Greetings to all of our alumni and other readers of Transitions. Although we are always busy at the end of the academic year we want to keep in touch with you. I hope you enjoy reading about the experiences and activities of our faculty, students and alumni. Your former professors care about how you are doing and this is one way for us to keep in touch. Send us a letter or e-mail or use the form in the newsletter to tell us how you are doing.

I am finishing my third and final year as department chairperson. Next year I will return to full-time teaching. The department has elected Dr. Jeff Bumgarner as the new department chair.

This year the department also voted to change our name. Beginning next year we will be simply the Department of Government. This name is obviously simpler than our current “Political Science/Law Enforcement Department.” It is fairly common in other universities. Most importantly this simple designation equally includes all the programs within our department; Law Enforcement, Political Science, International Relations and Public Administration.

Our former colleague Dr. Truman Wood passed away January 5, 2010. Dr. Wood was a professor in our department from 1961 until his retirement in 1991. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Mankato Teachers’ College, which later became Minnesota State, Mankato. Truman Wood set the standard for a dedicated teaching professor at our University. He was an important mentor for me and other faculty in the department.

We hope the economic recession has not been too hard on you, and that things will be improving soon. We know many of our alums have been affected and the job market is tough for our new graduates. Our university has also been negatively affected by the recession and the state budget deficits. This was a difficult year as our university tried to plan for future budget cuts of unknown size. Minnesota State Mankato decided to plan for a worst-case scenario and so laid the groundwork for very serious budget cuts. This will involve the loss of faculty positions through retirements, but also actual lay-offs. Under our contract a lengthy process is laid out for what is called “retrenchment.” Part-time (adjunct) and temporary (fixed term) faculty would be the first to go. But under retrenchment even tenured faculty could lose their jobs. The university is trying to cause the least harm through the reductions and position us to rebuild when things get better.

Already last year our department lost one Law Enforcement position after Dr. Jim Bailey resigned, and then hiring was frozen. There was much anxiety in the months-long process of identifying which departments would be cut. There were many reports to write, much data to be analyzed and too many meetings to attend. Thankfully our department was spared any major cuts for the next year. Hopefully the worst-case scenario will not come about and the planned cuts in other departments won’t need to be made. To keep our department strong we are planning to offer larger sections of introductory courses, and find more efficient ways to do more with less. Professors who had had a course off for research or for leading programs such as International Relations or Public Administration masters are now teaching more.

This whole process was stressful and frightening. But I was amazed at the good attitude our professors maintained. Morale is still good. Everyone has been willing to pitch in and do what they can to help the department and students deal with these difficult times. Instead of becoming
What is in a Name? The Department of Government

John C. Alessio, Dean College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

What a pleasure it is to write this newsletter piece on behalf of the newly named Department of Government at Minnesota State Mankato. There is much that can be said about this important name change. The Department of Government has always been an excellent department, with faculty members from both of the dominant disciplines working together. In many multi-discipline departments I have observed over the years there has been a tendency for programs to become increasingly more polarized as the areas of specialization become more developed and, hence, more pronounced. It is reassuring and quite refreshing to see that the Law Enforcement Faculty and the Political Science Faculty have wisely taken a different path. What some might have previously seen as two departments in one will now more clearly be seen as a single department. The Department of Government remains committed to being one faculty working toward a common mission – educating students in a cooperative interdisciplinary manner. I know this will seem like an overstatement to many; but as dean it would be very difficult for me to hide my delight at this amazing statement and step forward in Political Science and Law Enforcement relations. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of both Law Enforcement and Political Science programs for this path breaking accomplishment. Special thanks go to the department leaders who negotiated this agreement: Joe Kunkel, Scott Granberg-Rademacker, Tami Wilkins, Jeff Bumgarner, and others who led the way for the name change.

While I am not so naive as to think a common name immunizes individual programs from ever having differences expressed based on the uniqueness of each program’s needs, the act of arriving at a mutually agreeable name tells me that this is a faculty committed to working out differences rather than letting them expand beyond control. To be able to arrive at the point of a common name there had to be a willingness for faculty members to listen to each other and an interest on the part of faculty members to work together as one department. I see a bright future for the Department of Government – not so much because of the name itself, but more so because the department was able to arrive at the name in such an agreeable manner.

But what about the name? What does the “Department of Government” mean? It would be interesting to conduct a poll of the members of the department to determine what the name means to them. I am confident that the answers would be quite varied, and it would make sense that they would be. The word “government” itself brings to mind different notions, depending perhaps on one’s ideological perspective or subfield within the study of government. We are in an amazing political era right now. After many years of denouncing government, reducing its size, and eliminating its regulatory powers, the people of the United States elected a president and a congressional majority that believe in the importance of government. Under these circumstances the meaning of law enforcement seems somewhat less focused on arresting criminal suspects on Main Street, and includes a more serious reexamination of arresting criminal suspects on Wall Street. New laws are being passed through legislative initiatives that regulate corporations and other social entities so as to provide more protection for consumers, small businesses, new entrepreneurialism, the environment – and something sometimes referred to as a common good.

Of course, in the midst of all of this there is tremendous antigovernment backlash – what an interesting time to be a student of government. Will the pendulum make a full swing, or will it be stopped somewhere between banking regulation and immigration reform? Will federal legislation make a true difference in the quest for the common good, or will we have a series of hollow laws that raise still further question about the integrity and usefulness of government? There are many unknowns as we watch the current political and legal drama play itself out on the public stage. While all of this is happening internally we also have the continuous struggle between governments, which our international relations faculty would be quick to point out. In some instances the struggle is represented by overt war and in other instances the struggle is more subtle. Notwithstanding, the struggle is ongoing and pervasive.

