



OWU Department of Politics &
Government Alumni Newsletter /
Spring 2024

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Faculty & Staff, Spring 2024

Faculty

Dr. James C. Franklin (Chair)
Dr. Ashley Biser
Dr. Brianna N. Mack
Dr. Micheal V. Esler
Dr. Franchesca V. Nestor
Dr. William C. Louthan (Emeritus)
Dr. Ji Young Choi

Administrative Staff

Deborah Lovell

Newsletter Editors & Writers

Timothy Page, Christian Tesnow

George Meader Bequest:

The department gratefully acknowledges that this newsletter is made possible through the financial support received from a bequest by a former Ohio Wesleyan student, George Meader, who attended from 1923-1925. Meader was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from a southeastern Michigan district from 1951-1965. He received his law degree from the University of Michigan in 1931. Prior to serving in Congress, he had a private law practice in Ann Arbor, served as a county prosecutor, and as counsel to the U.S. Senate special committee investigating the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He served as counsel to congressional committees and resumed the private practice of law after leaving the Congress.



Faculty Updates

Ashley Biser was awarded the Charles W. Fairbanks Associate Professor of Politics & Government (*see article in later pages of the newsletter).

Ji Young Choi has a book forthcoming in October: *The Politics of South Korea: A Comprehensive Introduction* (Lynne Rienner Publishers). This book is a thematic introduction of South Korea's politics, economy, pop culture, and foreign relations from int'l and comparative perspectives. It also covers the political and economic history of North Korea as well as inter-Korean relations including a nuclear issue. He was invited as a discussant of "The Indo-Pacific as Japan's 21st Century Grand Strategy," by the Institute for Japanese Studies, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, February, 2024. Dr. Choi also presented his paper, "South Korea's Security Dilemma and Nuclear Options" at an annual conference of the Int'l Studies Association in San Francisco, CA in April 2024. Due to receiving a Travel-Learning Course grant, he and OWU students will visit Seoul and Busan in South Korea in May 2024. Dr. Choi will present one or two chapters of my book, *The Politics of South Korea: A Comprehensive Introduction* at Yonsei University, Seoul Korea in May 2024.

Michael Esler took a group of Moot Court members to Capital University in the Fall 2023. The students participated in the competition and got to participate in trying a court case. Dr. Esler also had alumni pre-law students share their experiences at law school with current OWU pre-law students at the Connection Conference in February 2024 at OWU.

James Franklin presented a paper at a conference in Vancouver in March of 2024. Dr. Franklin is currently the Chair of the PG Department and the Director of the International Studies Program.

William Louthan is creating a new edition of his previously published book, *The United States Supreme Court: Lawmaking in the Third Branch of Government*, which is set to be released some time in 2026.

Brianna "Nicky" Mack was the director of Mock Convention and recently published a paper *(See Faculty spotlight page)

Franchesca Nestor will be taking a group of students to the United Kingdom in May of 2024 with a travel learning course about Food and Politics. Dr. Nestor has also been instrumental in starting monthly student social luncheons and has participated in the I-Cubed lectures.



Please also visit the Faculty & Staff page by scanning the QR or clicking on link below.

<https://www.owu.edu/academics/departments-programs/department-of-politics-government/faculty-staff/>

J.K. Eddy Memorial Lecture on World Politics



Are the United States and China Destined for Conflict?

April 23, 2024



Ryan Hass was the guest lecturer for the 34th Annual J.K. Eddy Memorial Lecture on World Politics. During the day of the lecture, Hass met with students for lunch and met a student that was interested in a career in foreign affairs. He enjoyed the curiosity, warmth, and thoughtfulness of the students. The lecture was a great mix of the lecture, public discourse, and questions from the audience. Dr. Choi and Hass discussed the politics and ideas that could potentially cause China and the U.S. to be in conflict. OWU was honored to have Wayne Lafferty and Meghan, family members of the Eddy family, attend the dinner and lecture.



Hass is Director of the John L. Thornton China Center and the Chen-Fu and Cecilia Yen Koo Chair in Taiwan Studies at the Brookings Institute. He is also a senior fellow in the Center for East Asia Policy Studies. His research focuses on enhancing policy development on the pressing political, economic, and security challenges facing the United States in East Asia.

