As predicted in the last edition of the Tavistock Times the academic year started with a new intake of 400 masters students. This builds on the success of the last few years and makes the School of Public Policy one of the largest post graduate schools in political science and public policy in Europe.

Whether this represents a high water mark for student numbers or whether we will continue to grow in the next few years is hard to predict. With the looming public sector budget cuts, the proposed reforms of higher education funding and continuing recession, UCL and SPP will have to think strategically about how we manage change in a period of austerity.

I am however happy to announce that in light of our recent growth we have been able to make a number of exciting new academic hires.
Professor Tony Wright joins SPP after eighteen years as a Labour MP and twelve as the Chair of the Public Administration Committee of the House of Commons. In the wake of the recent Parliamentary expenses scandal and in his capacity as the chair of the House of Commons select Committee on Reform of the House of Commons he secured major reforms in how Parliament functions. His new course, in term two, on Public Accountability will draw upon his academic interest in transparency and accountability and his real world experience of policy-making and good governance. I for one look forward to attending his planned guest speaker lectures.

In September 2010, we were also joined by Dr Slava Mikhaylov and Dr Jeffrey Kucik. Dr Mikhaylov joined the department from the LSE as a lecturer in Research Methods and in future years he proposes to teach new courses in Political Leadership and the topical subject of Energy Politics. Dr Kucik joins us from Emory University as a Lecturer in International Public Policy and the new Director of the Masters in International Public Policy. In addition to teaching International Political Economy and International Organisation his research focuses on the legal architecture of the global trade regime.

Excitedly, our growth plan doesn’t stop with these three wonderful additions to the department. We intend to continue hiring in the coming year to build our administrative and academic capacity. Thus in January we will interview for UCL’s first Chair of International Relations and a Lecturer in Public Economics. We plan to follow up these appointments in the spring, with new posts in Political Science and International Relations and a Senior Lectureship in Public Policy for our new MPA with NYU. These new appointments for 2011/12 should allow us to offer students an ever more varied programme of courses and related events in the coming years and make us even more competitive with our rival departments in the UK and US.

With our continued expansion we have attempted to mount a number of additional policy events which we hope have added to the student experience. In November 2010, Dr Christine Reh led a group of UCL students to participate in an EU Negotiation Moot in Brussels organised by the European Parliament. It will come as no surprise that SPP students representing the UK ranked 1st. Interestingly, in December 2010, Dr Colin Provost took a group of public policy students to visit the newly created Supreme Court. Next term Dr Reh is planning to organise a trip to the EU institutions in Brussels and Dr Basak Cali will be taking students to Universal Periodic Review under the UN HR Council where they will also meet ambassadors and representatives of NGOs. For those considering an academic career the department organised a round table of faculty to discuss “How to apply and prepare for a PhD” and for those that missed the event the video can be watched at: www.ucl.ac.uk/spp/spp/news

The success of SPP is not just measured just in the growth of faculty, student numbers and events but also in the success of our recent PhDs and the development of the next generation of academics. I am therefore proud to announce the successful defence of five PhDs this term. Dr David Karp defended his thesis on Non-State actors and human rights and now takes up a lectureship at the University of Glasgow. Dr Meghan Benton successfully defended her thesis on A Theory of Denizenship and has taken up a post as Research Associate in the Department’s Constitution Unit. Dr Sara Kutchesfahani defended a thesis on nuclear non Proliferation Policy and takes up a two year post-doc at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Dr Nicola Salisbury successfully defended a thesis on Governance Networks around HIV and Policy in South Africa.

Finally, Dr Yannis Theocharis successfully defended his thesis on the digital silent revolution and will take up the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt two year post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Mannheim. Our congratulations go out to all of them.
In this sixty second interview we quiz Stephen Thomson, Departmental Web/IT Administrator.

Stephen Thomson,
Departmental Web/IT Administrator

What is your name?
Stephen Thomson

When did you join UCL?
August 2008

What are your responsibilities in the Department?
I manage the School’s IT and Web facilities. I also assist staff with a wide range of IT issues and development.

What do you particularly like and dislike about your job?
I enjoy the creative aspects of designing the School’s websites and developing new systems to improve the School’s functions. I dislike it when computers go down or IT system failures - I get a lot of anxious visits and phone calls from staff.

What do you consider your greatest achievement to date?
The School’s website… the feedback has been tremendous. Plus, overseeing a huge improvement in the School’s IT facilities over the past two years.

Most inspirational person that you have met whilst at UCL?
I can’t really think of a single individual but I have a lot of respect for the students. To undertake higher education in England is very expensive and it shows a great deal of self-belief that incurring debts is worth the difference it will make to their future careers.

Favourite location around UCL?
Tavistock Square gardens on a warm summer’s day.

What would your ideal afternoon/evening in London include?
An evening meal at L’Atelier de Joël Robuchon, followed by comedy at one of London’s many venues then a club where Paul Van Dyk or Erick Morillo were dj-ing.