There are also struggles between levels of government. This type of struggle has become particularly pronounced within the United States as federal support for local governments has diminished-forcing state, county, and city governments to find ways of raising their own revenues. States, in turn, pass laws that defy federal laws and which sometimes even defy the constitution of the United States. There have been, including in recent years, movements on the part of some legislators and various other political leaders to pass federal legislation allowing states to secede from the Union. Counties, regions, cities and states have, over the years, tried to secede from larger governments. Most often they are forced to stay together against their will, and only rarely are matters resolved in a way that makes unhappy governed bodies actually want to stay with the larger governing unit.

Amidst all of the struggles it is important to also recognize the cooperation and support between governments and government levels. Good things do happen – albeit often in an unnoticed manner; and they happen at all levels. Given the potential for intergovernmental conflict there is actually an amazing amount of cooperation taking place – especially among local communities represented by separate governing bodies.

The realized value of living locally in democratic communities, as is often expressed through anarchist thinking, has been one of the few positive by-products of nearly three decades of a federal government shaped by a simple and unsubstantiated economic idea: if we just give people with the most power and wealth complete freedom to do whatever they want in the name

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of a free market, everything will turn out alright. Of course, many people are now questioning that simple idea; but the ironic response from some dedicated free market advocates is that the last thirty years just weren’t quite free enough.

Do we need more government, or do we need less? That is the ongoing question. What exactly is the right amount of government? I suspect the answer to that question, to whatever extent we can find it, would lie in the thinking of political philosophers rather than in an actual formula. I believe it was Eric Fromm who once wrote that the ideal social arrangement is when people do what they are supposed to do because that is what they truly want to do. Government under those circumstances becomes marginally necessary. But then how do you get everyone to want to do what they are “supposed to do”? The answer to that question, if there is one, is most likely quite complicated; and for some who have experienced extreme totalitarian nation-states, the question itself might be a bit scary.

It is true that governments can only do so much – especially governments of nation-states where groups of people bound themselves together to form governments. It is true that governments can only do so much – especially governments of nation-states where groups of people bound themselves together to form governments.

selfish and defensive, our professors have become more cooperative and willing to help.

Finally, hats off to Dr. Bill Lewinski who is retiring at the end of this year. Dr. Lewinski really helped build Law Enforcement into the great program it is. He has been an inspiring teacher and has been involved in cutting-edge research and service as a consultant. We haven’t seen him much in the past few years as he has been on leave directing the Force Science Research Center. But his influence has been felt even while he was away. One bit of good news this year was that Chris Dobratz would be able to continue filling Dr. Lewinski’s position.

We very much want to hear from you, our alumni. Please fill out and send in the form on the last page of this newsletter.

Dr. Joe Kunkel and Dr. Bill Lewinski. We’ll miss you, Bill!

The Law Enforcement Program has experienced another busy year, with enrollments of about 450 majors. While the job market is more competitive than ever, our graduates manage to secure employment in the field throughout Minnesota and across the country. Our faculty remains highly committed to student learning and advising, and offer a level of integrity and insight that is unsurpassed as a model for students to emulate. And as always, our faculty members are engaging, creative and fun! We have an outstanding reputation and a big part of that notoriety is due not only to the fact that we have outstanding faculty and students, but we have exceptional alumni.

This year, several of our astonishing alumni came to campus to offer current students phenomenal presentations and talks. Retired chief of the Roseville, Minnesota Police Department, Carol Sletner, was highly interactive with students when she presented a two-hour session entitled, “Preparing to Get the Job You Want in Law Enforcement.” Students were also privileged to visit with Diana Clawson, who is employed with the U.S. Secret Service and is currently on an assignment involving protection of the White House. Another alum, John Hermann, a Special Agent with the FBI, offered students the chance to learn what his current job is like and what all he went through to get where he is today. Of the students who were able to attend these gatherings, all expressed sincere appreciation for everything learned from these speakers. If you are alumni who would consider coming to campus and sharing information or “your story” with students, we’d love to work something out with you. Be safe!
The University of Wisconsin - River Falls hosted the 2010 Arrowhead Model United Nations conference, April 15-18. Minnesota State Mankato fielded several “country teams” representing France, Egypt, and the Dominican Republic. Iyob Waldsamayate represented France at the Security Council. The remaining delegates sat on one of the main committees of the General Assembly—Political and Security Committee, Economic and Finance Committee, Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee, and Environment Committee. Other delegates included Aziza Berdiyeva, Ryan Herman, Jessica Jacobs, Jamiele Lamson-Buscho, Zemfira Khusrutdinova, Lincoln, Zachary, Moriah Miles, Luke Moore, Emma Ohanyan, Florkime Paye, Salem Taye. I should highlight the fact that three of our participants were exchange students. They were sponsored by the International Student Office (ISO).

Even though, a majority of our delegates were first timers, our students submitted resolutions and debated effectively in the deliberations. And, I, in addition to my regular role as coach, served as Chair of the Political and Security Committee. I was ably assisted by Aija Collins who served as Legal Secretary for the committee.

The model is a wonderful learning opportunity for our students who not only learn and practice UN-related skills (e.g., resolution drafting, debating, use of parliamentary procedures, etc.), but also get to reflect on and integrate knowledge gained in their academic courses. The students get to also hear a prominent individual speak about major issues in international relations. This year the featured keynote speaker was Ms. Verena Nowotny, spokesperson for the Austrian Mission to the United Nations. Ms. Nowotny spoke about the challenges faced by the UN in addressing the many crises around the world.

