Happy Iowa Caucus Day Eve! By Wednesday morning we will know: the GOP field’s order of finish; who beat – or failed to meet – expectations; the media and pundits current conventional wisdom on what that means; and how the various campaigns spin it and react to it (folded tents any one?). We won’t yet know whether the results will significantly affect the primary results in New Hampshire, herald a front-runner destined to be the nominee, contribute to a long period of uncertainty about an eventual nominee that could even presage a late entry or convention draft (Jeb?), or give a very brief and ultimately inconsequential moment-in-the-sun to someone who will decisively NOT be a serious contender or even Veep candidate; or…..

Meanwhile the economic and political problems in Europe, the North Korean new regime watch, the Iranian nuclear program issue, the Arab Spring’s still-to-be-determined final short-run (let alone long-run) legacy in places such as Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and Libya, etceteras, rage on (not to mention globally significant developments oft times flying below the radar in China, Nigeria, India, Iraq, Russia, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, Brazil, Turkey, and Mexico).

At home those attuned to the news have witnessed intense arguments about: the Courts, health care, and economic inequality and OWS; as well as taxes, corporate rights, higher education affordability, environmental concerns, Marcellus Shale gas, and, indeed, about the proper role of government (not to mention which level and branches) in sphere after sphere.

Luckily, as poli sci alumni you all are among those best positioned to make sense out of all this. You understand the context and complexity, the principles and values at stake, because you took courses such as: Debating Democracy and/or Political Theory; Comparative Politics: Europe and/or Comparative Politics: Africa; Civil Liberties and/or Constitutional Law; Public Administration and/or State & Local Politics; International Relations and/or Intelligence and National Security; Campaign Strategy & U.S. Elections and/or American Political Parties & Interest Groups; American Foreign Policy and/or The Vietnam War; Research Methods and/or the Senior Capstone Course; Global Issues and/or Geopolitics; Presidency and/or Congress; World Politics and/or Nationalism; The Politics of Migration and/or Ethnic Conflict; or one of the many, many seminars over the years on topics such as: Science and Politics, Political Dissidents, Liberalism and Conservatism, or Political Novels (not to mention internships or study abroad). And, you learned how to research, analyze, and think critically; as well as to reflect on your values and intellectual/political identity; and improved your ability to articulate your insights and opinions effectively. Regularly, but especially at election time, I wish more people had such backgrounds. However, since they don’t, I’ll offer all of you some old-time political advice – vote early and vote often.

Speaking of our alumni, in addition to thanking those who sent in formal updates, there are many more who need thanking for staying in touch even when they don’t choose to submit an update, attending homecoming and meeting with current students (or at least sending in material for my annual shout out), letting us know about internship and employment opportunities with their
companies, offering to lend guidance to students interested in following a similar path of employment, political involvement, graduate or law school, and so forth. Accordingly, at the end of the official updates, there is a bit of a honor roll call for some of you, with apologies re: errors or those left out. Blame the editor’s fading memory, lost emails, or – as all the GOP candidates in Iowa did – President Obama, the Federal Reserve, politicians, and the media. Whatever the merits of most of those arguments, and not to make light of the serious issues facing whoever is sworn in January 2013, I can vouch for the President’s innocence on this one (and produce my own birth certificate).

WHO’S DOING WHAT: ALUMNI UPDATES

Margaux Valenti (Major ’09) – Well 2L year got off to an unexpected start. Brave Little Vermont (see Calvin Coolidge 1928 speech) was battered by Hurricane Irene. I live in town hit quite hard by the hurricane. With classes starting almost a week late some schools might worry about academia. Vermont has a bigger heart than that. With some students flooded out of their homes while others were trapped in their homes due to washed out bridges and roads, the school gave all students and faculty a pass to miss classes to help rebuild with our neighbors, the town and the state. The only condition: email the Vice Dean so you could be accounted for because students were still missing with no way of contacting them. VLS served not only as a base camp (as well at the local bar, both running on generators) for a clothing drive, helped the church across the street with daily dinners but the students also volunteered to help Vermonters fill out their FEMA paperwork. In my first few weeks of my second year of law school I learned how to board up a greenhouse in thigh-deep water, how to gut and rebuild a house, how to "muck-out" a basement, what post-flood river sludge really consists of and most importantly what lengths Vermonters young and old will go to help out those in need. Once the river settled, things took a turn back toward normalcy. I have been busy sitting at the President of the Environmental Law Society and just generally trucking through a VERY busy third semester. In addition to the standard class I am also getting a certificate in Alternative Dispute Resolution. In spring I will be offsetting my class time with a part time externship lobbying with a firm in the state capital.

