

---

## **Department of Political Science Annual Report 2009-10**

This year, the Department of Political Science served more than 500 majors, generated over 9,000 student credit hours, managed two bachelor degree programs, three concentrations, and various minors, made a number of changes to strengthen the quality of the various programs and enhance student learning, welcomed a new chair, and made important contributions in scholarly and professional arenas. The following briefly presents the major accomplishments during the period, and lays out plans for the coming academic year. The attached one-page profile summarizes data and serves as the appendix.

### **Curriculum Developments**

The department conducted an extensive review of the curriculum guided by past assessment information, and marshaled through a number of revisions:

- In response to declining scores on the major field test, requirements for the PS major were changed to include foundation courses in the major subfields and an increase the overall number of required hours from 33 to 36;
- The international relations faculty added the research methods course as a requirement to the IR program (as recommended in the 2005-06 external review) and also increased the total number of required hours to 36;
- The pre-law faculty revised the pre-law concentration to purge courses considered of limited value and include more appropriate courses;
- Many rarely taught courses were purged from the catalog;
- Special advanced studies courses were adopted in each subfield to help students identify special topics courses;
- To better indicate to students the degree of difficulty of general education courses and our preferences regarding the sequencing of courses, we changed PS 2010 to 1005 and PS 4000 to 3001;
- In an effort to bolster practical training and enhance student options, the department crafted a new minor in Political and Civic Engagement. As part of this initiative, the department created the following new courses: PS 2110 Moot Court, 2140 Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature, 3550 Democratic Participation and Civic Advocacy, and 4950 Community-Based Research Practicum, and obtained EXL designations for PS 2100, 2110, 2120, 2130, 2140, 4040, 4270, 4280, 4290, 4360, and Dr. Maynor's section of 4800. This initiative reflects goals in the institution's master plan as well as student need expressed in the senior survey and alumni survey for more practical training.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- In 2008-09, the average test scores for IR majors on the field test climbed back beyond the 500 mark, while the average tally for PS majors continued to fall further below the

500 funding threshold. This prompted the discussion, analysis, and curriculum changes noted above and will continue to be monitored;

- Average LSAT scores in 2009 for PS majors stood at 149, virtually unchanged since 2007 when data on this was first collected. Hopefully, the curriculum improvements will help improve these scores. Other initiatives to help students prepare and perform for the exam are being explored;
- On the 2008-09 California Critical Thinking Skills Test (General Education Test) the mean score for IR and PS majors was higher than for the college. IR majors outscored those from the college in the areas of analysis, deduction, evaluation, and inference (all areas except induction), while PS majors enjoyed scores above the collegiate average in all areas save analysis and inference;
- In 2008/09, twenty students from the department (11 POSC, 9 IR) participated in study abroad programs. Though among the top compared to other majors, this number is considered rather low given the nature of our programs;
- A review of student evaluations from fall semester 2009 courses showed overall average department scores on par or exceeding the college and university average in every area (presentation ability; organization and clarity; assignments and grading; intellectual and scholarly approach; incorporation of student interaction; motivating students; and effectiveness and worth). The department enjoyed its highest rating on the factor of intellectual and scholarly approach, placing 0.3 points higher than the MTSU average. At the individual level, eight of the 14 full-time faculty enjoyed an increase in their weighted average compared to the Fall 2008, and three showed no change. Among the three faculty with the lowest ratings in Fall 2008, all three registered improvements in 2009.

### **Student-Centered Learning**

The Department continued to provide students with learning opportunities outside the formal classroom. This included:

- 42 **internships** in political campaigns, law offices, and community-based organizations;
- The first ever MTSU **Moot Court** team finished 7<sup>th</sup> at the regional competition in Little Rock and competed in the national competition;
- **Mock Trial** placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at regional competition in Birmingham and subsequently placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at a competition in Greenville, South Carolina. MTSU also hosted its Annual Mock Trial Invitational Tournament in November 2009, the largest invitational in the nation;
- **Model UN** competed at the Southern Regional in Atlanta in the fall and the Virginia International Crisis Simulation in Charlottesville in the spring;
- The **Student Mediation Association** participated in the annual invitational intercollegiate event at Brenau University in Gainesville, Georgia, and the national intercollegiate mediation tournament at the John Marshall Law School in Chicago;
- 7 students participated in **directed studies** courses working individually with faculty on research projects.

