CONTENTS

Director’s message. 2
60 second interview 3
Dr Julian Wucherpfennig 3
Careers networking event 4
Senior teaching fellow 5
Educating the future leaders of the global south 5
UCL political science and the REF result 6
News from the religion and political theory (RAPT) centre 7
SPP open day 8
Austerity, inequality and the Scottish approach to economic growth 9
How to use art galleries to teach politics 10
Political scientists explore the town of US carnival and jazz 11
Addressing the major global challenges of our day 12
IPAS 2014–15 13
News from the UCL Constitution Unit 14
PhD programme news 16
International development and the pay-offs of volunteering 17
International public policy review 18
Veterans4diplomacy 19
New staff 20
Past students – where are they now? 21
It has been a busy and productive spring term. As cherry trees blossom in Tavistock Square, masters students heads turn to dissertation proposal forms. Undergraduate affiliate students will be thinking about essays and how to make the most of the time in London that remains and academic staff will see a window opening for research projects.

Too late for the last issue of the Tavistock Times, we got the good news about the department’s performance in the six-yearly Research Excellence Framework. There are a variety of ways of measuring research. Whatever your measure, we are one of the very top performing departments in the United Kingdom. Then, think about the youth of the Department – we celebrate our 10th birthday this coming September –the youthfulness of our academic staff and the fact that we submitted all eligible staff and the achievement becomes more significant.

The oft-remarked divide between research and teaching always seems a bit artificial. True enough there are only so many hours in a day but an interest in research means commitment and enthusiasm for a subject in the classroom. The research-active instructor is up with or ahead of developments in her field and the research ranking of a department and a university is a major contributor to the reputation of degrees conferred. That our Department submitted all eligible staff suggests that it is very well positioned to deliver on the high priority placed on research led teaching, which is a signature theme of UCL strategic planning and which surely is what is special to a university education. Professor Albert Weale, who led our REF submission, provides further analysis of the REF result in this issue.

One privilege as Acting Director is to hear about everyone’s accomplishments. Exciting new course modules for our new PPE and MPA degrees are through the design stage. We are well on the way to the next REF, counting publications from 2014 forward. Congratulations to Dr Cathy Elliott on her promotion to Senior Teaching Fellow and to Stephen Thomson promoted to Web/IT manager. Thanks to Helen Elliot, Genavive Sarkis, Ben Webb, Tom Dannenbaum, Marc Esteve, Julian Wucherpfennig and Colin Provost for making our 11 March Open Day for prospective masters students such a success. A special thanks to this year’s students Emilia Lischke (International Public Policy), Anastasia Ushakova (Public Policy), Klimsan Murati (Security Studies) and Tina Kang (Human Rights) and PhD student Paolo Morini… who give the inside story!

There are some excellent new appointments to mention. Dr Alan Renwick, with expertise in electoral reform and processes of constitutional change, takes up the British Politics post and deputy directorship of the Constitution Unit. Alan joins us from Reading. Alexandra Hartman, who is completing her PhD at Yale, will be joining us next academic year to teach qualitative methods, sharing her expertise gained researching her PhD dissertation in Liberia. Dr Mike Seiferling joins us from the International Monetary Fund. Mike’s work on governance and development indicators fit well with the Department and with the new MPA. Dr Jeffrey Howard joins us from Essex with a British Academy Rising Star award. On an enviable trajectory, Jeff works on moral and legal problems of policy relevance. Finally, welcome to Simon Stanier who is our new Postgraduate Administrator. Simon also joins us from the University of Essex.

All the best with exams and dissertations.

Professor Neil Mitchell
Acting Head of the Department of Political Science
What is your name?
Julian Wucherpfennig, although some refer to me as ‘Dr Julian’ (not that I would ever encourage the title).

When did you join UCL?
I joined UCL in September 2013.

What are your responsibilities in the Department?
I’m the Director of the MSc in Security Studies and I research and lecture on issues related to political violence.

What do you particularly like and dislike about your job?
I very much enjoy the freedom to explore the topics that fascinate me, whether this is while doing research or in the classroom. What distinguishes my job from many others is that novelty and excitement are pretty much hard-wired. There will be absolutely no excuse, should I ever get bored.

Like many others, I dislike marking and even more so when students try to “re-negotiate” their marks.

What do you consider your greatest achievement to date?
 Academically speaking, perhaps my forthcoming publication in the discipline’s flagship journal but this is of course somewhat pale in comparison to the life I have built and what I have with my much better half.

Most inspirational person that you have met whilst at UCL?
Rather than singling out any one person, I can say that my colleagues are nothing short of outstanding, both as academic colleagues and personally.

Favourite location in UCL?
I really like working on the huge whiteboard I had installed in my office.

What would your ideal afternoon/evening in London include?
Being relatively new to London, I still enjoy being a ‘tourist’, exploring parts of the city that I previously had not seen, including sampling local pubs, bars and restaurants.

What is your favourite book?
I would have to say Chess Story, also known as The Royal Game, by Stefan Zweig.

What are your hobbies?
I enjoy traveling, and I like watching football. As an avid cook, I enjoy shopping for good ingredients, as well as opening a good bottle while in the kitchen. Skiing is another favourite of mine; not that I can do much around here.

If you had not gone into academia what would you be doing now?
That’s a tough one. I could have tried out a few more things before eventually realising “the pleasure of finding things out”. I might have become an analyst. Or a skiing instructor.

If you could implement one policy in the world today, what would it be?
Based on my research, I know that inclusion and power sharing are key to preventing conflict and building peace.
Alumni Events Highlight Versatility of UCL Political Science Postgraduate Degree

Helen West, UCL Careers Consultant writes:

Three networking events hosted at UCL involved SPP/Political Science Alumni leading panel discussions for current students revealing the versatility of their postgraduate degrees from the School of Public Policy.

Each event brought together representatives from the following sectors: Business and Private; Charity and Voluntary; Government and Public, proving that a postgraduate degree from the School of Public Policy holds currency in multiple areas. After an overview by each panelist, students had the opportunity to ask questions. Many students stayed after the panel concluded to speak individually to alumni. Each panel discussion was followed by an informal networking reception for all attendees.

During the Business and Private sector event, employees from KPMG, CBI, Barclays and Sunbird Group shared stories about their various career paths and how they came to their current professions. Many of the panelists gained experience in the public sector and/or charity organisations before taking up positions in Governance, Audit, Data Analysis and Investor Relations in the private sector. Alumni shared tips such as not looking at any particular job as the end goal but rather viewing each position as a stepping stone and a way of broadening experience and filling in any knowledge or skills gaps.

The Charity and Voluntary sector panel comprised representatives from Concordis, Save the Children, Oxfam and the Strategic Society Centre. Alumni stressed the importance of getting involved in volunteering, societies and campaigns in order to test out different experiences during their time at UCL.

