Welcome to our winter 2023 edition of the Political Science Department’s Newsletter. We had a strong start to the new school year, welcoming two new faculty members and launching a new minor in Law and Politics.

We continue to offer new courses both at the undergraduate level and graduate level and to innovate our existing courses. Our year-old interdisciplinary MA in International Affairs is growing; we already have 25 students in this program in addition to our existing MA in Political Science.

In this issue, I would like to spotlight two recent additions to the department as tenure track colleagues: Professors Patrick Cunha Silva and Agustin Markarian. Also, as in past issues, we note some of the most important achievements of our students and faculty over the past six months. Last but not least, as this newsletter is especially important for us to reach out to alumni, we also continue to highlight some of our former students. Specifically, this issue places the spotlight on Judge Jeanne Wrenn (1993, 2000) and Dr. Ratri Istania (2019). We hope to hear from many more alumni (perhaps in response to this newsletter) so that we can spread even more widely your professional achievements since we last saw you in our classes!

Alexandru Grigorescu, PhD
Professor and Chair
In the Spotlight

Two new faculty members joined our department this fall. Please join us in welcoming them; we are excited to have them as colleagues!

Assistant Professor Patrick Cunha Silva

Professor Cunha Silva’s research and teaching interests focus on representation and electoral politics. In his research, he seeks to understand (i) the reasons behind the underrepresentation of certain groups (e.g., women and people of color) in public office and (ii) the effects of electoral rules on voters’ and elites’ behaviors. His primary regional focus is Latin America, but, he has also addressed research questions related to these topics using Western and Eastern European cases. He utilizes experimental, quasi-experimental, and observational designs. His work has been published in *Party Politics, Political Research Quarterly, Electoral Studies*, and *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Parties*.

Assistant Professor Agustín Markarian

Professor Markarian’s research primarily uses quantitative methods to study racial and ethnic inequities in American politics. His ongoing research projects study how victims’ race and ethnicity shape policy responses to mass shootings, the impact of police killings on civic participation, and how local election timing shapes communities of color’s representation in local government. His research is featured in the *American Political Science Review, Legislative Studies Quarterly*, and the *Oxford Handbook of Political Participation*. He teaches courses in American politics, race and ethnic politics, and research methods.
In the Spotlight ... continued

This fall, the Department of Political Science launched a new minor: Law and Politics. The minor aims to serve students interested in the intersection of the legal and political realms. Students minoring in Law and Politics will take courses on the American legal system, international legal systems, and a course introducing them to law. The minor places a special focus on engaged learning, requiring students to take either Moot Court, Mock Trial, or a legal internship. This requirement is especially important for the many students who will be drawn to this minor because they are interested in a legal career after graduation.

As the program grows in the coming semesters, we hope to host networking and community events for our students featuring Loyola alumni, especially those employed in the legal field. After only one semester of existence, there are already nearly 50 declared students in it. Keep an eye out for future announcements and let us know if you would like to participate in it as guest speaker, internship host, or mentor.

The formal launch of the minor was highlighted by a talk from Loyola Alum Dan Reidy (CAS, 1971), a native of the Southwest Side of Chicago, who spoke about things to consider when deciding upon a career in law. The former partner in charge of Jones Day’s Chicago office drew on his 45 years of experience working on both civil and criminal cases. Prior to joining Jones Day, Reidy spent a decade working in the U.S. Attorney’s office as part of Operation Graylord, so named for the curly wigs worn by British judges. This joint federal and state investigation into judicial corruption in Chicago resulted in 92 indictments that included 17 judges, 48 lawyers, 10 deputy sheriffs, 8 police officers, 8 court officials, and one state legislator. Reidy retired in 2019.

Faculty News

Congratulations to Megan Condon and Yuna Blajer de la Garza for securing (with Jon Schmidt from the School of Education), a $300,000 grant from the Teagle Family Foundation. The grant will allow Loyola to offer a summer program for underrepresented high-school students. The grant will fund "Speak Up Democracy," a two-week academically rigorous, engaging, college-level residential summer seminar in the liberal arts for three years. Each year, the program will welcome 30 rising Chicago Public Schools (CPS) seniors from underrepresented backgrounds. The summer program will draw from classic texts in political and philosophical thought engaging with perennial questions of political life—what Teagle considers transformative texts—and combine them with more contemporary applications of those problems. The summer seminar will be followed by an academic-year program that will provide a range of experiences guiding students through the search, application, admission, and transition-to-college process, providing resources that are often not known or accessible to first-generation students. The academic-year program will build upon the summer discussions and introduce students to civic action strategies, enabling them to craft a policy proposal to present to an elected official in the spring.
Faculty News ... continued

Congratulations to Yuna Blajer de la Garza for winning the 2022 Carlo Argenton Memorial Prize for the best research article published in the prestigious European Journal of Political Theory.

