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Welcome to the first edition of Tavistock Times for 2014 and happy New Year to everyone at the School of Public Policy.

The new academic year started well for SPP with the opening of the extension at 31 Tavistock Square and the arrival of over 400 master students, across our 8 Masters programmes and 35 affiliates at UG in September. As in previous years, the student body is highly internationalised and this has created a real buzz in both classroom debates and question time at the Thursday night ‘Policy and Practice’ seminar.

In fact the ‘Policy and Practice Seminar Series’ has been a huge success with a nice mix of leading academics and policy makers presenting on a number of topical and politically salient issues. Some of the highlights have been Jonathan Powell talking, from experience of the Northern Ireland negotiations, on how to deal with terrorists, David Cowling from the BBC discussing media and politics and topical debates on Climate Change with Michael Jacobs and on Pension reform with Robert Laslett. I hope that you all continue to enjoy the series in term two.

We also welcomed back Jack Straw to SPP, in his capacity as the new Chair of the Advisory Board, to launch the Institute of Global Governance (IGG). He gave a very reflective lecture on the UN exploring its limits and the opportunities for reform. The IGG (hosted in the School of Public Policy) is a university-wide initiative, focusing on major global public policy issues and grappling with current problems of governance in the domains of Economics, Sustainability, Security, Justice and Institutional Design. Significantly, it will attempt to explore these issues not only from a social science perspective by attempting to draw on UCL’s cross-disciplinary strengths in Engineering, Medicine, Planning and nature sciences. The IGG has already hosted the launch of the iPlatform (a new international policy forum), with a keynote from Lord Woolf of Barnes on the Rule of international Law and facilitated a high profile policy roundtable with UNAIDS on a proposed Lancet report on Global health.

In terms of global events, UCL was also visible in New York this term with two major launches. First, Dr James Melton, as part of a global academic team in collaboration with Google, launched Constitute, a website for reading, searching and comparing the world’s constitutions. Speakers at the launch event included His Excellency President Moncef Marzouki of Tunisia and Her Excellency Roza Otunbayeva (former President of the Kyrgyz Republic). The same week Gordon Brown gave a keynote in New York to officially launch the NYU/UCL alliance and MPA.

As term two begins I would like to take the time to welcome a number of new staff to SPP. Dr Avia Pasternak, will be joining us as the new Director of the Global Governance and Ethics masters and Lecturer in Global Ethics from Essex University in January. We will also be welcoming a number of teaching fellows in: Dr Theo Boutruche, Teaching Fellow in Human Rights, Dr Melanie Garson, Teaching Fellow in International Security, Dr Masaki Hidaka, Teaching Fellow in Voters, Public Opinion and Participation, Dr Anastasia Voronkova, Teaching Fellow in Governing Divided Societies, Dr James Dawson, Teaching Fellow in Comparative Politics, Dr Cathy Elliott, Teaching Fellow in Qualitative Research Methods and finally Dr Fauzia Ahmad, Teaching Fellow in Advanced Qualitative Methods.

Finally, I am pleased to announce the launch of Q-STEP, a programme designed to promote a step-change in quantitative social science training over a five-year period from 2013. This new institute will be led by Dr Jennifer Hudson and will sit at the core of the Department’s plans for a new undergraduate degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) planned for launch in 2015.

Once again, enjoy the second half of the year and I wish you all a happy and productive 2014!
In this sixty second interview we quiz Dr James Melton, Lecturer in Comparative Politics and Researcher in the Constitution Unit.

What is your name?
James Melton

When did you join UCL?
September of 2012

What are your responsibilities in the Department?
Lecturer in Comparative Politics and Researcher in the Constitution Unit.

What do you particularly like and dislike about your job?
I like pretty much everything about my job. I enjoy exploring the strategic motivations underlying political actors' decisions and trying to understand the similarities and differences between those motivations across contexts. At the same time, I enjoy interacting with students in my courses and helping them to learn transferable skills that they will be able to use throughout their lives.

The part I dislike most about my job is being on the plagiarism committee. I understand its importance but I find no enjoyment in punishing students who, most of the time, inadvertently plagiarised other's work.

What do you consider your greatest achievement to date?
My position at UCL. The academic job market is brutal and I consider myself very fortunate to be working in such an excellent department at such an excellent institution.

Most inspirational person that you have met whilst at UCL?
I could mention almost anyone in the Department but let me take this opportunity to recognise the Department's administrative staff. They have been able to help me solve literally every problem that I have encountered since starting at UCL and they always do so with a smile.

Favourite location in UCL?
I am partial to the parks in Gordon Square and Tavistock Square.

What would your ideal afternoon/evening in London include?
My ideal afternoon would involve spending time with my wife and two boys. Taking them to the park, a museum, the zoo; really, wherever they want to go.

What is your favourite book?
Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You? by Dr. Seuss. It is currently one of my boys' favourites, which means that I read it about 10 times a day.

What are your hobbies?
It is hard to have hobbies with two little boys but before I had kids, I played a lot of basketball. I hope to start playing again once my boys are a little older.

If you had not gone into academia what would you be doing now?
Probably a doctor or a farmer. I switched from a biology/pre-med major to political science halfway through my undergraduate education and my dad owns a farm in Illinois and has previously asked me to work with him on the farm. I turned down both of these opportunities to be a political scientist and have no regrets.

If you could implement one policy in the world today, what would it be?
I do not really have a specific policy recommendation that would make the world a better place. Instead, I would like to see leaner, more efficient governments that are careful to minimise the negative externalities that result from their policies. Along these lines, I would welcome wider adoption of two relatively recent innovations in policy-making:

1) small-scale policy experiments that allow governments to test policies before they are widely adopted and
2) “nudging” individuals to adopt behaviours that are beneficial to both themselves and society.
MY NUDGE TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

Professor Peter John, Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, writes:

I never planned my nudge tour of Australia. From 16 July to 16 August 2013, I was a visitor at the School of Politics and International Relations, Australian National University.