Albert Veverka (Major ’05) – Everything is going great here in Pittsburgh! I just hit the six month mark at my new job as an Assistant District Attorney in Allegheny County, and I absolutely love it! I am so grateful that I get to do what I love and that I love what I do. At the moment I am prosecuting cases involving traffic violations, harassment, disorderly conduct, driving under the influence and most matters involving the gaming commission. I work with an outstanding group of attorneys who are committed to representing the Commonwealth in a professional manner. I am thrilled that the Steelers managed to limp into the playoffs (no pun intended), and I am looking forward to the upcoming playoffs. I hope this note finds you and the rest of my fellow Mercyhurst alumni doing well. All the best wishes for a healthy and successful 2012!

Tony D’Abruzzo (Major ’03) – this upcoming year is going to be a busy one. Still with the Philadelphia Police Department as an analyst. We are kicking off our second phase of SMART Policing very soon, which I am the Project Coordinator. I’ll spare you the boring details of it, but instead direct you to the website I need to update with the new project plan (http://www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/SPIsites/philadelphia). In the next year, we will be
working toward some organizational changes by being more strategic with long term planning and managing resources with this program. In addition to that, I am also serving as a subject matter expert in Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Safety, a federal program sponsored by National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, which encourages police department to focus on both crime and traffic crashes through analysis. This gives me some added responsibility in my department, as well as allows me to travel to implementation workshops and help train analysts in this philosophy. So far I've only managed to get to Indianapolis, but hopefully I will do some more traveling in this upcoming year.

Ramona Ramos (Major '06) – I am still currently with the Defense Finance Accounting Services a Department of Defense agency however I have switched positions. I am currently working in the security department, I am writing the training materials and the security department's standard operating procedures for the agency. I am really enjoying my current position! Outside of work I am one of the heads of the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (YNPN) Cleveland. YNPN is a national networking group. Here in Cleveland we are starting our third year and we have made quite an impact here in Cleveland. We currently have 600 members. We plan both networking events, professional development workshops and inform our members of job opportunities here in Cleveland.

Blaire Murphy (Major '11) – I am currently living in Los Angeles and interning for an ethnic marketing and communications firm, Imprenta Communications Group. I am applying for my Master's in Public Diplomacy at USC which is found under the Annenberg School of Journalism and Communications and the School of International Relations. I figured it would be a good idea to have an idea of what the communications field was about so interning with Imprenta was a good choice. I am also applying to a couple other schools just in case USC doesn't work out.

Lilly Gehres (Minor '05) – I'm in my second year of the Master of Environmental Management program at Portland State University. Course work, TAing, and an internship with the Lake Oswego Corporation keep my days and nights quite full but it's all great fun and highly rewarding. I have been developing a thesis project with the Lake Oswego Corporation about the impacts of changing land use (mostly to impervious surface and highly maintained and manicured lawns) on nutrient and sediment levels in the lake. It has required that I become a licensed Oregon boater and a Class C operator (I can pump gas within the state - total resume boost!). Zipping around the lake on official scientist business is quite thrilling even when the canals are frozen and I have to channel the adventurous spirit of Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton to reach the sampling locations. I should be finishing in the summer time and then it is head first into the job market – ideally working for an agency involved in fresh water resources, but I’m open to most any paying job. Happy New Year, I wish everyone much prosperity with all their endeavors!

Rich Wagner (Major '96) – I started my own consulting business in 2010 and I am now up to about 30 client and two employees. The girls, twins Rachel and Elizabeth, are now squarely affixed in the terrible twos; we are now the family that restaurants see coming and then turn off the lights and lock their doors. We still live in Northern Virginia, just outside of DC. We still have as many cats as bi-pedals in the house. Nothing else all that new.
**Ian Michalski (Double Major ’10)** – I have just finished the 3rd semester of my MPIA degree at Virginia Tech’s School of Public and International Affairs. I am also continuing my work at the Office of Outreach and International Affairs, where this school year I am the coordinator of the “International Faculty Development Program.” This program takes 9 mid career professors representing the different colleges within the university to Europe as part of a semester long program that seeks to provide the resources and training to internationalize curriculum and research. In my last semester I will complete my final project/paper to meet the requirements of my degree. My paper and research will focus on “The Politics of Language Contact in the Dominican Republic.” In early January 2012 I will be conducting interviews and field observations in the Dominican Republic, for 10 days and hope. While all of this is exciting I also must share that I have applied to 4 M.A.- Ph.D. programs in Hispanic Linguistics and I am now just waiting to hear back so I can start the next chapter of my life as an eternal graduate student!

