

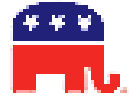


CALVIN

MINDS IN THE MAKING



Politeia



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The Official Newsletter of the Calvin College Political Science Department

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International Relations Major Added.

The Political Science Department added a new major of study this fall: International Relations. This expansion of the department is evidence of the rising interest and significance of Political Science today. Political Science students may now choose programs in either general political science, international relations or the public administration concentration of the political science major.

Katrina's Political Aftermath

A Hopeful Future after the Storm

Hurricane Katrina was the worst natural disaster in U.S. history. Over a thousand lives were lost, more than a million were displaced, and relief and repair efforts are projected to cost over \$100 billion.



AP Photo

However, the storm's sheer destructive capacity was not the only factor that differentiated this storm from other past national crises.

This time around, the government was largely seen as responsible for much of the incurred damage. Governments at all levels could have mitigated the storm's destructive capacity, but they failed to do so due to considerable obstacles to policy execution stemming from poor communication and even incompetence. As a result, government itself became the recipient of blame and harsh criticism, as the hurricane's aftermath rattled the social, political, and economic state of the country.

Yet while the disaster of Hurricane Katrina was a horrible natural and human tragedy, there is hope amidst all the loss. Good things can and may come out of what happened.

One thing the disaster made clear was that "politics matters," said Calvin Professor Bill Stevenson. "[After] a disaster like Katrina, people come to realize that the government serves all of these functions that we take for granted." And when those functions fail to be performed, much attention is given to address those problems in order to build a stronger, more effective government.

After 9/11, the nation successfully united to defend against further incidences of domestic terror, creating the new Department of Homeland Security in order to develop a more efficient system to protect the people. In the same way, the hurricane crisis and its aftermath, the first major test of the department, should only make the nation stronger as democratic reform works to create a more experienced and time-tested system. For it is only after recognizing hidden disease in the government and what needs to be dealt with further, that we can attempt to restore the government to even stronger levels of health.

Furthermore, times of crisis often prove to be opportunities for outpourings of mercy and compassion in a united front to alleviate pain and suffering.

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It is in times like these that individuals are linked inextricably in community as our mutual humanity binds us together.

In the Calvin community, many students took advantage of the opportunities given them to give aid to those in New Orleans. Students partnered with CRWC and other organizations to help those affected by the hurricane; and in one LOFT (Living Our Faith Together) service in September, students donated over \$6,000.

The hurricane aftermath—and the call for servanthood nationwide—have also served as a reminder that there is continual need for assistance to disadvantaged persons. One thing we must realize is that desperate need is very much present even within our own local communities. As socially responsible citizens, we must not just gravitate towards the catastrophic and the horrific that affixes our attention, but be aware of the everyday crises as well, helping those who are in need in the communities where we have been placed presently.

Granted, the hurricane season was tragic, but there is hope for the future after the storm as communities work together to rebuild and restore. As aid continues to pour into the reconstruction process in New Orleans, and as public awareness of the need for service and community has heightened, we have hope that the aftermath of these crises will pass and that the nation will emerge stronger, better prepared, and more united in purpose.

Political Science Couple Making a Difference: Mark and Emily Brieve

Mark Brieve ('04) and Emily Post Brieve ('05) are recent Calvin grads currently working for Michigan legislators as legislative aides. Mark works for Republican Jerry Kooiman (Grand Rapids) and Emily works for Republican Tom Pearce (Rockford).

Having worked on Representative Kooiman's legislation for the past few years, it is evident that Mark has transitioned very smoothly from college to his professional career. Mark credits his Calvin education, notably the POLS 380 internship in Lansing, as his gateway to real world politics: "Without that internship, I wouldn't have the job that I have now." He enjoys his work and knows that he is making an important contribution to the community. "Working at the state government level, I feel, more so than at the federal level, that we can directly impact people's lives. I love being able to have an impact in people's lives," said Mark.



Emily Brieve, Mitt Romney, and Mark Brieve

Emily Brieve, like her husband, is also making an impact on people's lives, but her legislative career began a little differently. She, like Mark, also took political science courses at Calvin, including the POLS 380 internship. However, she had two different internships before being hired at her current position. Her first internship was in Fall 2004 with The Rossman Group (TRG)—a Lansing based public relations firm. "I learned quite a bit about politics that semester," said Emily.

Because of her first internship experience in Lansing, Emily thought it would be interesting to intern for a state senator or representative. Her next internship in Spring 2005 (her last semester at Calvin) was with Senator Hardiman's office as a legislative intern; and in April, she was offered her current position of legislative assistant to Representative Tom Pearce, the day after she was interviewed for consideration. Emily enjoys helping to create good policies that benefit society.

Mark and Emily got married this past summer, and both continue to do outstanding work in the legislative realm. Still early in their careers, they have a long, bright future of creating many positive changes in and through good public policy.

Political Science Department Happenings...

- Congratulations to Professor Matthew Roberts and his wife, Kristen, as their firstborn child, a son, Penn Ezra Boyd Roberts, was born on September 10, 2005.
- Congratulations to Professor Amy Patterson and family, as they adopted Isabel, their new Chinese daughter from the Jianxi province. Isabel was adopted in August '05 and is now about 1 year old.
- Professor Robert DeVries is retiring after this academic semester. Thank you, Professor, for your many years of service.



**ATTENTION
POLITICAL
SCIENCE
ALUMNI!**

Current Calvin students would love to meet with you to talk about career opportunities. Please e-mail Professor Stevenson at stew@calvin.edu to set something up.

Some Numerical Observations:

3 - The number of political science professors staffed at Calvin when the department was created in 1969.