I am working with Professor Keith Dowding on a project on the policy agenda of the Australian government (as well as matters nudge, I work on public policy). However, my fate was cast as I had already dropped a line to Rory Gallagher who heads up the New South Wales Behavioural Insights unit as I know him through the UK Behavioural Insights Team. I had also been in touch with one of my academic contacts in Australia, Andrew Leigh, an experimental economist, now MP for Fraser in the ACT. My first meeting (when I was feeling rather jetlagged) was with Andrew and explained the particular interest the state governments have in the behavioural economics agenda.

Also one of the members of the agendas project, Dr Aaron Martin from the University of Melbourne, is interested in experiments and he invited me to give a talk at an event called ‘Behaviour Economics and Policy Making’, which was hosted and sponsored by Melbourne School of Government. This took place on July 24 and was attended by civil servants from the Victoria government as well as academics from the university.

What I found exciting was that I found a real appetite among policy-makers for doing randomised controlled trials and after my talk the attendees broke up into tables to scope up potential ideas, many of which I hope get off the ground.

I also really enjoyed the event with the Behavioural Insights at the New South Wales Government on August 13 for many of the same reasons and also their awareness of the state of the art in behaviour change and policy.

There is a lot happening in NSW and it looks like it is going to be tested with more robust methods. I particularly like the way that campaigns to prevent drink driving have turned to social media to get the message home.

Even before I got to Sydney, the Commonwealth Government had been in touch. Tony Simovski from the Department of Finance and Deregulation invited me to meet civil servants there. So on August 9, I discussed behaviour change and experiments, giving my insights into the workings of the Behavioural Insights Team and answering some probing questions about how behaviour change policy actually works on the ground. I stressed how the team in London operates collaboratively and not in a top-down way, a message that I think went down well. They must have liked what I said, because I got invited to give a talk there the following Wednesday. I was impressed that about forty people came to hear me at short notice and did not mind me plugging Nudge Nudge Think Think, our book with Bloomsbury. I now have a stack of business cards from the people who came (as well as many from the other events).

With this talk done, I went over to see my fellow nudge conspirator and co-author, Gerry Stoker, who is visiting the University of Canberra, thinking my tour was done.

All I had to do was to pack up my flat and say my goodbyes but then a member of the team from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, which is working on behavioural insights, e-mailed me and asked me if I could come in so found the time on my last day in Australia. I regaled them with my anecdotes about the Behavioural Insights Team and my involvement with it, which they liked. They listened to my message that behavioural insights needs top-level political sponsorship to ensure that it beds down and creates innovation, one the messages of my paper, ‘Policy entrepreneurship in central government: the Behavioural Insights Team and the use of RCTs’.

So on Friday 16th August, as I was settling into my long flight home, gazing at the towers of Sydney slowly receding into the background, I reflected on what I had found out from my tour. I was impressed by the great interest in behaviour change policies and the willingness to look at randomized controlled trials as a method of evaluation.

I can report a lot of enthusiasm and my sense is that Australia is on a cusp of something important and policy-makers can learn from the early steps that were taken elsewhere. I fully expect many experiments and new ideas will come from state and federal governments in the years to come. Had I tried harder I reckon I could have spent every day of my month talking to people.

Fortunately, I managed to finish off a book on the internet and politics with Helen Margetts, write some research papers and—of course—work on that ARC project on policy agendas! But I felt a learnt a lot this time. I had been to ANU once before and never left my computer screen; this time I actually got out and about and learnt something about Australian politics and administration! So thank you everyone for my tour.
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL TEACHING AWARD (SPPADTA), 2012/2013

Professor Peter John and Dr Jennifer Hudson, UCL Department of Political Science write:

The School has set up an annual teaching award eligible for any member of SPP teaching staff who wishes to apply. Peter John and Jennifer Hudson were the judges. They gave equal weight to:

a) the quality of the teaching
b) course evaluations and
c) course documents.

After much discussion, we decided to give the award to Melanie Garson, who is a teaching fellow and convenes the module, Conflict Resolution and Post-war Development (PUBLG082). We were particularly impressed by the quality of the course materials, which showed evidence of meticulous preparation and the use of innovative teaching methods. She achieved very high course evaluations.

We congratulate Melanie and encourage staff to apply for the teaching award in 2013/2014.

POLICY AND PRACTICE SEMINAR SERIES

Many distinguished practitioners and academics visited the School of Public Policy to speak at our Policy and Practice Seminar Series. Martin Davidson – CEO of the British Council, Professor Robert Hazell and his research team, a panel on the EU Parliament Elections, Dr Sue Griffiths and Sameer Kassam from Global Partners Governance, Jonathan Powell, BBC’s David Cowlings, Jack Straw, Professor Michael Jacobs and Professor Robert Laslett.

All the speakers shared with our students and visitors their time and expertise in their fields, such as diplomacy, EU issues, parliamentary development, special advisers, terrorism, election coverage, global governance, environmental policies, public policy and more. The attendance and enthusiasm with which the audience received the talks were enjoyable and together it was a grand way to start our Policy and Practice Series for this first term of this academic year.

However, there is more to come. The schedule for term two is now finalised and some of the highlights for this term will be Sir Stephen Wall and Pierre de Boissieu talking about the challenges for the EU, Colin Crouch on his new book ‘Making Capitalism fit for Society’, the Deputy First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, talking about the Scottish Independence, Vijay Rangarajan on the EU’s role in the world and more.

You can find the schedule of the Policy and Practice Seminar series by visiting our website at: www.ucl.ac.uk/spp/seminars or checking our online registration page at: www.uclslpp.eventbrite.com The Seminar Series is open to the public and takes place every Thursday at 5.30pm in A V Hill Lecture Theatre, Medical Sciences building.

Finally, stay up-to-date with all the SPP news and upcoming events; follow our Twitter account at: www.twitter.com/uclslpp and like our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/ucl.politicalscience

You can also check our LinkedIn group; just search for UCL Department of Political Science.