**Adam Hammer (Major ’09)** – “I currently work for my father's business, the Hammer Financial Group. My tasks have ranged from administrative duties to creating model retirement portfolios. I have researched stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and related investment instruments to meet specific client's goals. In September, I passed an exam issued by the College of Financial Planning. I am officially an "Accredited Asset Management Specialist" or AAMS ®. I am eagerly awaiting the Iowa Caucus, and pulling for a Gingrich-Paul ticket (unlikely, I know). Hope all is well at the shining school upon the hill!!"

**Maeve Kelly (Major ’07)** – I hope this finds you well. A few major updates on my end. I recently left the World Economic Forum after a year of amazing Swiss chocolate, Davos and wonderful trips to Geneva. I missed politics more than I thought and am now working in New York City for Anzalone Liszt Research, a premier Democratic polling firm. We poll for over a dozen House and Senate members and most importantly, we are part of the Obama polling team. But most of all, I am excited to be planning my wedding to a great Irish man, Sean Gavin next June in Philadelphia :)

**Rob Vescio (Major ’96)** – I am finishing my first year at Cohen & Grigsby law firm, where we launched a new lobbying practice in January. The first year was very successful. We continue to grow the practice around our anchor clients such as the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce and Giant Eagle. We are working on all of the top issues in the state from Marcellus Shale to the privatization of our state's liquor stores. I am proud to see Mercyhurst professors quoted more and more on state political issues. I read a recent article with Dr Federici's comments with respect to the retirement announcement of Senator Jane Earll. On the personal side, we had our third child in June. I now have two boys and a girl (Julianna). They keep us quite busy. Finally, for current and future graduates searching for jobs. As was the case when I graduated in 1996, the economy is sluggish and jobs are hard to find. When I was a senior, I read an article about the lackluster job market and how graduates may have to take temp jobs until full time employment became available. Instead, I am encouraging those interested in politics to join a campaign. There are a number of campaigns looking to hire for the 2012 cycle. Every state House and US House seat are up for grabs and half of the state senators and one US Senator in PA is up in 2012. There is no better political on-the-job learning experience than working a campaign. It is where we build our foundation for future political or lobbying careers.
Lindsey Kole (Double Major ’07) – I have been keeping myself busy with juggling grad school and work. I am currently working toward my Master’s degree in Security and Safety Leadership from George Washington University. Thus far, I have enjoyed the program and am very lucky to have a great group of people in my cohort. I’m hoping to graduate in May 2012. As for my professional life, I was promoted to an Associate at Booz Allen Hamilton. I was pleasantly surprised by the promotion and am hoping it allows me to seek out some new opportunities. The Browns have been kind enough to be too terrible to watch this year, so my Sundays are mostly focused on school rather than football. I’m certainly hoping they step it up next year. I hope all is well in Mercyworld!

Billy Byrnes (Double Major ’02) - I am currently living and working in Waslala, Nicaragua with my wife, Kristin. Waslala is an 8 hour "retired from the states Blue-Bird" bus ride from Managua. We have been here for three months, and will begin teaching English in January. In the meantime we are getting acquainted with the community, the people, and life as a volunteer. We help out at a local Catholic parish (the only one in the town where we live), and we frequent the home for the elderly each week. We live and work at an agricultural/technical school for secondary education. Three mornings a week I milk cows, and one day a week I help cut sacate, a grass that is milled and fed to the cows. We also have chickens and pigs on the farm. We have acres of coffee plants and cacao trees that are being harvested right now. We traveled to El Salvador for a week, to attend the vigil commemorating the anniversary of the six Jesuits who were martyred at the University of Central America in 1989, along with their housekeeper and her daughter. It was a powerful experience to be there for the vigil and to walk that holy ground. We also visited the house of Archbishop Oscar Romero, and the chapel where he was assassinated. This was particularly moving for me, because Romero is such an important figure in my faith life. I recall doing my leadership essay for your class on him. He is certainly well-revered throughout El Salvador. Life in Waslala is, as they say, tranquilo. We are excited to be here and feel so welcomed by the community. We will be here for two years, and then who knows what. You can check out stories from the campo and see photos on our blog: www.billyandkristin.tumblr.com.
I hope all is well at the Hurst and that you have a most blessed Christmas.
Peace, Billy