9 ½ - The number of professors currently staffed at the department ("½" denotes Professor Smidt's part-time involvement).

146 - The number of students currently registered as Political Science department majors

18 - The number of Political Science courses taught this past semester, fall 2005.



The current political science faculty members are: Robert L. De Vries, Simona Goi, Douglas L. Koopman (on leave until '07), Amy Patterson, James M. Penning, Matthew M.C. Roberts, Corwin E. Smidt, William R. Stevenson, Charles E. Strikwerda (part-time), Scott M. Thomas, and Rachel J. Vanderhill.

More info can be found at: www.calvin.edu/academic/pols/faculty/index.htm

The Political Science Department: Past and Present

Political Science courses were first taught at Calvin in the 1930s by professors in the History Department. At the time, there were about 350-450 students enrolled at the college, and Calvin was still on the old campus on Franklin Street. Course offerings were isolated and limited to classes relating to political history and government. At the time students were not able to major in Political Science because there were not enough courses offered in the field.

However, more courses were added gradually, and in 1958 it became possible for students to major in Political Science. Though some of the teaching was still done by historians, in 1958 the first faculty member (whose graduate field was Political Science) was appointed: Johan G. Westra. Calvin's Political Science program continued to grow into the 60s, and Calvin's Political Science Department was officially created in 1969 when it separated from the History Department—after Calvin moved to the present-day Knollcrest Campus in 1962.

Obviously, a lot has changed since the 1930s. Calvin's student enrollment has expanded to the current level of over 4,000, the department now boasts 9 full-time professors (and one half-time), two department majors are offered (and one area of concentration), and 146 students are registered currently as Political Science department majors.



Calvin's Franklin Campus, 1917-1973

But some things haven't changed over time, like the department's commitment to excellence and to its mission statement: "to prepare our students to live lives of Christian service as stewards of God's created order, including the political realm." To this day, the department continues to develop outstanding scholars that have a profound and lasting impact on society, advancing God's Kingdom.

New Political Science Professors:

These short biographies were sourced from Calvin's SPARK publication

Matthew Roberts - Political Science

A Calvin graduate, Prof. Roberts is a doctoral candidate in political science at the University of Minnesota. His field is political theory, and he is becoming an expert on the role of the Supreme Court in American politics. He has also published a number of encyclopedia articles on Supreme Court cases involving religious issues.

Scott Thomas - Political Science, Spoelhof Chair

Prof. Thomas has been teaching at the University of Bath, in England, for the past eleven years. His main teaching field is international relations, and has a major interest in the role of developing countries in international politics. He is the author of numerous articles and chapters in this field, and recently published a major study, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-first Century* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005).

Rachel Vanderhill - Political Science

Prof. Vanderhill is a 1999 graduate of Calvin who is now completing a Ph.D. in foreign affairs at the University of Virginia. She did her master's degree at Virginia on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is completing her dissertation on democratization in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia.

Reading Recommendations

With Professors
Amy Patterson and
Matthew Roberts



Professor Patterson recommends:
The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini. "Set in Afghanistan before, during, and after the civil war, it highlights many of the political issues that shaped the lives of ordinary Afghanis. It also provides interesting cultural insights into gender relations, politics, and generational differences in that country."

Professor Roberts recommends:
How Democratic is the American Constitution? by Robert A. Dahl. "Much of the debate about the newly adopted Iraqi constitution centered around whether that document was actually democratic enough. Dahl's book serves as an important reminder that even in our own country democracy has been a journey, not a single event."



Reports and Editing by
Joe Sung
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Calvin Political Science Fulbright Scholar: James Robin King



Robin King in Amman, Jordan

James Robin King ('04), a recent Calvin Political Science graduate from Indianapolis, Indiana, was the recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship for the 2005-2006 academic year. As a recipient of the grant, he is currently studying the application of Islamic teaching on non-violence to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict at the University of Jordan's Center for Strategic Studies in Amman. The Fulbright Grant is a program created by the U.S. State Department to foster mutual understanding among nations through educational and cultural exchange.

King commented on this exchange: "The idea is that when Americans are intimately involved in Jordanian society (and vice versa, as there are Jordanian Fulbrighters in the US), working with Jordanians, volunteering, becoming friends, having important conversations, the better the larger relationship between the two countries becomes, even if on a small level... I am extremely passionate about this, helping to mend the relationship between the U.S. and the Arab and larger Muslim world. For me, this is both personal/relational and cultural/political."



Robin King and his doorman, Abu Hammad

Along with his high academic ambitions and goals, King also has several personal goals aside from studying Arabic and doing academic research at the university: "I deeply want to be a part of Irbid (or Amman), to have a local butcher, grocer, vegetable seller, etc., people I get to know. I want to make good friends, to have people over to my flat for dinner, and to be asked to dinner. Knowing me, much of my time will be spent socializing, talking about politics, religion, and family. When I leave Jordan, I want the people where I live to have a fresh perspective on Americans, Christianity, and life, in general." He also emphasized wanting to share Jordan with his home communities in the U.S. "I can't understate how passionate I am about giving people a fresh perspective on the Middle East."

Calvin is proud to have such a distinguished scholar in James Robin King who is bridging gaps between the U.S. and the Middle East, while being an outstanding representative of Calvin, the United States, and of Christ.

Model United Nations 2005



Eric Rudie and Nick Kramer at the Model UN

Seventeen Calvin Political Science students attended this year's American Model United Nations Conference in Chicago from November 19-22, 2005. Calvin students simulated representative delegates of South Africa, participating in the General Assembly Plenary, the International Court of Justice, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.