### **Improved Assessment**

- To improve assessment, the Department added a series of questions to the senior survey. The information will help provide feedback on the quality of courses and advising;

- Support from the Department and the College was obtained to enable Dr. Peteresen to attend a conference on assessment;
- The Department purchased assessment materials including the book *Assessments in Political Science* published by the American Political Science Association;
- The Chair began work on revising goals and assessment and developing new tools to track progress. These will be under formal discussion over the summer and should be in place for 2010-11.

### **Communications/ Recruitment / Student Relations**

Concerted efforts were made this year to increase the level of communication with students, actively recruit majors, and improve student relations. Such efforts included:

- Increased communication with students by:
  - Establishing and maintaining email lists of majors;
  - Utilizing email lists of alumni;
  - Creating a facebook page for students;
  - Improving and updating the departmental web page;
  - Publishing two electronic Newsletters (Fall and Spring) (attached);
- Enhanced efforts to recruit students through a recruitment letter targeting students earning a grade of 'A' in either of the general education courses in the fall and spring semesters;
- The Department also sponsored a number of events, such as:
  - Careers in International Relations;
  - PS Forum: "Meet your Legislator: Jim Tracy";
  - PS Forum: "Iraqi Kurds: Awaiting the Third American Stab in the Back" by Commander Rick Denny;
  - PS Forum: "Graduate School Workshop";
  - Spring Picnic for students and faculty.

### **Alumni/Donations**

- From September 1 to January 21, 2010, the Department received \$7,775.00 in donations to a range of scholarship accounts and the Political Science Enrichment Fund.

### **Faculty**

Faculty had an amazingly productive year offering 121 classes, coordinating over 40 internships, and generating over 9,000 student credit hours. And despite a heavy 4-4 teaching load, they professionally devoted time and energy to course improvements, scholarship, grant writing, and service activities. Among the highlights:

- **David Carleton**, **Lisa Langenbach** and **John Maynor** developed and taught new online courses. **Amanda DiPaolo** created a new course on Canadian politics, to be taught for the first time this coming fall. **Sekou Franklin** attended a short course on energy sustainability at the University of Dayton to incorporate into an upcoming special topics course on sustainability. **John Maynor** taught his PS 4800 Senior Seminar as an EXL course, requiring students to complete a public service component. **Steven Livingston** obtained an Instructional Technologies Development Grant to develop streaming

education videos of the US Congress. Collectively, **David Carleton**, **Lisa Langenbach**, and **Clyde Willis** coordinated the many campaign, public service, and pre-law interns. Overall, the faculty enjoyed student evaluation above the college and university averages, with **John Maynor** and **Robb McDaniel** tied for the highest student evaluations for fall semester courses;