To learn more about the history of the J.K. Eddy Memorial Lecture on World Politics.

Scan or visit: <https://www.owu.edu/academics/departments-programs/international-studies-program/lectures/eddy-lecture-series/>



Hass presented the lecture in Benes Rooms A & B on April 23, 2024. The event is sponsored by the OWU International Studies Program, East Asian Studies Program, and the Department of Politics and Government.

Benjamin F. Marsh Lecture On Public Affairs Breathing Clean Air: An Environmental Success Turned Environmental Justice Story



[Virginia Gewin](https://www.virginia)

<https://www.virginia>
[gewin.com/](https://www.virginia)

Gewin presented the lecture in Benes Rooms A and B located in Hamilton Williams on April 8th, 2024 at 7 PM. The lecture was sponsored by the Ohio Wesleyan Politics & Government Department. Ohio Wesleyan is happy to have had freelance, science journalist, Virginia Gewin speak for the PG department. In her lecture, she discussed her field research on how state/federal emission guidelines are often faulty or ineffectual in the fight against climate change. In attendance was Libby Marsh, daughter of Benjamin F. Marsh of which the endowed lecture is named.



To learn more about the history of the B. F. Marsh Lecture on Public Affairs. Scan or visit: [Benjamin Marsh Lectures](https://www.owu.edu/academics/departments-programs/department-of-politics-government/benjamin-marsh-lectures/)
<https://www.owu.edu/academics/departments-programs/department-of-politics-government/benjamin-marsh-lectures/>

Travel Learning



Course PG349, led by Dr. Ji Young Choi, delves into **East Asian Politics** with a focus on South Korea's development. The optional travel component, slated for May 14 - 30, 2024, offers students a firsthand exploration of South Korea's historical, cultural, political, and economic landscapes. Through visits to significant sites and interactions with locals, students will gain insights into the nation's achievements and challenges. In essence, PG349 presents a unique opportunity for students to enhance their understanding of East Asian dynamics through immersive experiences in South Korea.

PG 300.38, led by Dr. Francesca Nestor, delves into Food Politics and Policy, comparing U.S. regulations with those of the United Kingdom. The optional travel component, set for May 12-19, 2024, in London, offers students firsthand exposure to how regulatory policies impact individuals with food allergies and sensitivities. Throughout the week, students will explore London's food culture, engage with experts, and visit the University of Bath for additional insights. The course provides a unique opportunity for immersive learning in the dynamic realm of food policy.



International Studies

An international studies major at Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) offers a comprehensive curriculum that covers global issues, international economics, and international politics. Students are encouraged to study at least one foreign language and spend at least one semester studying or interning abroad. The program also provides an integrative senior seminar to tie everything together. Graduates of the program can pursue various career paths, including graduate programs in international affairs, international business, and area studies. Additionally, the major provides students with solid liberal arts skills useful in most professions, as well as specialized language and knowledge desirable for a career in international fields. The diverse and interdisciplinary nature of the major equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in an increasingly globalized world. If you are interested in supporting this program, please contact Dr. James Franklin (jcfranklin@owu.edu).

East Asian Studies

The East Asian Studies program aims to give one a broad perspective of East Asia (particularly Japan, Korea, and China). To achieve this goal, the program adopts an interdisciplinary approach including studies in politics & government, economics, history, religion, sociology & anthropology, and foreign languages. The student benefits from the variety of perspectives and expertise that faculty from different departments bring to their classrooms. One may choose to focus on one particular East Asian country. As a major, study abroad is required, so students can apply their studies in a culturally immersive experience. In addition to study abroad, Theory-to-Practice grants and Travel-Learning courses are great opportunities for the students to research, travel, or complete internships in an East Asian country. Students have gone to Japan, South Korea, China, and Taiwan. If you are interested in supporting this program, contact Prof. Ji Young Choi (jiychoi@owu.edu).

ON AND OFF CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES...