Our participation in this important activity was made possible by the generosity of the Department of Government, Student Senate, and ISO. We express our gratitude and thanks to Department of Government Chairperson Joseph Kunkel, and ISO Director Thomas Gjersvig. Pat Davis, Department of Government office manager, as always deserves our praise and thanks for her work to facilitate the process and ensure proper handling of all the financial transactions.

Under the leadership of Aija Collins, the United Nations-International Relations Club (UNIR) had another active year. Aija and her cohorts put on a number of fundraisers and organized or co-sponsored several current issue discussions. The club also hosted Ms. Caryn Lindsay who gave a session on the Foreign Service. Club members have also dramatically increased in the past year and we look forward to a more active club for next year. We encourage those of you who were at one point members of the club to write to us with your contact information. We also invite you to stop by during the school year if you happen to be in the Mankato area.

Snapsots of Minnesota State Mankato students at the 2010 Arrowhead Model UN Conference
Greetings to the readers of this 2010 issue of Transitions. I type this as I sit in what is technically still Joe Kunkel’s office, i.e. the chair’s office in Morris Hall 109. Dr. Kunkel has served out his 3-year term as chair of the department. I have been selected to be the incoming chair of the department, effective in the Fall of 2010. The timeline of title changes notwithstanding, Dr. Kunkel and I traded offices early so that we wouldn’t have to mess with it come the fall. Essentially, I get to be in this big office for a while without the commensurate responsibility. Pretty good deal for me.

Becoming department chair is just one of the many changes for me personally, and for the department organizationally. On a personal level, I have been promoted to full professor, also effective Fall 2010. I no longer will have to keep a record of everything I’ve done for the past 20 years in order to build a case for promotion. I’m fairly happy about that.

At the department level, I’ve already mentioned our transition to a new chairperson. But with Dr. Tami Wilkins going on sabbatical leave, there are some additional changes in the Law Enforcement program. In particular, Dr. Colleen Clarke will become the director of the Law Enforcement program and I will become the POST coordinator for the program. Traditionally, these two roles were combined in a single person. However, for the coming year, we are going to experiment by separating these roles. Dr. Clarke, as director, is the primary contact person for students who have law enforcement program concerns which cannot be handled by their advisor. Indeed, Dr. Clarke will manage the Law Enforcement program and will represent the program to the campus community, including prospective and current students, faculty, and the administration. My role as POST coordinator simply requires me to ensure that our program conforms to POST curriculum standards and to “sign off” for students seeking to take the POST licensing exam and who are eligible to do so. Obviously, the duties of the POST coordinator and Law Enforcement director are related to each other and at times overlap. Dr. Clarke and I look forward to working together on behalf of law enforcement students to ensure that they are getting a top-notch college education and that Option I students are professionally prepared for peace officer licensure.

Another change at the department level is the department’s name. We are no longer the Department of Political Science and Law Enforcement. We are now the Department of Government. While that name might sound odd at first, please note that many other political science-related programs at universities around the country have adopted the same departmental moniker. The name change is intended to capture all of our programs (political science, law enforcement, international relations, and public administration) under a single heading. It is also worth noting that students will still be majoring in the respective disciplines, i.e. political science, law enforcement, etc.). The name change was overwhelmingly supported by the department’s faculty, and for a variety of different reasons. In any case, we are all looking forward to establishing ourselves under this new, unifying identity.

Finally, for those former students out there who have graduated (recently or long ago), please don’t be a stranger. Drop me, or Pat Davis, or your advisor a line and let us know what you’re up to.

Colleen Clarke


Austin Akervik acted as president of the Law Enforcement Club. He organized the students in the club to continue to fulfill their obligation with adopt a highway project in the fall and the spring. The club members went out twice to the shooting range; always a popular activity.

Sergeant Dan Wulff, a retired Minneapolis Bomb Squad officer, spoke to the students about his career and injuries that forced him to retire from policing. Dan Wulff is a survivor with an amazing outlook on life and a positive attitude that helped him heal and return to his life with his family. Mr. Wulff is a true inspiration to our students who are about to start their law enforcement careers.

Mr. Myron Latgren, a retired Minnesota State Patrol officer and pioneer of accident reconstruction gave a detailed and interesting account of the inception of accident reconstruction in Minnesota. Representing the state patrol, Latgren was one of the first to teach accident reconstruction to the officers in our state. As a state patrol officer, Latgren was then sent to instruct police in departments from other states in the country. A true pioneer in modern policing who kept the students enthralled with his knowledge and quick wit.

During the spring semester I was asked to act as advisor to the Lambda Chi Alpha Club Fraternity on campus. Although not directly linked to the law enforcement, the originators of the club were law students. As well, a number of our law enforcement students are members in this club.

One of the courses offered in the study abroad is Response to International Terrorism. Our group faced the reality of international terrorism when, just days after Christmas, prior to leaving the US, a Nigerian man with ties to al-Qaida attempted to destroy a Detroit bound airliner. It was a sobering experience that left a number of students and parents uneasy about the excursion. The group was undeterred and all boarded our flight for what turned out to be a phenomenal trip. The sights, interaction with the locals as well as people from all over the world enriched the learning experiences of the students.

Barcelona and Rome were new destinations to our international learning, adding another facet to the course in Comparative Criminal Justice Systems.
Christian Dobratz

I will soon finish my second full year at Minnesota State Mankato and am really feeling like I am settling and “fitting” in. The more I learn about our faculty and our students, the more honored I feel to be serving in my position and my pride for the program we offer is immense.