What is your favourite book?
There’s actually quite a few but White Fang by Jack London sticks out. I’ve read it three times and it’s still beautifully written and the story remains with you for a lifetime. I wish I had more time to read these days.

What are your hobbies?
DIY, movies, cooking and gym.

If you had not gone into academia what would you be doing now?
I suppose if I hadn’t gone back to University then I’d still be an Archaeological photographer but if I could completely restart everything then I’d have done Computer Science at University and come up with Facebook before Mark Zuckerberg!

If you could implement one policy in the world today, what would it be?
I’d happily tear up Mandelson’s Digital Economy Bill. It’s ill considered, improperly debated and could very well punish innocent people and limit their right to a fair trial.
EU NEGOTIATION MOOT 2010

Olga Friedmann, MSc European Public Policy 2010/11, reports on the 2010 EU Negotiation Moot:

On 24–26 November 2010, 23 SPP students went to Brussels to participate at the 2010 EU Negotiation Moot. The negotiation simulated EU decision-making on financial regulation and was organised by the UK Negotiation Training Association, founded by a group of former SPP students, by the European Parliament and by Gergely Polner and Marton Hadju, press spokesmen for the Hungarian EU Presidency.

The adventure started at the beginning of term when we received a letter advertising the 2010 Negotiation Moot in Brussels in our School of Public Policy Welcome Pack. The 25th and 26th November seemed a long time away and those who were curious came to the talk given by last year’s participant Nazli Basoglu, which was organised by European Public Policy Director, Dr Christine Reh, who facilitated the trip and accompanied the SPP team to Brussels. When Nazli told us that the days in Brussels were the most exhausting she had experienced in a long time and that we were supposed to represent in the Council and information on Financial Regulation in the EU, in order to prepare a position paper for our respective country and start to research the other states’ attitudes to the nine issues to be negotiated. Since the participants came from different universities in France, Germany, Hungary and the UK, the first task was to establish the communication within the teams using Skype, Facebook and email to discuss the position paper, strategies and potential coalition partners. Indeed, electronic negotiations started long before the students left for Brussels, with first potential coalitions being formed a week in advance.

The Eurostar journey was a much appreciated opportunity to continue and commence new talks with other Member States; by the time we all arrived in the hostel and met our team colleagues from the other universities for the first time, it felt like we were in the middle of the negotiations before they had officially started. After more bargaining and discussing everyone went to bed for a short while in order to be fit for the official part of the trip the next morning.
Sitting around a table in the European Parliament, the presidency currently held by Belgium, the Commission and the Member State representatives gave speeches outlining their preferences for the issues on the table, such as fiscal safeguards, the seat of the regulating agency and the rules on fast track infringement procedures. The representatives then had the chance to ask specific questions and clarify positions. After several pit stops for coffee and a lunch break, all of which were used to continue negotiations outside the plenary room, it was time to vote for or against a proposal provided by the presidency team, in which they attempted to incorporate everything that had been said during the official negotiations and what they had overheard or been told in the corridors.

After this and several other proposals submitted by coalitions of Member States it did not receive the necessary qualified majority, with only a few minutes until the room had to be vacated, the delegations finally managed to agree on an amended version of a compromise suggested by the UK. Taking into consideration the position papers, the presentation skills of the participants and the priority points each country received through this compromise, the UK came in first place. The jury also awarded outstanding speakers, among them EPP students Veronica Collins and Maria Escubos, with an opportunity to write a Blog on the Council Presidency website.

The fact that the Council simulation was over did not mean that there was time to rest and relax. All students were assigned their political parties for the European Parliament part of the game. The parties were told their priorities and set off to appoint party and committee chairs and to start discussing their strategy.

That evening was spent at the famous Delirium Café trying to convert these strategies into coalitions, trading priorities for positions, meaning party representatives debated late into the night.

Before the MEPs broke into their respective committee sessions, Josh Sisskin of ALDE was elected to be the president of the European Parliament. In the committees the party representatives discussed and agreed on priority proposals that were used as the basis for the debate in the plenary meeting. After hearing speeches by the party chairs, the debate commenced and all representatives could argue their group’s propositions, ask each other questions and proclaim their standpoints. Compared to the very formal Council procedure, the debate in the Parliament was lively and involved a lot passionate contributions from different party representatives. Many coalitions had been formed and dissolved again by that point and it was clear roughly what the other parties looked like. Several amendment proposals and votes later, the plenary passed a set of amendments and the session was over.

The jury again gave awards to outstanding individuals and Ayca Rodop (IPP at UCL) received a trophy for the best performance of the day representing EFD. In terms of priority points the four non-attached MEPs came in first and the EPP in second place.

The whole experience is probably best described as rather unique and very intense. Even though most of the UCL participants had already studied the EU institutions for over seven weeks, the simulation gave us a completely new understanding of the operation of the Council and the Parliament. It was exciting to gain an insight into what it feels like in reality to negotiate with twenty-six other Member states or seven parties and how difficult it is to reach a compromise with so many different players involved.
ALEX BRAITHWAITE AWARDED AIREY NEAVE TRUST FELLOWSHIP

The Airey Neave Trust provides support to help Refugees remain in the UK and also funds innovative research on the topics of refugees and migration, law and terrorism and political violence.