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. ASHLEY BISER

Professor Biser's Induction: The Charles W. Fairbanks Endowed Chair in Politics and Government



Ohio Wesleyan University proudly appoints Professor Ashley Biser to the prestigious Cornelia Fairbanks Albright Endowed Chair in Politics and Government, recognizing her outstanding contributions to political theory and dedication to inclusive education. With extensive academic prowess, Professor Biser's research on Hannah Arendt's theories delves into contemporary issues like reproductive technologies and disability politics. Beyond academia, she co-founded Akili Dada, empowering young women in Kenya, and spearheaded initiatives like Mock Convention and the innovative seminar, "How to Change the World." In her new role, Professor Biser's leadership promises to enrich the university community and advance its global citizenship mission. Ohio Wesleyan celebrates her achievements and eagerly awaits her continued impact. Congratulations, Professor Ashley Biser, on this well-deserved honor!

AWARDS & PI SIGMA ALPHA

The Department of Politics and Government presents two departmental awards, the Earl E. Warner Award for Academic Excellence and the James J. Hearn Award for Community Service. The 2024 Earl E. Warner Award winners are Katherine DiJulius (picture to the right), Blake Johnson, and Anna Nacci. The 2024 James J. Hearn Award winners are Sophia Gipson and Callia Barwick (pictured bottom right). The Department also inducts members into the Upsilon Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha at the end of Spring semester. Pi Sigma Alpha has inducted six new PG students into The National Political Science Honor Society. Congratulations to Lauren Dorsel, Jenna Norman, and Callia Barwick (pictured above from left to right), Meredith Frymyer, Giorgi Bediashvili.

Scan here for more information about departmental awards.



Model UN

OWU Model UN club meets every other week to discuss international issues and practice a Model UN conference. Every year, students aim to participate in one or two national or local Model UN conferences. This past April, 18 students attended the Model UN conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. One student said he was excited to go again this year. They had committees and crisis committees where students participated in writing resolutions. Plus, in the evenings there was a sort of mixer to get to know students from other universities.

Moot Court

Moot Court is a challenging but rewarding experience. It is a chance for the students to test their legal knowledge and skills, and to develop their confidence as a public speaker. It is also a great way for students to network with other students and professionals who are interested in the law. In the fall of 2023, OWU participated in the Moot Court Competition at Capital University. If you are interested in supporting this program, please contact Dr. Michael Esler (mvesler@owu.edu).

Monthly PG Luncheons

Beginning in the Spring of 2024, Dr. Franklin and Dr. Nestor met with students monthly to chat about topics relating to politics and government plus campus related information. The professors plan to continue this opportunity to meet with the students next academic year.

Pre-Law at OWU

Students had the opportunity to meet and chat with former Pre-Law alumni, Paige Ross, Audrey Holmar, and Alexis Henson during a recent Career Connection Day on February 29th, 2024. The students discussed law school possibilities and preparations for admissions process. Professor Michael V. Esler is the program director for the pre-law students.

Arneson Institute



The Arneson Institute at Ohio Wesleyan University hosts and manages the "Wesleyan in Washington" program, which offers internship study opportunities for Ohio Wesleyan University students.

The institute coordinates faculty oversight of appropriate internship credit and matches students with important and substantive internships and educational experiences not restricted to any one discipline.

Additionally, it provides students with a wider range of connections for internship opportunities.

ON AND OFF CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES...



M O C K C O N V E N T I O N

A once-in-an-OWU-Generation opportunity, the Ohio Wesleyan University Mock Convention, a time-honored tradition, has provided a vibrant platform for students to dive into the realm of politics, enhance their critical thinking abilities, and engage with current national concerns. **Mock Convention is a student-run, simulated presidential nominating convention held every four years.** As with the prior Mock Conventions, we invited OWU students from all backgrounds and majors to participate in this 2024 exciting initiative. **No Politics & Government experience is required!** Mock Convention teaches students how to work together to create an inclusive, knowledgeable, and engaging experience that will prepare students for a lifetime of civic engagement.

While the two-day affair featured its share of playful interludes, the Mock Convention served as a forum for Ohio Wesleyan students to engage in serious discussions and revisions to a Republican Party platform crafted by students themselves. These deliberations followed a series of thought-provoking panel discussions on policy matters held earlier in the fall.

Romney emerged as the presidential nominee of the Mock Convention after a thrilling run-off election against none other than music sensation Beyoncé. Joining him in the nominations were esteemed GOP figures Nikki Haley and Liz Cheney, alongside the beloved OWU mascot, Bob the Bishop. Notably, Romney had previously secured the GOP candidacy at Ohio Wesleyan University's Mock Convention back in 2012, a testament to his enduring appeal among students.