I have finally been able to fine tune most of my courses and have tailored them the way I wanted and envisioned them to be, in addition to updating the most recent data for the courses. This has been a big relief. I continue to push forward towards my goal of earning my Ph.D. in Business Administration with a Specialization in Criminal Justice. Although this is a source of major stress for me, the topics to date are interesting and I enjoy the style of my courses. I am very thankful for a very understanding wife and family, especially when it is crunch time trying to meet deadlines for papers.

I am currently in the process of trying to publish an article I wrote comparing Southwest Airlines and American Airlines in regards to organizational culture, structure, and relational coordination. In addition, I completed 2 book reviews this past year for Jones & Bartlett—first reviewing a textbook entitled Conducting Criminal Investigations, and then reviewing a second textbook entitled Interviewing in Criminal Justice, which was published in 2009. Further, I did complete a career highlight for a textbook being authored by Dr. Jeff Bumgarner. The book, entitled Police and the Community, is slated for a 2011 copyright date with Jones and Bartlett.

Much of my time at Minnesota State Mankato, aside from classroom lecture, has been devoted to being an active advisor for students enrolled in the major. I find this a daunting task with great rewards. I thoroughly enjoy the interaction and time getting to know our enrolled students on a more personal basis. Lastly, I have been able to secure several donations from some LE agencies of slightly used and new equipment, such as body armor and handgun holsters, that I have incorporated into the classroom setting for Tactical Communications, providing the students with a more realistic experience with the equipment they will be using in the field, as well as teaching a section in class on weapon-retention.

I am thoroughly enjoying my experience here at Minnesota State Mankato. We have a very strong program, a dedicated staff, and excellent students enrolled in the program. Interacting with them both in and out of the classroom has been truly rewarding and makes coming to work each day a real pleasure and opportunity to learn from them as well.

Scott Granberg-Rademacker

It has been a challenging year of ups and downs.

This year has tested the limits of my endurance as I supervised a grand total of 23 graduate capstone Theses/APPs (way more than anyone else in the entire university) and served as second/third reader on no fewer than 10 others. This was a lot of extra reading, editing and meeting with students above and beyond my contractual duties.

Furthermore, the state’s bleak budget situation and the university’s cuts to programs made for a very stressful environment. Fortunately, it appears that the storm has passed and left the MPA program and our department intact for the most part.

Despite these challenges, the year has had some bright spots too. I have continued serving as the graduate director for our MPA program—which has booming enrollment. I also served as the Treasurer of the Great Plains Political Science Association, and I am the official ICPSR representative for the university.

On the research side, my article entitled “An Algorithm for Converting Ordinal Scale Measurement Data to Interval/Ratio Scale” was published in the February edition of the Sage journal Educational and Psychological Measurement. This article has caused something of a splash as I have received questions, feedback and comments on this article from scholars all over the world. Also, this past October, I presented a paper with Dr. Jeff Bumgarner entitled “Variable Influences on DNA Crime Laboratory Productivity” at the Great Plains Political Science Association Meeting in Sioux City, IA. The paper was well-received and Dr. Bumgarner and I are working to submit it for journal publication. I also have a manuscript (with two co-authors) outlining the use of Artificial Neural Networks as a solution to the “black box” problem in systems theory under review at the journal Computational and Mathematical Organization Theory.

Also I am off-contract this summer, which hopefully will mean some uninterrupted time for writing and research. I’m keeping my fingers crossed.

Despite the ups and downs things are going fine, and I am looking forward to brighter and better times in the future.

Tom Inglot

Greetings to all our alumni and friends!

A recent message from the editor of this newsletter, Jeff Bumgarner, just reminded me that my year-long sabbatical leave is officially coming to a close. As I mentioned in my previous newsletter entry from 2009, I had applied for several
grants to fund my new international projects for 2009-10. I am happy to let you know that I was successful in receiving three out of five funding opportunities that I competed for. Unfortunately, I had to decline one of them – the Fulbright Fellowship to teach at the University of Wroclaw, Poland. Instead I accepted another major (federally funded) research grant from the National Council of Eurasian and East European Research (NCEER) that allows me to conduct collaborative work on several countries for two years, until October 2011. The title of my project is “Continuity and Change in Family Policies of Central and Eastern Europe: A Comparison of Hungary, Poland, and Romania.” The initial stages of my sabbatical research were also funded by a generous Faculty Research Grant from Minnesota State Mankato.

My current research project focuses on demographic, political and social challenges that aging European nations have to deal with in the early 21st century. Many countries have already begun to address these problems by designing new incentives and programs for families with children. This causes controversy as citizens resist higher taxes and demand extensive protection for other, traditionally well protected groups such as the elderly. Together with a small team of European colleagues we have been conducting research on these issues in three countries since August 2009. I visited Europe already three times and I am planning my next trip for June and July. In August and September I worked in Warsaw, Poland, Budapest, Hungary and two cities in Romania – Cluj and the capital city of Bucharest. Together with my collaborators we interviewed many politicians, government experts, social activists and academics specializing in family policies. In the meantime I also gave two guest lectures, at the Etvos Lorand University in Budapest and at the Bobes-Bolayi University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. In September and October I also attended several conferences, including the 2009 annual meeting of the European Social Policy Network Association held in Urbino, Italy, where I chaired a panel.