Braithwaite’s Fellowship supports his ongoing project, ‘The Territorial Motivations of Terrorist Organisations’, which addresses a question of considerable theoretical, empirical and policy importance: does the deployment of military capabilities overseas provoke increased levels of violence by minority, non-state actors against the interests of the deploying states?

Initial quantitative research into this topic has demonstrated that U.S. deployments of troops overseas are associated with terrorist violence against the USA’s global interests and that this same relationship holds cross-nationally for the years 1981–1999. The Fellowship covers a period of archival research, data collection and data analysis designed to build comprehensively upon this extant work and to enable the production of an article-length publication and a monograph on the relationship between overseas military practices and the radicalisation of territorial non-state actors. The project will also result in the release of a comprehensive and innovative digital database of public statements made by terrorist organisations that will provide an invaluable resource for scholars of non-state actor violence.

The Fellowship is awarded to support a period of research leave (August 2010 to June 2012) and to hire a part-time Research Assistant (RA). Braithwaite has hired Belén González Simón as an RA. Belén joined SPP in November 2010 having completed an MA in International Relations at University of Essex (with Distinction). Belén is also joining SPP as a PhD candidate in October 2011.

The Department have also used part of the funding to hire Elisabetta Brighi as a Teaching Fellow. Dr Brighi joins SPP in January 2011 for a period of six months, having previously taught and conducted research at the LSE, Oxford, EUI, Universita di Napoli-L’Orientale, and Middlesex University. Elisabetta will convene the popular modules, ‘Terrorism’ and ‘Foreign Policy Analysis’ in Spring 2011 and will serve as Dissertation Supervisor on projects on topics central to Foreign Policy.

More details about the Airey Neave Trust and the research they support can be found at:

www.aireyneavetrust.org.uk/our-research/archive
A team of researchers in the Department of Political Science have just won funding from the national Economic and Social Research Council to investigate the relationships between international economic inequalities, poverty and conflict (Grant ref: RES-000-22-4437). David Hudson, Alex Braithwaite and Niheer Dasandi will be working on the project from January 2011–June 2012. David Hudson explains the project.

Much recent attention has been paid to the interaction between poverty and conflict in developing countries. The academic research—championed by the likes of Paul Collier and colleagues—has contributed to increased attention upon this nexus within the policy making community. The UK Government has recently committed to spending 30% of its ring-fenced aid budget to support fragile and conflict-affected states. Meanwhile, the World Bank’s agenda-setting 2011 World Development Report will be dedicated to ‘Conflict, Security and Development’.

However, it is surprising that neither the academic community nor the international development community has, as of yet, systematically examined the influence of international inequalities upon poverty and conflict in developing countries. Our main proposition is that the prevalence of poverty and conflict is strongly conditioned by countries’ positions within the international economic system. The nature of a country’s economic ties with the rest of the world—often deeply unequal—can create significant dependencies and/or incentives to challenge the status quo, resulting in poverty-provoked violence within the state.

In order to test the claim that poverty is more likely to cause conflict in those countries that are subject to considerable international economic dependence than in those countries that are relatively less dependent the project will use an innovative and cutting-edge combination of network analysis and matching methods.

The network analysis will be used to map out three international economic networks: trade, FDI and aid. The image shows an initial network output, the international trade network for 1990. The network analysis will be used to generate measures of different countries’ levels of dependence in the international economic system. A country’s dependence is shaped not only by direct relations with others but also through indirect relations and its position within the overall structure. These network measures will then be used in a statistical method of matching countries to infer whether dependent countries are more likely to succumb to poverty-provoked conflict, as has been hypothesised.

The findings from the project will allow us to identify the extent to which international inequality traps lead to poverty and conflict traps in developing countries and to draw out the policy implications of any such finding.
On a chilly Wednesday in December 2010, students from the MSc in Public Policy gathered in front of the UK Supreme Court in Parliament Square to get a glimpse of how the newly reformed High Court functions. The Court only just turned one year old in October and has opened its doors to anyone who wants to visit, thus presenting an ideal opportunity for SPP students to understand the inner workings of the UK judiciary.

Our tour began as Court officer, Peter Jarrold, ushered us into the room known as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, where we were immediately confronted with a long table, upon which rested the flags of many Commonwealth nations, many of which were unrecognisable to myself and the students. As it turns out, the High Court’s work does not only affect members of the UK and European Union. Many Commonwealth countries, such as Jamaica and the Bahamas, do not have their own high courts and cases from those countries are referred to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which consists of UK Supreme Court justices.

