

POLITICALLY SPEAKING



Faculty & Staff, Spring 2026

Faculty

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

Administrative Staff

Deborah Lovell

Newsletter Editors & Writers

Jenna Ashbrook, Vincent Sack II



Politics and government are all around us, shaping our daily lives in countless ways, from the roads we drive on to conflicts around the globe. If you want to understand the world around you and make a difference in it, then a major or minor in Politics & Government at Ohio Wesleyan University is right for you. We offer a wide range of courses on topics in American politics, comparative politics, international relations, public policy, and political theory. We also offer several unique opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience, such as internships with local and state government agencies, campaigns, and NGOs. A degree in Politics & Government will prepare you for a variety of successful careers in government, law, business, education, and the nonprofit sector.

OWU Department of Politics & Government
Newsletter / Spring 2026

Fall 2026

PG 111 Power & American Politics

B. Mack/MWF/10-10:50AM

PG 111 Power & American Politics

F. Nestor/MWF/3:10-4:00PM

PG 112 Global Issues

J. Choi/MWF/2:10-3:00PM

PG 113 Democracy, Dictatorship & Political Change

J. Franklin/TR/10:00-11:50AM

PG 113 Democracy, Dictatorship & Political Change

J. Franklin/TR/1:10-2:30PM

PG 279 Conduct of Political Inquiry

B. Mack/MWF/1:10-2PM

PG 281 Food Politics and Policy in America

F. Nestor/TR/1:10PM-2:30PM

PG 319 Women and Politics

F. Nestor/TR/2:40-4:00PM

PG 346 European Politics

J. Franklin/MWF/2:10-3:00PM

PG 350 Law & Courts

M. Esler/MW/2:10-4:00PM

PG 351 American Constitutional Law

W. Louthan/TR/10-11:50AM

PG 359 Voting and Elections in the U.S.

B. Mack/TR/10:00-11:50AM

PG 364 International Political Economy

J. Choi/MWF/11:00-11:50AM

PG 366 Great Power Politics and U.S.-China Relations

J. Choi/WED/6:30-9:00PM

PG 371 Power and Authority: Political Theory from the Canon to Fanon

A. Biser/MW/2:10-4:00PM

PG 450 Moot Court

K. Berger/MON/6:30-9:30PM

Spring 2027

PG 113 Democracy, Dictatorship & Political Change

J. Franklin/TR/1:10-2:30PM

PG 261 American Politics & Mass Media

B. Mack/MWF/1:10-2PM

PG 279 Conduct of Political Inquiry

J. Franklin/TR/10:00-11:50AM

PG 300 37 Public Opinion

B. Mack/TR/10:00-11:50AM

PG 347 Contemporary Political Topics

J. Franklin/TR/2:40-4:00PM

PG 350 Law & Courts

M. Esler/MW/2:10-4:00PM

PG 349 East Asian Politics, Economy, & Society

J. Choi/MWF/2:10-3:00PM

PG 360 International Politics

J. Choi/MWF/11:00-11:50AM

PG 499B Senior Seminar: International Relations

J. Choi/WED/6:30-9:00PM

PG 499D Senior Seminar: American Politics

B.Mack/MW/2:10-4:00PM



FULL
COURSE
CATALOG



PG Major
Course
Catalog

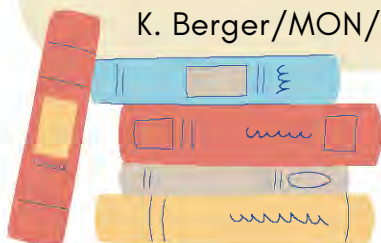


Pre-Law
Major
Course
Catalog



International
Studies Major
Course Catalog

East Asian
Studies Major
Course
Catalog



Faculty Updates



Below are some of the more recent updates for the department faculty. Please also visit the Faculty & Staff page by scanning the QR or clicking on link below to read more about each professor.