RESEARCH DEGREE FORUM

In November 2013, a lively forum was organised for current Master’s students who might be thinking of studying for a PhD. The panel was chaired by Professor Robert Hazell as SPP Careers Adviser. On the panel were lecturers Christine Reh, James Melton, Michael Plouffe and Rod Abouharb, who talked about their experience of doing PhDs in Europe and the USA, plus two current PhD students Paolo Morini and John-Paul Salter who talked about doing a PhD at UCL. There was a very lively discussion about the highs and lows of doing a PhD, which SPP students and staff can find on the SPP website at www.ucl.ac.uk/spp/intranet/pg/careers/research-degree-forum-2013
UCL and the Institute of Education (IoE) have been chosen to host one of 15 new Q-Step Centres to train undergraduates in quantitative social science.

The Centre is led by Dr Jennifer vanHeerde-Hudson, Director (Political Science, UCL) and two Deputy Directors, Professor John Micklewright (Department of Quantitative Social Science, IoE) and Dr Slava Mikhaylov (Political Science, UCL). The £1.34m award will enable us to offer three exciting new degree programmes in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE), Quantitative Human Geography and Population Health Science and provide students with the skills to compete in a highly competitive job market.

Q-Step is a £19.5 million programme designed to promote a step-change in quantitative social science training over a five-year period from 2013. Fifteen universities across the UK are delivering specialist undergraduate programmes, including new courses, work placements and pathways to postgraduate study. Expertise and resources will be shared across the higher education sector through an accompanying support programme, which will also forge links with schools and employers.

Developed as a strategic response to the shortage of quantitatively-skilled social science graduates, Q-step is funded by the Nuffield Foundation, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

For more information see: www.nuffieldfoundation.org/q-step

Students at the UCL-IoE Centre will be offered internationally recognised, research-led teaching. The centre will offer six new modules in core training in quantitative methods, including a ‘problem driven’ approach to teaching quantitative methods using current policy debates (for example obesity, migration, security, inequality, health).

Students will emerge from their degree programmes with a wide range and depth of skills obtained through a combination of core training, internships, short courses, dedicated workshops and seminars and a personal mentoring scheme. They will also be offered the opportunity to take optional modules with embedded quantitative methods, along with summer short courses led by the IoE. The Centre will also offer paid student internship opportunities within the two universities and with external employers.

Professor Anthony Smith (UCL Vice-Provost, Education), said: “This partnership represents a fantastic opportunity to build on the strengths of our respective organisations and once open the centre will provide our students with the best possible education and training for the wider world. While this represents one of the first fruits of the new strategic partnership between UCL and the IoE, such close collaborative links will help us not only build on pre-existing efforts but also open up new themes and opportunities in the future.”
NEWLY-LAUNCHED INSTITUTE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Dr Thomas Pegram, Deputy Director, Institute of Global Governance writes:

The newly-launched Institute of Global Governance (IGG) is a university-wide initiative, which in collaboration with partners within and outside UCL harnesses the unique strengths of a world-leading multi-faculty university to address the challenge of global governance.

The IGG’s activities extend from questions of global justice and equity to financial regulation, international organisational reform and global environmental sustainability. It serves as a hub for cross-disciplinary research excellence, as well as a bridge between scholarship and national and international leaders in the wider global society. The promotion of an outcomes-focused approach is central to its mission with experts invited to address current opportunities and challenges for global governance, one of the major global public policy issues of our age.

IGG’s first event took place on 28 November 2013, when Jack Straw, the inaugural Chair of IGG’s Advisory Board, spoke on the topic of the UN system and the challenges it confronts in the 21st century.

Looking ahead, the Institute will put UCL’s imprimatur on global governance research and policy impact, providing a powerful statement on the value of a cross-disciplinary approach towards understanding the nature of governance ‘deficits’, the processes, structures and institutions involved and potential solutions. Identifying practical approaches to major global governance challenges is best enabled by integrating knowledge and research capabilities across disciplines and sectors. Such knowledge-exchange can serve as the departure point for fundamental disciplinary advances, as well as practitioner innovation in the global arena. To this end, the Institute will facilitate collaboration with faculty from across UCL, as well as engage with policy-makers, practitioners, civil society and national and international leaders in the wider society.

You can find more information about the IGG and its upcoming events by visiting IGG’s website at:

www.ucl.ac.uk/global-governance

JOINT FACULTY GRADUATE OPEN DAY

For the second year running, the Department was invited to take part in the Joint Faculty Graduate Open Day at UCL. Various departments from Arts and Humanities, Social and Historical Sciences and SSEES were present. The event took place on Wednesday 20 November 2013 and was a great opportunity for prospective students to learn more about our programmes, the admission process and the School of Public Policy in general.

The day was held in the Wilkins North and South Cloisters, where the School of Public Policy had a stand offering information and advice. The event was very well attended and we had a queue at our stall most of the afternoon!

Prospective students were invited to attend a programme of presentations arranged by the University which included talks by the Careers Office, Volunteering Services and the Graduate School. Opportunities to take a tour of the UCL Campus and the library with current students were also on offer.

Feedback from the day was extremely positive with students commenting on the quality of the programme information and how friendly and approachable staff were.

Helen Elliot (Admissions Manager) and Dimitrios Kranitis, PA to the Head of the Department & Administrative Officer (Events)
NEWS FROM THE UCL CONSTITUTION UNIT

The Launch of Constitute: The World’s Constitutions to Read, Search and Compare

The Constitution Unit is delighted to be associated with a major new international venture launched in September 2013 and run by UCL’s James Melton.

Constitute (www.constituteproject.org) is a website for reading, searching and comparing the world’s constitutions. Constitutions are critical to countries’ development. Outcomes, such as democracy, economic performance and human rights protection, are all associated with the contents of countries’ constitutions. It is little wonder then, that constitutions are often blamed for poor economic and political outcomes or that such outcomes commonly result in constitutional change.

Constitute aims to improve constitutional design and in doing so increase the likelihood that countries’ constitutions will facilitate development, rather than hinder it.

