Letter from the Chair

To friends of the Department of Political Science at Emory,

Greetings from Tarbutton Hall! This issue of the newsletter presents the latest developments and accomplishments of our students, faculty, and alumni. Inside you’ll find a profile of Associate Professor Michael Owens and his path-breaking research on the reintegration of prisoners into the wider community. John Reuter 11PhD, a graduate student, describes his fascinating research in Russian politics and his eye-opening fieldwork. You’ll hear from Sveta Milusheva 10C, one of our most promising undergraduates. Harvey Klehr, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Politics and History, will describe Emory’s new Program on Democracy and Citizenship. And you will be able to catch up on the activities of department alumni.

In the last issue, we announced the creation of a departmental endowment to support undergraduate research. I am proud to report that our departmental fund-raising effort is off to a strong start, and we are on our way to our goal of raising $50,000 to support undergraduate research. Our students’ eagerness to engage in important and timely research is matched only by their entrepreneurial spirit. This year, our students traveled to Washington, India, and Costa Rica to collect data for research projects. Two students presented their research at professional political science conferences, and several presented their research at Emory’s first Pi Sigma Alpha conference on undergraduate political science research. These research experiences, which often define a student’s years at Emory, need financial support, which is why we are asking for your help. If you are interested in donating, you can do so online, at http://polisci.emory.edu/General%20info/donate.htm.

We hope to see you all back on campus sometime soon! ☺

Always,

Dan Reiter
Chair, Department of Political Science
The Program in Democracy and Citizenship

By Harvey Klehr, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Politics and History

The Program in Democracy and Citizenship (PDC) is a curricular initiative intended to increase undergraduates’ knowledge on topics necessary to become responsible, informed citizens of a democratic society. Started by Mark Bauerlein of the Department of English, the program now resides in the Department of Political Science, and I am the director.

In recent years numerous studies have demonstrated an alarming decline in civic literacy. Tests of students at all levels of the educational system and surveys of the general public reveal an abysmal ignorance of basic facts about American history and of the principles and values that underlay the American democratic system. The founding fathers would have been appalled and alarmed; many of them argued that without an informed and public-spirited populace, a democratic society could not endure.

Emory College of Arts and Sciences aims to prepare students for “intellectual leadership of the nation” and imbue them with “a commitment to use knowledge to improve human well-being,” among its missions. To fulfill these aspirations, Emory must do more to ensure that students graduate with a sophisticated understanding of the principles and history of democracy. Several years ago the General Education Requirements were changed so that students no longer have to take a course in American history or two courses on the history of Western thought or even one course in non-Western cultures. Although there have been no studies of how students have reacted, anecdotal evidence suggests that fewer and fewer students come to their political science or history classes with a sure grounding in American history or knowledge of American government. Many Emory students avoid such courses entirely.

The Program in Democracy and Citizenship was created to address this kind of problem in concrete ways. We partner with various departments to offer courses emphasizing basic texts in American and classical democratic principles. This year we paid for fourteen sections of the basic freshman English composition course. Normally the temporary faculty and graduate students who teach these sections use whatever readings they want, ranging from science fiction to romance novels. The thinking is that the goal of the course is to improve student writing and the readings used to do it are irrelevant. The PDC freshman composition sections use great texts—speeches and essays from the American tradition, such as George Washington’s farewell address, the Federalist Papers, Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural; essays by Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony; and speeches by Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan. Our premise is that such vital works are part of our common intellectual heritage, and students should be exposed to them.

We also sponsor two courses in Ancient Mediterranean studies where students are exposed to the Greek and Roman foundations of Western society. This year we hired an adjunct professor to teach courses in the political science department on liberalism, conservatism, and democratic citizenship. A postdoctoral fellow in political science taught courses on the political thought of Abraham Lincoln, the American founding, and the American political tradition.

We also bring speakers—primarily journalists and public intellectuals who typically do not get to college campuses—to classes to meet with students and discuss issues in American public life based on founding principles. This year we also sponsored a major lecture by Richard Brookhiser, whose books on American founders have been best sellers. His talk, “What Would the Founders Do? Our Questions, Their Answers,” drew an enthusiastic crowd of 150 students.