While I was in Italy I learned by email that my book on “Welfare States in East-Central Europe, 1919-2004” (Cambridge 2008) was awarded a special 2009 AASS/Orbis Prize for the best book published in English on any aspect of Polish affairs in 2008. The prize is awarded annually by the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies and Orbis Bookstore in London, England. In the meantime I also received a contract for the Polish language translation of my book which will be published in Warsaw by a university press sometime this year. In addition, in November I published a chapter in the new volume, “Post-Communist Welfare Pathways” (Palgrave 2009) edited by an Italian/Dutch team, Drs. Alfio Cerami and Pieter Vanhuysse.

My second visit to Europe took place in February-March. Warsaw, and most of Europe, was totally buried in snow – as you might have seen on TV – it was unprecedented. But overall it turned out to be better than the Icelandic volcano because all airports remained open. I did a lot of interesting work in Warsaw, where I also attended another major conference on family policy, the first of its kind held at the Polish Parliament with the participation of major political figures. After that I managed to get to Budapest, Hungary for the national holiday of March 15, where I attended rallies by three major opposing political parties (campaigning before the April elections). Each of them, interestingly enough, held a separate celebration in different parts of town! I spent very fruitful two weeks there, meeting scores of interesting people and discovering a new world of family policy – Hungary boasts one of the best systems of government protection for families and children in Europe, and perhaps all over the world (they have had traditionally an extremely low birth rate and the population continues to decline every year, so they are trying very hard to counter this trend). I returned to the U.S. in April to continue my research at home. I was also invited to deliver a lecture on the Polish Anti-Communist Student Movement (I participated in this movement during 1980-83, and as a result of this I emigrated to the US) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (my alma mater).

Now the summer is upon us. After all of my travels, my wife, Joanna and I are planning to finally spend more time together. Besides, I still have one more research trip ahead of me and I have already started planning for my return to teaching in the fall semester. This time I will offer my traditional classes on comparative politics, European politics, and U.S. foreign policy but also an undergraduate class on comparative social policy/welfare state that is directly related to my research interests. In the Spring I will also teach a graduate seminar on this same subject on our new Edina campus in the Twin Cities. I am also preparing a new, web-based program to facilitate reading and discussion for my courses.

In sum, I am looking forward to another busy and very exciting year. It was a pleasure, as always to share with you all my comings and goings. Please stay in touch and send us good news about yourself wherever you are.

**Eiji Kawabata**

In 2009-2010, I taught a graduate seminar (for the first time at Minnesota State Mankato), in addition to an intro course and upper-division undergraduate/graduate courses in international relations and Asian politics. Teaching the graduate seminar was particularly enjoyable and enlightening. We examined major approaches in comparative politics and political economy, focusing on the recent development in scholarly discussions. We applied these approaches to the analysis of the politics of privacy in comparative perspective. We learned different aspects of privacy in democracy as well as recent developments where the expansion of cyberspace and the war on terror threaten privacy. We realized complexities that are associated with the politics of privacy. We always had a lively discussion in class. I enjoyed teaching this seminar.

I am working on a new research project, focusing on the politics of privacy in Japan. Recently the Japanese government enacted a comprehensive law for privacy protection. This

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change is remarkable because traditionally privacy has never been emphasized in Japanese society. My research examines how and why the shift toward privacy protection occurred. Based on preliminary research, I wrote a paper and presented it at the International Studies Association Annual Convention in February 2010 in New Orleans. I continue to work on this project. In July 2010, I will go to Tokyo to conduct field research, using funding from the Minnesota State Mankato Faculty Research Grant program and the Northeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies. In Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 when I will be on sabbatical; I will be a Visiting Scholar at the Center for Japanese Studies, University of California at Berkeley. I look forward to interacting with scholars and using library materials at Berkeley (of course, I will enjoy the weather in the Bay area). I hope to report the results of my research in next year’s issue of Transitions.

Joe Kunkel

As the 2010 elections heat up I am getting more calls for interviews from various media organizations. In 2008 the Franken-Coleman contest for the Senate was the main topic on which I was asked to comment. This year it looks like the First District Congressional race between Tim Walz and Randy Demmer will be of interest. Already journalists from around Minnesota and the nation have called to learn about what we expect to be a very important and hard fought contest. How that election goes will say much about the direction of the country in the next two years.

Again this spring in POLS 473 Legislative Process we had a mock Congress simulation. This year we reenacted House action on the H.R 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, the climate bill with “cap and trade.” Each student played the role of a member of the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee. In committee hearings we heard from expert witnesses, including former Senator John Hottinger representing the Sierra Club, Robert Ambrose, Government Affairs Representative, Great River Energy, Rick Howden, District Staffer for Congressman Tim Walz, and Minnesota State Mankato Geography Professor Dr. Don Friend. Many of the students were disappointed that they were not able to find common ground across party lines. That shows our simulation was almost as partisan as the real Congress.

Professor Suzanne Bunkers (English) and I again led a study-tour to Italy over spring break. This year we went to Lake Como, Milan, Venice and Florence. We had 26 people in our group. This was a great group of students who had a good time without any major problems. The weather was cold in Europe this year and we experienced some of that. But we had good times nonetheless. Before the trip we learned about the aristocratic republic that governed Venice for nearly 1,000 years. We studied Florence during the Renaissance, a time of great artistic revolution but also cut-throat political intrigue. This is the experience on which Niccolo Machiavelli based The Prince. We learned about the various tyrants and dukes who ruled Milan and how Milan became the economic capital of modern Italy. We learned something of the whole history of Italy and also of the modern period since unification in the 1860’s. Our students were well prepared for the tours of the historic sites. The expert Italian guides were impressed with how much information and understanding our students brought to Italy.