Each year sees numerous countries changing their constitution each year. Already this year we have observed new constitutions in Fiji and Zimbabwe and constitutional amendments in Brazil, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Mexico, Switzerland and Tonga. In addition, countries like Egypt, Myanmar (Burma), Tunisia and Yemen are all known to be in various stages of the constitutional revision process. Some might be surprised to learn that so many countries have either recently revised or intend to revise their constitutions. After all, constitutions are meant to be timeless documents that establish the foundations for politics and governance from one generation to the next. This may be true in the United States or Western Europe but most countries’ constitutions are more fragile. A typical constitution lasts only 19 years, which means that, on average, 5 constitutions are replaced and 30 are amended each year.

Despite the high level of constitutional change each year, there is no country that changes its constitution often enough for public officials to gain much experience as constitutional drafters. Constitutional drafters are typically engaged in a task that they have never done before and will never do again. They lack systematic information on the contents of other countries’ constitutions that could help them to decide what topics should be included in their constitution and how to address those topics. Such information is hard to acquire. There is no single location that constitutional drafters can use to access and compare constitutional documents and language – which is
critical to drafters – because these documents are locked up in libraries or on the hard drives of constitutional experts.

Constitute addresses this problem by putting searchable copies of the world’s constitutions online. However, Constitute is more than just a repository of constitutional texts. The project draws on data collected by the Comparative Constitutions Project over the last eight years to assign topic tags to provisions within constitutions. This allows for powerful, topic-based searches of those texts. There are more than 300 topics for users to choose from on the site, which range from the fairly general – e.g. the structure of the branches of government to the very specific e.g. voting rights for indigenous groups. For those interested in regional or temporal trends in constitution-making, the search results can be filtered by country and year.

Our hope is that Constitute will improve constitution-making by allowing drafters to consider the full array of possible choices when determining the contents of their country’s constitution. We also anticipate that the tool will empower domestic actors not directly involved in drafting the constitution but who are, nonetheless, integral to the success of that process. Increasingly, constitution-making processes ask the public to participate, for example by submitting suggestions to the constitutional drafting committee or approving the completed draft in a public referendum. Constitute will facilitate participation in these aspects of the constitution-making process by allowing groups in civil society, academia, and the general public to inform themselves about how other countries have tackled particular problems.

More generally, the constitutions available on Constitute will be of great interest to numerous domestic actors in countries all over the world. Many constitutions are not available in digital form and tools to organise their provisions for a non-specialist are rare. However, even though there is substantial demand for such tools from public officials, lawyers, non-governmental organisations, students, etc. Constitute can be used by such individuals to learn about their constitutions. Want to know if your constitution protects freedom of religion or the right to health care or even the rights of breast-feeding mothers? Just search for the term you are interested in, using either a topic or free text search and filter the results to display only the country where you reside. (For the curious reader, note that only Ecuador’s constitution mentions the rights of breast-feeding mothers.)

Constitute will increase transparency in countries throughout the world by ensuring universal access to the world’s constitutions. We expect that access to these important documents will improve constitution-making as well as empower the general public to play a more active role in their country’s governance.

Constitute was launched at the New York Palace Hotel on 23 September, 2013. Speakers at the event included President Marzouki of Tunisia and former President Otunbayeva of the Kyrgyz Republic. Both Presidents had many kind words to say about the new site. However, they also both emphasised that an effective constitution requires not only meticulous drafting but also the support of the citizens living under its edicts. By providing universal access to the world’s constitutions, we expect that Constitute will help constitutions meet both of these requirements.

For more, see James Melton in the Constitution blog:
http://constitution-unit.com

Constitute www.constituteproject.org was made possible by support from Google Ideas and the Indigo Trust.

Uncertainties in SNP White Paper strengthen argument for second referendum

The SNP White Paper was unveiled on the 26 November 2013. Commenting on the launch of the Scottish government’s independence White Paper, the Director of UCL’s Constitution Unit, Professor Robert Hazell, made two points.

The timetable is realistic

‘The 18 month timetable for negotiations between September 2014 and March 2016 is reasonable and realistic. If Scotland votes Yes, the UK government will have to negotiate in good faith and with all due speed. Both governments will need to identify the big issues to be resolved before independence; a lot of smaller things can be left until afterwards.

The Czech-Slovak divorce took just six months to negotiate, from July 1992 to January 1993 but it required 31 Treaties and 12000 legal agreements to effect the separation. Many of the agreements were still being negotiated years later’.

If the White Paper cannot be delivered, a second referendum might be needed

‘This is an aspirational White Paper. Some of the most important questions – membership of the EU, of NATO, keeping the pound, sharing other services with the UK – are not within the gift of the Scottish government but depend on others. We will not know until the negotiations are concluded whether the Scottish government can deliver all it hopes.’

If the White Paper turns out to have been a false prospectus, there is a strong case for offering a second referendum in March 2016. The terms of independence will then be known. They may be very different from the aspirations of 2014. In the second referendum the people of Scotland could then be asked, Do you still want independence on these terms?’
Launch of a New Pamphlet:
Risk Management Government Lawyers and the Provision of Legal Advice within Whitehall

The Constitution Society, in partnership with the Constitution Unit, launched the new pamphlet Risk Management: Government Lawyers and the Provision of Legal Advice within Whitehall. Written by the Constitution Unit’s Dr Ben Yong, the report looks into the important role that legal advice plays in the British political system.

Government lawyers are a powerful and influential group within Whitehall and as such they deserve greater understanding. Law and legality are now ever-present considerations in the policy and decision making process. Government cannot escape from the reach of the law – if it ever could. The result is that lawyers have become more integrated into the policy and decision making process in Whitehall because of the increasing penetration of law into government but as law is inescapable and its effect uncertain, lawyers talk of legal risk rather than legality and illegality. Government lawyers see themselves not as ‘guardians’ but as managers of legal risk.

This short study examines the work of government lawyers in Whitehall, looking at the changes over the past thirty years in the way that legal advice has been provided. It examines the role of lawyers in the policy and decision making process, the hierarchy of legal advice and the professional norms that government lawyers adhere to. Finally, there is a case study of the role of government lawyers in the decision to use military force against Iraq in 2002–2003.