Olga Avdeyeva took part in the Montana World Affairs Council program “What, So What, Now What?” to discuss both the official Russian government perspective on the war in Ukraine and the evolving perspective of Russian citizens as the war has dragged on and Russian casualties have mounted. The broadcast, which appeared in several media outlets, can be seen on YouTube.

Lavar Pope, Clinical Associate Professor of Political Science at Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago and an affiliate of the Political Science Department, recently published a book titled Rap and Politics: A Case Study of Panther, Gangster, and Hyphy Discourses in Oakland, CA (1965-2010). The book was reviewed in the prestigious journal Perspectives on Politics. A link to this review is available here.

Student News

The Loyola Model UN Club, under the leadership of Brian Endless, participated in the American Model UN Conference in Chicago and had another very successful conference! 22 students from Loyola were among the 900+ at the event, representing Egypt and Portugal. In addition to a great team effort, several students really stood out and received awards voted on by their fellow participants. Please join us in congratulating Ash Winters, Ariel Gines, Anneke Benthem, Tyler Bernklau, and Mike Clausen.

A group comprised of both graduate and undergraduate students accompanied Molly Melin on a multi-week study trip to Columbia this past summer. The course explored both the past conflict and current reconciliation and peace building efforts.
Alumni Spotlights

Jeanne Wrenn (1993, 2000) is a Circuit Judge in Cook County in the Domestic Violence Division. As a Political Science student at Loyola, Jeanne fell in love with the Jesuit mission of being ‘men and women for and with others.’ Her passion for helping others led her to pursue law, where she could shape public policy through law and work to create a better community. Her professors’ approachability and willingness to mentor profoundly impacted her path to law and her eagerness to take on Loyola students as interns. Jeanne’s teachers at Loyola taught her the importance of having a good mentor and mentoring others. Jeanne embraces this with her internship program. She believes her internship allows students to see where they fit and what their roles could be through experience with civil and criminal cases and court in and out of session.

As a Circuit Court Judge, Jeanne is in the humbling position of making decisions that can change people’s lives daily. Judge Wrenn, a Rogers Park native, applies the values of fairness and empathy she learned at Loyola in the courtroom every day. Currently her work focuses on both civil and criminal domestic violence cases. She uses the values learned through her Jesuit education to treat each case with empathy and fairness. Jeanne has been recognized for her work in fighting to decrease wage disparity in law and was featured in a Chicago Tribune article on the subject. One of Judge Wrenn’s proudest professional accomplishment came during her time at the Cook County State’s Attorney Office. Under her leadership, her team was able to pass the Illinois Safe Children’s Act and Offender Initiative Probation statute. She continuously works toward passing balanced yet progressive legislation. Jeanne Wrenn stays connected with the Loyola community through her position on the National Alumni Activity Board and consistent attendance at alumni events. She is also a proud owner of season tickets to Loyola Men’s Basketball games where she cheers for her fellow Ramblers alongside her daughter, a fellow Loyola University alumna. She feels the need to give back to her community because Loyola has given so much to her.

Ratri Istania received her PhD in 2019 from Loyola’s Political Science Department. She is currently a full-time faculty member and the head of the undergraduate program at Politeknik STIA LAN Jakarta. She is also a senior researcher at the Populi Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research. With an interest in local politics, Dr. Istania’s work focuses on issues of territorial politics and ethnic/identity conflicts. Her new book with Routledge Press entitled Territorial Change and Conflict in Indonesia: Confronting the Fear of Secession. A link to this book is available here. During Indonesia’s G20 Presidency 2022, she was a member of the Employment Working Group’s expert team (EWG). Dr. Istania, together with a colleague, wrote about her experience at the G-20 meetings.
Share Your News

We encourage you to share your news with Susan Dimock (sdimock@luc.edu) or Chris Hasselmann (chasselmann@luc.edu) for a future Alumni News section of the newsletter.

Interested in mentoring students? Need an intern? Please reach out to Eric Hansen (ehansen4@luc.edu) or Susan Dimock (sdimock@luc.edu).

Please consider giving to the Political Science Department.