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# DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES THE UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION

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Issue 15

May 2021

## Goodbye to Political Science and International Studies

Starting next year, there will no longer be a Department of Political Science and International Studies at Mount Union. As a result of the Academic Program Analysis, conducted this year, the Department of Political Science and International Studies will be merged with Sociology/Criminal Justice and History, into a newly formed Department of Social Sciences. Even though the Department may no longer be around, rest assured our programs will continue. All of our majors will remain and will function as before.

We look forward to the opportunities this merger will provide to build on the already established collaboration and synergy that exists between our departments, as well as provide more opportunities for our students.

The new department will be housed in van den Eynden Hall. So this summer will be busy for all of our faculty, as we pack up and move into our new offices. Everyone is invited to visit us in our new location.

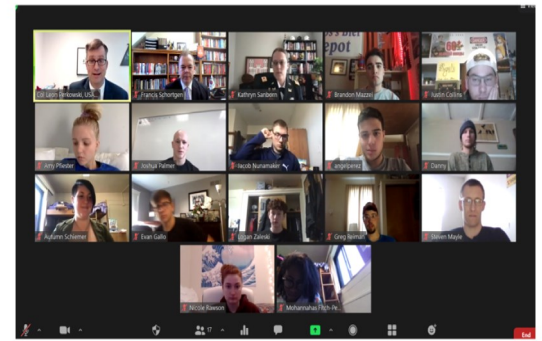
Most importantly, the newsletter will continue uninterrupted.



## The Army War College Returns (Virtually) to Mount Union

Continuing an annual tradition, the Department of Political Science and International Studies hosted the U.S. Army War College on January 14-15. This was the ninth visit to our campus of students from the Carlisle, PA-based institution. The Army War College provides a graduate education to senior military personnel and government officials. Its students include not only US military and government officials but also students from allied nations.

Unlike earlier years, this year's visit was conducted entirely through virtual sessions in various classes. Topics of discussion ranged from "Equal Justice under Law" and "Soft Power in the Pacific Islands" to "Tragedy of the Commons: Climate Change and National Security."



Members of the Army War College meet with students via Zoom

## SCHOLAR Day Presentations

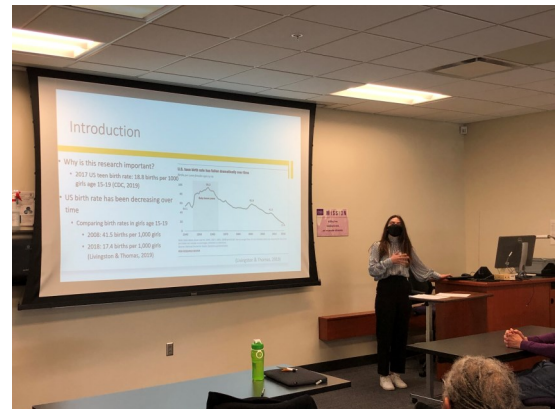
While Covid-19 made this year's SCHOLAR day a bit unusual, four of our majors presented their original research:

**Joseph Demeis** presented on Threats to the Tap: How the Security Vulnerabilities of Water Treatment Plants Pose a Threat to U.S. National Security.

**Samantha Friedmann** presented on Empowerment Through Knowledge: Policy Approaches for Preventing Pregnancy and the Spread of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Ohio Teens.

**Farrel Murphy** presented on Faith Based Leadership and Response to Racial Injustice and the Black Lives Matter Movement in a Small Town.

**Walter Sterling** presented on Trusted Ballots: A Research Proposal over Voting Systems Affect on Voter Trust in Election Results.



Samantha Friedmann presents at SCHOLAR day

## Departmental Awards

The following students won departmental awards this year:

**Cla Figaro** and **Walter Sterling** won the John O. Rouse International Travel Prize

**Walter Sterling** won the International Studies Prize

**Farrel Murphy** won the Political Science Prize

**Ana C. Malinowski** won the Judge Phillips Pre-Law Prize

**Joe Demeis** won the Department Best Paper Award for his paper: Threats to the Tap: How the Security Vulnerabilities of Water Treatment Plants Pose a Threat to U.S. National Security.

