that you do for the SSRC?

Michael Miller: Currently, I am the director of the Just Tech program and co-director of the Media & Democracy program at the SSRC. The Just Tech program is a new initiative which aims to support research about the intersection of technology and power, especially as it relates to questions of marginalization and identity. I began working at SSRC as a program officer for the Media and Democracy program at the SSRC. This program supports research surrounding the effects of innovations in media technology and institutions on a variety of political practices by hosting regular research development workshops and public events.

CS: What was your experience like post-graduation?

MM: After graduation, I adjuncted for a time. But given the demanding nature of the work, the little pay, lack of security and the fact that I was at the time expecting a child I knew that I could not continue with that work. I learned of the ACLS Public Fellows Program and decided to apply. This program places recent Ph.D. graduates from across the humanities in nontraditional academic settings. This is how I originally received my position at the SSRC.

CS: How did your time at the GC prepare you for your career afterwards?

MM: I am constantly evaluating academic research and the GC prepared me to assess the strength and clarity of an argument, which in turn helps me to provide more effective feedback to my colleagues. In a more general sense, going to the GC gave me numerous opportunities to teach. Indeed, this is one of the challenges of attending the GC — the heavy teaching load most students bear. But it is important to remember that teaching is a transferable skill. When you teach, you are getting practice standing in front of an audience and communicating high level ideas in a way that makes sense to others. There are a number of contexts outside of academia in which these skills are incredibly useful.

CS: What advice would you give to current GC students?

MM: Publish. If you want to enter into academia after graduation you should try to publish as much as possible. I say this as someone who did not publish in school. As a student, I was worried that my academic work was insufficient. But part of the publication process includes making substantial revisions to your work. No paper is perfect when it is sent out for publication. Think of it this way: when you submit a paper for class, a professor (who is an expert in the field) is evaluating your work and giving you feedback. This is not an opportunity that exists as forthcoming after graduation. I recommend that after receiving feedback from a professor on a paper, start making the suggested revisions immediately. Then start sending that paper around for publication. My other advice would be to start seriously considering if academic work is what you want to pursue, especially given the state of the job market. If not, take an audit of the skills you’ve obtained through your training at the GC — methods, writing, editing, public speaking, organizing events, writing grant proposals, managing budgets — and consider how (not if) these skills are transferable to a variety of non-academic careers.
Sofia Sedergren-Booker (M.A., 2019) has been working for the CUNY Census Project and is the co-founder of the Swedish Trans-Atlantic Researchers and Scholars (STARS) Network.

Caroline Sigler: Can you discuss the work you have been up to since graduation?

SSB: In December 2019, I founded the Swedish Trans-Atlantic Researchers and Scholars (STARS) Network. STARS is an academic network for researchers who come to North America from Sweden and vice versa. We connect people across disciplines by providing a space for hosting events (currently over Zoom), share information and guides on the challenges of relocating, and are currently launching a mentoring network for more advanced/experienced scholars to advise those just starting out. I have also been working for the CUNY Census Project. The aim of this campaign is to encourage people to complete the census so that New York receives the representation and funding it deserves.

CS: What can you tell us about how COVID-19 affected census reporting?

SSB: The primary strategy of the CUNY Census Project was an in-person, on the ground campaign. Quarantine has made this impossible, so we have since moved to a digital campaign that operates remotely. Despite this, I think it has been a good campaign and we have had a lot of engagement. So far we are at a 60% self-response rate as opposed to a 64% self-response rate in 2010.

CS: What has been the biggest challenge you have faced since graduation?

SSB: As an international student, I am facing issues related to immigration and transitioning from a student visa to a permanent residency status.

CS: There are a lot of international students at the GC and so your experience may be helpful to them. Do you have any advice for the students who may find themselves in your situation after graduation?