For spring break 2011, Dr. Bunkers and I are planning our first study-tour to Germany. We will visit Berlin, Nuremberg and Munich and some Medieval towns on the Romantic Road. I also received the good news that I had been awarded a Fulbright grant to teach in Nuremberg Germany May-July 2011. This is an exciting prospect. I will teach a course on American politics in the Age of Obama in Nuremberg and an American Political Thought class in nearby Erlangen. Although I will be teaching in English, this year I took German 101 and 102. This has been a fun experience for me, seeing things again from the perspective of the undergraduate in the classroom. I thought I fit right in with the 20 year olds in the class. I wonder what they thought!

Kevin Parsneau

While I have kept active teaching courses and continuing to research, this year has been one for expanding work beyond teaching and research. The state budget crisis has presented challenges for our department and programs as it has for other departments and colleges, and people have tried to pitch in to minimize the effect on students. I like to think that I have done my part even as our programs have grown during tough times.

I have had more students than ever this year. In response to concerns about the budget as well as limited classroom space, the department offered “U.S. Government” in the over-sized student union ballroom. There were some technology issues, but for the most part the students were patient, even enduring a room change at mid-semester, and seemed to do as well as past classes. We also have had high enrollment in our growing Masters of Public Administration program with larger-than-ever classes both at the Mankato campus and at the extension campus at 7700 France Avenue. It’s great to see the program gaining students in a growing professional field.

I have continued researching the executive branch and presidential appointments to the cabinet departments. My database of executive branch nominations since Kennedy, including the nominees’ resumes and press coverage of their nominations and activities as officers, has grown this year to include more nominees from George W. Bush’s administration and even the first year of Barack Obama’s administration. While the political layer of the bureaucracy is not interesting or exciting to most people, this research looks at how presidents select people to help them accomplish their goals and it has been an increasingly important part of political science research.
into presidents as well as public administration research into the implementation of policy. My research is the basis for an article that I submitted this spring.

I am also working on research into the superdelegates in the Democratic Party primary and caucus system in 2008. While there have been superdelegates for decades, 2008’s competition between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama was the first time the race was close enough that they had the possibility of determining the outcome of the nomination. At least, that possibility was what Clinton hoped following her defeats in the Super Tuesday competitions. My research looks into the superdelegates’ actual behavior and examines how realistic her hopes were. This research is being presented at the 2010 Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, and, to my knowledge, my coauthor and I are the only ones doing empirical, systematic research on the superdelegates.

Finally, I’ve taken on the job of Pre-Law advisor and we have revived the Minnesota State Mankato Pre-Law Society. This year, the society went from no members and its founding documents hidden in a drawer somewhere, to an energetic club with regular meetings and activities, thanks to a core of active students, especially the new President Jordan Heinrich. This year, the students invited guest speakers to talk about the law school application process, life in law school and law careers. They are also going on a trip to visit law schools. Pre-Law students are some of the most enthusiastic and goal-oriented students we have at Minnesota State Mankato and I am looking forward to seeing how far they will go. Altogether, it has been a strong start and promises to be a growing club taking on more projects and taking advantage of more opportunities.

Fred Slocum

This has been a busy year. In the fall, I taught U.S. Government, Introduction to Political Analysis, Public Opinion and Polling Methods, and my signature course, Southern Politics (the only such course offered at any college or university in the North Central states). For the Public Opinion class, students joined me in two “out of classroom” experiences – an October 12 “field trip” to the Twin Cities to visit a market research firm and a focus-group facility, and a November survey project where we surveyed Janesville, MN residents by telephone to gain their awareness of and suggestions for addressing the problem of abandoned and deteriorating buildings in Janesville. I presented results from this survey to members of Janesville’s Economic Development Authority on February 16, 2010. Also, I attended the Minnesota Political Science Association (MNPSA) conference at the College of St. Benedict on November 7, and gave a talk on “Southern Politics: Continuity and Change” to a group of emeriti faculty and staff on November 13. In Fall 2009, I was appointed to a three-year term on the Minnesota Political Science Association’s executive board, and there is a strong likelihood Minnesota State University, Mankato will host the MNPSA conference in either October or November 2011. Stay tuned!

This year, I had a couple of other opportunities to share my knowledge of survey research. First, I wrote a December 2009 audience survey for the Mankato-area chorale ensemble Musicorum, which I have been a singer in for the past eleven years. Second, I wrote a membership survey for the Minnesota Political Science Association, distributed to its members online in February 2010.

In the spring, I taught the most widely-varying selection of courses of perhaps any semester: Introduction to Political Analysis, (American) Political Parties, American Legal Philosophy, and Environmental Politics. For the Political Parties course, many students participated in the parties’ precinct caucuses and wrote an extra-credit paper on their experience there; some students went on to become delegates to a party’s county or even state convention. In January, I attended the Southern Political Science Association conference in Atlanta, GA, and presented a paper on authoritarianism and Southern politics (co-authored with Scott Huffman of Winthrop University). Also in January, I gave commentary of the impact of Minnesota’s possible loss of a congressional seat for an article in the Northfield, MN News. On February 15 and 17, I guest-lectured in Dr. Kevin Parsneau’s class, The Executive Process, on late 20th-century presidential elections, and on April 6, I guest-lectured in the Business Law class, Topics: First Amendment Rights, team-taught by Prof. Dan Levin (Business Law) and Dr. Craig Matarrese (Philosophy), appearing again for questions on April 13. On April 14, I presented on “Abraham Lincoln and the Exercise of Presidential Power” at a panel discussion on “Lincoln and Civil Liberties,” accompanying the opening of Minnesota State Mankato Memorial Library’s exhibit “Abraham Lincoln: A Man of His Time, A Man for All Times,” running from April 19 through May 20. I rounded out the spring by attending the Midwest Political Science Association conference in Chicago, IL, April 22-25, where I served on the association’s undergraduate poster award committee.