Zach Smith (Minor ’05) – I am now in my 7th year with Booz Allen Hamilton and things are par for the course. I am approaching my third year supporting the Defense Threat Reduction Agency in the development of their technological system to anticipate future WMD planning opportunities. The work is stimulating, frustrating, and enlightening all at once. I've been providing high level briefings (I recently briefed SecDef Panetta and ADM McRaven) and traveling around to the various combatant commands briefing and providing training. I am getting ready for a trip to Hawaii probably next month, Hawaii in January, rough timing I know. If I had any education related pearls of wisdom there are two things to that I can't stress enough: 1) speaking/presenting skills are a rare commodity and 2) technical capability, not everyone can be a software developer but understanding at least the basics or enough skill that you can help yourself is worth its weight in gold. In the non-work parts of my life everything is good as well, Kara and I have been married for 2 years, and we are continuing to work on fixing up our house. I am still a full time volunteer EMT with Vienna Fire & Rescue which I find stressful but rewarding to be able to aid my community.
Jenelle Remington (Major ’10) – I am currently working in Rochester, NY at Harter, Secrest and Emery LLP as an administrative assistant to the CFO and Controller in the Finance Department. I am still trying to figure out what to get my Masters in...definitely thought I would have it figured out by now! Happy holidays :)

Jule (Gardner) Banville (Contract Major ’95) – Trying to think of where last I left you all, but, professionally, it was probably as the editor of NewWest.Net. After an interesting, fraught 6-year run covering the news and culture of the Rocky Mountain West, the site went dark Jan. 1 when it finally ran out of money. I had a back-up plan, but it was still sad to see this particular experiment in journalism ultimately fail. It has lots of company as my industry continues to try to figure out how to pay for itself when it comes to the ‘tubes. I was able to turn lemonade into lemons in a return gig as an adjunct instructor at the University of Montana School of Journalism. This past semester I taught Online News, where I tried to make sure my students had a grasp on reality of funding journalism on the web, in addition to making them do, you know, journalism on the web. I also taught Feature Writing as an online-only course, which was interesting and frustrating in equal measures. In the end, several of my students who feared me (Yesss!) ended up turning in kickass longform narratives I hope to help them publish. I was supposed to teach two classes next semester but (and here’s where I might be burying the lead), I'm fat with fetus and due March 1 (a girl, our second of those. My daughter, Kate, just turned 2). This was all sort-of planned because, as my mother so kindly informed me a few years ago, I'm "not getting any younger." I got the plus-sign a few days before I was scheduled to run/walk the Missoula Marathon and, after starting my training in the snow and ice of a Montana January, I did go through with it, although was far from speedy (5:50). That was not really due, solely, to the pregnancy. It was mainly due to being short and plump, if determined. Still: I doubt I will be doing more marathons as it was, I'll be frank, a bit of a bitch. On the job front, I hope there more news to come, as I'm in the running for a full-time tenure-track faculty position at UM. I should know in spring and it would start in fall. It's competitive, though, so I don't yet have a good read on how it will go. Think good thoughts! If it doesn't work out, chances are I'll still be teaching several classes next year as an adjunct and continuing to make a crappy wage doing what the full-timers do. But dang those kids are worth it! Am I right, Doc? Cheers and happiness to all of you.

Kristen Hudak (Major ’05) -- Lots of transition for me in the past few months...In late September, I moved to New York City to accept a Sr. Publicist position with ESPN. In my role, I support our ad sales, affiliate, marketing, digital and research teams with PR, messaging, media outreach, etc. Though I love the job and the company, I'm still trying to get used to living the big city. I suffered a break-in after only a few weeks, so I'm still fighting the urge to pack up and come home. Luckily, fellow poli sci alum Maeve Kelly let me crash on her couch for three weeks until I found a new apartment! Also, I adopted a kitten from a shelter in August (Marley). She's been a wonderful companion during the tough times. Here's hoping for a better 2012!