Panelists alluded to key moments during their time at UCL which had influenced career decisions: from being inspired to run a campaign, to finding opportunities through to chance conversations with peers. As careers are subject to non linear change, sometimes small steps have profound outcomes.

Alumni from Government and the Public sector included representatives from the Cabinet Office, Local Authority, the Ministry of Justice as well as a Parliamentary Assistant to an MP. The panelists chronicled their career paths and provided industry insights. Again, the importance of building and developing networks was highlighted as key.

All panelists helped to demystify the concept of networking for students, “volunteering or interning exposes you to a variety of people…and that’s networking!” . Alumni reassured students that networking in practice meant “having informed conversations” and offered everyday examples of meeting new colleagues, working in different teams or following up on recommendations.

All three networking events were well attended with captivated SPP students asking several questions and soaking up each and every recommendation.
SENIOR TEACHING FELLOW

The Department would like to congratulate Dr Cathy Elliott on her recent promotion to Senior Teaching Fellow.

Cathy currently teaches the Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, Advance Qualitative Research Methods and International Development and Public Policy modules. She is an outstanding teacher and tutor and her contribution to the Qualitative methods modules is particularly notable.

Her interactive teaching style and approachability make her one of the most popular and well-regarded tutors in the Department. Cathy is keen to design and develop innovative teaching methods, including working with curators at the Tate Modern to run workshops at the Tate for SPP students, to encourage them to reflect on how art can help us understand politics in different ways.

Cathy’s promotion reflects her many years of outstanding teaching in the Department and is richly deserved.

EDUCATING THE FUTURE LEADERS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The Department is delighted to announce the establishment of the Pentland Scholarship which will support one individual per year for the next three years undertaking the Master of Public Administration, Executive programme in Global Public Policy and Management (Global EMPA), a degree programme delivered jointly by the School of Public Policy at UCL and NYU Wagner.

The Pentland Scholarships will help a new generation of future policy leaders to meet the demands of a complex world. Pentland, working with the UCL School of Public Policy and NYU Wagner, creates a unique partnership to enable talented young professionals from the Global South to take advantage of the innovative, one-year Global EMPA, with additional access to the Clinton Initiative events and networks. The scholarships will be awarded to individuals from Africa, Asia-Pacific or Latin America and will support outstanding young people in public service careers. The scholarships will equip scholars with the knowledge and skills they need to design and implement effective and sustainable solutions in their home countries in the face of global challenges.

Pentland Scholars will benefit from spending the first semester (fall) at NYU Wagner in New York City, the spring term at UCL in London and will also have an opportunity to complete a short internship with Pentland focused on good governance. In the course of their programme, Scholars will learn about the workings of Pentland and experience a highly successful professional environment. Situated in two of the most dynamic cities in the world, they will also have the opportunity to meet in informal gatherings with officials from government, the United Nations and leading European institutions and international NGOs.

Cathy Elliott
UCL POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE REF RESULT

Professor Albert Weale, UCL Department of Political Science, writes:

The Department can celebrate an excellent performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014. REF 2014 is the official evaluation of research within UK universities and its results determine the core research funding that institutions receive from the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Six similar exercises have taken place since 1986.

The Higher Education Funding Council does not produce an official league table of the results. Instead, it grades work into five categories: 4*, 3*, 2*, 1* and unclassified across three dimensions of a department’s work: publications, non-academic impact and research environment. Its core funding is related only to 4* and 3* grades. Because the scoring system is complicated, different departments can claim to have done well by different measures. But UCL can claim to have done well by any measure. The simple ‘grade point average’ score places us fifth in the Politics and International Studies league table. However, since departments can choose not to submit research inactive staff, a proper assessment should control for the proportion of staff submitted. If we make that adjustment, then UCL is placed second because we were able to submit 100% of our staff. Table 1 shows how we did by these measures against the other top departments.

This result is worthy of note not just because of how well the Department did but also by virtue of the way in which the result was achieved. A number of departments start to buy in ‘super-stars’ as the date for the REF approaches, a bit like struggling football teams trying to work their way up the league. Our staff appointments in recent years have been overwhelmingly of staff at the early stage of their careers. The quality of their work has been recognised and this promises even further strength in the next few years. This is remarkable in a department that is itself quite young. In ten years, UCL Political Science has developed from the newcomer to one of the top performing departments in the UK, matching other departments that have been established much longer and usually with many more staff.

Celebration does not mean sitting on your laurels, however. At its Away Day on 25 February, much of the time was given over to the ways in which we could improve even further. But for a few weeks at least, we can afford to enjoy the limelight of success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Grade Point Average</th>
<th>By Grade Point Average x % FTE Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essex 3.54</td>
<td>Essex 3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSE 3.45</td>
<td>UCL 3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield 3.40</td>
<td>Oxford 3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford 3.31</td>
<td>Warwick 3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCL 3.28</td>
<td>LSE 2.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
Summary of Rankings by Different Measures
NEWS FROM THE RELIGION AND POLITICAL THEORY (RAPT) CENTRE

Past events

In December 2014, Cécile Laborde was the keynote speaker of the CONCEPT Conference at the Nottingham Centre for Normative Political Theory. The conference focused on Cécile’s work and all invited speakers engaged with her arguments about republicanism, secularism or religion. In her keynote lecture, Cécile presented some of the arguments about secularism that will be developed in her forthcoming book.

In January 2015, the RAPT Centre co-organised, with the ReligioWest Project based at the European University Institute (Florence), a two-day interdisciplinary workshop on religious pluralism. Twenty scholars were invited to present their research about the philosophical assumptions, the normative implications and the empirical dimensions of religious pluralism. The contributions will be edited as a working book, published by the EUI and openly available online as well as in book form.

Forthcoming events

After the successful 2013/14 Lecture Series on ‘Secularism and Religious Freedom,’ this year’s Lecture Series focuses on ‘Multidisciplinary Engagements with Religion.’ Speakers are prominent international scholars in law, history, anthropology and sociology. The centre has recently welcomed Tariq Modood (Bristol University) and Linda Woodhead (Lancaster University) who spoke on ‘Multiculturalising Secularism, Multiculturalising State-religion Connexions’ and ‘Moral Majority and Moral Minority: The Values and Beliefs of Religious and Non-religious People in the UK Today’ respectively.

The lectures series continues in the summer term on Thursday 9 July, with a lecture from Saba Mahmood from the University of California, Berkeley. Lectures are open to all.

Please visit the RAPTc website to register for these events: www.ucl.ac.uk/religion-political-theory-centre/events/lectureseries2

The RAPT Conference on ‘Religion in Liberal Political Philosophy: New Approaches’ will take place in June (10–12) at UCL. Over 25 speakers are invited to present cutting-edge work in political philosophy on the questions of religion, secularism, non-establishment, freedom of religion and of conscience, public justification or liberal neutrality.