SSB: Quarantine has made navigating the immigration system an even more difficult process than usual. I would recommend hiring a lawyer if possible, but this is expensive and not everyone can afford it. One good resource to make use of is CUNY Citizenship Now. They will help review your application and can provide general information about the process. It makes a huge difference to have someone who has experience going through the process help you out.

CS: What is your favorite memory of the GC?

SSB: My favorite memory would probably have to be going to department events. These were opportunities to meet people and have fun. In New York City, everyone lives in all different areas so it can be difficult getting to know other students. These events allowed me to talk with other students, network, and make friends.
Alum news


Sam Hellman (M.A., 2020) accepted an offer for a Ph.D. program in Chinese Literature at Columbia University.

Fanny Lauby (Ph.D., 2014) was promoted to Associate Professor and received tenure at William Paterson University. Lauby also published “The leadership challenge: undocumented youths in social movement coalitions in the United States,” in Social Movement Studies.

Pierre Losson (Ph.D., 2019) appeared on The Arch & Anth Podcast to discuss the social, legal, and political factors determining whether returns of a cultural heritage object take place. He was also accepted as a fellow at Columbia University’s Italian Academy in support of his work “Claims for the Return of Cultural Heritage Objects: Latin America.”


Michael Miller (Ph.D., 2017) is the program director for the Just Tech program, a new initiative at the Social Science Research Council (SSRC).


Adam Sachs (M.A., 2020) was interviewed by GC News about pivoting careers during the pandemic and becoming the Director of Finance at Heights and Hills.

Michael Sharpe (Ph.D., 2008) received fellowships from the Northeast Asia Council (NEAC) and the Japan Foundation. He published “Extending Postcolonial Sovereignty Games: The Multilevel Negotiation of Autonomy and Integration in the 2010 Dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles and Dutch Kingdom Relations,” in Ethnopolitics and “Learning Through The Pandemic: Transactional Online Education Is Failing Our Students,” in American Association of University Professors. Sharpe was interviewed by Columbia University’s Weatherhead East Asia Institute and the Ralph Bunche Institute’s International Horizons podcast on racism and immigration in Japan. He was a panelist at the Mike and Maureen Mansfield Foundation on “Teaching in the Time of COVID.”

Patricia Stapleton (Ph.D., 2012) was recognized by CUNY Graduate Center as a Graduate of the Last Decade Award recipient.

# Spring 2021 course schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:45-14:00</td>
<td>Jacobs, Marxism (PT)</td>
<td>Su, Participatory Democracy and Social Movements (PP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-4:00</td>
<td>Beinart, Writing Politics II (G/WP)</td>
<td>George &amp; Cole, Teaching Political Science (G)</td>
<td>Buck-Morss, Critical Reason: The Basics (PT)</td>
<td>Ungar, Crime and Violence in Comparative Politics (CP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schwedler, Basic Theories &amp; Concepts in Comparative Politics II (CP)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tien, Race and Ethnic Politics (AP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schram, American Politics: Core, Theories &amp; Concepts (AP)</td>
<td>Woodward, International Intervention and Domestic Consequences (CP)</td>
<td>Invernizzi-Accetti, Modern Political Thought (PT)</td>
<td>Program events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30-8:30</td>
<td>Erickson, State &amp; Society (CP)</td>
<td>Metha, Gandhi as a Political Philosopher (PT)</td>
<td>Schwedler, Comparative Politics Basic Methods II (CP)</td>
<td>Braveboy-Wagner, Comparative Foreign Policy: Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (IR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wolin, Nietzsche for Fun and Prophet (PT)</td>
<td>Fortner, Qualitative Methods (G)</td>
<td>Lee, International Political Economy (IR)</td>
<td>O’ Brien, Power, Resistance, Identities, and Social Movements (G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodward, Dissertation Proposal Workshop (G)</td>
<td></td>
<td>O’ Brien, Women of Color Impacting Politics (G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **November 4**: Application deadline for the [Social Science Research Council’s International Dissertation Research Fellowship](#).
- **November 6**: Application deadline for the [GC Early Research Initiative (ERI) - Catalyst Grants](#), to provide short term support for doctoral student research.
- **November 16**: Application deadline for the [Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship](#) to support final year Ph.D. dissertation writing concerned with religious or ethical values.
- **December 1**: Application deadline for grants from the [Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy](#) to support doctoral research with a social policy application.
- **December 10**: Application deadline for the [Ford Foundation Fellowships Program of the National Academy of Sciences](#) to support Ph.D. dissertation writing or post-doctoral study for individuals committed to a career in teaching and research at the university level in social sciences.
- **December 17**: Application deadline for the [Ford Foundation Fellowships Program of the National Academy of Sciences](#) to support pre-doctoral graduate study.
- **January 4**: GC application deadline for the [Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship](#).
- **January 14**: [American Political Science Association (APSA) abstract submission](#) deadline for the 2021 Annual Meeting “Promoting Pluralism” in Seattle, WA.
- **January 27**: Application deadline for the [Boren Fellowship](#) for graduate research abroad and intensive language study central to U.S. interests.
- **January 31**: Application deadline for the [Graduate Center Doctoral Student Research Grant (DSRG)](#).
- **February 3**: [American Sociological Association (ASA) paper submission](#) deadline for the 2021 Annual Meeting “Emancipatory Sociology: Rising to the Du Boisian Challenge” in Chicago, IL.
Department events