Peter began by explaining the vital reason for why there was now a UK Supreme Court in a building separate from Parliament, as opposed to the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords, which was housed in Parliament and existed until 2009. The Law Lords of the Appellate Committee were always only concerned with conducting the work of the nation’s highest court and not the legislative duties of Parliament but because they were housed in the House of Lords, the average citizen, somewhat understandably, perceived a conflict of interest, even if that conflict did not exist. Thus, the Constitutional Reform Act of 2005 converted the Law Lords to Justices, gave them their own building and named the resulting institution the UK Supreme Court.

Of course, the question on the mind of most observers is whether the Court will substantively do anything differently from before. The Constitutional Reform Act does not give the Court substantive new powers and indeed the Court is still prevented from striking down acts of Parliament, as was the Appellate Committee before. However, the role of the European Union has served to strengthen the Court as it can refer to the European Court of First Instance or European Court of Justice, those matters in which it believes an act of Parliament contradicts European law, which is supreme in the EU. Moreover, the UK Human Rights Act of 1998 specifically allows the Court to strike down acts of Parliament that it believes contravene the EU Convention on Human Rights. Finally, when asked if he thought the Court would adopt a powerful, independent streak anytime soon, Peter Jarrold quoted Court president Lord Phillips as saying that, “If Parliament does the inconceivable, the Court may have to do the inconceivable.”

From the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, students departed to the building basement to see the inter-active exhibit that deals with the Court’s history and functions. In addition to having many informative and easily understood displays on the role of the Court in the UK judicial system, it also had a touch-screen machine in which the viewer gets to play judge. After choosing one case out of six (that deal with everything from asbestos exposure...
to Naomi Campbell), the display presents to you the case facts and the relevant law and then asks for your decision. Upon reaching the decision, the display tells you whether you agreed with a majority of the justices. It is not to replace formal legal training but it is a fun and accessible method of learning the Court’s work.

Finally, we were allowed to sit in and observe the Court’s proceedings of the day. Cases in two different courtrooms were available to witness but students seemed to spend more time hearing about the Latvian pensioner who had recently moved to the UK and was denied a UK pension. It was pointed out during the proceedings that Irish pensioners can move to the UK and claim a pension so why can not citizens of other EU nations? The barrister for the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (smartly dressed in a black gown and white wig) argued that the UK’s relationship with Ireland was culturally unique, in a way that distinguished it from the UK’s relationships with other EU nations. It remains to be seen whether that argument will be upheld, as the Court will rule on this case in early 2011.

Overall, the students enjoyed the accessibility of the Court, as well as learning more details concerning its specific functions. One student expressed mild dismay about not being able to put on barrister’s wigs but fortunately this disappointment was outweighed by the rest of the visit. With the Court’s open proceedings and welcoming atmosphere, students can visit on their own, or they can come along the next time SPP arranges a formal tour.

**SPP SEMINAR SERIES**

**Dr Christine Reh, MSc European Public Policy Director, writes:**

In the 2010/2011 academic year, the SPP Seminar Series continues to be an established feature in the Department’s weekly calendar. Every Thursday, the Series convenes a research presentation by a renowned scholar or a talk by a policy practitioner on an issue relevant to British, European or international public policy and governance. The Series is designed to give students and faculty the opportunity to discuss ongoing research in their fields of interest and to learn more about the real-world application and relevance of their work. The Series is also used as an outlet for the Department’s own research agenda where members of staff present and discuss their work in progress.

Highlights in the autumn term were two roundtables held in October. The Series kicked off in a packed Council Room with a discussion on “Conflict Resolution and Local Peacebuilding” by three local activists: Gulali Ismail (Aware Girls, Pakistan), George Ngoha (Collaborative for Peace, Sudan) and Landry Ninteretse (Amahoro Youth Club, Burundi). The three peacebuilders came to London for a week of policy-exchange organised by the NGO Peace Direct and the Department was fortunate to host Gulali, George and Landry for a fascinating and informative account of their experience on the ground. Two weeks later, Professor Simon Hix (LSE) and Dr Michael Shackleton (Head of the EP’s London Office) offered two contrasting—but equally lively and insightful—perspectives on the changes brought to the European Parliament by the Lisbon Treaty.

Other term one speakers included Professor André Bächtiger (University of Lucerne) on “Perfecting the Deliberative Process”; Alexander T. Knapp (Visiting Professor, American University and Independent Consultant) on “Bezerkistan: Complexity, Conflict and Reconstruction”; and Professor Mark Bevir (University of California Berkeley) on “The Making of Governance: Social Science and the Construction of Public Policy”. SPP-internal speakers were Dr Rodwan Abouhurb and Professor Tony Wright on “Doing Politics and Thinking about Politics”.

In the spring, the Series will continue every Thursday from 5–7 pm in the SPP Council Room with an equally promising line-up of speakers—please check our departmental website at [www.ucl.ac.uk/spp/seminars](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/spp/seminars) for further details.
The Constitution Unit is the largest research centre within the School of Public Policy. It is the UK’s leading centre for the study of constitutional reform.

Professor Robert Hazell, Dr Meg Russell and Dr Ben Worthy all teach courses within SPP and act as supervisors for students’ dissertations. They are currently leading research projects on coalition government, parliament and freedom of information. The Unit recruits interns to assist in its research projects, including SPP graduates. SPP students are welcome to attend the Unit’s monthly seminars.