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

Ji Young Choi is serving as the director of East Asian Studies and advisor of OWU Model UN. His research work, "The US-China Tech War and South Korea's Strategy: A Case Study of South Korea's Chip Industry" will be published in an edited book soon (London: Routledge 2026). Also a review article on Dr. Choi's book, *The Politics of South Korea: A Comprehensive Introduction* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner 2025) was published in *Pacific Affairs* (March 2026) by Dr. Hannah June Kim.

Michael Esler is enjoying his well-earned retirement while teaching PG 350: Law and Courts in the fall as an emeritus professor.

James Franklin is currently the Director of the International Studies Program. Dr. Franklin worked with students throughout the school year as part of Ohio Wesleyan's Summer Scholar Research (SSRP), which was recently expanded to non-natural sciences faculty, and is currently working on his book to be published.

Francesca Nestor is currently the Politics & Government Department Chair. Dr. Nestor participated in Ohio Wesleyan's Summer Scholar Research (SSRP) where she worked with several OWU students on her research throughout the last school year.



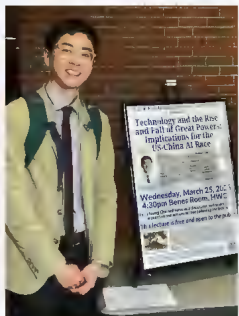
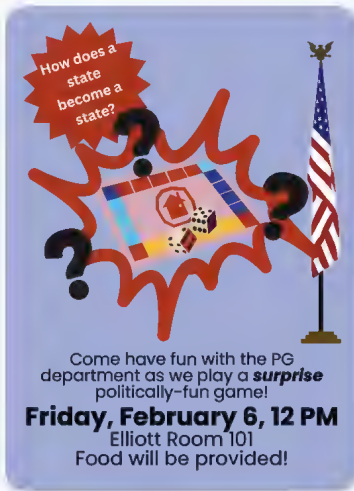
Pictured from left to right: Michael Esler, William Louthan, Ashley Biser, Nicky Mack, Francesca Nestor, Ji Young Choi, James Franklin



Monthly PG Luncheons

This spring has been full of the monthly lunch and learns. We talked about fall 2026 courses and looking at your schedule for the whole academic year, as well as beta-tested a fun political game about DC statehood!

Additionally this semester we successfully, as a department, created t-shirts to fundraise for various departmental needs.



The J.K. Eddy Memorial Lecture on World Politics Technology and the Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Implications for the US-China AI Race

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026
4:30pm Benes Room, Hamilton Williams Campus Center**

The Eddy K Memorial Lecture this year featured Jeffrey Ding, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at George Washington University. Dr. Ding earned his Ph.D. in international relations from University of Oxford, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar. His lecture provided a thoughtful analysis of artificial intelligence and its impact on international relations. A central theme of the lecture was developing a better understanding of how and when emerging technologies influence economic power transitions. Ding challenged common assumptions about AI, arguing that while many view it as a decisive factor in shifting the U.S.-China power balance, its actual impact depends less on invention and more on diffusion (how widely and effectively a technology is adopted across an economy). Ding was careful to frame AI as a “potential general-purpose technology” (GPT), similar to electricity. Like electricity, AI’s transformative power will come from its broad application across industries rather than isolated breakthroughs. This raises key questions about which countries can implement AI most effectively at scale. At the conclusion of the lecture, Dr. Ji Young Choi led a discussion and a question & answer session. The questions added another layer of thought surrounding the topic of AI and its future effects around the globe.



The John Kennard Eddy Memorial Lecture on World Politics is a living memorial to a former student. The Eddy family has chosen this very valuable and important method of keeping Jeff’s flame alive across the generations of Ohio Wesleyan students. Please visit www.owu.edu/eddy or scan the QR code to learn more about the history of the lecture.

SPONSORED BY THE OWU EAST ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM, AND THE POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT SUPPORTED BY THE J.K.EDDY MEMORIAL LECTURE ENDOWMENT FUND



CONGRATUALATIONS, DEB LOVELL

2025 SPARK award recipient

Our academic assistant, Deb Lovell, received the 2025 SPARK award, an annual award given to one OWU staff member that goes above and beyond in supporting students and faculty. Deb came highly recommended by several colleagues. Joining Ohio Wesleyan University in 2023, she has already made an immense impact on the academic community.

