AUTUMN 2015 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE CHAIR

It is a pleasure to be reporting news from the Department of Political Science to our alumni and friends. This edition of the newsletter provides information about a new undergraduate student organization, two new undergraduate courses, and an educational website project called LegEx that uses innovative and compelling visualizations of lawmaking in Congress. We also report on the latest winner of our Distinguished Alumni Award, Christine Charbonneau. The past year has been a busy and exciting...

NEW POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT ORGANIZATION CREATED

Can exchanges between faculty and students be made fun, cool and exciting? A new Political Science Student Organization, or PSSO, is founded on the belief that they can. The organization was formed through the initiative of Cassie McMaster and Madison Wright, two students now entering their junior year. Cassie explains: “Madison and I decided to create PSSO when we were first admitted into the Political Science program. We felt that there wasn’t an easy way for students and faculty to...

TWO INNOVATIVE COURSES ADDED TO THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Political Science added two new courses to its undergraduate curriculum last year. One course was designed as an opportunity for non-majors to develop a better understanding of contemporary politics. The second was designed to help students understand the elements of persuasive political speech and to develop their own skills in crafting written and spoken arguments. “Perspectives on Contemporary Public Policy Issues” (POLS 120) originated in discussions among faculty and...
The cartoon short "I'm Just a Bill on Capitol Hill" has endured since 1976 as the leading pop-culture account of the lawmaking processes in the United States Congress. Now, an award-winning research and website project headed by Professor John Wilkerson is bringing Congress's ever-complicated lawmaking process into the digital age. His new website for Legislative Explorer, or LegEx, provides a powerful research and data visualization tool that aims to improve... Read more

DISTINGUISHED ALUM AWARD WINNER: CHRISTINE CHARBONNEAU

Does a degree in political science remain valuable to students long after graduation? We know that our graduates find success in many paths, but very few choose careers as political scientists. Is there reason to think that the things students learned in classes on politics in the U.S. and around the world will remain relevant in their daily lives? In an inspiring speech to the graduate class of 2015, this year's Distinguished Alumni Award winner, Christine Charbonneau, reported that she had... Read more

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