For several years I have participated in the College in the Schools (CIS) program, where an appropriately credentialed high-school teacher offers a course to qualifying students for college credit. I have continued this year as a consulting faculty for a CIS U.S. Government course offered at Belle Plaine High School, Belle Plaine, MN. On March 10, I gave a talk on Southern Politics to both morning and afternoon sections of Belle Plaine’s CIS U.S. Government course.

For summer 2010, I am serving on a best-book award committee for the Southern Political Science Association, meaning I am primed to read lots of books! I will teach two courses first summer session: Introduction to Political Analysis, and U.S. Government. For Fall 2010, I will offer the department’s 600-level graduate seminar in American Politics, long in our catalog of courses, but also long dormant – until now. I hope the revival of this course will be a valuable addition to the department’s Master’s in Public Administration program.

Our student chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha (political science honor society, for which I am chapter advisor) has been fairly quiet activity-wise this year, but we have initiated three new members in both fall 2009 and spring 2010. Considerably less
quiet has been my frequent commentary on politics and public affairs via my columns and letters in the Mankato Free Press, three of which have already been published so far in 2010.

As always, I would enjoy hearing from alumni and friends of the department: frederick.slocum@mnsu.edu.

Jackie Vieceli

This has been a year of work on projects which are ongoing. During the Fall semester, I served as the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences representative on UCAP, and learned a lot about the 120-credit conversion and the new electronic system for managing curriculum proposals. I also continued this year to direct the Kessel Peace Institute. During the year, we co-sponsored addresses by two holocaust survivors and a visit to campus by Lama Shenpen Drolma. We also organized a panel on Haiti and did a teach-in this Spring on “Our Wars and Their Consequences”, as well as presented films on Afghanistan and on torture of detainees.

I am continuing work on my book on global political philosophy, and am getting closer to wrapping up the first volume. I also chaired the department’s Personnel Committee this year. After giving us great leadership, Dr. Abdalla Battah will step out of directing the IR Program according to the normal rotation which the faculty had decided upon, and I will be serving as Program Director for the coming term. I also continue to seek opportunities for taking a student study abroad group back to South Africa.

In Memorium
Dr. Truman David Wood
November 2, 1932 - January 5, 2010

Truman Wood was a professor in the Department Political Science/Law Enforcement of Mankato State University, later Minnesota State University, Mankato from 1961 to 1991. He taught a variety of courses, but primarily focused on American Political Thought. He demonstrated great care for students and understood quality teaching and careful advising to be the top priorities of his academic career. For some courses he would not return exams in class but would post exam scores outside his office. Students needed to come to his office to see the scores and then he would call them in for a visit to talk about their progress. Toward the end of his career Truman worked closely with non-traditional students. To serve their needs he helped start the Paralegal concentration. Although he never served as department chair he probably had more influence on committees and behind the scenes.

Truman Wood came from the area. He graduated from Delevan (Minnesota) High School in 1950. He earned his Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Mankato State Teachers’ College (later Minnesota State University, Mankato). He worked as a teacher in several high schools in Iowa and Minnesota. He earned a Masters and Ph.D. from University of Iowa.

Dr. Wood was particularly active in community service. He was a member of the Mankato Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the Mankato Planning Commission for 22 years and chair of his church administrative council for 14 years. He frequently served as a public speaker for high school commencements, service clubs and as an election analyst. He was active in Republican party politics until the 1980’s, serving as a delegate to the National Convention in 1964. When he retired, he and his wife Reta established the Truman and Reta Wood Scholarship for political science majors who demonstrate a record of community involvement and academic excellence. Truman Wood was an inspiring teacher, a caring advisor and a model citizen. He shaped and touched many lives.
**DEPARTMENT NEWS**

**DR. TOM INGLOT WINS AWARD FOR HIS BOOK!**

Our own Dr. Tom Inglot was a co-winner of the 2009 AAASS/Orbis Books Prize for Polish Studies. The award is sponsored by Orbis Books in London and is presented annually for an outstanding book relating in some way to Polish affairs. Dr. Inglot won the prize for his highly acclaimed book *Welfare States in East Central Europe, 1919-2004*, which was published last year by Cambridge University Press.

**DR. JOE KUNKEL SELECTED FOR FULBRIGHT AWARD**

Dr. Joseph Kunkel has been selected for a Fulbright Senior Lecturer Award for Germany. Dr. Kunkel plans to teach two political science courses at Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nürnberg Germany, April-July 2011. He also plans to network with German professors, give lectures at German-American Institutes around Germany, and visit Gymnasium teachers to talk about American politics and civic education. He hopes to strengthen the existing exchange relationship between our two universities.

**STUDENT NEWS**

Law enforcement students traveling with Dr. Clarke and Dr. Wilkins to Europe over Winter Break pose for a group picture in Barcelona, Spain.

Joseph Kunkel and Suzanne Bunkers (English) gathered in a Milan Italy restaurant for the farewell dinner of their 2010 Italy Study-tour.
Baton of Honor

Each semester, the Law Enforcement faculty selects two graduating students to be recipients of the Baton of Honor. Students selected for this honor have demonstrated consistent ability in the classroom, are thought to have the respect of their peers and faculty members, and possess leadership qualities. The names of honorees are permanently displayed on a plaque outside of the classroom 206 in Morris Hall.

Honorees are also given a red, white, and blue cord to be worn during the commencement ceremony.