A list of confirmed speakers is available on our website and registration to attend the conference is now open see: www.ucl.ac.uk/religion-political-theory-centre/events/rapt-conference

Publications

The RAPT Centre is pleased to announce the publication of the following three volumes in 2015:

Cécile Laborde and Jean Cohen (eds.) Religion, Secularism and Constitutional Democracy. New York: Columbia University Press. This volume includes contributions from a range of international scholars, with chapters on public justification and liberal neutrality by RAPTc members Laborde and Bardon.

François Guesnet, Cécile Laborde and Lois Lee (eds.) Negotiating Religion. Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming. This is the outcome of a UCL Grand Challenges initiative that brought together scholars of religion from different disciplines: law, history, geography and political science. It includes chapters by RAPTc members Laborde and Lee, as well as three chapters by colleagues in the Department of Political Science: Saladin Meckled Garcia on human rights and religious establishment; Robert Morris (Constitution Unit) on the future of establishment in the UK, and Albert Weale on public reasons of the heart.
Lois Lee. Recognizing the Nonreligious: Reimagining the Secular, Oxford University Press. This book examines the role of nonreligious cultures in the world today and reconsiders concepts and theories of secularity, secularism, atheism and nonreligion itself.

Cécile Laborde’s monograph, Liberalism’s Religion is under contract with Harvard University Press, publication expected in 2016.

For a full list of our publications, see our website: www.ucl.ac.uk/religion-political-theory-centre/publications.

If you want to be updated with news concerning RAPT events and publications, please email Aurélia (a.bardon@ucl.ac.uk) or Lois (lois.lee@ucl.ac.uk) to be added to the RAPT mailing list.

SPP OPEN DAY

Helen Elliot and Genavive Sarkis write:

On Wednesday the 11th of March, the School of Public Policy opened its doors to prospective students for our Departmental Open Day. This annual event is an opportunity for prospective students to experience the Department, learn more about our programmes and meet our staff. The event was very well attended, with the Council Room filled to capacity.

The afternoon began with a welcome and introduction from Professor Neil Mitchell followed by a series of excellent taster lectures from our some of our staff which were as follows:

Dr Tom Dannenbaum – International Law and Humanitarian Intervention

Dr Colin Provost – Regulating Business in the Global Economy

Dr Marc Esteve – The Relational State

Dr Julian Wucherpfennig – Fear of Terrorism

This was the first Open Day featuring the new MPA programme, which is due to begin this September. To meet the growing level of interest in this programme, Dr Marc Esteve’s talk was filmed and put online for the benefit of the many students that were unable to attend. Many thanks go to Stephen Thompson for filming and editing.

The talks were followed by a Q&A session with Programme Directors and current students. This is always a highly requested part of the programme and we would like to thank our students – Paolo Morini (PhD student and PGTA), Emilia Lischke (IPP), Anastasia Ushakova (PP), Klimsan Murati (SS) and Tina Kang (HR) - for their participation. The day ended with tours of the UCL campus, led by Paolo and the Masters students.

Feedback from the day was extremely positive, with students commenting that they found it informative and useful. Over 94% of students that took part in our post-event evaluation said that the event has made them more likely to take up a place at the School, if offered.

We would very much like to thank all the staff and students who were involved in making the day a success.
This February, The Right Honourable Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland, visited UCL School of Public Policy and The Constitution Unit and spoke about ‘Austerity, inequality and the Scottish approach to economic growth’. Chris Rogers, MSc student and IPPR’s Head of Editorial was there and had the chance to briefly interview her.

You mentioned that you are not opposed to a coalition with Labour in principle but it is not your preferred option. What would Ed Miliband have to offer you to make you prefer coalition to anything else?

It's not really about policies, its more about structurally – a minority government where you have to win arguments and see support on an issue by issue basis, we have shown in Scotland that that can be a stable form of government. I think that's a better way of doing business and that is structurally my preference.

The SNP usually does not vote on English Matters, what is your opinion on the Conservatives attempts to formalise this policy?

Where matters are genuinely English votes for English Laws, I think there is actually an irony actually in Tories pushing that so strongly, after saying in the referendum how important we were in the election.

I think the issue is that some areas that the Tories would have you think are English issue are not English only. I used the example of the health service. A vote on the English health service, affecting the budget of the English health service has a direct effect on the size of the Scottish budget via the Barnett Formula. On those issues I would strongly resist Scottish MPs not having the right to vote.

On the issue of the Barnett formula, do you support the current funding structure?

Well, as long as we are still in a position where we are getting a block grant from the UK Government it should be determined through the Barnett Formula which will calculate the level funding we receive. I want Scotland to be fiscally independent – once we have that then that is the arrangement we will have but until we have that I believe the Barnett formula should stay as it is just now.
HOW TO USE ART GALLERIES TO TEACH POLITICS

Dr Cathy Elliott, Senior Teaching Fellow in Qualitative Methods and International Development writes:

Attentive readers of the Tavistock Times may have noticed that I’ve recently run a few trips to the Tate with students, facilitated by curator (and former SPP student) Liz Ellis. Both the students and I learned a lot from the experience so I was delighted when Orlanda Ward invited me to share my ideas about teaching in art galleries at the recent Political Studies Association postgraduate conference.

This session took the form of a workshop with around twenty postgraduate students. Some of them had some experience of teaching and a few of them had a lot more experience of art than me! One had even used galleries to teach in before. It was therefore a fun and interactive session, in which we reflected on our experiences and tried to think about how we might use more art in our own teaching practice.

The one thing that struck us all was that no matter what part of the discipline we work in – whether we are concerned with war and peace or wealth and poverty or gender or human rights – artists have engaged with the ideas that we seek to explore in the classroom.

However, as my students have observed, looking at a work of art can disrupt our taken-for-granted assumptions and bring to the fore the emotional, visceral and embodied dimensions of political categories. This can prompt all sorts of unexpected discussions that enrich learning.

The point of my IDPP session was to help students appreciate that the images of poverty they see every day have a history, that poverty is not limited to Africa and that artists have always both used and disrupted stereotypes about race and poverty. To explore other questions in the session, we played a ‘postcard game’: we each looked at a piece of art on a postcard and asked what we might use it for in our teaching.

Great ideas about identity and otherness, communitarianism and cosmopolitanism, gender and race, all came out in discussion and – for the teachers as for the students – the same picture took on different resonances for different people. We felt sure these discussions would add an extra dimension to our courses.

We also experienced the excitement of having our work transformed into art on the spot, by illustrator Jo Harris. I am still wondering about how her brilliant drawings of the session might help us think about how we take notes! In the meantime, though, I’m looking forward to hearing about the experiences of these new teachers as they take their own students out of the lecture theatre and into local galleries.
POLITICAL SCIENTISTS EXPLORE THE TOWN OF US CARNIVAL AND JAZZ

Hannah Smidt, current Department of Political Science Research Degree Student writes:

On February 18th 2015, five thousand political scientists from all over the world (indeed, from more than a hundred different countries!) populated New Orleans. What did all these scientists seek to explore in the US capital of Jazz? The famous carnival season “Mardi Gras” had just ended... Did they all get the date wrong? Of course not. This diverse community of junior and senior scholars stayed in the city for four days to attend one of the most widely known get-togethers in their academic field of interest – the 56th Annual International Studies Association Convention, short ISA.