To view the publication click here:

To see an interview with Dr Yong marking the launch of the report this week click here:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1YS1Y8iqZc&feature=youtube

Internships
Part-time current SPP students and SPP alumni may be interested in applying for the Constitution Unit internship scheme. An internship at the Constitution Unit is an ideal way for recent graduates to gain experience of work in a think tank which is also an academic research centre and to do research which is linked to policy. Interns are invited to assist in one of the Unit’s project streams, which currently include special advisers, parliament, comparative constitutions, judicial independence and constitutional and administrative law.

Please find details at:
www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/aboutus/internships

New Projects
The New Political Class? The Changing Socio-Economic Profile of PPCs and MPs in Britain, 1945–2015

Dr Jennifer vanHeerde-Hudson (Principal Investigator, UCL) and Dr Rosie Campbell (co-Principal Investigator, Birkbeck) have been awarded a grant from the Leverhulme Trust (RPG-2013-175) to investigate Britain’s changing political class.

Our motivation for this project emerges from an oft-cited, widely-held belief that the political parties, politicians and policymakers—the political class—who occupy the Westminster Village are increasingly out of touch, insular and unable to understand the lives and concerns of the ordinary British public. In short, the people who are elected to represent us, no longer represent us. The changing socio-demographic profile of MPs documented first by King (1981) and Rush (1994), noted a shift from amateur politicians recruited from landed and working classes, to the career politician recruited from the middle class. However, both public perception and recent evidence that politicians are increasingly drawn from a narrowing middle class—a privileged class—despite significant efforts at increasing the descriptive representation of elected representatives.

This two-year project focuses on three principal questions:

• How has the socio-economic profile of parliamentary candidates and MPs changed overtime?
• Do social/electoral attributes influence selection and election?
• Is there a relationship between social/electoral attributes and career trajectory?

A key output of our project will be a single, publicly available dataset combining biographical, social, electoral and institutional attributes for candidates and MPs from 1945-2015. The dataset will inform our research on our key research questions and will provide the first systematic and comprehensive source of data on parliamentary candidates in Britain. We will work with the political parties and the BBC’s Political Research Unit to provide the most current data on candidates for the 2015 general election.
UNDERGRADUATE AFFILIATE PROGRAMME NEWS

Audrey Michael, Affiliate Political Science and International Relations student, Department of Political Science, writes:

My name is Audrey Michael and I'm studying in the affiliate Political Science programme at the School of Public Policy for the full year. Even though I only arrived in London a few months ago, I already feel as though I'm a part of UCL and life in London. UCL has presented me with so many opportunities and I wish I could take advantage of all of them but I am very satisfied with the experience I've had so far here.

At my home institution, Tufts University, I study international relations with a focus on Europe so I'm taking advantage of the Political Science programme's variety of module offerings to expand my knowledge of both European and world politics. This term, I'm taking Politics of the EU and Welfare Politics and next term I'm taking International Political Economy and Gender and Politics. I've adjusted well to reading more each week and exploring areas of personal interest, even though it can be challenging to keep up with coursework when there are so many things to do in London! I enjoy participating in the seminars and learning through reading. I especially appreciate how the programme allows me to incorporate previous knowledge about politics, while it designs modules to be accessible even without previous knowledge.

Since I've been involved in musical theatre for years, both in high school and at Tufts, I've joined the Musical Theatre Society as a costume designer. Working on the fall production of The Wild Party has been the most challenging costuming role I've undertaken but it has led me to many new friends and social opportunities around London. Being involved in musical theatre has truly integrated me into UCL's student body and I am grateful that UCL allows me to get involved as a full-fledged student, even though I'm only here for a year.

Of course, I haven't ignored all that London has to offer. Though I like to think of myself as a resident of the city rather than as a tourist, I've enjoyed seeing and doing the things that makes London unique as a city. I have seen a fantastic production of Macbeth at the Globe Theatre, attended a debate at Whitehall and shamelessly taken advantage of all the free museums. Since I'm living here until mid-June, I am glad that London has almost no end of places to see and things to do.

I am excited to continue my studies at the School of Public Policy next term and beyond. I have had a fantastic time as an affiliate student and I look forward to the months to come.
PhD PROGRAMME NEWS

Dr Slava Mikhaylov, MPhil/PhD Programme Director reports:

Bentham Scholarship
The Department of Political Science is happy to announce the establishment of the Bentham PhD Fellowship, available for prospective departmental PhD candidates. For the first year, the Fellowship will cover the full Home/UK fee of £4,500 and will carry the UCL/research council level stipend of £15,726. In the 2nd and 3rd years, it will cover the full fee and offer a stipend of £15,726 on the basis that the student contributes to teaching for a total of 180 hours per annum (this includes both contact and non-contact hours and is in line with research council scholarships).

Accepted or forthcoming publications


Javier Sajuria has had two papers published:
• Sajuria, J. 2013. Internet et conception de la démocratie aujourd’hui chapter in “Les réseaux sociaux sur Internet à l’heure des transitions démocratiques” (ed. Sihem Najar), Karthala 2013, Paris

Awards and recognition
Paolo Morini and Orlanda Ward have been selected as project partner for NUS LGBT’s research into LGBT Equality in Education. They will conduct interviews to analyse how gender and sexuality (but more importantly their intersection) influence the educational experience of students in five universities, including UCL.

Conference Presentations
Florian Ostmann presented a paper at the 17th Brave New World Postgraduate Conference in Political Theory, University of Manchester, 27-28th June (Title: “What is a fair price, and when does it matter”)

Florian Ostmann also presented a paper at the 11th Pavia Graduate Conference in Political Philosophy, 9-10 September 2013 (Title: “Constructive Interpretation and the Status Quo: The Case against Practice-Dependence”).

Ivica Petrikova attended the American Political Science Association annual meeting in Chicago in August, where she presented a paper called “Organizing for Land Reform: Can India Learn Anything from Brazil?”