September 8th: Comparative Politics Workshop, Nicholas Micinski (Boston University) “Migration Management and Digital Identity”


September 11th: Political Theory Workshop, Francisco Fortuno-Bernier (GC) “Populism and Republicanism: Debates Between Spain and Latin America” - Discussant: Tyler Olsen (GC)

September 12th: Student Picnic in Central Park

September 15th: Comparative Politics Workshop, Michael Yarborough (John Jay College) “Making Marital Status in South Africa, Past and Present”

September 17th: Election Series, Sanford Schram (Hunter College) and Richard Fording (University of Alabama) “Hard White: The Mainstreaming of Racism in American Politics”


September 24th: Comparative Politics Workshop, Lisa Wedeen (University of Chicago) “Book Conversation: Authoritarian Apprehensions”


September 29th: Election Series, Virtual Debate Watch Party

October 1st: Virtual Program Awards Night

October 2nd: Student Picnic in Prospect Park

October 8th: Society and Protest Workshop, Heath Brown (John Jay College) “Right-wing protests in the US: How a violent protest launched the conservative movement and homeschooling in the US”

October 9th: Political Theory Workshop, Daniel Rogers (GC) “Title TBA”

October 15th: Professional Development Workshop, Michael Fortner (Murphy Institute, GC) “Applying for Ph.D. Programs”

October 22nd: Society and Protest Workshop, Zitian Sun (NYU) “The Pitfall of Popularity: The Dynamic of Radicalization in the 1989 Tiananmen Student Movement”

October 22nd: Professional Development Workshop, Charles Tien (Hunter College, GC) “Work-Life Balance: A Discussion”

October 23rd: Political Theory Workshop, Susan Buck-Morss “YEAR 1: Translations in Time”

October 26th: Election Series, Davin Phoenix (UC Irvine) “What the Anger Gaps Mean for Election Day 2020”

November 3rd: Election Series, Virtual Election Watch Party

November 5th: Society and Protest Workshop, David Sorge (University of Pennsylvania) “India’s Ethno-Religious Unrest: Emergent Events or Evolving Repertoire?”