We have in the past provided summer grants to faculty to develop courses with more historical content. We hope in the future to partner with additional departments such as economics, sociology, history, and philosophy to find ways to increase the number of courses offered around the topics of democracy and citizenship. These efforts have been supported in the past by a three-year grant from President James Wagner and the Woodruff Fund, by gifts from several foundations, and by a three-year commitment from the Jack Miller Center that enabled us to hire a postdoctoral fellow in political science to teach courses on American political thought. The PDC is actively seeking additional financial support that will enable us to continue these initiatives and, hopefully, expand them. If you have any questions about the PDC or are interested in supporting it, please contact me at polshk@emory.edu.
Undergraduate Spotlight: Sveta Milusheva

Born in Bulgaria, Sveta Milusheva 10C came to the United States when she was eight. In high school, she found herself volunteering in the mountains of Costa Rica for Amigos de las Americas, an outreach group that sends American students on community service projects in Latin America. After high school, she followed her older sister to Emory as an Emory Scholar, double majoring in international studies and economics.

Milusheva’s intellectual interests in globalization and development blossomed in a class on international political economy she took her sophomore year with Associate Professor Eric Reinhardt. For that class, she wrote a research paper on remittances, finding that remittances increased the number of microenterprise businesses in areas where there are effective banking systems. Since then, she has grabbed hold of many opportunities to explore her interests. She has studied abroad in Russia and Argentina, she has worked with the Student Coalition Empowering Emerging Nations, and she interned at a conference in Tanzania on economic development.

As an Emory student, Milusheva has indulged in her passion for research. In her sophomore year, she worked with Associate Professor Mary Odem in the Department of History on a project on undocumented immigration as part of the Scholarly Inquiry and Research at Emory (SIRE) program. In her junior year, she received a grant from Emory’s Institute for Developing Nations to conduct independent research on worker cooperatives in Argentina. During the past two years, she worked as a research assistant to Associate Professor Maura Belliveau at Emory’s Goizueta Business School.

Beyond her own research interests, Milusheva has found leadership opportunities within Emory’s Model United Nations program. As co-president, she grew the program from ten members to its current forty. Under Milusheva’s guidance, Emory’s Model UN team won numerous awards at Model UN conferences including the 2010 Harvard Model UN Conference. Political science professor Kyle Beardsley, faculty adviser to Model UN, says that “Sveta is an ideal student leader who has found that nice balance of excellence in academic performance and sincere dedication to student leadership.”

Other faculty members have also raved about working with Milusheva. Reinhardt speaks highly of his former student and advisee: “Sveta is one of the most talented, intelligent, and hard-working students I have had in a dozen years here at Emory. She is a wonderful exemplar of what Emory College is all about, cultivating top-notch undergraduate researchers who also are committed to making a difference in the broader world.”

Newly graduated, Milusheva treasures her Emory experience. “I have had a really amazing experience here at Emory, and that’s really due to two things: the wonderful professors I have had the chance to interact with and the numerous opportunities that have been available to me. In political science, I have really looked up to Dr. Reinhardt who has been an inspiration. I have admired his work and appreciated the time he took to help me with assignments from class, as well as the time he took to talk to me outside of class about my independent projects as well as my future.” Milusheva offers this advice to freshmen: “If you really want something at Emory, whether that may be to get into a great class or to receive funding for a really cool project, it’s possible; sometimes you may need to go out of your way, but if you try hard enough you can get so much out of your time here. I am extremely happy I can leave Emory being able to say that I did get everything I wanted to and much more out of my experience here at Emory.”