Read the full article about the award by scanning the QR code, congratulations on this well-deserved award!



AWARDS & PI SIGMA ALPHA

At the 2025-2026 end of the year celebration, awards ceremony, and Pi Sigma Alpha new member inductions, the evening started with the 12 new members being inducted Pi Sigma Alpha Upsilon Chapter. Congratulations to **Caroline R. Anderson, Kyle G. Barnes, Madinah N. Bintshahiydullah Binraymond, Candace M. Bowman, Caitlin O. Calvin, Reagan M. Davis, Matthew W. Higgins, Anastasiia Hnidets, Ella H. Holtsberry, Isabel D. Milner, Payton E. Mindel, Adam R. Walker**. The department also recognized Dr. William Louthan for his 50 years of service as the faculty advisor for OWU's chapter.

The department also thanked the current PG student board (**Madinah Binraymond, Lauren Dorsel, Max Fossaceca, Isaac Nichol, Vincent Sack II, Hayley Sanders**) for their service this year and welcomed the members joining the PG board for the 2026-2027 academic year (**Araceli Allo, Anaya Belle, MiKayla Boyd, Hailey Harris**) joining returning board members **Madinah Binraymond, Isaac Nichol, and Vincent Sack II**. Senior Moot Court cords were also given to those seniors who participated in Moot Court during their time at OWU. During this evening, the PG and Pre-Law graduating seniors were also recognized.

The Department of Politics and Government presented the two annual departmental awards, the Earl E. Warner Award for Academic Excellence and the James J. Hearn Award for Community Service. The winner of the **James J. Hearn Award for Community Service was Gabriela Gonzalez Duarte** and the **Earl E. Warner Award for Academic Excellence was awarded to Kaylen Brandt**. Congratulations to all on a great year!

Pictured from left to right:
Dr. Louthan, Adam Walker,
Ella Holtsberry, Reagan
Davis, Anastasiia Hnidets,
Caroline Anderson,
Candace Bowman



James J. Hearn Award for
Community Service
Gabriela Gonzalez Duarte



Scan here for
more
information
about
departmental
awards.



Pi Sigma Alpha is the national political science honorary. The Upsilon Chapter at OWU was established in 1934 by none other than Ben Arneson himself. Membership is highly prestigious. Graduate schools, law schools, and prospective employers are very pleased to find membership in Pi Sigma Alpha on an applicant's resume and the society offers competitive scholarships for graduate study!

Take the First Step in Pre-Law at OWU

Are you interested in pursuing a career in law? If so, the OWU Politics & Government Department's Pre-Law Studies major is the perfect fit for you! The Pre-Law Studies major is designed to prepare students for the rigors of law school and success in the legal profession. The major offers a rigorous and interdisciplinary curriculum that combines courses in politics, government, English, history, philosophy, and economics. Students who are interested in declaring the Pre-Law Studies major should contact Dr. Nestor for more information. If interested in learning more about Pre-Law Society please email Dr. Franchesca Nestor fvnestor@owu.edu



Moot Court

Every fall, students have the opportunity to participate in the yearly Moot Court Competition, tackling challenging legal concepts and developing their argumentative skills. With Dr. Esler's retirement in 2025, OWU alumnus, Katie Berger, headed the course. Katie Berger graduated from OWU in 2016 where she then went on to earn her juris doctorate from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. Katie Berger now works within the U.S District Court for the Southern District of Ohio.

This year's Moot Court case tackled a pressing constitutional question at the intersection of academic freedom and discrimination, focused solely on the First and Fourteenth Amendments. William DeNolf v. Olympus State University challenges whether speaking out against affirmative action, then being fired for this action as a public employee, is a violation of First Amendment rights. Further, DeNolf raises a Fourteenth Amendment claim, arguing that Olympus State University's admissions policy violates the Equal Protection Clause. While the Supreme Court has loosely dealt with topics similar to this in recent times, it has never dealt with this unique combination of First Amendment speech on affirmative action, making this year's competition a compelling exploration of First and Fourteenth Amendment rights. This year's Moot Court team consists of 13 participants. We thank Professor Katie Berger (OWU alumnus) for coming back to her undergraduate roots to advise this year's competition!