- Faculty published three books [**Amanda DiPaolo's** *Zones of Twilight: Wartime Presidential Powers and Federal Court Decision Making*; **Stephen Morris' Political Corruption in Mexico: The Impact of Democratization; and **Karen Petersen's** co-authored *Prospects for Political Stability in a Democratic Iraq: A Study of the Clusters of Conflict*]; three peer-reviewed articles [**Amanda DiPaolo's**, "Canadian National Security cases vs. American National Security cases" in the *International Journal of Human Rights*; **John Maynor's**, "Blogging for Democracy" in the *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*; **Karen Petersen's**, "Revisiting Downs's Issue-Attention Cycle: International Terrorism and U.S. Public Opinion" in the *Journal of Strategic Security*]; and numerous book chapters and invited articles by **Sekou Franklin** and **Andrei Korobkov**. In addition, **John Maynor** is completing a book manuscript, **Karen Petersen** and **Andrei Korobkov** have forthcoming peer-reviewed articles, and **Stephen Morris** has a co-edited book due out in July and a peer-reviewed article due in the fall. The faculty also presented 10 research papers at regional, national and international scholarly conferences, including the Midwest Political Science Association, the International Studies Association, the Russian World 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly, the Regional Border Management/Security Conference, the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Kazakhstan, the International conference on institutions, networks, and trust in European-Russian relations at the European University in Florence, the Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies, and the Association of Third World Studies;**
- Faculty received numerous grants including a Faculty Research and Creative Project grant (**Sekou Franklin**), a TBA Access and Diversity Grant (**Steven Livingston**), Summer Research Grants (**Amanda DiPaolo**, **John Maynor**, **Karen Petersen**), an MTSU Instructional Technology Grant (**Steven Livingston**), a Diversity Research Grant (**Amanda DiPaolo** and **Karen Petersen**), a Liberal Arts Grant Writers grant (**Karen Petersen**), and an Instructional Evaluation and Development Grant (**Karen Petersen**);
- In the broad area of service, **David Carleton** served as campus liaison for The Washington Center and on the MTSU Teacher Education Council, the Advisory Board for the American Democracy Project, and the CLA committee on restructuring. He also attended the Tennessee Compact's conference on grant writing for civic engagement programs. **Sekou Franklin** authored two editorial pieces in *The Tennessean* and published a public-service manual *The Green Pathways Out of Poverty*, chaired the Board of the Urban EpiCenter, served as a leading member of the Green-Collar Jobs Task Force of Nashville-Davidson County, and coordinated the minor in Urban Studies. **Andrei Korobkov** served on the Board of Advisors of the Russian-American Center in Dallas, the Research Institute for European and American Studies in Athens, Greece, as IR section President of the International Studies Association Post-Communist Systems, chaired panels at five scholarly conferences, and as section editor for the ISA Compendium project. **Lisa Langenbach** participated in the MTSU Committee on Distance Learning, serving as an

on-line courses faculty mentor and RODP course developer. **John Maynor** served on the faculty senate and as editor of the journal *Contemporary Political Theory*. **Robb McDaniel** served as the advisor to Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society, and to the College Democrats, and chaired the Veterans Memorial Committee. **Stephen Morris** served on the Essay prize committee for the Mexico Section of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), the editorial board of *The Latin Americanist* and the *Carta Economica Regional* (University of Guadalajara), and as the web master for the Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies. **Steven Livingston** served on the CLA Tenure and Promotion Committee, as site director of the MTSU General Education Program in France, the editor of *Global Commerce*, and on numerous occasions shared his expertise on international economic issues with the media. **Karen Petersen** served a term as president of the Tennessee Political Science Association, organizing the annual meeting, participated in the Forensic Institute for Research and Education conference, and served on the Student Fulbright Interview Committee, and the Honors College Buchanan Scholars selection committee. **Steven Livingston** continued to edit *Global Commerce*. **Moses Tesi** edited the *Journal of African Policy Studies*, served on the College of Liberal Arts, Diversity Grant Award Committee, and on the University Search Committee for Vice Provost for International Education, and coordinated the minor in African Studies. **George Vernardakis** served on the University Faculty Appeals Committee, the Rotary Club of Murfreesboro, and the Alliance Francaise de Nashville. **Clyde Willis** completed his year as interim chair last summer ensuring a smooth transition, and during the year chaired the department's promotion and tenure committee that acted on two applications for promotion and one for tenure (**Karen Petersen** was recommended for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor; **Andrei Korobkov** was recommended for promotion to Professor.

\* \* \*

### **Plans for 2010-11**

The forgoing suggests many of the priorities and major tasks for the upcoming year. Among these are:

- Promoting and initiating the new minor in Political and Civic Engagement, including the development of new internship and community-based opportunities for students, and standardization of internship supervision;
- Continually improving our engagement with students outside the classroom by organizing workshops, guest speakers, faculty research presentations, sponsored films, and social events, and improving the flow of communications, thereby strengthening the sense of community. New initiatives might include running focus groups with students and creating a virtual mentoring program linking current and former students;
- Designing and publishing new brochures incorporating recent curriculum changes;
- Developing and publishing a student handbook designed specifically for PS majors;

- Developing additional strategic goals and assessment techniques, and working with faculty to improve overall teaching effectiveness;
- Improving external relations among friends, supporters and alumni;
- Preparing for the five year external review and SACS five-year Retrospective Report;
- Approving a set of by-laws for the Department;
- Providing faculty with the opportunity and support needed to pursue their research goals;
- Obtaining a real reduction in teaching loads, consistent with AAUP recommendations, for faculty engaged in research or with extensive service commitments. Such a move will greatly enhance both in-class and out-of-class experiences of the students and overall quality.

