

**October 2009 Political Science Newsletter  
Penn State Erie, The Behrend College**

**This Month's Headlines:**

- 1. Grant and Alumna Donation Will Pay Most Residential Costs for 10 Penn State Students in Toronto, Summer 2010**
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**1. Grant and Alumna Donation Will Pay Most Residential Costs for 10 Penn State Students in Toronto, Summer 2010**

We have received a grant from the Canadian Embassy in Washington DC and a donation from Barbara Welton, an Erie attorney and Penn State Behrend political science alumna, that will allow us to fund most of the costs of student housing in downtown Toronto during a Penn State course on North American Politics to be taught in Summer 2010. Ten students will therefore need to pay just \$200 toward the cost of their student room on the Ryerson University campus in Toronto while taking the month-long class. To find out more about the course and the financial assistance, keep reading below.

**2. North American Politics Education Abroad Course in Toronto, Summer 2010 - Financial Aid Available**

**The Course**

PL SC 299/499 - North American Politics, 3 credits - will take place in downtown Toronto between May 9 and June 5, 2010. The class is an official Penn State Education Abroad course that can be used to fulfill requirements for the political science major or minor at any PSU campus, the international politics major at UP (PL SC 499 only), and requirements in some majors for an Education Abroad component, including the international business major at Penn State Behrend. The course may also meet requirements in other majors and minors.

The course will be co-taught by Dr. Robert Speel, associate professor of political science at Penn State Behrend, and by a Ryerson University professor. The class will take place on the Ryerson campus in downtown Toronto and will include students from Penn State and Ryerson in the classroom together. American students from Penn State and Canadian students from Ryerson will participate together in class discussions and on class excursions and will take the same exams. Penn State students will be graded by Dr. Speel.

The course focuses on the comparative politics of the United States and Canada and on international relations between the two countries. Among the topics to be discussed will be a

comparison of the development of separate political cultures in the two countries, comparisons of government institutions, election systems, federalism, and regionalism, and comparisons of each country's policy approaches toward the economy, health care, gun control, same-sex marriage, language, free speech, abortion, and the role of religion in public life. Issues important in international relations between the two countries will also be discussed - this includes trade, border security, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and control of the Arctic. Class excursions will visit the Ontario Parliament Buildings and Fort York, site of an important battle in the War of 1812.

The grade for PL SC 299 will be determined by exams and class participation. An additional research paper will be assigned for students who enroll in PL SC 499 - the paper will be due a few weeks after the course is over.

The class begins the week after final exams at Penn State Behrend, and the class ends the week before Behrend's seven-week summer session begins, so students who wish to take any other summer classes on the Behrend campus will be able to do so. The class will meet four days a week, Mondays-Thursdays, between 2-5 PM for fourteen days over four weeks, with a final exam on Friday, June 4. Students will have the option of staying in the Ryerson University residence an additional few days until June 8. Weekends will be free for students to explore Toronto on their own.

### **The Ryerson University Residence and Location**

Students will live during the month in the International Living Learning Centre (ILLC) student residence on the Ryerson campus. Students will each have their own motel-style single rooms with television, air conditioning, and private bathrooms. Each floor of the residence also has a kitchenette, laundry machines, and a television lounge area. The residence is located next door to a 24-hour supermarket and to a 24-hour grocery store.

The ILLC residence is located just two blocks from Yonge Street, the Eaton Centre, and Dundas Square. Yonge Street contains miles of restaurants and retail shops. The Eaton Centre is a large downtown mall on several floors that contains many stores and two fast food courts. Dundas Square, patterned after New York City's Times Square, offers frequent free live performances by musicians and buskers and is surrounded by restaurants, stores, a new movie theater, and many large electronic billboards. The ILLC is also a short walk from subway lines and streetcar lines to take you to other parts of Toronto. Toronto contains the tallest structure in the Western Hemisphere (the CN Tower), the second largest zoo in North America, a large variety of ethnic neighborhoods, Canada's largest museum of world cultures and natural history (Royal Ontario Museum), several prominent art museums, the hockey hall of fame, and the Harbourfront Centre, which is located on Lake Ontario and contains cultural attractions, shopping, boat cruises, and pedestrian walkways. Penn State students will visit several of these locations as a group while in Toronto outside of class time.