After graduating, Milusheva plans to visit Kenya and complete a business curriculum, supporting young entrepreneurs in Kenya. When she returns, she will first work for the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., and then enter a PhD program in either economics or public policy, with an emphasis on development in Central and South America.
Spotlight on Faculty Research:
Michael Leo Owens

“I am a ghost inhabiting a citizen’s space.” Joe Loya, an essayist, playwright, and rehabilitated bank robber, described himself that way when he was on parole from prison. Loya learned the hard way that California disenfranchises parolees from prison. Generally, in addition to incarceration, states impose civil penalties on people convicted of felonies. Penalties reduce the number of rights, benefits, and obligations felons have as citizens, even after they’ve completed their sentences, made restitution, and remained crime-free. Some lose bundles of citizenship for good; others just have a long and hard time retrieving them. When states restore civil and political rights to ex-felons via pardons and other administrative acts, citizenship can remain incomplete. Ex-felons may regain some rights, such as voting, while remaining excluded from licenses to practice occupations and hold jobs unrelated to their crimes, social benefits such as public housing, and civic obligations like jury duty.

Scholars are interested in how the adoption of punishments that seemingly exceed reason in their duration and severity give life to the ghosts that stand where full citizens once stood. I am pursuing this interest in my current book project, The Prisoners of Democracy. It is a study of how public policies, public attitudes, and the post-imprisonment environment shape the civic reintegration of ex-felons and their standing as democratic citizens. Public opinion surveys, interviews with policymakers and advocates, focus groups with ex-felons and their neighbors, and participant-observation at “reentry” rallies, conferences, and roundtables are my data sources.

My study comes at a time when one in thirty-one American adults (and one in thirteen Georgians) are under correctional control. That is, approximately 7 million Americans are in prison and jail or on parole and probation. Of that number, 73 percent dwell among us as parolees and probationers. Moreover, American correctional facilities release about seven hundred thousand people annually from prisons and jails. For policymakers, the release and return of ex-felons to society is mainly about public safety. For me, it is an opportunity to interrogate the idea of the “second chance” for ex-felons and to explore the politics of punitiveness.

The public is open to giving ex-prisoners a “second chance.” But policies towards ex-prisoners, which vary by state and locality, tend not to reflect public sentiment. Federal law, for instance, permits states to permanently bar poor people convicted of drug felonies from receiving welfare and food stamps. Approximately twenty states do this, including Georgia. Yet my national survey results suggest that only about 25 percent of the American public supports the policy. Also, when given a choice to exclude impoverished drug felons from public assistance or any other benefits, 67 percent of the public would prefer no more than a five-year ban. Sometimes public policies match public support for the “second chance.” Recently, Rhode Island’s voters amended the state’s constitution to permit parolees to vote. Cities like Chicago “banned the box,” meaning they removed questions about felony convictions from their job applications. These and other policies favoring the interests of ex-felons are atypical.

As our political science students learn, public policies bound and bestow the benefits and burdens, credits and costs, and prizes and penalties. Yet the targets, benefits, timing, and processes for allocating the good and the bad to groups are influenced by the degrees of civil respect and societal esteem accorded groups. Perhaps no group in America receives less respect and esteem and has fewer political resources than ex-felons. Of course, some ex-felons who went to prison such as Martha Stewart and some ex-felons who never went to prison like George Steinbrenner may have more than the average American. But they are novelties.

Ex-felons remain citizens, albeit diminished ones, mainly by design. Many truly are just apparitions of citizens. How American policies view and react to these ghosts may tell us as much about the place of ex-felons in American democracy as it does about American democracy itself. That’s my hope for The Prisoners of Democracy.

Biographical Note: Michael Leo Owens is associate professor of political science, with a courtesy appointment in religion.
Department News

Professor Tom Lancaster was promoted from associate professor to full professor. He was also in the first cohort of Distinguished Teaching Scholars (DTS), a program run by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence. DTS is designed to honor Emory faculty who are leading teachers and create a university-wide conversation around pedagogy.

Assistant Professors Jennifer Gandhi and Jeff Staton were promoted to associate professor with tenure.

Walt Ecton 10C, a graduating political science major, is one of four students awarded a Bobby Jones Scholarship by Emory College. The scholarship supports a year of graduate study at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Ecton will pursue a graduate degree in peace and conflict studies during his year at St. Andrews. Surabhi Agrawal 10C, a graduating international studies major, is the sole recipient of the Bobby Jones Fellowship, which provides support for the duration of an entire postgraduate degree program. Agrawal is completing her honors thesis on the role of local institutions in India in maintaining peace in villages. She will pursue a graduate degree in international relations at St. Andrews.