Kirk Shoemaker (Double Major ’10) – I am well and just about ready (leaving in the next 45 min) to depart my new residence in Fort Bragg, NC and head up to D.C. to visit Jess for a few days. I signed out on holiday leave this morning and I don't report back until 3 January. As you know I finished Ranger School on 26 August and then attended Recon School (RSLC) and Airborne School all located at Fort Benning, GA. After I finished all of this "cool guy" schools, I
left Fort Benning and moved to my unit (82nd Airborne Division) here at Fort Bragg, NC. I arrived just about the right time and after only 2 weeks of work I am going on holiday leave ;-) This is actually a blessing because in March my unit will be leaving for southeast Afghanistan for a 6-9 month deployment. This is a fairly rapid turn-around for me, especially since I have been away so much with training. I am very thankful that I will be able to spend a fair amount of time home over the holidays with Jess and my family before I leave. It's going to be tough to be away and the area we are going to promises to be remote but I am anxious to do what I can to help the Afghan people and to lead and work with my fellow soldiers. I have been through a lot of training and now I want to test myself. I know you can relate...it's like training for a race for a long time...you eventually want to run that race. I have been doing more reading these days which is wonderful. I forgot how awesome it was to read a good book. I finished Cormac McCarthy's The Road, Ishmael Beah's A Long Way Gone, Memoirs of a Boy Soldier, and I just started to read Dr. Federici's book on Eric Voegelin The Restoration of Order. Hoping to make progress on this over the holidays.

Ashley Gardner (Minor '04) – I have become a Peace Corps Volunteer and am currently serving in Cambita Garabitos, San Cristobal, Dominican Republic. I am in my diagnostic period until the end of January. I have been in Cambita since late October, and in the country since mid August. My program is Community Economic Development, although I will likely be doing many projects outside of my program. Currently I am interviewing community members and teaching an English course. I have to say my current weather sitting outside as I type this makes me even happier as I remember winters in Erie. I hope all is well at Mercyhurst.

Randy Hilliard (Double Major '99) – Following a challenging tour in pre- and post- earthquake Haiti, I decided that I would stretch my mind a bit, learn to speak Portuguese and move to Brazil. My family and I have been here for almost 6 months and, although the ground is no longer moving beneath our feet, it is certainly a country on the go. It is nice to finally take an overseas posting were running water and city power are the rule rather than the exception. Though we live in Brasilia, I am currently looking out my window at the beaches of Copacabana, where we will spent the Christmas holiday. [Ed. Note: Randy also humbly reminded me that in his senior thesis his prognostication on the longevity of the Euro currency seems to be playing out. Not surprisingly, that topic was one addressed this fall in the Senior Capstone course by one of this year’s soon to be graduates. He’s hoping for a different outcome.]

Dinorah Sanchez (Minor ‘10) – I spent this past summer interning in DC and then began the semester. The Bush School is expanding its faculty through many new hires. I was very fortunate to be asked by our program director to be the first student representative to serve on our faculty committee search for a nonprofit management professor. This semester has been busy as our Capstone project is well underway but I am still finding free time to enjoy my last year at A&M. I also started refereeing with A&M's intramural flag football--pretty fun! I just wrapped up the fall semester which means I am rounding third heading home to graduation. At the same time, it means I am applying for jobs, as I have decided for work experience before pursuing doctoral work. Lastly, I miss all of the PoliSci faculty and cannot wait to visit and catch up. By the way, if anyone is interested in attending The Bush School of Government and Public Service (Texas A&M) just let me know. Thanks and Gig 'Em!!
Michelle Olivares (Double Major ’09) – I finished up my Masters courses at Goldsmiths, University of London and now officially have an MA International Studies yay! My dissertation was entitled, "Developing Women's Sports, From the Victorian Period to the Present: Exploring the history of women's sport and its impact on the future of the next generation". During late winter until the spring I did an internship at the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, a charity based in London whose objective is to get more women and girls participating in physical activity and sport. The charity's team consists of only 8 people so it was very hands-on and I loved it! I got to meet with a lot of people in the sporting world and even set up an event at the House of Lords and met some Lords and other members of Parliament. The day after dissertation hand-in, the boyfriend and I went on a long holiday island hopping in Greece, and despite the economic troubles going on, I would definitely entertain the idea of moving there--beach, sun, and sand! I still live in London and plan to continue living in London long term and am currently looking for a full time position, while temping here and there. I am also still rowing for Curlew RC here, and am now a Committee member for the club as Social Chair/Event Manager or what I like to call, "Facilitator of Fun"! I love living in London but am very excited to be returning home at Christmastime to the Chicago suburbs for a few weeks of family and Filipino food!