Among them was a group (of respectable size!) of UCL academic staff and PhD candidates. They presented and discussed their research findings in panels consisting of contentwise like-minded colleagues. In doing so, they contributed new insights to the academic discussion on varied topics, such as State and Popular Responses to the Persistence of Poverty in India, Problems with Reconciliation or Dynamics of Civil War, just to name a few.

Beyond talking about research philosophies, tools, methodologies and findings during panels, ISA offered plenty different occasions for the UCL group to meet and engage with other scholars: Roundtables, for example, on discussing the last decade of scholarship on foreign fighters; distinguished scholar panels (which are open to every ISA participant but are called “distinguished scholar panel” since they honor a researcher who inspired the work of many more); career course for young scholars and of course, receptions of various ISA sections and caucuses, such as the well-attended Scientific Study of International Processes, the Women’s Caucus or the Mexican International Studies Association Group.

This sheer variety of exciting research topics and the opportunity to get in touch with the authors of the many articles and books you have devoured and slogged through, admired and criticised made ISA one of the most exciting and interesting experiences of my PhD studies. I had the chance to present my paper on the impact of international election observers on post-electoral violence in Africa. Beyond receiving profound feedback from both the Chair and the discussant of my panel, I was also happy to meet a fellow panelist from IFES, which is one of the most active organisations for international election assistance. A unique opportunity for exchanging with a practitioner and expert in my field of interest. If there is one single best thing to name about attending ISA, it is this possibility of connecting to people who share your research interest.

Physically, ISA was quite exhausting: Each day started at 8:15am with one of the many exciting panels which you really do not want to miss and usually ended late at night with drinks and passionate political (science) discussions. And this went on for four days in a row…

Mentally, however, ISA revived the energy, ambition and inspiration for going back to the desk in our cosy London PhD office, thinking about all the good comments, recalling the interesting conversations and with a smile, remembering meeting old friends doing their PhD research all over the world.
ADDRESSING THE MAJOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF OUR DAY

The Global Governance Institute, within the School of Public Policy, aims to establish UCL as a world leader in this key field of scholarship and global public policy. Founded to harness the unique cross-disciplinary strengths of UCL, the Institute’s second year of operations has been dedicated to consolidating a robust multi-faculty network, reaching out to external partners in government, international organisations, civil society and industry and engaging with our students across the SPP, particularly with an impressive cohort on the MSc in Global Governance and Ethics.

At the beginning of 2014/15, the GGI recruited five outstanding Thematic Directors drawn from a range of UCL faculties to undertake cross-disciplinary study of crucial governance ‘deficits’ that explores the processes, structures and institutions involved and potential solutions to identified problems.

The Directors are developing an exciting programme of activities across all five of the Institute’s thematic priorities: global justice (Dr Avia Pasternak-SPP), global economy (Professor Stephen Smith-Economics), environmental sustainability (Dr Ilan Kelman-Institute of Global Health), security (Dr Jason Dittmer-Geography) and global regulation and accountability (Dr Michael Collins-History). The Institute has also welcomed its first Senior Research Associates, colleagues from the School of Public Policy and across UCL who play an integral part in bringing creativity and innovative ideas to the GGI.

The Institute core team have also dedicated themselves to scaling up the GGI’s central intellectual mission: to advance knowledge on global governance, with a particular focus on possible methods to renovate international governance institutions. To this end, the Institute has hosted a number of workshops interrogating the contemporary practice of global governance across fields as diverse as climate regulation, human rights, cyber-governance and the transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP). A lively seminar series has featured some of the leading intellectuals in the field, including Phil Cerny, Robert Keohane and Joost Pauwelyn.

In November 2015, the Institute will convene an international Symposium bringing together some of the world’s leading scholars. The agenda is ambitious: to expand our theoretical, analytical and empirical horizons in this emergent field of study and practice.

Our students in the SPP and in particular the MSc in Global Governance and Ethics have played an integral role in the growing momentum at the GGI. An excellent cohort not only regularly participates in GGI events but many have also proven to be enthusiastic collaborators in event organisation. A dedicated group serves as in-house GGI bloggers and photographers (see the soon to be revamped GGI website) and others are taking advantage of the GGI as a platform for raising awareness of global public policy campaigns in which they themselves are involved. The Institute will also be supporting the student editorial team of the UCL International Public Policy Review in launching its 2015 issue.

Reflecting UCL’s new global engagement strategy to ‘think global, act together’, the GGI is also dedicating itself to building partnerships internationally, with a particular effort to engage with scholars in the global south. With the support of UCL International Office, the Institute will welcome colleagues from Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America in April for a workshop on hybridity and private authority in global governance. This deepening of links between scholarly communities across world regions is reflected in the recent launch at the SPP of the Pentland Scholarship for the Executive Masters of Public Administration in Global Public Policy which will support individual scholars from the Global South.

We greatly look forward to building upon further opportunities, collaboration with our students here at SPP – the next generation of global policy-makers – as the GGI continues to advance research and informed public debate on solutions to global societal challenges.
IPAS 2014–15

IPAS is one of UCL’s School of Public Policy student run societies. Since its founding in 2003 IPAS has arranged socials, invited speakers, facilitated trips and numerous other events aimed to enhance the community spirit within SPP, allowing the Department’s students to socialise, network and generally enrich their UCL experience.

Each year IPAS fundraises for a worthy cause and this year is no different – for the Class of 2015 though, we want to make sure that you not only feel good about helping a fantastic cause but have fun doing so – hence we have renamed ourselves the FUNdraising Team!

We have chosen to continue to build on the fantastic work the committee of 2013/14 did with the Wonder Foundation, which aims to improve the all-round wellbeing of vulnerable communities worldwide, through increased access to education, healthcare and economic and personal development tools.

Wonder, recognised that a long series of conflict in the 1990s destroyed most of the Democratic Republic of Congo’s infrastructure so they are working with partner hospitals, heath centres and outreach clinics to try and tackle the health problems in the country including; HIV/AIDS, malaria, outbreaks of polio, cholera, typhoid, yellow fever, the ebola virus, tuberculosis and haemorrhagic fever which are taking lives and limiting development.

This year IPAS, with your assistance wants to raise a £1100 to go towards training and financially supporting local people who want to become nurses, a single qualified nurse can save an estimated 100 lives a week. By paying for their training and the associated costs we can help those who want to become community health nurses and midwives, ensuring that care is specifically targeted, sensitive to local need and more widely available. By supporting this cause we are helping those in desperate need of medical assistance and at the same time the newly qualified nurses to make a better life for themselves and their families.