Javier Sajuria presented his work at three conferences: International Studies Association, European Political Science Association and COINS2013 in Chile. The paper presented at the latter conference was published in the conference proceedings:
• “The Emergence of Political Discourse on Digital Networks: The Case of the Occupy Movement” (with J. Fabrega). Paper prepared for the Collaborative Innovation Networks (COINS 2013), Santiago, Chile, 11-13 August 2013.
Javier Sajuria also participated in a Contributors’ Workshop for the UNU-WIDER project on “Experimental and Non-Experimental Methods in the Study of Government Performance”. The workshop took place in New York from 22-25 August.

Matt Godwin, 1st Year MPhil/PhD candidate was delighted to present his paper: “Parliamentary Privilege? Kinship in Canada’s Parliament,” at the 2013 Political Studies Association Post-Graduate conference at Oxford. With a number of conference organisers being UCL graduate students, it was nice to see so many colleagues heavily engaged in the academic policy community.

Stefano Gurciullo presented his last paper, “Strengthening Banks’ Portfolio Against Asset Shocks: A Genetic Computational Approach” at the 2013 Annual Conference of the European Association for Evolutionary Political Economy, held in Paris. The event gathers together scholars from that apply evolutionary, dynamic and realistic approaches to economic theory and policy. Stefano discussed his findings in a conference panel focused on the evolutionary computational approaches, such as agent-based modeling and genetic algorithms.

In July, Volkan Gul presented in Paris a paper titled “Representation in Deliberative Democratic Practices” at the 12th Congress of French Political Science Association. In the paper, he offered to use another theoretical framework to understand representation in deliberative democratic practices. Volkan’s presentation received very positive feedback. One of the scholars Volkan met in Paris encouraged him to send an abstract to the conference in Pilsen, Czech Republic. Subsequently Volkan was selected to present his paper in Pilsen paper titled “The Effectiveness of Minipublics and Organizers” at Toward Democratic Inclusion: Ideas of Public Deliberation and Their Application to Contemporary Policy and Practice conference at the University of West Bohemia. In the paper, he argued that what organisers do is more important than what participants do in citizen engagements such as deliberative polls, citizens’ assemblies and citizen juries. Volkan considers that it’s been a successful conference. Not only did he receive feedback but he also had an opportunity to meet scholars who are working on the subjects that he is interested in.

Sara Amighetti and Lior Erez presented in the conference ‘Facts and Norms in European Political Theory’ in the University of Copenhagen in August. Sara presented her paper ‘Global Justice and Social Relations’ and Lior presented a paper titled ‘Can Motivational Facts constrain Cosmopolitan Norms’. They were two of only four graduate students presenting in the conference.

Sara Amighetti (with Alasia Nutti, Cambridge) presented in the Harvard Graduate Political Theory conference, 18-19 October, a paper titled ‘National Responsibility for Historical Injustice Reconsidered’.

Summer schools and external training schools/workshops

Sofia Delmar attended a short course on Structural Equation Models (SEMs) at the University of Southampton. The course focused on modeling latent variables – variables that cannot be observed directly but are estimated using other measured variables -- to test and estimate causal relationships. SEMs are particularly suitable for political scientists testing models with multiple effects and relations between variables.

Sofia Delmar also attended a short course on multilevel and hierarchical modeling (MLHM) at the University of Manchester. The course introduced basic concepts of multilevel modeling and the use of specialised software (MLwin). Multilevel models allow relationships to be simultaneously assessed on several levels and compared across different units of analysis. They are particularly useful for her PhD research on the politics of decentralisation where time is nested in parties and countries.

In addition, Sofia Delmar attended a two week course in the Essex Summer School on multilevel modeling. This covered model development with defined hierarchies, non-nested models and multilevel models with dichotomous outcomes, all using R software package. One of the most interesting parts of the course was the use of Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods to estimate multilevel models.

Javier Sajuria participated in the Essex Summer School – Experiments. This is a two-weeks training school at the Centre for Experimental Social Sciences (CESS) in Nuffield College.
Javier also participated in the Summer School in Social Network Analysis, Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg. This was a ten-day international summer school on SNA. This year the focus was on Internet Research. The School operates under an invitation only policy and was fully funded by the Higher School of Economics.

Manu Savani attended the Essex/Oxford Summer School on Experiments in the Social Sciences. It was a useful opportunity to examine the full range of experimental methods and hear first-hand from the experts how to use sound design to improve the rigour of the experiment and analysis. Learning a bit of z-tree was an added treat!

The highlight of Manu's summer training was a workshop again at Nuffield discussing field experiments in developing countries, which included a half-day run through of the Gerber and Green Field Experiments manual by Prof Don Green himself.

In July, Janina Beiser attended a two-week course on Advanced Quantitative Methods and Research Design with Allan Dafoe at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research in Uppsala University. The course covers a variety of topics, including model-based and design-based inference, permutation inference, MLE and design-based methods such as natural experiments, instrumental variables and regression discontinuity designs. All these topics were discussed with regards to the question of how we can draw reliable causal inferences using quantitative data. The course is also concerned with questions of good practice in empirical quantitative research. The course provided a very interesting mixture of actual theoretical knowledge as well as programming skills in R, critical discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches for drawing causal inferences and discussion of the research process more generally. The course was fairly intense requiring several homework problems to be handed in during the course as well as a final exam afterwards. The amount of work required was substantial but at the same time Janina thinks that she learned a lot and found the course not only very helpful but also very motivating. She recommends the course to anyone interested in quantitative research. Janina thinks it is not necessary to have R skills beforehand but the course will be most useful for students who are familiar with MLE already.

From July 1-13, Florian Ostmann participated in a summer school on international trade organised by the LUISS School of Government in Rome. Covering economic and legal aspects of trade policy, the program featured an impressive number of experts from academia as well as the public and private sector. The opportunity to engage with representatives of the WTO Secretariat and the European Commission proved particularly rewarding.

Paolo Morini attended the Oxford Summer School on Experiments in Political Science (organised as part of the Essex Summer School). The summer school, which lasted for two intensive weeks, was a great opportunity to learn more about the state of the art experimental techniques in the social sciences but also a nice occasion for networking with other PhD students from all over the world.