Full details of the Constitution Unit’s activities can be found at: www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit

Constitution Unit wins three major grants

In late 2010 the Unit was awarded three major grants, for research on coalition government, judicial independence and Parliament’s impact on legislation. We report here on the first two. Meg Russell, currently on sabbatical in Australia, will report on her Parliament project in the next issue.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE GRANT

Robert Hazell has been awarded a grant of £½m by the AHRC for a three year study of the Politics of Judicial Independence. His partners are Professor Kate Malleson of Queen Mary and Graham Gee of Birmingham and they have recruited Patrick O’Brien as Research Associate.

The background to the project is that the courts have a lot more power than they used to, which has heightened tension between politicians and the judges. That in turn has triggered a growing debate about judicial independence and judicial accountability. The judges enjoy much greater separation of powers but still feel uneasy; and politicians fear that the judges may have become too independent. So the main questions addressed by the project are:

- What is the meaning of judicial independence and its proper limits?
- How is it best protected and by whom?
- Who is now accountable for the courts and judiciary and to whom?

The project will examine not just high profile clashes but the day to day decisions on the budget and management of the court service, judicial pay and pensions, complaints and discipline, appraisal and training. In the process we hope to identify all the ‘hidden guardians’ within the executive, parliament and the judiciary whose everyday decisions define how judicial independence and accountability are interpreted in the UK.

Referees commented:

“The team is outstanding, comprising two leaders in the field (Hazell and Malleson) who have complementary skills and backgrounds. They cross the law-politics bridge between them seamlessly”

“The team of researchers is exceptionally well-qualified and well-connected. They have a very strong track-record of high level work in this field and of delivering major projects. Their reputation and expertise make them uniquely well-placed to gain access to the top level of judges, politicians and officials”.

Lord Phillips, President of the Supreme Court, has agreed to give a lecture to launch the project at UCL on 8 February 2011. There will be a series of high level practitioner seminars running throughout the project; a website and blog; articles for the press and legal and political magazines.

If you want to be involved contact: r.hazell@ucl.ac.uk
COALITION GOVERNMENT

Robert Hazell and Dr Ben Yong have been awarded a grant by the Nuffield Foundation to conduct a detailed study of how coalition government works in the UK. Whereas much academic work focuses on the formation of coalitions and their duration, there is far less on how they work in practice: partly because of difficulties of access. Hazell and Yong have been authorised by the PM, Deputy PM and Cabinet Secretary to conduct high level interviews. Whitehall recognises the need to learn lessons from the first coalition government in the UK in 60 years, in case it becomes a pattern for the future.

The project builds on earlier work by the Constitution Unit (Coalition Government in Britain: Lessons from Overseas, Seyd 2002). It also follows on Hazell and Yong’s 2009 study of hung parliaments and the challenges they would present for Westminster and Whitehall.

Referees recognised the contribution of this earlier work:

“Professor Hazell is exceptionally well primed for the task. Not only does his previous research lead naturally to this piece, he is central to the small group of scholars Sir Gus O’Donnell, the Cabinet Secretary, has consulted on such matters before the election and since”.

“If anyone is to conduct such a project then no other person or organisation is to be better placed to undertake it. As a former civil servant who for the last two decades has pioneered policy relevant but independent study of Britain’s constitution and constitutional change (including of the coalition governments in Scotland and Wales), Professor Hazell has unrivalled contacts at Whitehall and Westminster. He is ideally placed to secure the confidence of those who are to be interviewed and to disseminate the results”.

The project will also hold private seminars at the Institute for Government (where Robert Hazell is a Fellow). The main output will be a book.

Constitution Unit monthly Seminars

- **Wednesday 26 January 2011, 6pm**
  Mark Pack (Co-Editor, Liberal Democrat Voice) discusses the Liberal Democrats position in the Coalition Government
  Venue: Council Room, The Constitution Unit (Public Seminar Series, free and open to all)

- **Monday 28 March 2011, 6pm**
  Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Dean of UCL Laws, will talk about judicial diversity in England and Wales
  Venue: Council Room, The Constitution Unit (Public Seminar Series, free and open to all)

- **Wednesday 13 April 2011, 6pm**
  Professor Tony Travers (LSE) will discuss the emergence of the New Localism in England and Wales
  Venue: Council Room, The Constitution Unit (Public Seminar Series, free and open to all)

- **Wednesday 15 June 2011, 1pm**
  Jenny Watson, Chair of the Electoral Commission, will talk about issues relating to the AV referendum
  Venue: Council Room, The Constitution Unit (Public Seminar Series, free and open to all)

- **Wednesday 6 July 2011, 6pm**
  Professor Justin Fisher (Brunel University) discusses reforming the current system of party funding
  Venue: Council Room, The Constitution Unit (Public Seminar Series, free and open to all)

Sign up for all our events on our website, and find videos and presentations from previous seminars at:

[www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/events](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/events)

Also download Unit Seminars on iTunes U at:

[http://itunes.ucl.ac.uk/](http://itunes.ucl.ac.uk/)
AN INTERN’S STORY

Adam Cadoo, currently a Master’s student at the School of Public Policy, gives an account of his experience as an intern at the Constitution Unit.

