

## **THIS MONTH'S HEADLINES:**

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- 4. FINNEGAN FOUNDATION SUMMER INTERNSHIPS IN HARRISBURG**

## **1. PL SC 177 DEPOSITS DUE BY DECEMBER 2 FOR SPRING BREAK TRIP TO WASHINGTON**

The political science program will be sponsoring a student trip to Washington DC over Spring Break 2011 (March 5-13). The trip is a required portion of the course POLSC 177 (GS). The class is taught by Dr. Robert Speel, associate professor of political science at Penn State Behrend.

The exact itinerary will not be determined until February next year, but on past such trips, the group has met with our members of Congress, with officials at the International Monetary Fund, the Organization of American States, and the embassies of Australia, Romania, Botswana, India, Ireland, Canada, Jamaica, Estonia and Indonesia. We have toured the White House, the West Wing of the White House, the Pentagon, the State Department, the Department of Justice, the US Capitol, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the C-SPAN studios. We have participated in seminars held in the Supreme Court chambers, Ford's Theatre, and the Federal Reserve Board room (where they make decisions about interest rates). Among the highlights of the trip will be meetings or tours with Penn State Behrend alumni who work on Capitol Hill or for federal government agencies.

We have also met in past years with leaders from the Democratic National Committee, Greenpeace International, the National Beer Wholesalers Association, and the Cato Institute libertarian think tank. We always visit Arlington National Cemetery and all the most famous monuments and memorials. Free time is provided to visit museums such as the Newseum, the International Spy Museum, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the various Smithsonian Museums, as well as the National Zoo. Students have also attended major sports and entertainment events in Washington DC during the evening. Students should be aware that most of the places we visit during the week are only available to student groups in Washington and not to individual tourists. Some of the places we visit may provide the only opportunity some will have in their lives to tour certain government buildings or meet with certain officials in Washington.

The trip is associated with the political science course POLSC 177 (GS), and students will be required to sign up for either a three credit or one credit version of the course in order to take the trip. The three credit version of the course will involve weekly class meetings before and after the trip, to be held on Tuesdays or Thursdays at 4:00 PM. The class meetings will last about an hour. We will meet twice a week for part of February and then end early in April. Most of the time in Washington is also considered class time. In addition, the three credit version of the class will involve assigned readings, quizzes, some research, and short papers appropriate for a

three credit course. Students who wish to take a three credit version of the course but cannot attend the TR 4:00 PM class period should talk to Dr. Speel.

The one credit version of the course will include participation in the trip and a 10-page paper to be written after the trip. It is intended for students who would like to participate in the trip to Washington, but who don't necessarily need a three credit political science course.

The three credits or one credit can be used for both the political science major and minor in the subfields of American government or international politics. The course can also be used to fulfill the "Crime and Public Policy" area requirement for the Crime, Psychology, and Public Policy certificate. And students in all majors can use the course to fulfill GS general education requirements. Some majors will allow the course to fulfill other specific requirements. The course and trip are open to students in all majors. There is no prerequisite.

In Washington our group will stay at the Virginian Suites hotel ([www.virginiansuites.com](http://www.virginiansuites.com)). The hotel is located in Arlington, VA, just across the Potomac River from Washington, and is a brief walk from a Washington Metro (subway) stop. Each room in the hotel contains two queen-sized beds, a pull out sofa bed, a full kitchen, television, furniture, private bathroom, and closet space. A chartered bus will transport students between campus and Washington.

Dr. Dawn Blasko, associate professor of psychology, will be joining us on the trip.

The cost for the trip, per student, for 8 nights stay in the hotel and the bus transportation to Washington, will be approximately \$500 for students who stay 3 to room (by utilizing the sofa-bed). The exact cost will depend on how many students sign up for the trip by the December 2 deadline. Students will also be responsible for their own food and incidental expenses while in Washington, including subway tickets. Students will be able to eat meals cheaply in their rooms if they prefer by using the kitchens present in each room. We will generally go to lunch at area food courts. Students should plan on bringing or having available approximately \$100-\$200 in personal spending money. ATM bank machines are available at the hotel and throughout Washington. Penn State students registered full-time in Spring 2011 will incur no additional tuition costs for the course or trip.