OWU Model UN meets every Wednesday at 7:30 pm to practice debate and problem solving skills. Each year, the club goes to three conferences. They attended TennMUN at University of Tennessee in September 2025. At the most recent conference, Anna Heines, the President of OWU Model UN, received the "best delegate" award for their committee at a Model UN conference in the College of William and Mary (Williamsburg, Virginia) in April of 2026. For more information, contact President of the club Anna Haines at arhaines@owu.edu and follow them on Instagram for meeting reminders and updates: [@owu_model_un](https://www.instagram.com/owu_model_un) The OWU faculty advisor is Prof. Ji Young Choi (jychoi@owu.edu).



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

CONGRATULATIONS OLIVIA DANLEY!

2025-2026 President's Assistant and Acceptance to OSU Law School

Olivia Danley is a 2025 OWU Alum who was very involved on campus. She was on the field hockey team, in Kappa Alpha Theta, and also participated in academic organizations like Moot Court. Even with all of these commitments she managed to finish her degree a year early.



Olivia knew she wanted to pursue law school, a goal that was solidified after shadowing a magistrate and gaining firsthand insight into the legal field. She began preparing for the LSAT and navigating the application process. However, her plans shifted when she tore her ACL, leading her to take an unexpected gap year. Taking this in stride she decided to focus on her applications and accept the Postgraduate Assistant position in the President's Office for a one-year term, an opportunity that ultimately became a transformative experience. As a first-generation college student, she gained valuable insight into the inner workings of higher education, learning what it takes to run a university while building meaningful connections with faculty, staff, and leadership. Her work in the President's Office allowed her to "look behind the curtain," developing skills and perspectives that extend far beyond the classroom.

We are very proud and excited for Olivia! We wish her well in her future endeavors!

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 this program, please contact Dr. James Franklin (jcfranklin@owu.edu).

East Asian Studies

The East Asian Studies program aims to give you 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. You benefit from the variety of perspectives and expertise that faculty from different departments bring to their classrooms. You may choose to focus on one particular East Asian country. As a major, study abroad will be required, so you will be able to apply your studies in a culturally immersive experience. In addition to study abroad, Theory-to-Practice grants and Travel-Learning courses are great opportunities for research, travel, or internships in an East Asian country. Students have gone to Japan, South Korea, China, and Taiwan. If you are interested in this program, contact Prof. Ji Young Choi (jiychoi@owu.edu).

ON AND OFF CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES...

Gabby Gonzalez Duarte

My post-graduation plans are to take a gap year before pursuing a graduate degree in public health, with particular interests in epidemiology and biostatistics. During that time, I hope to continue building experience in public health research and community-based work. I have also accepted a summer internship with Resilient Retreat, an organization grounded in trauma-informed care that provides free and confidential programs for survivors of abuse, first responders, and helping professionals.



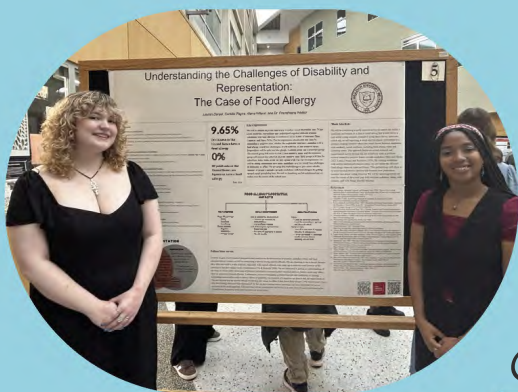
During my senior year, one of the most meaningful things I have worked on has been my honors research project on barriers to healthcare access among the Latino population in Central Ohio, with a particular focus on Delaware County. This project is part of the Community Health Assessment through the Delaware Public Health District, which has made the work especially meaningful because it connects academic research with ongoing local public health efforts. Using focus groups and qualitative research guided by the Socio-Ecological Model, the study explores how individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy-level factors

shape healthcare access and experiences. The goal is to better understand the lived experiences of Latino community members and contribute findings that can help inform local efforts to improve health equity and access to care.