The recipients for the Baton of Honor in the Fall of 2009 were Nicole Neudecker and Joseph Kauser. The recipients in the Spring of 2010 were Paige Burke and Jeronimo Yanez. The Department of Government congratulates these students!
Hello to all currently involved and graduated members of the Alpha Delta Alpha Chapter of Alpha Phi Sigma at Minnesota State University, Mankato! This article is a brief summary of our chapter’s activities and events throughout the past year. As in years past, we participated in the Adopt-A-Highway Program. In early February, Alpha Phi Sigma took a tour of the Blue Earth County Justice Center, which was recently constructed in 2009. The county paid approximately forty-two million dollars to build the law enforcement center, which houses the sheriff’s office, county attorney’s office, probation, dispatch, courts, and jail. On the tour, we were able to see the majority of the building besides the jail units, and also met several deputies from the Blue Earth County Sheriff’s Office.

Three members, Erika Friesen, Matt Heytens, and Steve Lowry were able to travel to San Diego, California for the Alpha Phi Sigma National Conference. These students had the opportunity and honor to meet Sheriff Lee Baca of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and the distinguished author of policing novels, Joseph Wambaugh. Mr. Wambaugh wrote numerous best-selling books, including The Onion Field, The Choir Boys, and The New Centurions. These three students were also able to go on ride-alongs with the San Diego Police Department and the San Diego Harbor Patrol. Steve Lowry was awarded two national scholarships, the V.A. Leonard Undergraduate Scholarship and the Jose A. Marques Memorial Scholarship.

I was awarded Chapter Advisor of the Year. Overall, the opportunity to attend the National Conference was a wonderful experience that none of us who attended will ever forget.

Other activities this year included a visit to a shooting range in New Ulm. Our chapter also hosted a guest speaker in April. Special Agent John Hermann of the Federal Bureau of Investigation was our guest speaker. Agent Hermann is a Minnesota State Mankato graduate and former member, and is also the brother of one of our current members, Ryan Hermann. Nearly eighty people attended his lecture. Not only were law enforcement students present, but many students from other majors were there as well.

Agent Hermann was a great success at educating and informing students about the FBI and Alpha Phi Sigma.

The Chapter was very active this year. Chapter officers, and most notably, our president, Steve Lowry, were exceptional. Steve demonstrated very strong leadership skills, and helped to make our year very successful. In addition, he made every gathering both special and fun.

We wish our graduates the best of luck in the future. We also hope everyone reading this article is happy and safe, and will spread the word that our local chapter of Alpha Phi Sigma and the entire Law Enforcement Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is the best at instilling and expecting integrity, honesty, and leadership.
Michelle (Murzyn) Leba was recognized by the Minnesota Council for Social Studies, Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest and the National Council for Social Studies, as the 2009 Middle School Teacher of the Year. She also received the 2010 Distinguished Young Alumni Award from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Michelle was a social studies major and coach in the first year of Public Achievement in 1997-98. She is a geography teacher and part-time curriculum coordinator at Washington Technology Middle School in St. Paul. Congrats to Michelle!

Bran Johnson received his bachelor degree in Political Science and his Master of Arts in Public Administration from Minnesota State Mankato in 1985 and 1988, respectively. He is a purchasing manager for the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Julie Anderson received her bachelor degree in International Relations from Minnesota State Mankato in 1993. She was last known to be completing her doctorate in Public Administration at Hamline University. She currently serves as the Executive Director of Transitional Housing for Steele County, MN.

Carrie Nordstrom received her bachelor degree in political science from Minnesota State Mankato in 1984. She currently serves as the Calendar Clerk for Judge Robert Kressel, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Minneapolis, MN.

Sabella Abidde earned his Ph.D. at Howard University and is a columnist on African issues in Washington DC.

Salomon Orellana entered a Ph.D. program at Michigan State University in 2004. He has finished his Ph.D. and was looking for academic work when Dr. Slucum last saw him at the Midwest PSA conference last year.

Michael G. Miller entered a Ph.D. study at Cornell University in 2006. He will finish by August 2010 and has accepted a position as assistant professor at the University of Illinois - Springfield.

Danielle Thomsen entered a Ph.D. study at Cornell University in 2007.

Jeff Long entered a Ph.D. program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2007.

Nathan Madden entered a Ph.D. study at the University of Missouri, Columbia in 2008.

Andrew Kalis graduated from Minnesota State Mankato in 2004. He completed law school at the University of Minnesota in 2007. Andrew passed the Minnesota Bar and is now a private practice attorney.

Alum Highlight – Mike Miller
by Dr. Fred Slocum

One of our most distinguished alumni, Michael G. (Mike) Miller, earned his Master’s in Public Administration (MPA) at Minnesota State Mankato in 2006. Mike enrolled in the Ph.D. program in the Department of Government, Cornell University, in Fall 2006. As of May 2010, Mike has virtually finished his Ph.D. at Cornell. His dissertation committee chair, Walter Mebane (University of Michigan) has given a “green light” to his dissertation, pending any needed revisions. Mike has formally submitted his completed dissertation to his committee at Cornell, and there is high confidence of final approval.

The good news continues: Mike also has landed a tenure-track academic job, in possibly the worst academic job market for political scientists in a generation. In Fall 2010, Mike will begin his career as Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS). He will teach undergraduate and graduate courses on American government, research methods, campaign management, and public policy. The UIS position has a teaching load that will allow Mike to pursue an ambitious research agenda on campaign finance in the American states.

From a very proud correspondent and good friend of Mike’s - Fred Slocum
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