

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS



PhD Student Anna Marisa Schoen Wins Dissertation Award

Anna Marisa Schoen, PhD, recently won the UH Outstanding Dissertation award, which was given to only one humanities dissertation across the entire

University. The award came with a \$1000 prize. Schoen's dissertation examined the concept of the "nation" in pre-modern political theory texts. It argued that the medieval notion of nationalism can in some ways improve our contemporary understanding of nationalism.



JEFFREY CHURCH
Professor and Chair,
Dept. of Political Science

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

In December 2021, I attended as Chair my first in-person graduation since the pandemic began. It was a wonderful experience to be back in person celebrating the achievements of our students with their families and friends. Yet it was also a humbling experience. As I sat on stage with my fellow chairs, I looked out at the graduating students and

realized that these students experienced an unprecedented disruption to nearly half of their academic career at UH. Many had been taking online classes since the pandemic began, and all had to navigate new rules and challenges as the pandemic evolved. Through it all, these students persisted and succeeded. Many of them graduated with honors. I remain deeply impressed by our students, by their intelligence and creativity and discipline, and—especially on view at graduation—their resilience. They give me hope as we enter the new year.

GRADUATE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Jamie Wright, Jennifer Clark, and Heather Evans. "They were laughing": Congressional Framing of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford's Sexual Assault Allegations on Twitter"

GRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS



Darren Davis, PhD UH 1994, was appointed Snyder Family Mission Endowed Chair at the University of Notre Dame

Susan Achury, PhD UH 2019, started as tenure track assistant professor at Lycoming College in Fall 2021.

Luke Williams, PhD UH 2016, started as tenure track assistant professor at Texas Southern College in Fall 2021.

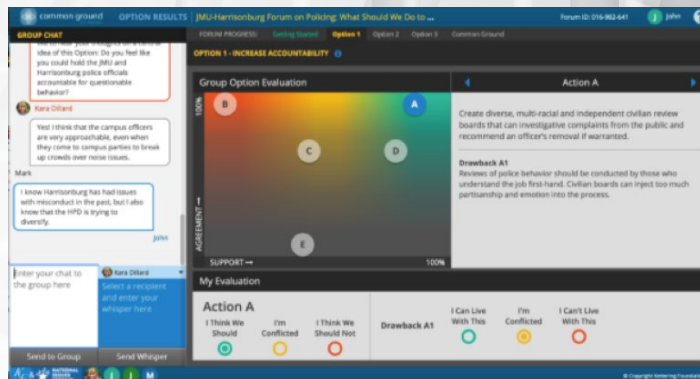
Kenicia Wright, PhD 2018, will start in Fall 2022 as Assistant Professor at the School of Politics and Global Studies at Arizona State University.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Enlarging the Political Conversation

The ability to have a civil and meaningful conversation about controversial political issues is critical for democratic citizens. Unfortunately, many (perhaps most) students have limited opportunity to develop these skills. A surprising number of students rarely discuss politics, even with family and friends. Still others find themselves in a political bubble, where the discussions are primarily reinforcing pre-existing beliefs. Among those who do engage with controversial political discussion, the main outlet today is social media, where discussion is usually shallow and often toxic.

Dr. Ryan Kennedy has been leading a team that attempts to give every student who goes through the required introductory government courses a meaningful chance to experience civil political discourse and engagement on controversial political issues. Using an online platform called Common Ground for Action, developed by a group of NGOs and scholars, students engage in hour-long, guided discussions. Last semester, more than 1,700 students participated in these online discussion forums, along with more than 20 students who received training on moderating the discussions. In the last semester, more than 80% of students said they learned a lot from the forums and almost 75% said they would like to do it again if given the opportunity. The forums are currently being conducted at UH, UH-Downtown, Ohio State University, and Prairie View A&M, with even further expansion planned next year.



(Image: a screenshot of the online platform for political conversation)

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Senior Political Science major **Diego Alejandro Lopez** presented his paper “Rights of Native Peoples in the New World Post Conquest: A Spanish Perspective,” at the American Political Science Association annual conference in Seattle, Washington. Lopez was able to attend the meeting by winning a College Dean’s Grant to support his travel.

Senior Political Science major **Monica Gebrehiwot** was the 2021 winner of the Peek Family Endowment Scholarship, awarded to a top Political Science major who “exhibits leadership qualities.”

UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY VIDEO

Political Science alumnus Odus Evbagaru (BA, 2018) was recently selected to be the Chair of the Democratic Party in Harris County. As a student at UH, Evbagaru served as Vice-President of the College Democrats. He went on after graduation to be the chief of staff for state Rep. Jon Rosenthal, D-Houston. He inherits the reins of the Democratic Party and is optimistic about its future. In the latest conversation of “Coogs in Public Office,” Evbagaru credits his family and UH with giving him the skills for success. *Click on the image to the left.* Congratulations to our distinguished alumnus!

NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

In Fall 2021, UH Political Science welcomed three new full-time faculty members:



Jae-Hee Jung, Assistant Professor

Jae-Hee Jung is an assistant professor in the department of political science. She received her Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis and her B.A. from Yonsei University in South Korea. She comes to UH most recently from the University of Oxford, where she was a postdoctoral fellow in survey research. Jung specializes in comparative politics with a focus on political parties. In her research, she studies political behavior and political psychology by examining party campaigns, party rhetoric and voter attitudes. She often employs surveys and survey experiments in her work and has published several articles in top journals of political science, including the *Journal of Politics*.



Michael Kistner, Assistant Professor

Michael Kistner is an assistant professor in the department of political science. He received his Ph.D. from Princeton University and his B.A. from Illinois Wesleyan University. In his research, he explores how campaign finance, legislative organization and electoral concerns affect public policy and representation, particularly in American state politics. Kistner's work combines the collection of large-scale observational data with quantitative social science tools like machine learning, formal modeling and Bayesian methods. He has several articles forthcoming in notable journals of political science, including the *Journal of Politics*.



Tanika Raychaudhuri, Assistant Professor

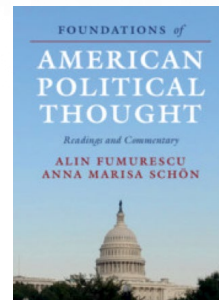
Tanika Raychaudhuri is an assistant professor in the department of political science. She received her Ph.D. from Princeton University and her B.A. from the University of Michigan. Her research is in American politics with a focus on political behavior, immigration, race and inequality. Raychaudhuri was a postdoctoral fellow in the Center for the Study of Ethnicity, Race and Immigration at the University of Pennsylvania. She employs surveys, interviews and experimental methods in her work and is currently working on a book manuscript that explains why Asian-Americans support Democrats in national elections. She has published several articles in noted political science journals, including *Electoral Studies*.



"Ambiguous Rhetoric and Legislative Accountability"

By Elizabeth N. Simas, Kerri Milita, and John Barry Ryan

Work on candidate positioning suggests that ambiguous statements help candidates by broadening their appeal and providing leeway to take different positions once in office. Professor Simas and her co-authors use two original survey experiments to show that contrary to conventional wisdom, ambiguity may not shield a legislator from the backlash that comes from eventually taking a position with which voters disagree.



Foundations of American Political Thought: Readings and Commentary

By Alin Fumurescu and Anna Marisa Schön

Organized chronologically from the Puritans' arrival in the New World to the Civil War, each chapter of Fumurescu's and Schön's book includes carefully selected primary sources and substantial commentary to explain the historical context and significance of the excerpts. A coherent interpretative framework is offered by focusing the analysis on the different assumptions about the "people"

FACULTY AWARDS



Professors Tiede and Kennedy Win \$750,000 NSF Grant

Associate Professors Ryan Kennedy and Lydia Tiede have been awarded a major NSF Grant for their project “Community Responsive Algorithms for Social Accountability,” which promises to establish a model for accountability for a comprehensive range of algorithms used in public policy. It will also contribute to education and workforce development by producing a set of educational materials that can be easily accessed by legal professionals and the general public. This award is one of the most prestigious grants given to Political Scientists.

Professor Chatagnier Awarded a \$220,000 NSF Grant

Congratulations to Assistant Professor Tyson Chatagnier for being awarded an NSF grant for his project, “Military Service in Political Appointees,” which will result in the collection and analysis of a new cross-national data set detailing the military experience of political appointees around the world. The grant will fund research assistantships for graduate and undergraduate students. This grant is among the most prestigious grants awarded to Political Scientists.