Alyson Pinter (Double Major ’05) – I'll start with the personal (and best) news first--I'm engaged! Patrick proposed in June where we met, at the Krav Maga school where we both train! We've set a wedding date for May 2013, here in Northern Virginia, and are continuing to have a fabulous time together as we start figuring out all of this wedding planning stuff! I can't wait to introduce him to everyone; although I actually was able to give him a quick tour of the 'Hurst campus this summer when we briefly stopped by Erie on our way to a relative's wedding. I'm also set to travel with him and his family next year (for 3 weeks!) when they visit the Philippines (where he lived til about 12) for the first time since they left almost 25 years ago--should be quite an adventure, as we're scheduled to visit four different islands. In other news, work is going well, I'm now the senior analyst on the account I follow, which is fascinating and has given me some amazing opportunities like briefing our former and current Directors (the current one even sent me a personal thank you note after I completed a difficult project for him!) I'm also mentoring and helping along our two new hires on the account; its been fun showing them the ropes and seeing their first successes--I'm starting to do more outside reading on leadership and management as a result. I've starting teaching Krav Maga, leading the basic classes, and in October I held a special self-defense seminar I designed specifically for women--as a result the owner of the school asked me to make the women's seminars a regular part of the school's offerings (so ladies in NoVA, let me know if you'd like to try out the next one and I'll let you know when we schedule it!) The horses are both doing well--Playa will be 23 this year, and even though she's the "old lady" of the barn, she certainly doesn't act like it! Intalio had another colic scare this summer, but luckily it only required a few days stay at the equine hospital in Leesburg and no surgery. Hopefully they both stay healthy through the winter (although we're clearly spoiled being further south than PA--I actually gave Intalio a bath today--Dec 31st--because it was so warm!)

Dana Hyland (Major ’05) – I went home to Rochester and had a great Christmas with my family. I had a busy fall this year - I had 2 eye surgeries in September to fix my once horrible, horrible vision that LASIK couldn't even touch. It has been amazing ever since - I can see perfectly without glasses or contacts and am so thankful for it every day! Work has been
consistently busy - still working on climate change at the EPA. While I enjoy working on the issue and I really like and respect all of my colleagues, I could do without the controversy and negative attention that climate change and the EPA have received lately. Very discouraging... Well, here's hoping 2012 will be a great year for Washington and Mercyhurst!

**Phillis Roman (Major '07)** – I am finally finished with school!!! (Never to return again). [Ed. Note: DePaul Law School] After passing the bar and being sworn in to the Illinois bar November 10. I started work at a small firm in the suburbs of Chicago handling subrogation defense and helping on the plaintiff injury and criminal defense cases. I am still living in Chicago because I can't bring myself to leave the Windy City just yet. All in all, life is good post-Hurst.

**Casey (CJ) Kilroy (Double Major '04)** - Hey Doc C! Well, here I am....still working for Seabourn and I'm currently out in Asia - we recently transitioned from Istanbul, Turkey all the way through to Singapore. We are now doing Singapore to Hong Kong cruises until I am back home in February. Our transition through the Middle East was very interesting...going through piracy and security briefings to prepare ourselves for this very unstable area. Thankfully, our ship made it through safely, however our sister ship had a little bit of a close call this past week. The hired British ex-marines scared them off and the ship/crew/guests are fine! That's all for me! Peace, Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and all that jazz!
http://caseykilroy.com My Blog - Views from a Porthole

**Tim Krysiek (Minor '05)** – I'm sending this update from Chicago, where I'm ringing in the new year with fellow Laker Jason Staley. Jason sends his best regards to the MC poli sci community. This year I made it back to the Hurst for the first time since graduation and had a great time catching up with everyone at the Alumni Weekend. In August I flew to Shanghai to start Duke's Cross-Continent MBA program. I'm now one-third of the way through the MBA, having completed the Shanghai and London residencies. Next year I'll travel Dubai, Delhi, St Petersburg and Durham, NC to finish the degree. I'm still based in London, working for Statoil. This year I led a working group charged with developing Statoil's corporate Arctic strategy and my team and I are delivering it to the executive committee in January in Oslo. I had a chance to catch up on my reading over the Christmas break and I recommend Dan Yergin's The Quest for anyone interested in energy geopolitics and domestic energy policy. Happy new year to all!