David Elkind 11C, an international studies major, received the 2010 Woodruff Library Undergraduate Research Award. The judges were unanimous in selecting his paper, “Information Warfare: Missile or Missive?” for this prize. Elkind wrote the paper in fall 2009 for the class Constitutional Diplomacy, taught by Associate Professor Larry Taulbee.

Professor Dan Reiter published How Wars End (Princeton, 2009).

Adrienne Smith 11PhD received a National Science Foundation grant to support her dissertation research on the representation of women in municipal politics and policymaking.

Assistant Professor Tom Clark was the co-winner of the Emerging Scholars award given by the Midwest Political Science Association. He won the Carl Albert award for best dissertation in legislative studies, given by the American Political Science Association, as well as the Best Paper Award from the Law and Courts section of the American Political Science Association. Clark also received a grant from the National Science Foundation Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics Program.

Professor Randy Strahan was awarded the 2009 Emory Williams Distinguished Teaching Award.

Professor Rick Doner was awarded the 2010 Williams Award. The Williams Award is the University’s highest recognition for teaching excellence. Over the years, the Department of Political Science has received more Williams Awards than nearly any other department in Emory College.

Professor Tom Remington, Goodrich C. White Professor of Political Science, received a grant from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research.

Assistant Professor Kyle Beardsley received a grant from the Folke Bernadotte Academy in Sweden for research on the United Nations Security Council.

Professor Harvey Klehr, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Politics and History, published The Communist Experience in America (Transaction Books, 2009), a collection of his essays spanning some forty years of scholarship on the American Communist Party and Soviet espionage. Professor Klehr has lectured widely in recent months, giving invited talks at the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. He is also the new director of the Program in Democracy and Citizenship (PDC), designed to improve students’
access to and information about the principles of American democracy. The PDC has enjoyed the generous support of the Jack Miller Center and the Apgar Foundation.

Andrew Kirkpatrick 11PhD, a graduate student, received a fellowship from the University Association of Contemporary European Studies to conduct field research in Belgium this summer.

Despite the worst academic job market in memory, Emory graduate students still had a successful year on the job market. Emily Hencken-Ritter 10PhD accepted a tenure track position at the University of Alabama. Jeff Kucik 10PhD accepted a permanent teaching position at University College London. Keisha Haywood 09PhD accepted a tenure track position at Ramapo College. Ora John Reuter 11PhD turned down a Title VIII Research Scholar Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies at the Woodrow Wilson Center to accept a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Harriman Institute at Columbia University. Ozlem Egün 11PhD accepted a position as a visiting assistant professor at DePaul University. Her husband, Erik Tillman 05PhD, accepted a tenure track position at DePaul.

Alex Kappus 10C, a political science major, is the president of the Student Government Association and recipient of the 2010 Marion Luther Brittain Award. The Brittain Award is the University’s most prestigious undergraduate award, going to a graduate who has demonstrated exemplary service to both Emory and the greater community, as well as qualities of strong character and integrity.

Caitlin Ainsley 10C received the 2010 Elliott Levitas award as the top graduating political science or international studies major. She begins her PhD studies in political science in fall 2010 here at Emory.

Alumni News

1970s
Daisy Hurst Floyd 77G is dean and professor of law at the Walter F. George School of Law, Mercer University. Her husband, Tim Floyd 77C is professor of law and director of the Law and Public Service Program at the George School of Law at Mercer.

Kathelen Amos 79C was appointed to the Emory Board of Trustees.

1980s
Gabriella Montinola 89C is associate professor of political science at the University of California at Davis.

1990s
George Lemieux 91C is a United States Senator representing the state of Florida.

Andrea Simpson 94PhD is associate professor of political science at the University of Richmond. She was the first black woman program chair and first black woman president of the Western Political Science Association. She is an award-winning scholar in race and politics.

Frank Boyd 96PhD is associate provost for academic planning and standards at Illinois Wesleyan University. He is married to Kathleen Montgomery 96PhD, who is associate professor of political science at Illinois Wesleyan.