My internship at the Constitution Unit exposed me to such a wide range of experiences and responsibilities. I started off interning three days a week under Ben Worthy, assisting him in his project on Freedom of Information and Local Government. I was also given responsibilities of maintaining the website updates in the area of FOI. This was great as it meant researching the progress of FOI initiatives all over the world.

After a few weeks I extended my internship to five days a week which allowed me to provide supplementary research assistance to Professor Robert Hazell. This was a fantastic opportunity as it allowed me to work on a wider range of topics, from fixed term parliaments to the Coalition Government’s Agenda for Constitutional Reform. Luckily for me, I was interning over the General Election period which was a very exciting time.

Attending functions, meeting academics and policy practitioners and assisting in conferences were all fantastic experiences that I would recommend to anyone interested in constitutional affairs or public policy research.

I was given the freedom also to suggest and manage my own projects, which I utilised to the fullest by setting up the Constitution Unit’s first Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pages/ConstitutionUnit/134498506570416?ref=ts)

All in all, a thoroughly worthwhile experience which will undoubtedly help me in my future career.

Find out more about internships at the Constitution Unit at:
www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/aboutus/internships
PhD PROGRAMME NEWS

Dr Slava Mikhaylov, MPhil/PhD Programme Director reports:

Congratulations Dr Theocharis!

It gives us great pleasure to announce that Yannis Theocharis successfully defended his thesis entitled, The Digital Silent Revolution? Young people, political activism and cyber-cultural values in Britain and Greece. Moreover, Yannis has been awarded the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt post-doctoral fellowship (two years) at the University of Mannheim. Yannis will be working on a new project that extends the work developed in his thesis with Professor Jan van Deth as mentor.

Congratulations Dr Salisbury!

Congratulations to Nicki Salisbury, who passed her PhD viva on 02 November 2010. Nicki’s examiners were the Chair of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, Professor Albert Weale (UCL, Political Science), and Professor Peter Piot (LSTHM). Baron Piot is the Director of the London School of Tropical Hygiene & Medicine and a former Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and former Executive Director of the UN specialized agency, UNAIDS. The examiners commented on the very high quality of the thesis and Nicki’s performance in the viva.

Nicki’s research was based on fieldwork in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa and looked to explain why organisations conducting HIV prevention have a preference for either behavioural or structural interventions—the latter seek to address the underlying causes of risk, such as poverty, gender inequalities etc. rather than simply change behaviour.

Using surveys and interviews the project mapped out and analysed the position of organisations within the network of funding, advice seeking and receiving behaviours and other communications to see whether varying channels and levels of access provided or denied the requisite knowledge and resources to implement effective HIV prevention programmes. The findings showed that a surprisingly high proportion of organisations express a preference for structural approaches to HIV prevention but the actual interventions undertaken often remained behavioural and knowledge-based.

Nicki’s supervisors were Dr David Hudson and Professor Graham Hart. Nicki holds an MSc in Public Policy from UCL and a BA in Political Science from Westmont College. She has worked since 2001 in HIV policy and related issues in the United States and South Africa.
ACCEPTED/FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Chiara Cordelli  
‘The Institutional Division of Labor and the Egalitarian Obligations of Nonprofits.’  

David Blunt  
‘Transnational Socioeconomic Justice and the Right to Resistance’  
POLITICS (forthcoming) February issue

David Wearing  
‘A question of judgement - Iraq and the Labour Party leadership race’, for OpenDemocracy  

David Wearing  
‘Red Ed’s new Labour generation’, for Le Monde Diplomatique  

Chino, Takahiro (2010)  

Cathy Elliott  
‘The Will to Democratise: Democracy Promotion as Governmentality.’ In Kumar, Rajeeh (ed)  

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Takahiro Chino received a research grant from the ‘Konosuke Matsushita Memorial Foundation’ that was established in memory of the founder of Panasonic.  
http://matsushita-konosuke-zaidan.or.jp/en/works/research/promotion_research_01.html
CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS


James Dawson presented at the Joint PhD Symposium on Southeastern Europe at LSE on 18/06/2010. The paper, titled ‘Nationalist Politics and Social Identities: Everyday Political Talk in Serbia and Bulgaria’ is online at www2.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/LSEE/PhDSymposium/Papers.aspx


James Dawson presented a paper ‘Towards Comparison with Room for Contingency’ at the Political Studies Association Graduate Conference in Oxford on 6–7th December 2010. Details of the panels can be found online at www.psa.ac.uk/spgrp/51/SessionPanels2.aspx

Cathy Elliott presented her ongoing PhD research at an all-day methodology workshop at the International Studies Association North-East conference on 6 November 2010.