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**Editor’s Note:** As referenced earlier, throughout the year I hear from alumni about births and marriages, requesting letters of reference or passing along information about internships or employment, degree completions or job changes, linking up on LinkedIn or in-person as you pass through or at homecoming, etc. Here’s a few kudos and thank you notes: Breanne (Scully) Whalen finished law school, got married and moved while studying for the bar, then started a new job as an associate at a medium sized civil litigation firm (Freund, Freeze, and Arnold) in Dayton. Lindsey Weber and Harley Ellenberger both passed along great internship opportunities for our students. Master’s degrees were completed by Nicole Kubit (in IR from Webster University – while working full-time running a study abroad program and more at La Roche) and by Brad Thompson (Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University). Carlo Garofalo both completed his Masters (In Italy, St. Johns) and got married. Jay Starliper completed his poli
sci Ph.D in political philosophy from Catholic University. Gina Giachetti is now working in Dubai (UAE). Dani Vinciguerra and Kirstie Corso both completed their Masters at GSPIA (more on that in my update). Homecoming attendee/contribution thanks go to: Elise Yablonsky, Kaitlyn Faucet, Sarah Belotti, Adam Hammer, Tom Hermanowski, Sean Will, Pierre Priestly, Casey Kilroy. Homecoming thanks for winning shout out info also go to: Megan Hull from DC; Barb Deleo from the UN; Gretchen Ulery from IBM in California; and Kelly (Diskin) Abbott using her Masters in Education to teach in an all-male classroom with students dealing with emotional disabilities. Plus, there have been quite recent contacts from Jerrod Markle, Avi Fogel, Brad Rybczynski, Kate Hansen, Erin (Lloyd) Hromada, and Kevin Flanagan. And...The point is, we appreciate your on-going support, loyalty, help, friendship, email address updates, etc. THANX.

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Brian Ripley -- is enjoying his return to full time faculty status. He has adopted a course called Global Issues and revised it to emphasize the role of ideas, institutions, and non state actors in global civil society. Working with his colleagues in the Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics, he helped bring Phil English (former member of Congress), Mike Kelly (current member of Congress) and (in collaboration with Dr. Surzho-Harned) Kathy Dahlkemper (former member of Congress) to campus for various public forum events. He now resides in 117 Preston Hall, Dr. Federici's former office, and finds himself inspired to improve his teaching, enhance his scholarship, and fight uncontrollable urges to say nasty things about Thomas Jefferson.

Dr. Lena Surzho-Harned -- It's been a busy and eventful fall term for LSH. The "Ukrainian Voter," her dissertation, is completed and defended. She and Dr. Peterson co-authored and presented a paper about twitter adoption among the members of Congress and the European Parliament at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. The paper she worked on with her colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh is forthcoming in the International Research Quarterly. The Model International Organizations Team successfully competed in no less than four intercollegiate competitions during the fall term including the Lake Erie International Model UN. The team is preparing for a national Model NATO in Washington DC in February.

Dr. Michael Federici -- is nearly finished with his book on Alexander Hamilton. It will appear in print in the spring. In September, he attended the APSA Meeting in Seattle at which he gave a paper, was a discussant, and taught a short course for graduate students. Later that month he attended the first ever Front Porch Republic conference at Mt. Saint Mary's University in Maryland and the annual board meeting for the Academy of Philosophy and Letters. In October, he attended a Liberty Fund conference on Benedetto Croce. The conference was held in San Diego. He has a contract for which he is co-editor to publish a collection of 15 essays with Palgrave that should appear in print in 2013. The book is titled THE MODEST REPUBLIC. His edited volume titled, RETHINKING THE TEACHING OF AMERICAN HISTORY, will be published by Butler Books and will appear in print around March-April 2012. Dr. Federici is currently serving as president of the Faculty Senate.
Dr. Natasha Duncan -- Over the past several months, Dr. Duncan has been working on a book manuscript on immigration policy and states’ pursuit of high skilled international migrants. The book is in the production phase and is scheduled to come out late spring 2012. As for other areas of scholarship, she participated in a workshop on public policy and immigration in Barcelona, Spain and was invited to present research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in November. In the new year, she will be working on developing a FSAT course with travel to Latin America and integrating a service learning component into her international migration course, which would allow students to interact with and learn about the experiences of refugees in the Erie community.