**Employment**

Nick Martin has taken up the post of Chrystal MacMillan Fellow at The University of Edinburgh.
NEW STAFF

The Department would like to welcome the following new staff:

Dr Avia Pasternak
MSc Global Governance and Ethics Programme Director

I am delighted to be joining UCL in January 2014 as a lecturer in Global Ethics. Before coming to UCL I was a lecturer at Essex University. I have a D.Phil in Politics from Oxford University (’07) and an MA and BA from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

I am a political theorist. My work focuses on collective responsibility and on the distribution of global justice duties. Right now I am working on a book that investigates how responsibility for what the state does should be distributed between its citizens.

I am very excited to be joining one of the strongest political theory research centres in the world. I was a British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow at SPP so know from first hand experience what a great and friendly department it is. I am also delighted to be the Director of the MSc in Ethics and Global Governance and look forward to meeting the students.

Dr Fauzia Ahmad
Teaching Fellow in Advanced Qualitative Methods

I am very happy to be returning to UCL and joining the Department of Political Science as a Teaching Fellow in Advanced Qualitative Methods. I am an Alumni of UCL, having studied for both my undergraduate degree (in Biology) and Masters in Social Anthropology way back in the early ’90s. I have previously worked as a Researcher and Lecturer at Brunel University (Dept of Social Work) and Bristol University, where I gained a PhD in Sociology in 2006. Here, I have worked with Prof Tariq Modood on Gulbenkian funded research on British Muslims and multiculturalism and Nuffield funded research on South Asian women and employment and remain an Honorary Research Fellow in the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship.

Other work has included positions as the Senior Research Officer at the Commission for Racial Equality and consultancies with a number of organisations, including Bristol City Council, the British Council and the Commonwealth Education Council. My most recent post was as Research Fellow at the Aga Khan University (UK) Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations.

My on-going research interests and publications centre on race, faith and gendered identities, specifically relating to Muslim communities in Britain and public policy and British Muslim women and their experiences in higher education, employment and social welfare. I am also interested in methodological issues such as positionality and reflexivity relating to debates on ‘insider/outsider’ perspectives in feminist and post-colonial research. My current research focuses on British Muslims relationships, marriage processes and divorce and the policy implications in these areas.

I am looking forward to engaging with staff and students and working within a multi-disciplinary environment.

Dr James Dawson
Acting Director of MSc Democracy and Comparative Politics and Teaching Fellow

James joined the teaching staff at the Department in 2013 and currently serves as acting Director of MSc Democracy and Comparative Politics. Before taking up this post, James taught classes in Politics at UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies and King’s College London Department of Political Economy.

He studied for his PhD at UCL Department of Political Science between 2009 and 2013, successfully defending his thesis under the title “The Elusive...”
I am delighted to be starting a new job as a Teaching Fellow at SPP. I was a postgraduate student and teaching assistant at SPP and was awarded my PhD by UCL last year. My research investigated British democracy promotion policy, looking particularly at the colonial and postcolonial relationship with Pakistan. My PhD research was funded by a +3 ESRC grant. Since completing my PhD, I have been working with Tate Galleries on a collaborative research project looking at the politics of curating and interpreting art works for the public. As well as producing a jointly authored paper, I have also worked with art gallery staff to communicate the research and involve them in responding to it.

Before beginning my academic career, I was a development manager for the British Council for seven years, including three years in the field in Pakistan. 

http://imaginingpolitics.wordpress.com

Dr Cathy Elliott
Teaching Fellow in Qualitative Research Methods and International Development

I am delighted to be back teaching at the Department in January 2014 as both Teaching Fellow in Conflict Resolution and Teaching Fellow in International Security.

I am currently finishing my PhD, researching the role of reconciliation initiatives, particularly grass roots initiatives, in stabilising negotiated/mediated peace agreements in protracted identity conflicts. My research interests also include the social-psychological dimensions of conflict, as well as negotiation and mediation techniques for the resolution of protracted conflict.

I hold a Masters from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy specialising in conflict resolution and negotiation and a BA (Hons.) in Oriental Studies from Girton College, Cambridge. I am also a solicitor under the Law Society of England and Wales.

Dr Outi Keranen
Teaching Fellow in International Political Economy and International Relations

Outi Keranen joined the Department in 2013 as a Teaching Fellow and she is an associate at LSE IDEAS. She holds an MSc in International Relations from the University of Bristol and a PhD from the Department of International Relations at the LSE. Outi has previously held the post of Visiting Lecturer at University of Westminster and taught widely on International Relations, International Political Economy and Peace and Conflict Studies at the LSE.

Her research interests are in conflict and peace in international relations. Her primary research focuses on statebuilding in post-conflict and fragile regions and she has published on internationally-led peacebuilding in the Western Balkans.

She is currently designing and collecting material for a new research project interrogating the identity-building aspect of post-conflict statebuilding processes. The project
Masaki Hidaka started her appointment as Teaching Fellow for Voters, Public Opinion and Participation in December 2013. Prior to joining UCL, she taught at the National University of Singapore, the American University in Washington, DC and at the University of San Francisco. Her professional background also includes working as a Press Aide to former San Francisco Willie Brown and a position with the Clinton/Gore presidential re-election campaign in 1996.

Anastasia Voronkova is a Teaching Fellow in Governing Divided Societies. Prior to joining the Department in December 2013, she worked as a Teaching Assistant on comparative politics and general political analysis courses in the School of Politics and IR, Queen Mary, University of London from where she also holds a PhD in Comparative Politics (2012), an MA in Global and Comparative Politics (2007) and a BA in Law and Politics (2006).

Anastasia’s research interests lie in the comparative politics of ethnic conflict and conflict regulation, identity-centered mobilisation, institutional innovations and mechanisms of regulating tensions between minorities and majorities and ‘relational’ approaches to politics. Her research has addressed the dynamics of intergroup interactions, ethnopolitical mobilisation and conflict radicalisation in Nagorno-Karabakh and Northern Ireland during critical time periods.