PROFILE

Coro Power-Febres
PhD, Political Science

I am currently completing my PhD in political theory; my thesis, Liberalism, Feminism and Republicanism on Freedom of Speech: The Cases of Pornography and Racist Hate Speech, was submitted in December 2010.

I carry out a theoretical analysis of the liberal and republican positions on pornography and racist hate speech, critiquing these positions from an anti-pornography radical feminist perspective.

I argue that these are two forms of speech that should be considered relevant by political theorists, in part due to their growing presence in Western societies since the 1980s and in part due to mainstreaming effects they have on society’s speech. I align the anti-pornography radical feminist position with a republican conception of freedom as non-domination. The radical feminists have often been critical of the liberal defence of pornography on grounds of neutrality, they have not, however, been able to move away from the liberal framework when conceptualising their argument.

As a result, the difficulty of demonstrating the tangible harm caused by pornography has hindered their cause. Through an alignment with republican freedom as non-domination, though, the burden of proof can be circumvented. This model is also applied to the case of racist hate speech, with a particular focus on the racist hate speech of extreme right political organisations.

During my time at UCL I have greatly benefited from the intellectual input of members of staff and other PhD students. I also had the support of my supervisors when taking part in the United Nations Internship Programme in New York City for three months. Upon completion of my PhD I hope to continue researching. I am aiming for jobs in the NGO sector.
NEW STAFF

The Department would like to welcome the following new staff:

Elisabetta Brighi

Elisabetta Brighi will serve as Teaching Fellow in International Security from January 2011. Based in London, Elisabetta divides her time between international politics and photography. After receiving a PhD in International Relations from LSE, she was Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute and Junior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford (Exeter College). She now lectures at Middlesex University and is looking forward to joining the Department of Political Science at UCL. Her research interests lie at the intersection of IR theory, foreign policy and international security.

Elisabetta is also an experienced photographer. She was trained at Central St Martins and her work has been exhibited in galleries in Oxford, London and Bologna. Through her camera she especially enjoys investigating the changing contours of the contemporary public space; a book which looks at some iconic London architecture through artistic forms of photography is under preparation and will be soon available online at www.blurb.com

Maria Belén González

Maria joined the Department in November 2010 as a part-time research assistant for the project “The Territorial Motivations of Terrorist Organisations”, directed by Dr Alex Braithwaite.

Having completed a BA in Philosophy (2005-2009) at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), she decided to turn her research interests into Political Science. She has recently finished an MA in International Relations (2009-2010) at the University of Essex. Being particularly interested in political violence and the role of third party interventions into armed conflicts, Belén focused her Master’s dissertation on the effect of United Nations response time to conflict as a critical factor for a successful intervention.

Furthering her interest on conflict and the escalation of violence, she is preparing her PhD proposal on war dynamics and mass crimes.

Eric Ip

Eric Ip is a doctoral candidate at the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford. He completed his Master of Studies (Legal Research) degree at Oxford, received his Master of Laws (Legal Theory), with distinction, from King’s College London and his Bachelor’s degree (Government and Laws) from The University of Hong Kong. Eric was a United Nations University researcher in international law and regional integration and has conducted empirical research in comparative privacy law reform at the Law and Technology Centre in Hong Kong. Currently, he is an Associate Editor of the Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal and an Academic Tutor in Law and Social Sciences at St John’s College, The University of Hong Kong. Eric joined UCL in January 2011 as a Teaching Fellow in Human Rights.

Eric specialises in Constitutional Political Economy and Judicial Behaviour with an area concentration in East Asia. His doctoral thesis examines the origins and consequences of effective rights-based constitutional judicial review in non-liberal democratic polities,
Jonathan Roberts

Having graduated from Cambridge University with a BA in Classics, I worked for a number of UK charities, where I formed an interest in the management of voluntary organisations and the policy environment in which they work.

Vassilis Paipais

Vassilis Paipais is a finishing PhD student and an LSE fellow at the LSE International Relations Department and a post-graduate dissertation supervisor at the UCL Political Science Department.

His thesis dissertation is entitled 'Critique and the Grounding of Political Community: ideological depoliticisation in International Political Theory' and it offers a post-foundational meta-theoretical critique of ideology in theorisations of political community by critico-normative approaches in International Relations Theory. Part of his research resulted in a publication on critical international theory which is forthcoming in the Review of International Studies (available on 'First View'). The paper's title is ‘Self and Other in Critical International Theory: Assimilation, Incommensurability and the Paradox of Critique’ and consists in a critical investigation of some preliminary issues of his thesis revolving around articulations of identity and difference in critical international theory.

Vassilis’ interests and areas of expertise encompass International Relations/Political Theory, International Law and Ethics, International Organisation, Philosophy, Strategic Studies (broadly conceived) and Military History. In his research, he draws from across the fields of political philosophy, international ethics, international relations theory, sociology and history, stimulated through active participation in the academic community in Europe and North America individually and in his capacity as CRiPT (BISA working group) co-Convenor. Vassilis has taught political theory, international political theory and international organisation at the LSE and SOAS.