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES



SSRP – Dr. Nestor *UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF DISABILITY AND REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF FOOD ALLERGY*

Dr. Nestor's SSRP students, Lauren Dorsel, Camille Payne, and Alana Wilson, presented their research with Dr. Nestor in September, after which they joined students Caroline O'Malley and Kiki Russell to work on updating congressional committee data. All five students are subsequently attending the Midwest Political Science Association conference in April to present on both projects. This research will continue into the 2026-2027 school year with another SSRP this summer.

2026 CSPC Presidential Fellow



This spring semester, Vincent Sack '27 traveled to Washington D.C. to attend a conference, where he learned about the modern American political climate and to present his research paper, "How the Media Portrays Assassination Attempts Against American Presidents."



SSRP – Dr. Franklin *ANALYZING OPPRESSION AND POLITICAL REPRESSION WITH NEW GLOBAL INDICATORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS*

Dr. Franklin's SSRP students, Emily Kocel and Shannon O' Malley, presented their research with Dr. Franklin in March at the International Studies Association conference in Columbus, Ohio. The students, both International Studies majors, collaborated with Dr. Franklin on a paper, "Analyzing Oppression and Political Repression with New Global Indicators of Human Rights Violations"

Scan here to learn
more about Dr.
Franklin's research
with students



Words of Wisdom from OWU PG alumni...

OWU prepared me as a critical thinker, persuasive writer, and engaged citizen. The professors in the Politics and Government Department were second to none, so much so that I even named one of my sons after one of my professors in the PG Department.

**James J. Walsh, Jr. (2010), J.D., M.A.,
Partner, Benesch**

OWUs prelaw program allowed me become a strong oral advocate, ultimately leading to my selection as a Mololamken Scholar among the top law students:

<https://www.prweb.com/releases/12-scholars-selected-for-2025-mololamken-advocacy-academy-302419853.html>

I also received the highest grade in my oral advocacy class at Cornell law. Without Mike and William, the two professors who keep the prelaw program going, I would not be the oral advocacy and legal student I am today.

**Avery Newcom (2023), J.D. Candidate,
Judicial Intern, Colorado Public Defenders**

I am both an attorney practicing International & Immigration Law, as well as Honorary Consul of Romania to CT, engaging in diplomacy. Both of these careers were the product of multidisciplinary undergraduate studies at OWU in International Business, Politics & Government, and Romance Languages & Literatures (self-declared), with a minor in International Studies. I am utilizing my political coursework background in particular to advocate for bills that advance the rights and opportunities of immigrant communities and facilitate international business, such as the 4 different bills that I advocated for and which passed into law in 2023-24: bill to add Romanian, Ukrainian and several other languages to the DMV driving knowledge test, bill to establish the Global Entrepreneur in Residence Program in CT, bill to lower apostille fees for documentation to be used abroad, etc.

**Dana Roxana Bucin (2002), Juris Doctor (Law) in International Law
Partner, Chair of Immigration Practice, DEI Chair, Murtha Cullina LLP**

My major in political science at OWU prepared me to continue graduate work in political science at New York University and overseas as a Fulbright Professor in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Lebanon, and Morocco.

**John P. Entelis (1964), M.A., Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Political Science,
Fordham University**

At the recommendation of Dr. Ramsey, I pursued an internship on Capitol Hill to gain firsthand insight into the legislative process. That experience ignited my interest in public policy and jump started my career ambitions. I am especially grateful to Dr. Louthan and Dr. Franklin, whose teachings laid the foundation for my development as a political communications professional. I remain thankful to them, and to OWU, for equipping me with the knowledge and experiences that helped define my path within the field of political science.

**Erin Fleck (2011), Defense and Foreign Policy,
Communications, United States Senate**