## A Word from the Chair...

As we look back at the disruptions to the traditional academic setting and the need for a Social Distancing Learning Model, we close the 2020-2021 academic year with the fervent hope that we will be able to return to a more accustomed setting of teaching and learning in Fall 2021. Despite the highly unusual circumstances, the Department remained focused on sustaining a conducive and high-impact learning experience for our students who continued to excel in their academic pursuits and experiential learning, including high-profile internships with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. State Department, U.S. Marshals Service, to name just a few. Dr. Dionne has also been hard at work laying the foundation a Mock Trial Team, which will be an exciting addition to the department's extracurricular activities going forward.

The close of an academic year is also a bitter-sweet moment, as we bid farewell to students who have completed their undergraduate journey and are ready to embark on their career or Graduate School/Law School paths. We are proud of all that you have accomplished during your time at Mount and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Congratulations! To those who will return in Fall 2021, enjoy a well-deserved summer break, and we look forward to welcoming you back to campus from our new location in Van den Eynden Hall.

Kind regards,

Dr. Francis Schortgen

## National Security and International Affairs Club:

Formed in December of 2018, the National Security and International Affairs Club has worked to raise awareness and promote a heightened understanding of pressing national security threats and challenges as well as international political, economic, and security trends and developments. The organization meets regularly to discuss current international events as well as host speakers.

This semester under the leadership of **Joe Demeis**, the club organized two networking events for current students. The first, "Alumni in Graduate School", included **Wil Luca** ('20), currently studying Information Security at Carnegie Mellon University; **Macy Bailey** ('20) and **Luke Skivolocke** ('20), both currently pursuing a master of Science degree in Applied Intelligence at Mercyhurst University; and **Spencer Whyte** (Class of '19) who is enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Political Science and International Relations at the University of Delaware. The second event was titled "Alumni in the Workforce" featuring **Michael Gadzalski** ('16) who is currently working as a Global Security Operations Center (GSOC) intelligence analyst in the San Francisco Bay Area, and **Joshua Weber** ('18) who is employed with the United States Capitol Police.

## Student Internships:

Despite the abnormal circumstances, our students continued to take advantage of internship opportunities, working virtually and in person.

**Joe Demeis** interned with the Stark County Adult Probation Program.

**James Monigold, Gabby Moore, and Mackenzie Weber** interned with the U.S. Marshalls.

**Mackenzie Weber** interned with the U.S. State Department.

**Tianna Kirkpatrick** interned with Julie Jakmides law firm.

**Michael Piotrowski** interned with Morgan Engineering.

**Sky McCloskey** will be interning for Senator Rob Portman in the Cleveland office this summer.

**Patrick Borchert** interned with BIED Society (South China Sea Specialist).

**Jake Penko** interned at the Department of Homeland Security.

**Alex Gintz** interned at BIED Society (South China Sea Specialist).

## Mock Trial Returns to Mount Union!

Starting next year, Mount Union will once again host a mock trial team. Under the direction of Dr. Lee Dionne, students will compete in the annual national competition hosted by the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA). Dr. Dionne hopes to field at least one team (possibly two).

The AMTA releases case materials for the competition in the fall, which is when Mount will finalize our teams and start practicing. Schools can field multiple teams (6-12 per team), depending on the level of interest. Students of all class years are encouraged to participate. Regional and national tournaments take place between February and April.

For more information, contact Dr. Lee Dionne at: [dionnele@mountunion.edu](mailto:dionnele@mountunion.edu).



## Alumni News:

**Chris Bowles** (2014) is completing his Masters at Cleveland State University while continuing to work for Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc. He recently passed the HUD Housing Counseling certification examination and is now HUD-certified in housing counseling.

**Michael Gadzalski** (2016) has left the Navy and has taken a position as an Intelligence Analyst at Control Risks.

**Doug Granger** (2010) will be leaving Mount Union, where he served as the Assistant Director at the Center for Global Education, taking a position as Development Marketing Manager at the Institute for Humane Studies.

**Philip G. Kiko** (1973) retired from his position as U.S. House of Representatives chief administrative officer. He was at that position since 2016.

**Alex Mills** (2017) has completed his MPA from Cleveland State University and has accepted an offer to work as a Program Analyst for the US Army Corps of Engineers, Planning, Programs and Management Division.