Dr. Joe Morris -- has been busy working on projects associated with the Center for Applied Politics. In October he, along with Dr. Peterson, Sean Fedorko (class of 2011), and more than two dozen students completed the first biennial Mercyhurst Poll. The poll focused on a wide range of topics including the economy/poverty, environment, crime/justice, and cyber bullying. The results of the economy/poverty section were covered by news organizations including the Philadelphia Inquirer, Erie Times News, WITF Public Radio in Harrisburg, PA, and more than a dozen other newspapers and political blogs. The section on the environment, which focused exclusively on hydraulic fracturing of the Marcellus Shale, was covered by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Erie Times-News, and Roll Call. This January the center will begin its second poll of the 2011-12 academic year, which will focus on Pennsylvania female voters and the 2012 presidential election. Dr. Morris will be spending the holidays with his wife and children in Erie.

Dr. Rolfe Peterson -- is spending the winter term planning a course on campaigns and elections for the spring term. Campaigns will be studied, commercials will be reenacted, and Herman Cain will be spoofed. There are still research projects in tow; the work continues on studying comparative Twitter use among MEPs (members of the European Parliament) and MCs (members of Congress). On the panel at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Seattle, Professors Peterson and Surzhko-Harned had the surreal experience of presenting research on Twitter while the chair/organizer of the panel tweeted about their paper in real time. In addition to coursework and research, Dr. Morris and the students of the MCAP are gearing up for the winter term poll. Though still basking in the success of our fall survey which garnered a good amount of media attention, the winter poll offers another chance for students to engage in political research. Though we suffered through a snowless Christmas, the snow blower is prepped and ready because winter is coming. [Editor’s Note: We had a great fall that essentially lasted into January. I know it’s not right to blame Dr. Peterson’s forecast, but we have gotten approx. 3 inches of snow this morning and the forecast is for 12-18 inches in the next 24 or so hours.]

Dr. Clemons-- published with Dr. Mark McBeth and his 2010 student research assistant Rachel Brown, an updated version of a simulation he wrote for his Environmental Politics class (titled “Wolf Politics”). The published version includes an extensive Teaching Note explaining how to use it. It is available through The Electronic Hallway, hosted by the Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington. He taught, for the 2nd time, our senior capstone course and two sections of Geopolitics in the Fall (one an Honors section), and this term is teaching another section of Geo, plus his Vietnam War course. Some highlights from this fall included the Homecoming Event for alumni and current students, appearing in a sort of author meets critics
panel with Pulitzer Prize winner author Chris Hedges (I was the critic), several great Ad Hocs (on Libya, “the science of fracking”, and contagion/pandemics and public health), and the MCAP polls which, as Dr. Morris explained, got wide coverage. In my role as Dean for the School of Social Sciences I signed an Early Assurance Agreement with GSPIA. Watch for some Mercyhurst info on this, and a story highlighting four or five of our alumni who attended GSPIA and paved the way for future students. The next page of this newsletter provides the essential information on this opportunity for our current and future students, which is a nice compliment from the University of Pittsburgh. Finally, I am really looking forward to Spring, when I will be part of the Mercyhurst contingent offering classes in Ireland (my Leadership class to be specific). I promise more on that in the post-graduation version of the newsletter and will conclude with an excerpt from an old Gaelic Blessing: “Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.”

What: Mercyhurst’s School of Social Sciences has just established an early admission program with GSPIA (the Graduate School of Public & International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh)! Accepted students will not be obligated to enroll at GSPIA after graduation, but will receive the “early assurance” that their seats in the class are being held for them. Qualified Mercyhurst undergraduates may apply, and may receive conditional admission to GSPIA, up to a year earlier than the general public - after completing only three years of undergraduate education (or the equivalent). These students will learn their admission status prior to entering their fourth (senior) years as undergraduates. This leads toward a Master's Degree or PhD in Public & International Affairs, International Development, or Public Administration.

Wow: Importantly, any student admitted under the terms of the Early Assurance program not only gains an assured spot, but will also be guaranteed a merit scholarship in an amount of at least $5,000 per year, subject to GSPIA’s usual renewal requirements. GSPIA may, at its discretion, offer larger awards – and many of our students in the past have gotten more than that. Students will learn whether they have received a larger award no later than March of their senior year as an undergraduate. We were the first school ever offered this sort of agreement by GSPIA.

Why: Mercyhurst’s outstanding undergraduate programs in social science, and GSPIA’s outstanding graduate programs in public and international affairs, make the two institutions logical partners. For many years, there has been a significant flow of highly qualified Mercyhurst Political Science, and more recently also Intelligence Studies, alumni into GSPIA. An Early Assurance agreement allows GSPIA to acknowledge this relationship and attract talented students, and allows Mercyhurst to establish a partnership with a top graduate program.