Outi’s second strand of research looks at peace beyond war-torn and fragile regions: she is a co-investigator in an inter-disciplinary LSE-based project investigating media representations of the Euro zone crisis across EU member states. The research focuses on the diverging public perceptions of the crisis and ideas of Europe as well as on the role of media in the crisis. She is co-editor and contributor to the Euro Crisis in the Press – blog.

Dr Masaki Hidaka
Teaching Fellow for Voters, Public Opinion and Participation

Dr Anastasia Voronkova
Teaching Fellow in Governing Divided Societies

Anastasia has published on these issues and is currently working on a book manuscript modifying and combining the literatures on ethnic conflict, contentious politics and nationalism to highlight the various limits of elite flexibility and their impact on conflict development in these cases.

More broadly, she is also interested in institution-building and the extent to which central elites’ discourses in divided polities leave room for minorities’ political expression. She has extensive fieldwork experience, having conducted interviews, surveys and participant observation in several divided societies.
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:

Pallavi Singh
MA Human Rights, 2012-13

After completing my Masters in August 2013, I moved to New York in September to do an internship at the United Nations. I have been working for the Office of the Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. This has been an invaluable experience for me, as my academic work at UCL was mainly focused on this issue. I was thus able to put my academic knowledge to practical use and develop an in-depth professional understanding of the issue of sexual violence as a whole. During my internship, I have had a wide range of responsibilities, including research, policy analysis, advocacy and communications. Currently I am working with the programme officers by drafting the 2014 Secretary-General Report.

The Office has given me the opportunity to see which practical side of the human rights framework I would like to pursue a career in. At present, I am in the process of deciding. I have always been interested in working alongside people from different parts of the world and the UN is a truly cosmopolitan workplace. My internship in the United Nations also coincided with the 68th General Assembly. My highlights include catching a glimpse of Barack Obama’s car (so much security!) and having a drink with William Hague. Sightings like this lose their novelty shortly but it’s been a great excuse to experience New York. Londoners seem to get a warm welcome too!

Dylan White
MSc International Public Policy, 2010–2011

When I left SPP in the autumn of 2011, I wasn’t sure where my path would lead. Focused so intently on my immediate goal – the dissertation holy grail – I sometimes lost sight of life (and obligations) beyond the finish line. And so leaving the warm womb of student life for the cold uncertainty of the “real world”, I initially worked where I felt most comfortable: in research. After consulting for the University of Toronto (my undergraduate alma mater), the UK Defence Forum and Transparency International, I had gained valuable experience but was still on the hunt for longer-term security.

Early in 2012, after several rounds of interviews, I was thrilled to land a contract position at the Canadian High Commission (embassy) to the United Kingdom, working first within the Immigration Division and later in Consular Affairs. I loved my time at the High Commission, both for the personal contacts I developed and for the inside look I got at the functioning of a major government / diplomatic mission.

Despite being happy in my job, I continued to seek opportunities to diversify my portfolio. As such, when offered a traineeship at NATO HQ in Brussels, I was sad to leave the Commission – and London! – behind but knew it was a chance I could not refuse. Since September 2013, I have served in the Operations Directorate at NATO, researching and analysing issues including Kosovo, maritime security and counter-piracy. I write regular reports for the Secretary General and allied ambassadors and also facilitate Alliance committee meetings, multilateral negotiations and staff talks with other institutions.

What’s next? I’m currently pursuing opportunities with the Canadian Foreign Service, as well as with various international organisations. The truth is, I’m not sure where I’ll be in a year’s time – but the uncertainty is exciting this time around. What I do know is that whether my next job takes me to New York, Geneva, Ottawa or Nairobi, I’ll be ready for the challenges that come my way.

Consider this: selected from four thousand applicants, my traineeship cohort at NATO has thirty members. Two of us hold postgraduate degrees from UCL. Pretty impressive odds for one university among twenty-eight member nations! Overall, I feel like my MSc has given me a crucial advantage at the outset of my international career. I’m proud to be a graduate of University College London’s School of Public Policy. The good names of UCL and SPP will open doors for you and give you the confidence to walk through them.

Best of luck to all current and prospective students.
Zahara Choudri  
MSc Global Governance and Ethics, 2011–2012

After leaving SPP, I decided to work as a consultant in various projects within international development. During my time at SPP, I was fortunate to gain huge support from the Department to run a charity campaign with the Jaago Foundation. I held the responsibility of Head of Charity and Fundraising for SPP’s International Public Affairs Society (IPAS), where I worked with a group of twenty fellow postgraduate students to raise £20,000 within four months that allowed the charity to build one sustainable school in Chittagong, Bangladesh with now over 180 children. The campaign was a huge success, allowing us to gain official sponsorship from Manchester City Foundation and Etihad Airlines for a 10k run organised in Richmond Park in which students and the faculty took part. As a result of the campaign, I still work extremely closely with Jaago as the UK Country Director. Upon completing my Masters I have been fortunate to work on some fantastic projects with the Jaago Foundation, the largest education charity in Pakistan, CarePakistan and most recently working to support a project in Indonesia within microfinance and development.

The course itself was an excellent experience, with a plethora of courses and creating a fantastic platform for great dialogue and debate. I particularly enjoyed my dissertation period. We were the first year to partake in a capstone project working with DECC (UK Department of Energy & Climate Change). This was a fantastic opportunity to work with fellow postgraduates to collaborate and yet work independently to produce our research. Our team researched the development of Unconventional Gas in China up to 2030 and presented our research findings to industry experts within DECC. This was a fantastic experience, not only did we get to work with DECC we were also supported by the Department and our dissertation tutor, Dr Slava Mikhaylov.

Coupled with my development work, I am currently establishing my own start-up within real estate and property development. However I would be delighted to go back to SPP and research further as my heart has always been within academia!

FUTURE EDITIONS OF TAVISTOCK TIMES

TAVISTOCK TIMES is published three times a year with the next edition due to be published in April 2014.

Ideas for future articles should be sent to:
Helen Holt,
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before the end of February 2014

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