## Appendix Department Profile

<p><b>Majors</b> (Fall 2009): <b>519</b></p> <p>General Focus 136 Pre-Law 235 Inter. Relations 97 Public Adm. 25 Teaching Lic. 26</p>	<p><b>Graduates</b> (2008-09): <b>120</b></p> <p>20 (BA in International Relations) 20 (BA in Political Science) 80 (BS Political Science)</p>															
<p><b>Faculty</b> (2009-10): <b>14</b></p> <p>Full Professors: 4 Associate Professors: 8 Assistant Professors: 2 FTT: 1 (fall semester only) [Adjuncts: 4]</p>	<p><b>Classes Taught</b> (2009-10): <b>121</b></p> <p><b>Student Credit Hours:</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Semester</th> <th style="text-align: center;">LD</th> <th style="text-align: center;">UD</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Grad.</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fall 09:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2,398</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2,469</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4,870</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spring 10:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3,216</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1,398</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4,614</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Semester	LD	UD	Grad.	Total	Fall 09:	2,398	2,469	3	4,870	Spring 10:	3,216	1,398	-	4,614
Semester	LD	UD	Grad.	Total												
Fall 09:	2,398	2,469	3	4,870												
Spring 10:	3,216	1,398	-	4,614												
<p><b>Enrollment</b> (Fall 2009)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PS 1010: 414 students in 15 sections (average 27.6 per section)</li> <li>• PS 2010: 263 students in 11 sections (average 23.9 per section)</li> <li>• Other courses (excluding internships, directed studies): 986 students in 46 courses (average 21.4 per course)</li> </ul> <p><b>Internships</b> (2009-10): <b>42</b> (318 credit hours)</p>	<p><b>Capacity</b> (actual enrollment / maximum enrollment)</p> <p><u>Fall 2009</u> courses operated at 83% capacity. General Education courses functioned at 90% capacity with 17 of the 24 sections beyond 90% occupancy. The non-GenEd courses ran at 79% of capacity with 18 of the 40 classes beyond the 90% mark.</p> <p><u>Spring 2010</u> enrollment came in at 85% of the maximum capacity. General Education courses operated at 97% capacity with 14 of the 15 sections over 90% full. The non-GenEd courses ended at 80% enrollment with 17 of the 38 classes over 90% full.</p>															
<p><b>Major Field Test</b> (2008-09): <b>IR: 507; PS: 452</b></p> <p><b>By areas</b> (IR/PS scores):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">American</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Comp/IR</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Pub.Adm.</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Meth/Theory</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fall 2008</td> <td style="text-align: center;">368/510</td> <td style="text-align: center;">440/453</td> <td style="text-align: center;">412/441</td> <td style="text-align: center;">392/414</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spring 2009</td> <td style="text-align: center;">496/505</td> <td style="text-align: center;">612/458</td> <td style="text-align: center;">466/423</td> <td style="text-align: center;">461/389</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			American	Comp/IR	Pub.Adm.	Meth/Theory	Fall 2008	368/510	440/453	412/441	392/414	Spring 2009	496/505	612/458	466/423	461/389
	American	Comp/IR	Pub.Adm.	Meth/Theory												
Fall 2008	368/510	440/453	412/441	392/414												
Spring 2009	496/505	612/458	466/423	461/389												
<p><b>Retention</b> (2007)</p> <p>% PS Majors returning to MTSU -- 62.30 % PS Majors returning as majors -- 49.20 % IR Majors returning to MTSU -- 81.50 % IR Majors returning as majors -- 70.40</p>	<p><b>LSAT Scores</b> (September 2009-February 2010):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Avg. <b>150</b> (n=47)</p>															
<p><b>Donations to Scholarship and Enrichment Funds</b> (Sept 2009 – Jan. 2010): <b>\$7,775.00</b></p>																