This cause that Wonder supports is very much aligned to our studies at the School of Public Policy on international development or international issues and we feel strongly that support for projects like this are essential to help alleviate some of the extreme inequalities in the world and at least go some way to addressing the most fundamental human right: the right to live. With the wealth we see in the world today there is no justification for anyone to be suffering from a lack of basic health care.

To learn more about the project please see the Wonder Foundation’s web pages: www.wonderfoundation.org.uk

The IPAS committee has been and will continue to encourage our fellow masters’ students at the School of Public Policy to help raise money for this amazing cause and enjoy themselves whilst doing so! We have already had a successful Krispy Kreme Sale and a Lola’s Cupcakes Sale – the calories don’t count if it’s for charity right?! We have also collaborated with the IPAS Events team to gather donations at their events, which have included a Pub Quiz.

We are definitely not finished FUNdraising and will be recruiting people to partake in and secure sponsorship for a 5km run, just after the exams. To close out the year we are also hoping to hold an SPP Summer Ball with all funds raised going to support Wonder!

Please come along and get involved in the FUNdraising! If every student in the School of Public Policy (that’s over 450 of us) was to raise just £10 each by the time we give in our dissertation in September, we could raise at least £4,500 which would set a new record and enable us to support 12 nurses with a years worth of training, which could save 62,000 lives in one year alone, wouldn’t that be an amazing achievement. With your help we really can make a massive difference!

If you want to know what IPAS are up to check out www.facebook.com/uclipas or www.ucl.ac.uk/ipas

If you want to donate to our cause this year please visit https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/ipas1415 or drop any spare change you have in the donation boxes we have places in the SPP Reception and Common Room!
New Constitution Unit report

Enough is enough: Time to regulate prime ministerial appointments to the Lords

Recent years have seen endless stories about the growing size of the House of Lords (e.g. here and here). Since 1999, when the Lords was reformed to remove most hereditary peers, its membership has grown by one third – from 666 members to nearly 850 (see graph). This has caused not only media embarrassment but concerns among the chamber’s members about its ability to function effectively. In 2013 the Lord Speaker suggested that ‘if we don’t reform and shrink our numbers, the Lords will collapse under its own weight’; last year she pointed out that debates are ‘coming under increasing time pressure as more members wish to speak, all to the detriment of our ability to hold the government to account’ (pay wall). In a full day debate on the size of the chamber in January, a former Conservative Chief Whip noted that ‘we all agree that the House cannot go on growing as it has been doing’. Yet shortly afterwards the Sunday Times (pay wall) claimed that a new list of up to 60 peers was likely to be announced following the general election in May 2015.

This new Constitution Unit report sets out some clear and hard-hitting recommendations. It emphasises that the unregulated nature of prime ministerial appointments is now the most urgent problem facing the Lords, and that it would simply be irresponsible for the new prime minister after May 2015 to continue with the existing system. Longer-term Lords reform remains on the agenda, but until this is achieved a more regulated system of appointments is badly needed. The Prime Minister - who currently controls how many peers are appointed, when, and the party balance between them – should extend the powers of the House of Lords Appointments Commission so that it regulates the chamber’s size, and invites nominations from the parties when vacancies arise, using a clear and transparent formula. In the short term a target for the size of the chamber should be set – of perhaps 550 or 600. Until that target is reached, the Commission should invite nominations only on a ‘one-in-two-out’ basis, with one new peer appointed for every two that die (which on present numbers would allow about 10 appointments per year). If such a system was put in place, peers would have more certainty about future appointments, and it might be possible to encourage more of them to retire – indeed the parties might reach agreement on large numbers of retirements. This would allow the size target to be met more quickly.

All of these changes can be made without legislation, as the current system remains wholly at the Prime Minister’s discretion. The report hence argues that David Cameron and Ed Miliband should be pressed hard to commit to such change. If no such change is forthcoming it would create major problems but other more radical options do exist. In February 2013 the Lords debated a motion (proposed by Lord Steel) to refuse introduction to any new members until reform was agreed to get the size of the chamber down. At the time, the motion was dropped. If the party leaders do not take the necessary action, next time peers may choose to stand their ground.

The report has been welcomed by various senior figures, and received significant media attention. Its launch in the Lords was chaired by the former Lord Speaker, Baroness Hayman. Lord Jay of Ewelme, chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission until 2013, provided a

House of Lords membership 2000–2015
Source: Figures published by House of Lords Information Office in January each year
Preparing for another hung Parliament: nine key questions answered

Recent polls have suggested that the 2015 general election will result in another hung parliament, with no single party gaining an overall majority. The media and voters may assume that 2015 will then see a replay of 2010, with the swift formation of another coalition government. Not necessarily so, as Robert Hazell, along with Peter Riddell of the Institute for Government, has been explaining in pre-election briefings for the broadcasters.

Will the leader of the largest party become Prime Minister?

Not necessarily. The constitutional rule is, the politician who can command the confidence of the House of Commons becomes PM. This could be the leader of the second largest party, if he can secure sufficient from third and minor parties.

Does the Queen play a formative role?

No. The political parties must establish between themselves who can command confidence in the new House of Commons. The Queen will be kept informed and when the result of the negotiations becomes clear, will appoint that person as Prime Minister.

What if the negotiations result in a stalemate, with two rival combinations staking equal claims to be the next government?

The default position is that the incumbent PM has the right to remain in office and meet the new Parliament to test if he can still command confidence, as Baldwin did in 1923–24.

Now ‘verging on the ridiculous and it needs to be dealt with’. The report also has the formal backing of the Hansard Society and the Constitution Society, while Peter Riddell of the Institute for Government has said that it ‘makes a powerful, convincing and evidence backed case for urgent action by the Prime Minister to adopt a new approach to appointing peers’.

Enough is Enough: Regulating Prime Ministerial Appointments to the Lords was published on 9 February 2015 by the Constitution Unit

Will another hung Parliament lead to another coalition?

Not necessarily. A minority government is equally possible. In the twentieth century Britain had 20 governments; five were coalitions and five were minority governments. It is also possible to have a minority coalition.

What is the role of the civil service?

The Civil Service will offer a location for party negotiations (in 2010, Cabinet Office); they will be available to offer information but not advice; and act as note takers, if required. The parties may choose a different location in 2015 to keep away from the media, such as Parliament.

How long will the negotiations take?

Longer than five days, for several reasons. There are likely to be more parties involved than the three which negotiated in 2010. Their backbenchers will insist on more thorough consultation and endorsement by the parliamentary party, before agreeing to any coalition agreement or support arrangements and in 2010, it took 13 days to settle the full coalition agreement, the detailed Programme for Government published on 19 May.

Who governs in the meantime?