Over half of all residents of Toronto were born outside of Canada, and over half of the residents of Toronto's largest suburbs were also born outside of Canada. Because immigrants to Toronto have come in large numbers from every part of the globe (East Asia, South Asia, Latin America,

the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, Africa), Toronto is considered by many to be the most international city in the world.

You can view photos from last year's course at:

<http://www.pennstatebehrend.psu.edu/academic/hss/degrees/polsc/Torontocourse.htm>

### **Applications, Costs, and Financial Aid**

To take the course and participate in the Education Abroad program, students will need to fill out some application forms, pay a \$200 non-refundable deposit and pay Penn State tuition for 3 credits next summer. The exact amount of tuition depends on your class year, college of enrollment, and major. However, there is widespread financial aid available to assist with the costs of tuition. Behrend and Penn State offer many tuition scholarships and grants for Education Abroad students, and students who take at least 6 credits of summer classes next year will also be eligible for federal financial aid. Application forms for the scholarships and grants are included in application packets - Ruth Pflueger at the Learning Resource Center on the second floor of Lilley Library can also offer more information about financial assistance with tuition.

The cost of a room at the Ryerson ILLC residence for the month in downtown Toronto will be \$930 Canadian. At the current exchange rate, that is about \$870 US. However, due to a grant we have received from the Canadian Embassy in Washington DC and a donation we have received from Barbara Welton, an Erie attorney and a Penn State Behrend political science alumna, the first ten students to submit application forms and the \$200 deposit and have their applications accepted will not need to pay any additional money toward the cost of the Toronto residence for a month - the grant money and donation money will cover the rest. Students will need a minimum 2.5 GPA to be accepted into the course, though exceptions can be made - talk to Dr. Speel for details about that.

There will also be costs involved for student health insurance and an international student ID card - these costs will be under \$100 for most students. All adult Americans now need a passport to travel to Canada and return to the USA, so students will need to get one if they don't have one already. And students will be responsible for their own food costs and personal items - because each floor of the residence has a kitchenette and supermarkets are next door, students will be able to eat inexpensively while in Toronto. Students will also need to find their own form of transportation to get to Toronto, though we can offer suggestions to help with that. Toronto is about a 3 1/2 hour drive from the city of Erie.

Students who are not among the first ten students to submit applications and deposits can still enroll in the course and join the group in Toronto, but will need to pay the full cost for their room in the Ryerson University residence. The deadline for submission of applications and deposits to register for the course is March 1, 2010.

Application form packets are available at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) on the second floor of Lilley Library and at Dr. Speel's office, 159 Kochel. Application forms and the \$200 deposits should be turned in at the LRC. The first ten students whose applications are accepted will have the remainder of their residential costs in Toronto covered by the grant and donation.

Deposits in the form of checks or money orders should be made out to Penn State University. Deposits in the form of cash should be brought to Jackie May in the School of H&SS Office on the 2nd floor of Kochel - she will give you a receipt for your cash deposit.

If you have any questions about the course, residence, application forms, or financial assistance, please visit or contact Dr. Speel or Ruth Pflueger at the LRC.

### **3. Political Science Career News**

#### **A. Wednesday, November 18 - .GOV Pittsburgh Federal Career Day**

Carnegie Mellon University, 10am-3pm

The 8th Annual Pittsburgh Federal Career Day will have over 80 federal, state and local government agencies represented. Features include a networking breakfast, job fair, keynote speaker, breakout workshops on the job-search process and information sessions by select federal, state and city agencies.

<http://www.heinz.cmu.edu/2009-federal-career-day/index.aspx>

B. The Political Science Program, the Political Science Society, and the Academic and Career Planning Center are organizing a "Careers in Government and Non-Profits" event on our campus for Spring 2010. The event will include representatives from government agency employers and information about applying for federal, state, and local government positions and in non-profit organizations. Watch for the political science newsletters early next semester for more information about this event.