Using British Hong Kong (1991-1997) and post-colonial Hong Kong (1997-2011) as the core case studies, with comparisons drawn from relevant examples around the world, Eric investigates how constitutional courts constrain authoritarian governing coalitions in practice and why rulers choose to comply with or defy their rulings in regime security, public finance and political participation cases. His earlier work at Oxford looked into the role of judicial entrepreneurship in the self-empowerment of the contemporary Supreme People’s Court of China in political centralisation, socio-economic policymaking, constitutional rights elaboration and judicial reform.

I developed this interest further by studying for an MSc in Voluntary Sector Organisation at the London School of Economics (LSE).

I am currently studying for a doctorate in the Department of Social Policy at LSE. My doctoral research explores how parents trust pre-school childcare provision. Particular reference is given to different organisational forms, including the theoretical trust advantages of voluntary sector organisations. Other research interests include the growing role of the voluntary sector in public service delivery, the relationships between state and civil society, the emergence of social enterprise, the organisational governance of voluntary sector organisations and education and pre-school policy. I have co-authored articles on early years and education policy, and findings from my doctoral research are forthcoming in the Journal of Social Policy. In collaboration with Dr Sarabajaya Kumar I have contributed to the International Encyclopedia of Civil Society.

At LSE I have taught on graduate courses on the voluntary sector. I am looking forward to fulfilling a similar role at the School of Public Policy as I take up a position as a postgraduate teaching assistant on the Voluntary Sector Policy and Management module.
PAST STUDENTS WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Since the launch of the first Tavistock Times in the summer of 2008, we have been kindly contacted by many past students informing us of their progress since leaving the Department. A progress report follows:

Natalia Torres

MSc Public Policy, 2007–2008

Two years since graduation, wow, time really flies!

Since I returned to Argentina, I’ve been working as an independent consultant on transparency issues and access to public information, doing research for international organisations such as the World Bank, the Organization of American States, Transparency International and local governmental organisations and NGOs. I’ve also participated in the OAS’ Group of Experts for the elaboration of a model law on access to information and recently I was offered to act as a Peer Reviewer for the Global Integrity Report, 2010.

Needless to say how important the experience at SPP has been for me. Apart from updated theoretical frameworks and challenging methodological tools, the MSc PP gave me the opportunity to produce a consistent piece of writing. Last year, my dissertation was published in the Open Government Journal, a specialised academic journal on access to information.

Nowadays, I’m a senior researcher at the Center for Studies on Freedom of Expression (CELE) and I have also started a PhD at University Di Tella.

So my friends, they have been two intense years but somehow I still feel that Tavistock Square is just around the corner.

Hope to visit London and the School soon, greetings from the southern cone!

Antony Hermann

MSc International Public Policy, 2009–10.

Just under three months after leaving the School of Public Policy, I am pleased to find myself in another SPP: the Spokesperson’s Service (or ‘Service du Porte-Parole’) of the European Commission, where I am doing a five-month traineeship.

The Spokesperson’s Service is an exciting place to work. Before starting my MSc course, I had done internships at Deutsche Welle and Le Monde and I recognise the daily buzz in the Commission’s press room. Dealing with journalists everyday, EU spokespersons and their press officers share some of the pressure in presenting information and answering questions as news develops and in time for deadlines.

My work has involved providing general and communication and policy-related support to spokespersons in my unit and I am getting a great insight into the communication challenges that face such a large organisation.

As the end of my traineeship approaches, I am thinking about what to do next. In this respect, I feel that doing the MSc in International Public Policy has prepared me well for several possible paths – which is what I was hoping for as a newcomer to political science (I studied French and German as an undergraduate). Along with my interest in the EU’s external relations, I am thinking about jobs related to topics I explored in other modules and in my dissertation, like theories of IR and methods for measuring identity in divided societies.
NEW IPPR AND IPAS WEBSITES

The new International Public Policy Review (IPPR) site is now online at www.ucl.ac.uk/ippr/.

Founded at UCL’s School of Public Policy, The International Public Policy Review provides a forum for debate, discussion and online networking in the emerging fields of Global Governance and International Public Policy. As a rigorous student-led academic journal, it publishes both original research and innovative commentary from new and established practitioners and academics alike.

The IPPR website has undergone a considerable redesign of graphics and site structure. The latest issue of the IPPR Journal, Vol.6, No. 1, is now available too as well as all the previous copies.

In addition, the International and Public Affairs Society (IPAS) website has also undergone a much needed revamp. IPAS is the student-run society for UCL’s School of Public Policy.

The new site can be found at www.ucl.ac.uk/ipas/

FUTURE EDITIONS OF TAVISTOCK TIMES

TAVISTOCK TIMES is published three times a year with the next edition due to be published in April 2011.

Ideas for future articles should be sent to:
Helen Holt,
h.holt@ucl.ac.uk
before the end of February 2011

Contributions from past students are especially welcome keeping the Department up to date on their progress since leaving UCL.