The incumbent Prime Minister and his government remain in office. Under the caretaker convention they cannot make decisions which would bind the hands of a future government. So they cannot make new policies, public appointments or let important government contracts. If decisions cannot be deferred the government must consult the opposition parties, as Alistair Darling did the weekend after the 2010 election, when he attended the ECOFIN meeting on 9 May 2010.

What happens to Ministers who lose their seats?

They remain Ministers, even though they are no longer MPs. Jim Knight attended Gordon Brown’s last Cabinet meeting on 9 May 2010 although he had lost his seat. In 1964 Patrick Gordon Walker was appointed Foreign Secretary by Harold Wilson, even though he had lost his seat and served for three months until he also lost a by election in early 1965.

Will there be a second election?

There has been talk of Cameron or Miliband forming a minority government and then calling a second election to strengthen their numbers, as Wilson did in 1964 and again in 1974. This is made much harder by the Fixed Term Parliaments Act, which abolished the prerogative power of dissolution. Under the Act, Parliament can only be dissolved by a two thirds majority in the Commons (effectively, requiring the support of both major parties); or following a vote of no confidence, if no alternative government is formed in 14 days. Some MPs have called for repeal of the Act and others believe it could be overridden but they have yet to explain how.

To Codify or Not to Codify

The Constitution Unit is pleased to announce the launch of a new report To Codify or Not to Codify: Lessons from Consolidating the United Kingdom’s Constitutional Statutes. The report reflects on some lessons learned about the UK Constitution while consolidating the texts of 18 constitutionally relevant statutes and concludes that further codification is not essential. Read an overview by lead author James Melton on the Constitution Unit blog here.
PhD PROGRAMME NEWS

Dr Slava Mikhaylov, MPhil/PhD Programme Director reports:

Accepted or forthcoming publications

Alex Katsaitis published a chapter “EU Democratic Deficit(s) and Legitimacy; System versus Sub-System Level” in a volume edited by K. Demetriou titled The European Union in Crisis. Springer:

http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-08774-0_10

Ivica Petrikova had a paper published in November, in the Journal of International Development, called ‘The Short- And Long-Term Effects Of Development Projects: Evidence From Ethiopia.’ She also had a paper accepted by a journal called Forum for Development Studies; the article’s title is ‘NGO Effectiveness: Evidence from the Field of Child Labour in El Salvador’ and will be published in 2015.

Conference Presentations

Matthew Godwin presented a paper titled ‘Diaspora Politics and Civil War: A Research Agenda’ (co-authored with Fiona Adamson from SOAS) at the International Studies Association on February 18th 2015 conference in New Orleans.

Successful defense

Lior Erez successfully defended his thesis titled ‘Motivating Cosmopolitanism: A Political Critique.’
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PAY-OFFS OF VOLUNTEERING

Harriet Bradley, current MSc International Public Policy student writes:

The School of Public Policy ‘Careers and Volunteering: International Development and Beyond’ event on 13 March 2015 promised experiential advice on how to pursue a career in international development. It gave a practical snapshot of alternative career pathways to the familiar campus graduate recruiters.

The panel comprised a diverse set of experience, from practitioners to career consultants. It was chaired by Dr Cathy Elliott, who was also able to contribute her own experience of working in the development industry and teaching international development and public policy.

An overarching theme of the evening was on the inevitability of volunteering for entering the sector, both as a practitioner and a researcher but it can pay off.

Helen West of UCL Careers began with three reasons to volunteer: to gain the necessary experience of the third sector, to gain transferable skills and to know if it is the right career path for yourself. She also reminded us to avail ourselves of the UCL Careers Service, who offer support ranging from completing applications to interview coaching, important not least in making the transition from volunteering to applying for paid positions.

Second was John Braime of UCL’s Volunteering Services Unit, who have placements with some 400 organisations across London. The rub is that even volunteering within the international development sector is competitive. At the same time, there are many ways of gaining transferable skills through volunteering in various sectors: the example was given of community development and the similarities between local approaches in London and INGOs like Oxfam’s international projects.

Sam Ramsden, who worked as a volunteer and manager for Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), highlighted the international route into development. Although the prospect of volunteering for two years abroad appeared to be an economic luxury, Sam made the point that this can be more affordable than volunteering in London, especially as the reputable organisations will typically cover travel and living costs. Just beware of glorified travel companies who are unlikely to provide the necessary financial or pastoral support or worthwhile experience. For SPP students, Sam highlighted the usefulness of research training for getting into the research wing of INGOs like Oxfam and VSO.

Finally Helen Deacon, a UCL student, introduced us to the ‘bottom up’ development charity TECHO, which originated in Chile and has since spread to Latin America, the US, Germany and the UK. Helen highlighted the variety of experience to be gained from volunteering: from campaigning
to fundraising, hands-on project delivery, foreign language learning and perhaps the benefits of joining a smaller organisation in terms of being given a wide range of responsibilities and experience.

Students raised practical and ethical questions as to the economic viability of volunteering for those facing financial difficulty, balancing respect for cultural difference as a practitioner, how much autonomy volunteers have, through to the question of the ‘development machine’ itself and whether volunteering is effective. Ethics and social values are important issues to consider in this field and a follow up event would be welcome that could supplement the answers with voices from third sector research and academia- equally viable pathways within the international development sector.

Details of the various organisations and support:

**UCL Careers Service**
4th Floor
UCLU Building
helen.i.west@ucl.ac.uk

**Volunteering Services Unit**
1st floor
Lewis’ Building
www.uclu.org/volunteers

**Voluntary Service Overseas**
International Citizen Service
Youth Volunteering
www.volunteerics.org

**Helen Deacon**, Techo
www.techo.org/en
helen.deacon@techo.org

---

**INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY REVIEW**

Klisman Murati, President – International Public Policy Review writes:

Now it would be proper to thank all of those who have contributed to the success of the IPPR this year but seeing as we still have a long way to go to produce what will inevitably be a remarkable journal and online community, I’ll save the admirations for a later speech. What I can do now however is introduce myself and secondly inform you of what we are doing with the IPPR this year.

My name is Klisman Murati, I am an MSc candidate here at the School of Public Policy reading Security Studies with a particular interest in political strategy, terrorism and space militarisation; with the latter being the focus of my dissertation. I’ll save the aspirations for a later speech. What I can do now however is introduce myself and secondly inform you of what we are doing with the IPPR this year.

My name is Klisman Murati, I am an MSc candidate here at the School of Public Policy reading Security Studies with a particular interest in political strategy, terrorism and space militarisation; with the latter being the focus of my dissertation. I’ll save the aspirations for a later speech. What I can do now however is introduce myself and secondly inform you of what we are doing with the IPPR this year.