C. The Political Science program has free booklets called "Careers and the Study of Political Science" available to all political science majors. The booklet, published by the American Political Science Association, contains extensive information about the variety of careers available to majors in the discipline. To obtain a booklet, visit Dr. Speel's office or contact him by email.

### **4. Sophomores Can Enroll Early in Major**

If you are a third semester student with a GPA of 2.0 or above and have decided to become a political science major at Penn State Behrend, you are eligible to complete an Early Entrance to Major form without waiting until your fourth semester to enroll in Behrend's POLSC major. If you are interested, please see or contact Dr. Speel.

### **5. Spring 2010 Course Spotlight**

PL SC 419 THE BUREAUCRATIC STATE

Was there a time in American history when cocaine was legal and alcohol was illegal?  
How were drug laws created and enforced before there was a DEA?

Did the FBI or the CIA come first?

Do you know the story of how their first powerful leaders shaped the agencies?

How were veterans treated before the Veteran's Administration (VA) was established?  
What famous American military hero ordered veterans who were storming the US Capitol building to be shot?

The answers to these and many other interesting questions are answered and discussed in "The Bureaucratic State" (PL SC 419).

By focusing on agencies like the L.C.B. (Liquor Control Board), the class seeks to familiarize students with the modern American bureaucratic state, its history, and how it was developed. In tracking the unprecedented growth of the federal government in the twentieth century, and role of modern regulatory agencies, the course seeks to enable students to understand key concepts of public policy, and to provide an understanding of how public policy is shaped by, and implemented in, the bureaucratic state.

Whether discussing large federal bureaucracies like the Department of State, or small, local agencies like the Erie County Board of Health, the course examines the various actors in the policy process, and the influence they have in the evaluation, development and implementation of public policy.

Upon completing the course, students are able to appreciate the huge network of federal, state and local bureaucracies, and recognize the crucial role that politics play in the modern bureaucratic state. By understanding the crucial role that bureaucracies play and in shaping public policy, and becoming familiar with major policy players, the course should provide a skill base for the student who wants to become a participant in the policy development process.

## **6. Student Political Organization News**

A. **The Political Science Society** hosted a successful Harborcreek Candidate Forum on October 7. Both candidates for Township Supervisor participated, as well as two School Board candidates. All Behrend students who live on campus or in the University Gate apartments live in Harborcreek. The candidate event was co-sponsored by SGA.

PSS is planning upcoming events on internship opportunities for political science students and on career opportunities in government and non-profits.

PSS will also be joining with SGA to set up a petition drive on campus to help bring high-speed rail to Erie.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3. Students who live on campus and need a ride to the polling place should contact PSS president Zack Goncz at zag102@psu.edu.

The PSS will next meet on Tuesday, November 10, 5:30 PM, Reed 113.

B. **College Democrats** is working on getting representatives from the Arlen Specter and Joe Sestak US Senate campaigns to visit the campus in the near future. The group is also organizing

a debate with College Republicans. College Democrats meets every Wednesday at 4:30 PM in Reed 113. For more information, contact President Josh Snyder at [jss5166@psu.edu](mailto:jss5166@psu.edu).

C. **College Republicans** is also working on setting up the debate with College Democrats. The group met on October 26 and will hold its next meeting soon. For more information, contact President Brett Miller at [bzm5068@psu.edu](mailto:bzm5068@psu.edu) or Vice President Dan Smith at [djs5223@psu.edu](mailto:djs5223@psu.edu).

## **7. Faculty in the News**

Dr. Cook and Dr. Speel have both been interviewed and quoted in the *Erie Times-News* in the past month - Dr. Cook for an article about the G-20 Summit in Pittsburgh, and Dr. Speel for an article about an amendment to Congressional health care legislation sponsored by Rep. Kathy Dahlkemper.