Brochures with a full explanation of the trip are available from any political science professor and in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences office (170 Kochel). To register for the trip and course, students must submit a non-refundable deposit in the form of cash, check, money order, or credit card in the amount of \$150 to Penn State University, along with a completed course registration form, course fee form, and background information form, to Jackie May in the School of H&SS Office, 170 Kochel, by December 2, 2010. The forms are available from Dr. Speel or the H&SS School Office.

The \$150 will serve as a non-refundable deposit to reserve a space on the trip. The remaining cost of the trip will be due to Jackie May by January 27, 2011. We may need to cap enrollment in all sections of the course at 25, in which case the students who hand their deposits in the earliest will get priority, so hand in deposits early if you are sure you would like to go

For more information about the trip and course, pick up a copy of the brochure, or email Dr. Speel ([rws15@psu.edu](mailto:rws15@psu.edu)) with any questions.

## **2. NEW POLITICAL SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

We are pleased and honored to announce two new members to the Political Science Advisory Board.

**Joseph P. Conti** is an attorney and partner in the McDonald Group, LLP law firm in Erie, Pennsylvania concentrating his practice in the areas of criminal law and family law. He served for eight years as an Assistant District Attorney and was elected District Attorney of Erie County in 1995. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Law Enforcement and Corrections from Penn State University, a Master of Science Degree in Professional Counseling from Gannon University and his Juris Doctorate Degree from the University of Akron School of Law.

**Sheila Fitzgerald Sterrett** holds a BS degree in Communication from Clarion University as well as a Masters' Degree in Public Administration from Gannon University. She has two children and resides in Harborcreek. Sheila began her career as a Legislative Assistant for the late State Representative Karl Boyes and is currently Director of Government Affairs for the Manufacturer & Business Association. Her role at the Association includes representing the interests of more than 4,700 member companies in Harrisburg and Washington through constant contact with legislators as well as serving as a registered lobbyist on members' behalf. In addition, she also represents Erie County on the Republican State Committee for Pennsylvania and has worked on countless campaigns at the local, state and national level. Sheila is also a graduate of the Anne Anstine Excellence in Public Service series as well as Leadership Erie.

Conti and Sterrett join six continuing Advisory Board members - Judge John Falcone, Christopher Mong, Melissa Shirey, Judge John Trucilla, Barbara Welton, and Matt Wiertel. Details about the Board members can be found here:

<http://behrend.psu.edu/academic/hss/degrees/polsc/Advisory%20Board.htm>

The Penn State Behrend Political Science Advisory Board formed in 2009 and consists of prominent community leaders and alumni. The Board meets twice a year with faculty and current students to discuss community support and publicity for political science program teaching and research initiatives and events, career and internship opportunities for political science majors, and public engagement for faculty members and students with the community.

The Advisory Board will next meet on campus with a group of students on December 1.

## **3. FACULTY IN THE NEWS**

Dr. Zachary Irwin

will be a discussant on a panel about religion and identity in Southeastern Europe at the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies at its Annual Meeting in Los Angeles. on November 18-21.

Dr. Robert Speel was interviewed for ten separate articles in the Erie Times-News in the past month, all about this year's election. He also participated in a discussion about this year's election results on WQLN on November 6. The radio broadcast can be heard online here:

<http://www.wqln.org/main/Radio/Weekend%20All%20Things%20Erie/default.aspx>

#### **4. FINNEGAN FOUNDATION SUMMER INTERNSHIPS IN HARRISBURG**

The James A. Finnegan Foundation has announced details for its Summer 2011 Internship Contest. Winners are placed in paid Summer internships in state government agencies in Harrisburg and receive an additional award of \$1000 or \$1500. Details about applying for the internship program can be found at [www.finneganfoundation.org](http://www.finneganfoundation.org).