Details of the various organisations and support:

**UCL Careers Service**
4th Floor
UCLU Building
helen.i.west@ucl.ac.uk

**Volunteering Services Unit**
1st floor
Lewis’ Building
www.uclu.org/volunteers

**Voluntary Service Overseas**
International Citizen Service
Youth Volunteering
www.volunteerics.org

**Helen Deacon**, Techo
www.techo.org/en
helen.deacon@techo.org

---

Through the online blog [http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ippr](http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ippr), community outreach, varied event plans and elevated professionalism of the journal we have produced content that reflects UCL’s intellectual powerhouse status in academia. I can confidently say this year’s journal will be hard to top and will reflect the varied and dynamic natures of our student’s interests and future pursuits.

The theme the journal will have this year is ‘looking forward’. We wanted the student body at SPP to be brave in their writing and make the essence of their work reflect what they think the world will look like in the years and decades to come. How do they see the tensions between Russia, Ukraine and the EU playing out? What policy recommendations would they suggest reforming to ensure worker rights in Asia? Is TTIP going to totally transform the relationship between state and company? And how will world superpowers and the UN act and react as space is used more and more as a military playground? Expect to see thought provoking pieces ladies and gentlemen.

This year will also be the first time we have peer review as an academic standard placed on all work going into the journal which will be a benchmark that this year’s team has set. I have special thanks to give the Head of Editorial and his team for trying to get our journal published by SAGE. I also must highlight the events team efforts to organise a trip to Brussels which will be an amazing achievement.

I feel proud in being the President of the International Public Policy Review as I know my team and fellow contributors feel proud in putting their name to it.

I hope you enjoy the tour de force that will be our journal.
In December of 2014, I received one of my most fortunate calls of the year. The Director of the Young Atlanticist Program, Mr Jonathan Silverstone, had called to announce my acceptance in the inaugural Points Take Initiative Fellowship at the Atlantic Council. I would be one of ten mid to senior level veterans to enter a new developmental program for future foreign policy entrepreneurial leaders.

Since departing from the U.S. Air Force, I have committed my time to focusing on national and global public policy issues. I spent time serving as a Military Legislative Assistant in the U.S. House of Representatives where I drafted legislation and voting recommendations for Armed Services, Foreign Affairs and Veteran Affairs committees. Additionally, I spent eight months in eastern Turkey on a U.S. Fulbright Scholarship serving as an adjunct faculty member at Bayburt University teaching and conducting research on U.S. and Turkish foreign policy.

More important was my experience as one of only a few veterans serving in these leadership roles that influenced U.S. foreign policy. I have served in departments and organisations that would have benefited from experiences of today’s highly trained U.S. service members. In light of this, I decided to found a non-profit called Veterans4Diplomacy, which aims to develop veterans to become competitive for these roles and connect them to the right opportunities.

As I launch Veterans4Diplomacy, I am grateful for the opportunity that the Atlantic Council gave me. I also thank UCL and specifically the School of Public Policy for allowing me to be a fellow during this semester. This experience was priceless and the relationships built during it even more so. I am looking forward to the future with a persistent hope that this project will make a positive difference to veterans and to U.S. foreign policy.
NEW STAFF

The Department would like to welcome the following new staff:

**Alexandra C. Hartman**
Lecturer in Qualitative Research Methods and Comparative Politics

I am very excited to be joining UCL in January 2016 as a Lecturer in Qualitative Research Methods and Comparative Politics. I will be teaching courses in research methods and I hope to also teach classes in comparative politics, including African and Middle Eastern politics.

Prior to joining UCL, I am completing my PhD in Political Science at Yale University. My research uses multiple research methods to better understand the political economy of development with a focus on property rights, conflict and access to justice in fragile and post-conflict states. My dissertation explores the reasons why some land disputes are relatively easy to resolve, while others escalate into conflict and violence.

I am currently working in Liberia and Jordan on issues of dispute resolution, land tenure, access to the formal justice system and customary law. I look forward to joining the department and meeting new colleagues and students next year.

**Dr Jeffrey Howard**
Lecturer in Political Theory and Normative Methods

Jeffrey Howard will join the Department in September 2015 as a Lecturer in Political Theory and Normative Methods. He is currently a Lecturer in Political Philosophy in the Department of Government at the University of Essex. Before joining the faculty of Essex in 2013, Jeff earned his doctorate in politics from Nuffield College at Oxford University and his undergraduate degree from Harvard University.

His research explores the intersection of political theory, legal philosophy and institutional design. It aims to understand the ways in which citizens’ attempts to live morally upright lives can be facilitated or hijacked by their political institutions. He works on a variety of topics that relate to this broader theme, including criminal punishment, civic education, judicial review and law enforcement policy.

Jeff is very much looking forward to joining the Department.

**Dr Alan Renwick**
Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit

Alan Renwick will be joining the Department in September as Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit. He is currently Associate Professor of Comparative Politics at the University of Reading, where he has been based since 2008. He was previously a postdoctoral research fellow and lecturer at the University of Oxford.

Alan’s research focuses on political reform. He is currently completing a book for Oxford University Press on the “personalisation” of electoral systems. He is also working with a range of academics, politicians and organisations seeking to develop understanding of the best options for the design of a UK constitutional convention after the May general election. His future research agenda focus on the changing nature of democracy and how democratic institutions can be strengthened.

Alan is also deeply committed to teaching, having won awards for teaching excellence and innovation at both Oxford and Reading.

He comments, “I am delighted to be joining the Constitution Unit, whose research has been pivotal to political reform debates in the UK for the last two decades. I look forward very much to working with the Unit’s incoming Director, Professor Meg Russell and other colleagues in strengthening that profile still further for the future.”
Dr Michael Seiferling  
Lecturer in Public Finance

I am excited to be joining a very talented department at UCL this August to teach courses in the field of public finance and budgeting.

As a brief background, I completed a PhD from the London School of Economics in 2012 with a focus on political economy/public finance and quantitative methods. Prior to graduating, I began working as an economist with the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC in February of 2011, where my research interests evolved into fields of public sector accounting, balance sheet analysis and intersectoral linkages. Working with an international organisation gave me the opportunity to work hands on with authorities from ministries of finance, central banks and statistical offices from over 60 countries finding practical solutions to difficult real world problems.

Hopefully I can bring some of this experience back to UCL where I look forward to working with and learning from an exceptional group of staff and students.

Dr Nick Martin  
Teaching Fellow in Political Theory

I joined the Department as a Teaching Fellow in Political Theory in February 2015. I am teaching ‘Contemporary Political Philosophy II’ this year and ‘Meanings of Liberty’ next year. Before joining UCL, I was a Chrystal Macmillan Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. I have also taught at King’s College London and the Philosophy Department at UCL.

I completed my PhD in Political Theory at the Department in 2014 – it is great to be back so soon! My research interests lie in analytical normative and conceptual political theory, with a focus on contemporary liberal political theory, social justice and ethical pluralism. My doctoral thesis addressed these themes in the context of charity law. My current research focuses on the relationship between liberal secularism and freedom of religion, particularly with regards to the justification of accommodating religious beliefs and practices in general laws and policies, such as employment, schooling and animal slaughter.