Tanika Raychaudhuri and Chinbo Chong were awarded the 2021 Best Paper Award in Race Ethnicity and Politics for their paper “Group-based Belief Systems about the Racial Order: Racial Stereotypes and Asian American Partisan Identification.” In their paper, they used original survey and experimental data to explore whether, and if so how, racial stereotypes of Asian Americans affect their partisan views.

Tanika Raychaudhuri, Stephanie Chan, Ali Valenzuela, were awarded the inaugural Best Research Poster Award for their poster “Group Threat or Contact? The Effects of Local Immigration Primes on Policy Views.”

Congratulations to the new holders of our rotating chairs in Political Science. In our department, faculty members hold the chairs for three years.

Francisco Cantu, Senator Don Henderson Scholar

Lydia Tiede, Ken Lay Chair

Ling Zhu, Pauline Yelderman Chair



Former Postdoc Sebastian Vallejo Attributes Success to his Time at UH
Professor Sebastian Vallejo was a postdoctoral fellow in the UH Political Science department from Fall 2019-Spring 2021. During that time, he produced five papers that were published in 2021, and one paper forthcoming at the JOP. Vallejo attributes much of his research success to support from UH. He received support from the HPE Data Science Institute at UH, and met co-authors from Stanford through contacts with Ryan Kennedy. He is co-authoring with our faculty (including Eduardo Aleman). In the otherwise dim 2020 job market, Vallejo received three virtual “fly-outs” and two job offers. He ended up accepting a position as Assistant Professor at the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico. He is also the director of the Interdisciplinary Laboratory of Computational Social Science in Mexico.

Vallejo concludes about his time at UH, “All this to say that I think that much of what I was able to accomplish so far was thanks to my time as a postdoc at UH. I think it provides the time, resources and environment necessary to start building a career in academia. I also believe that the networks built with people from the department and from the university more broadly serve as a great opportunity for collaboration. (I also made some great friends).”

DEPARTMENT EVENTS

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
CENTER for PUBLIC HISTORY

James Schafer
Associate Professor of History
University of Houston

LaChaney B. Woodard, M.B., M.P.H.
Director, Nemana Integrated Health System
Sciences Institute at the University of Houston

Seth J. Chandler
Law Foundation Professor of Law
University of Houston Law Center

Jennifer Clark
Pauline Yederman Endowed Chair
Political Science, University of Houston

A CPH Lecture Series Event: The Past, Present, and Future of the Affordable Care Act
A panel discussion of the ACA in historical, legal, medical, and political context
Live Stream Event, September 27, 2021 6:00PM CST
Register on Eventbrite

Associate Professor Jennifer Clark was a commentator on the Center for Public History Event on the Affordable Care Act.

Conference on the 300th Anniversary of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*

PLEASE JOIN US AT
HONORS COMMONS • UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
DECEMBER 10 & 11, 2021
IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM

To Join the Meeting via Zoom:
<https://uh.edu/class/political-science/tfaii/plc>

PARTICIPANTS

Andrew Bibby	Peter Lund	Robert Sparling
Jeffrey Church	Michael Mosher	Vickie Sullivan
Alin Fumurescu	Emily Nacol	Cody Trojan
Megan Gallagher	Andrea Radasanu	Constantine Vassiliou
Ryan Hanley	Diana Schaub	Lee Ward
Rebecca Kingston	John Scott	Stuart Warner

Visiting Assistant Professor Constantine Vassiliou organized a conference honoring the 300th anniversary of the great political novel of the 18th century, Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*.

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
COLLEGE of LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

2021

WHOSE VOTES COUNT?
featuring
JELANI COBB, PH.D.
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021

CLASS 2021-22 LECTURE SERIES
ON RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE PANOS FAMILY ENDOWED LECTURE
IN EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The University of Houston College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
invites you to attend
The Panos Family Endowed Lecture in Equity and Social Justice

Whose Votes Count?

November 10, 2021
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. CT
Online Live-Stream

Featuring
Keynote Speaker
Dr. Jelani Cobb
Columbia University's Ira A. Lipman Professor of Journalism and
writer at *The New Yorker*
and
Discussant: **Dr. Tanika Raychaudhuri**
Assistant Professor of Political Science
at the University of Houston

Assistant Professor Tanika Raychaudhuri commented on Dr. Jelani Cobb's lecture as part of the CLASS Lecture Series on Race and Social Justice. Associate Professor Jeronimo Cortina served as moderator.

ALUMNI: Please send us updates about notable things in your career and life! We will include them in the newsletter.