Barry Morris 98PhD is director of cabinet strategic projects at Kennesaw State University.

2000s
Cameron Chisholm 03C is president of the Washington-based International Peace and Security Institute (IPS). The IPS’s goals are to empower the next generation of peacemakers and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills to a global audience from the world’s premier political leaders, academic experts, practitioners, and advocates. It develops comprehensive training programs, advances scholarly research, and promotes efforts to raise public awareness of peace and security issues.

Daniel Freifeld 03C is the director of international programs for the Center on Law and Security at New York University. Previously, he was a foreign policy adviser on Senator Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign and a program coordinator for the Near East South Asia Center at the U.S. Department of Defense, working in more than ten Middle Eastern countries.

Todd Peppers 03PhD has been selected to be the Henry H. and Trudy H. Fowler Chair in Public Affairs at Roanoke College. This endowed chair honors and supports a faculty member in the Department of Public Affairs who has consistently demonstrated excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Benjamin Clark 08C will be starting a PhD program in political science at the Catholic University of America in the fall.

Nadya Parks 08PhD took a position as academic adviser and lecturer in the political science department at the University of Illinois.

Justin Nicholson 09C is a research assistant at the Hudson Institute in Washington.

Fiona Sites-Bowen 11C, a political science major, founded the Tuesday Night Urban Run Club in Atlanta. In the spirit of Take Back the Night marches, the club intends to reclaim the community by engaging in recreational group running in urban Atlanta neighborhoods, including some neighborhoods that have been the locations of violent crimes. It has attracted dozens of participants, the eager support of urban residents and business owners, hundreds of supporters on Facebook, and coverage in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

PS
Ora John Reuter 11PhD arrived at Emory as a new graduate student in August 2005 after having spent a year in Ukraine on a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship. Interested in the politics of former Communist countries, he had the tremendous luck of witnessing firsthand the so-called “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine in the winter of 2004–2005. That November, questionable presidential election results and accusations of vote rigging sparked massive, nationwide protests. The public outcry eventually led to a revote, and the further democratization of Ukraine’s political institutions. Witnessing history firsthand solidified Reuter’s interest in becoming a political scientist.

During his career as a graduate student, Reuter’s intellectual focus evolved into a broader interest in the politics of authoritarian regimes, a surprisingly understudied area. His dissertation focuses on the emergence of dominant political parties in authoritarian regimes. Though we usually think about political parties in the context of democracies, parties, seeking to understand when such parties emerge. The dissertation gives special attention to the rise of Russia’s United Russia Party during the past decade. United Russia has been a critical tool that Russian Presidents Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev have used to solidify their grip on power.

Completing the dissertation has been an engrossing experience for Reuter. He has spent eleven months traveling across the breadth of Russia to conduct fieldwork. While in Russia, he established a formal affiliation with Yaroslavl State University, located about 150 miles from Moscow. He has collaborated with Russian political scientists at Yaroslavl State, making several presentations to faculty and students there. Reuter reports that while traveling in Russia he was “proud to represent the Emory political science department, whether in my interviews with ruling party apparatchiks or in research presentations for local universities.”

Reuter has been a tremendous Emory success story. He published three scholarly articles while a graduate student. He received several prestigious grants for conducting fieldwork, including a second Fulbright Fellowship. He is slated to defend his dissertation in the coming months, and next academic year he will serve as a postdoctoral fellow at the Harriman Institute at Columbia University, one of the most well-regarded research centers for East European and Russian studies in the world.

Assistant Professor Jennifer Gandhi is one of Reuter’s graduate advisers and one of his coauthors. She has found him a joy to work with, remarking, “John is a great example of the type of scholar we would like our graduate students to become: theoretically and empirically rigorous with attention to what actually happens on the ground politically.”

Reuter attributes his extraordinary success to the support he enjoyed while at Emory. “I have received incredible support from my advisors at Emory,” he recalls. “Dr. Thomas Remington, in particular, has left a deep, and wholly positive, imprint on my professional development. The overall graduate experience has been outstanding.”