Ohio Wesleyan President Matt vandenBerg emerged as Romney's running mate without the need for a run-off, defeating former Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan. Other nominees for the 2024 vice presidential candidacy included Nikki Haley, Liz Chaney, former Ohio State Rep. Wesley Goodman (OWU 2006), and actor Matthew McConaughey.



Various current and former GOP officials addressed the convention attendees, urging Ohio Wesleyan students to embrace active citizenship and exercise their right to vote at every available opportunity, a sentiment echoed by all speakers. Former Ohio Lieutenant Governor, Nancy Hollister, further motivated OWU students to consistently engage by emphasizing the importance of participation, listening, learning, and contributing.



Scan here to learn more about Mock Conventions, including the most recent 2024 Mock Convention

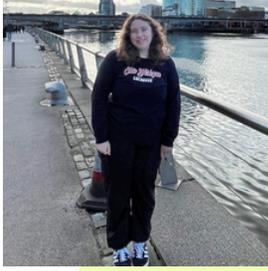
THE ELEPHANT'S DEPARTURE

As Mock comes to a close, we urge all participants to embrace the invaluable learning experiences it presents. We envision these sessions as catalysts for enhancing your comprehension of the democratic process while honing critical thinking, diplomatic, and collaborative skills.

Looking towards the future, we firmly believe that engagements like the Mock Convention play a pivotal role in nurturing the leaders and informed citizens of tomorrow. The ability to actively partake in intellectual discourse, empathetically consider diverse perspectives, and collaborate towards shared objectives is fundamental for fostering a more cohesive and resilient society.

Signed, 2024 Mock Convention Executive Board





Researching Reproductive Rights: *Nacci Travels to Ireland for Honors Project*



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

I traveled to Dublin, Ireland from February 15-20 to conduct research for my Senior Honors Thesis, which aims to investigate abortion knowledge and how it impacts voting behavior amongst college students. I conducted a survey of OWU students to measure these variables this fall, and traveling to Ireland allowed me to investigate similar questions and conduct comparative analysis between the United States and Ireland. Much like in the United States, Ireland recently had a national reversal in the legal standard governing abortion, with a 2018 citizen referendum resulting in the repeal of a constitutional amendment that made abortion virtually illegal. I interviewed professors of law, politics, and sociology, as well as abortion organizers and members of student political groups, in order to better understand the status of abortion rights in Ireland and how students approach the issue. I also visited the sites of important protests that led to the referendum, as well as the National museum of Ireland, which had photos and materials from the movement. The trip was an incredible experience, as it allowed me to immerse myself in my research, learn more about another country's government, culture, and history, and expand my project beyond my original idea that only focused on OWU. I was fortunate enough to secure Small Grant and DEI funding to support my project, and I would encourage any student with an idea for research to look into the various ways OWU can support them!



Nacci in the Long Room, Trinity College (research site)



Nacci in front of the National Museum of Ireland

BRIANNA N. MACK

Dr. Mack received her Master's and Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree from The Ohio State University, with her Masters in Political Science with a minor in Political Psychology and Doctorate in Political Science. Dr. Mack served as a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow and a Ralph Bunche Summer Institute scholar during her time as an undergraduate! A lover of pop culture, animation, and video games, Dr. Mack enjoys watching cartoons and anime, reading historical fiction and fantasy books, going to concerts, and exploring the Midwest with her family and friends.



Dr. Mack and OWU graduate and student of Dr. Mack's, **Teresa Martin '23**, recently published a research paper on music preference and political attitudes. ***Party Rocking: Exploring the Relationship Between Music Preference, Partisanship, and Political Attitudes***, published in *Poetics* (February 2024) and it can be read online at ScienceDirect.com. Dr. Mack shared this research paper at the recent luncheon Celebrating Black Excellence in Research Series. [Check out the article on the OWU News & Media page "Party Rocking" to read more about Dr. Mack and Martin's research.](#)



What are you most proud of in your career?

I am most proud of, what do you call it? I believe it's the two publications we had last year. Being able to produce research with both my students and colleagues is something I cherish. And now, in March, I feel like we've *survived Mock*, which I consider to be my biggest accomplishment for the next two years. So, both you and Sophie should be proud.