Dr Sam Raszewski  
Teaching Fellow in International Security and Foreign Policy Analysis

Dr Sam Raszewski is a Teaching Fellow in International Security and Foreign Policy Analysis in SPP.

He is author of numerous publications in the fields of energy, policy and governance, as well as a frequent speaker at international conferences and events and a media commentator on energy and security issues including for the BBC.

With his policy focus on political risk and energy security Sam also serves as a member of the Unconventional Hydrocarbons Network, an advisory committee to the European Commission. His academic research interests lie at the intersection between International Political Economy and Security.

Sam’s previous research experience includes the ‘Petroleum and Society’ project within the Centre for International Minerals and Energy Law (Queensland, Australia) and the ESRC-funded ‘Political Economy of Energy in Europe and Russia’ network (Warwick, UK).

Previously a Republic of Turkey funded Visiting Research Fellow at Ankara Sam holds a Ph.D from Leeds (UK) where his research focused on the role of energy transit in the external energy policy of the European Union. He is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK) and a Research Associate in the European Centre for Energy and Resource Security. His working languages include Polish, Russian and Turkish.
Marco Morucci
Research Assistant

Marco is a Research Assistant at the Constitution Unit. He works on the Parliamentary Candidates UK project, which aims at collecting data on election candidates since 1945.

He has previously worked at the Constitution Unit as an intern.

Marco holds a BA in Political Science and International Relations from LUISS University of Rome and a MSc in Comparative Politics and Democratisation from the London School of Economics. In September, he will begin his PhD at Duke University, in the United States.

His research interests focus on Economic Development and Democratisation, with a regional focus on Southeast Asia. He is also interested in quantitative and formal methods for Social and Political Science; and in applications of Computer Science and AI to social science research. At the moment he is working on political careers of MPs in the UK.

Simon Stanier
Postgraduate Administrator

I joined the School of Public Policy in March 2015 as a Postgraduate Administrator. My role involves a variety of administrative duties for Postgraduate programmes within the School as well as an ongoing project, working on a strategy for the development of our Alumni relations. Before my move I was working for the University of Essex Registry as a Taught Programmes Administrator for the Faculty of Social Sciences, providing administrative support for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within the Faculty.

Before working in universities I studied History at the University of East Anglia and then took my Master’s in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at King’s College London. This was a joint programme with UCL and Royal Holloway, and I had the opportunity to study one of my modules at UCL. Ever since, it has always been my intention to return to London and I am delighted to be returning to UCL in a professional capacity.
Like a number of my UCL cohort, I joined the civil service on the Fast Stream straight after finishing my masters - and by straight after I mean in January 2013 after finding out I had passed the assessment centre the previous March - as it can take quite a while to process all the paperwork and assign you a role.

I am in the last year of the ‘old’ Fast stream whereby you ‘belong’ to one department and have posting which last 12 months. (Under the current / ‘new’ fast stream known as ‘civil service resource’ or CSR fast streamers are centrally managed by HMRC and complete initially 4 six months postings in four different departments, including one outside of London). I was placed in the Department of Energy and Climate Change- which was a piece of luck as that was the area I chose to focus on while I studied International Relations at undergrad and then during my masters in IPP- (for example I followed Slava’s Political Economy of Energy Policy and Albert Weale’s Social Values: Health and the Environment at UCL).

My first post was in the ‘Smart Metering Implementation Programme’, which is one of government’s major energy infrastructure programmes (and links back to behaviour change/ nudge, which had been a key theme of my masters). It isn’t the most glamorous part of DECC but gave me a solid foundation of knowledge of working in Government and with Industry.

For my second post I took advantage of the (former – the new scheme is more structured) Fast Stream’s flexibility and emphasis on learning and development and went to Brussels for five months as a National Expert in Professional Training at the European Commission which is essentially an Erasmus for government officials (and sounds somewhat unfortunately close to ‘INEPT’ as you pronounce the acronym). I was working in DG CLIMA (climate action) on reform of the European Emissions Trading System (EU ETS). I hadn’t really been that interested in the EU previously unlike my EPP colleagues but I’ve been totally converted and follow the politics and developments in Brussels eagerly even though I think the whole set up of the different institutions is a bit bonkers.

This was a wise strategic move and I came straight back into the EU team in the International Climate Change directorate where I had really wanted to be. I am now the North America lead supporting the negotiations team and liaising with the FCO teams in country in the run up to the Paris climate negotiations. I count myself as extremely lucky to have ended up in working on something I care about at such a key time in the international agenda and although I am fairly junior it’s amazing to be part of the strategy conversations and thinking about how the UK should interact with different counties on this issues (like I am actually ‘doing’ international relations!).

The UK Civil Service, like most governments I suppose, has a bit of a bad reputation for being bureaucratic, inefficient and possibly a bit slack (clocking off at five etc). Sometimes it does have its ‘In the thick of it moments’ (tends to be the closer you get to ‘The Centre’) but in fact I work with a group of pragmatic, intelligent people who are extremely passionate and work very hard and often unsociable hours. I was surprised by how qualified everyone is - the majority have masters and PhDs in relevant fields even though postgraduate degrees are not a prerequisite. I am glad I have mine as I feel it gives me some legitimacy amongst all these brilliant people.

Although I think you may get a more vigorous induction and training in hard skills with equivalent graduate schemes with the big four- the variety and flexibility of a civil service career is second to none. I don’t think it’s for forever for me but the other great thing is a can be completely open and honest about my future ambitions and they will continue to support my development and help me achieve it and the door remains open to return in the future with those new skills and experiences.
Mariam El-Azm

_MSc Global Governance and Ethics, 2009–2010_

After completing a trilingual BSc in Business Administration (French, English and Spanish) from HEC Montreal, I decided to pursue a Master’s degree in Global Governance and Ethics at the School of Public Policy. As part of my dissertation, I travelled to Costa Rica to explore the relationship between coffee cooperatives, fair trade and human capabilities.

Shortly after completing my masters, I simultaneously interned at the Fairtrade Foundation and Trading Visions and later at RESULTS UK as a Grassroots Supporter.

Whilst faced with the frustration of being an unpaid intern, the experience I gained was fundamental in terms of getting my first paid job as a Conference Assistant at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK). CPA UK is an organisation based is the Houses of Parliament, which promotes good governance through exchange and cooperation. Since I first joined CPA UK in 2011, I have moved roles three times and in my current role as Asia-Pacific Programme Manager, I am responsible for CPA UK’s activities across the region. My role involves developing parliamentary strengthening and parliamentary diplomacy programmes with legislatures across Asia-Pacific.

The knowledge I gained during the course of my Masters and exposure to the different dimensions of development, including the importance of sound governance structures, were fundamental in shaping my professional career so far. I received excellent guidance from lecturers and tutors and would encourage all SPP students to make the most of their time at UCL.