**Erin Norton** (2018) started a new position as Program Assistant at International Tax and Investment Center.

**Katie Proch** (2014) took a position as Management Analyst at Ben Allegretti Consulting, Inc.

**Jeffrey Smith** (1978) recently published *The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America* (2017).

## Faculty News:

**Drs. Michael Grossman** and **Francis Schortgen** had their co-edited book (with Eric Matthews), tentatively titled *Achievements and Legacy of the Obama Presidency: "Hope and Change"*, accepted for publication with Palgrave.

**Dr. Francis Schortgen** moderated the "Implementing Coherent Socio-Economic Policies" panel discussion at the *Horasis Extraordinary Meeting on the USA* on March 18.

**Dr. Francis Schortgen** served as an online visiting professor at the School of Law and Business, University of Agder (Norway) where he taught a Master's level course on "Emerging Markets" from January-March 2021.

**Dr. Lori Kumler** served as a roundtable presenter on "Diversity Issues in the Classroom" for the 2021 Midwest Political Science Association Conference.

**Dr. Lori Kumler** is part of an interdisciplinary faculty team, along with Beth Canfield-Simbroski and Gwen Gray Schwartz, awarded a \$20,000 Sit Lux grant from Mount Union to work with undergraduates and to conduct research related to athletics in Alliance City School District and the Eastern Buckeye Conference. Political Science majors Mara Cvelbar and Jordan Edith will receive funding and housing to undertake research on the project during the summer.

**Dr. Lee Dionne's** proposal (co-authored with Huchen Liu) was accepted at the 2021 meeting of the American Political Science Association. They will be presenting on presidential budget politics in the wake of the 21st Century breakdown in "regular order" in annual appropriations.

**Dr. Lee Dione** is leading a San Diego book club discussion (virtually) of the Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr. The book club has been exploring themes of history, race and human dignity (having last read Ty Seidule's repudiation of the "Lost Cause" in *Robert E Lee and Me*).

## Other Departmental Happenings:

The **PreLaw Society** is in the middle of recording three interviews with guest speakers about law school and legal careers. Some of those interviewed include: **Don Rushing**, a retired member of the American College of Trial Lawyers, **Derek Higgenbotham** (a corporate lawyer turned CEO in the world of fintech) and **Karyn Moore** (a labor lawyer working in a law firm setting). The PreLaw Society hopes to continue this professional series of interviews going forward.

The Department hosted a virtual election panel on March 25 featuring **Merle Madrid**, Chief of Staff for Ohio Secretary of State; **Regine Johnson**, Deputy Director of Stark County Board of Elections; **Joyce Kale-Pesta**, Director of Mahoning County Board of Elections; **Kim Fusco**, Director of Columbiana County Board of Elections. Led by sophomore political science major, **Sky McCloskey**, the panel was attended by over 50 people, including community members, UMU students, and College Credit Plus American Government courses taught by Alliance High School teacher Joe Beichler.

## Goodbye Graduates!

As another year comes to an end, we bid farewell to our graduating seniors who, we are sure, will go on to greatness. We will miss all of you!

Here is a list of some of what our soon-to-be alumni are doing when they leave Mount Union:

**Kendall Bozick** was accepted into the JET Program and will be moving to Japan in September.

**Samantha Friedmann** was accepted to American University to do a master's degree in International Development.

**Tianna Kirkpatrick** will be attending Case Western Reserve University School of Law. She was named a Sugarman Scholar (\$44,000 per year or 78% of current tuition). She was also named a Dean's Scholar (\$3,000 award during first year).

**Gabriel Moore** has secured an interview with the US Marshals Service.

**Michael Piotrowski** will start full-time at Morgan Engineering as an IT Systems Specialist.

**Jonathon Wahlie** will be interning with the American Legislative Exchange Council where he will be on an economic development task for both commerce and insurance.

**Mackenzie Weber** was accepted into the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Summer Enrichment Program with the Department of State as a Rangel Scholar. She has also accepted a conditional job offer with the Department of Justice.

**Jake Penko** has received tentative job offers with both Custom and Border Protection and the Secret Service.

## We Need Your Help...

Help us build networks between our students and our alumni: Tell us what you have been up to! Have you gotten a new job? We love to hear from you...so please stay in touch.

We are especially looking for alumni who would like to share stories of their career paths and adventures since leaving Mount Union. Your contribution to our new Careers in Political Science and International Affairs class would be invaluable. We can make arrangements to have you Zoom into class if you can't come in person.

Send your updates to: [grossmmo@mountunion.edu](mailto:grossmmo@mountunion.edu)