November 6th: Department Colloquium, Corey Brettschneider (Brown University) “Democratic Punishment” Sponsored by the Center for Global Ethics and Politics and the Political Theory Workshop

November 12th: Election Series, “The Fallout” – Election day aftermath discussion

November 18th: Society and Protest Workshop, Nantasha Williams (University at Albany, State University of New York) “Live from the Frontlines: Protest and Violence from the Perspective of Activists and Social Movement Leaders”

November 19th: IRB workshop with Julie George (Queens College, GC)

November 20th: Political Theory Workshop, Tristan Mantel-Hoffman (GC) “Title TBA”

December 3rd: Society and Protest Workshop, Panel with Participants from Black Lives Matter and Hong Kong on Activists’ Perspective on Contemporary Social Movements and Violence

December 4th: Virtual Graduate Student Conference

December 4th: Political Theory Workshop, Zachary Conn (GC) “Walter Benjamin and a Communist Indifference to Democracy”
Warm and fuzzy

Parker Frances Stone arrived this summer, a little slice of heaven in a world gone to hell (Photo credit: B Stone)

Yes We Corn (Photo credit: Till Weber)

My kiddos (Emily, Matthew and Claire) on our annual trip down the Jersey shore (Photo credit: Jenna Russo)

Zelda’s advice for overcoming election stress: a sturdy scratch pad (Photo credit: Rebecca Krisel)

Sally Sharif discovered CUNY Corn’s cousin living in a remote corner of Upstate NY. (Photo credit: Sally’s partner)

My youngest daughter, Raffaella, asked me if there would be an election for Second Grade class President this fall. She said she would like to run! (Photo credit: Laura Tamman)
Warm and fuzzy

Nathan (top right) and Jacob (bottom left) Keller, my five year old twins. (Photo credit: Josh Keller)

Benny is the best student in lockdown — constantly trying to participate on Zoom. (Photo credit: Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner)

Brahim’s daughter Zaynab and Toby’s dog Reggie are the cuteness we all need right now. (Photo credit: Rebecca Krisel)

Atticus, the chunkiest loaf of them all. (Photo credit: Christopher Putney)

Her full name is Avi Ida Alyse Gilmore-Mekler... definitely small and mighty!!! (Photo credit: Ariel Mekler)

Here is Quintessential! (Photo credit: Sumru Atuk)
Satire

P.S. buy a tote bag

Want to support the Political Science Department and have something to show for it? Well, now you can! Simply donate $15 or more at http://bit.ly/GCPoliSciSwag, and receive a stylish, 100% cotton tote bag featuring Aristotle climbing the Empire State Building. Impress your friends! Devastate your enemies! Carry groceries, maybe! And most importantly, help support the dedicated students of America’s greatest public university system.

Caption by Professor Emerita Peter Ranis, drawing by his granddaughter.

“My mom will be so upset she got a C on my assignment!”

Ph.D./M.A. in Political Science

Now is the time to think seriously about politics.

- More than 60 faculty who are distinguished scholars, outstanding teachers, and leading voices in the discipline.
- Concentrations in American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, and Public Policy.
- Our midtown Manhattan location allows easy access to the United Nations, NGOs, civic organizations, and non-profits.
- Affiliated research centers include the Center for Urban Research, the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality, and the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies.
- Our Writing Politics program trains students to author sophisticated political analysis for non-academic audiences.
- Graduate students contribute to the vibrant, close-knit, international, and diverse intellectual community of the Political Science program, with many workshops and colloquia.
- Our graduates have successful careers in academia, government agencies, nonprofits, media, publishing, think tanks, political campaigns, and the private sector.
- Full-time or part-time enrollment, with many courses offered in the evenings.
- All of our doctoral students receive funding.
- All our M.A. applicants are considered for merit scholarships.
- M.A. students take courses alongside doctoral students, taught by professors engaged in cutting-edge research in these fields.

Admissions
- For applications, deadlines, and additional information about the admissions process visit http://www.gc.cuny.edu/admissions.

Contact Us
- Ph.D./M.A. Program in Political Science CUNY Graduate Center 365 Fifth Avenue, Rm 5200 New York, NY 10016 E-mail: politicalscience@gc.cuny.edu Telephone: (212) 877-6570 https://politicalscience.commons.gc.cuny.edu http://www.ps.cuny.edu