What track always ends up on the Dr. Mack-curated playlist?

If we were in my office, I would play the Tokyo Ghoul opening "Unravel" by Pellek. If I'm out and about, just chillaxing, I'd listen to anything by Mint Condition.

What risk have you taken that has paid off?

Applying for this job. Right? So some faculty know this but this was the only job that I applied for. This was a risk that paid off. Because yeah, the plan was for me to adjunct for a year and then go out on the market because I wasn't sure if I was ready to go out on the market. But I saw the job offering and I was like, I'll try, we'll see what happens. Lo and behold, I got it!

From your own academic interests to your initiatives on campus, it seems that voting is a huge priority for you. Why is the issue of voter turnout so important to you?

But I think a lot of the ills that we see today are of our own making. And if you don't turn out to vote this, the status quo will continue to remain the same. If you aren't involved then all these other narratives can take place. And so I guess maybe that's why because like [I] care about it because this is one of the easiest, relatively low cost ways to be involved and have a say in your community. And if you aren't willing to do that, you're part of the reason why we're yet one step closer to our democracy turning into an authoritarian regime.

So I hear that you are a huge Sailor Moon fan! And if you could be one of the sailor guardians, who would you be and why?

If of the traditional guardians, I see some of myself in Mars as well as Jupiter. But you know, if I could be anybody, I would prefer to be Saturn.

ALUMNI UPDATES

1953

Kenneth S. Lawson
Retired Manager in Quality Assurance
Beavercreek, OH

1960

Marcia Pelot Early
Passed away June 9, 2023
Port Republic, MD

1963

Linda Littlejohn, DDS, M.Ed
Retired
Wilmington, NC

Gary Benz, MBA
Retired
Gainesville GA

1968

Lyn McPherson
MS in Info Sys, Retired
Reston, Virginia

Wesley H. Poling, MDiv, PhD, Retired
North Haven, CT

1973

Douglas Ezell, MD
Retired
Billings, MT

Susan Donaldson Boyd
Retired
West Allenhurst, NJ

John Procter Boyd
Retired
West Allenhurst, NJ

Chris Hock Miley
Retired
East Tawas, MI

1978

Joni (Manos) Brown
Retired Teacher/Coach
Columbus, Ohio

Peter Elmendorf
Retired
Florence, SC

1988

Michael J. Piatt
Head Men's Basketball Coach, Miami
University
Vandalia, Ohio

Ami (Sears) Noble
Mercy Health, Surgical Nurse
Maumee, Ohio

1994

Pamela (Conover) Quagliero
Temple University, Assistant Director,
Operations, Undergraduate Admiss.
Richboro, PA

2007

Brent Perrin
Majority Strategies, Account Manager
Washington DC

2013

Tyler LeFevre, JD, MBA
Allison Transmission - Corporate
Counsel - Global Defense and Global
Purchasing
Fishers, IN

2018

Matthew Pheneger, JD
Assistant Prosecutor
Lima, Ohio

2019

Kimberly McCalmont
Dawson Recruiter
Dublin, OH

Thank you for up for filling out and updating your information either on the paper copy and sending it to the Politics & Government Department or by updating your information in the google form. This information was updated from submissions from 2022 to April 2024.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

We need your help! Please fill out the following [information sheet](#) to help the Politics and Government Department keep track of its alums. Any information you could provide is valuable and allows us to continue to update you on department and other alumni news. You may also send your resume as a supplement to this form. Thank you!

Please circle the following concerning your information:

- YES, I give the Politics and Government Department permission to use this information in future newsletters, on the web page, etc.

- YES, I give the Politics and Government Department permission to use this information, but I wish to remain anonymous (i.e. we may publish your information without using your name).

- NO, please do not publish this information.

Name: _____

Maiden Name (if applicable): _____

Class: _____

Street Address: _____

Email: _____

Postgraduate Degree(s): _____

Institution: _____

Present Employer: _____

Position: _____

How did your course work, internships, and other experiential learning experiences as an undergraduate at Ohio Wesleyan help to shape your subsequent postgraduate education choices, career development and participation in civic and political affairs? Please be specific.

Please mail to:
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61 S. Sandusky Street
Delaware, OH 43015



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