

newsletter for politics alumni

politicsgrad

AUTUMN 2006

Annual Fund award



When staff and students return to the Department of Politics this October, they will find a refurbished social space and state-of-the-art e-learning facilities. And it's all thanks to a £17,000 grant from the University's Annual Fund.

Work is already under way to develop the dual use student-staff area at 10 Priory Road. The room will have bar chairs, a bench around the wall for lap-top use, and a wi-fi hot spot, as well as a refurbished kitchen area. The grant

has also enabled the department to develop its e-learning facilities, through expanding and upgrading the wireless equipment to provide building-wide coverage for notebook PCs, for formal and informal learning and group work. In addition, plasma screens will be mounted in the foyer of 10 Priory Road. This will be used to display the latest University and faculty seminars and lectures open to students and updates on scheduling of classes.

The Annual Fund consists of donations from graduates and friends of the University.

Politics ranked fourth in UK

The definitive *Times Good University Guide 2007* has ranked politics and international relations at Bristol 4th best in the UK. Professor Anthony Forster, Head of Department, said: 'This is a tribute to staff and students and confirms our department as a leading place for the study of politics and international relations, both nationally and internationally'.

It is an exciting time to write about the Department of Politics. We are rapidly expanding – with 370 undergraduates, 140 Diploma and Masters students and 45 MPhil/PhD students. We now have 25 permanent staff and five researchers.



As we have expanded, we have reorganised our research into four research groups covering European politics, gender, international development and international security. In turn, alongside our generic MSc in International Relations, we have developed four specialist degrees that draw on our expertise and we now run one of the most popular Masters degree programmes in the UK. In the past five years we have also attracted £1.5 million of income from funders for our research.

Over the past 18 months we have undertaken a curriculum review to update our undergraduate degree course and to ensure student-centred learning is the cornerstone of our approach. We are now preparing the new curriculum for approval and look forward to introducing it in October 2007.

Professor Anthony Forster
Head of Department



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iraq in fragments



women at the top



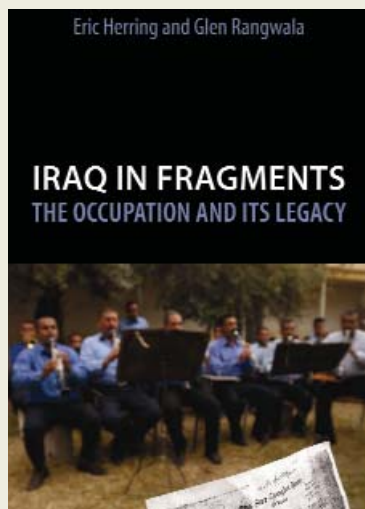
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study abroad

Four new members of staff have joined the department: Professor Mark Duffield (an expert on conflict, security and development and author of *Global Governance and New Wars*); Dr Adrian Flint (an expert on sustainable development, environmental policy and the European Union (EU), especially in an African context); Dr Nieves Perez-Solorzano (an expert on EU regulatory reform and competition policy); and Dr Steve Webber (an expert on security and foreign policy in Europe and the USA).

Iraq in fragments



An insight into the failure to rebuild the Iraqi state following the war has just been published. In *Iraq in Fragments: The Occupation and its Legacy*, Dr Eric Herring, Senior Lecturer in International Politics at Bristol, and Glen Rangwala, analyse in detail why the Iraqi polity fractured after the invasion, and the consequences of this fragmentation. The major reason advanced by Dr Herring and Rangwala rests with the character of the project to rebuild the Iraqi state. Through this project, the Coalition powers have often unwittingly created incentives for unregulated local power struggles, patron–client relations, corruption, smuggling and violence. These features in turn have substantially shaped Iraq’s new political actors.

As uncertainty about the future of Iraq persists, this book provides a much-needed analysis of the deeper forces which give meaning to the daily events in Iraq.



Women at the top

Dr Sarah Childs is lead author (with Professor Joni Lovenduski and Dr Rosie Campbell) of

The Hansard Society’s fourth *Women at the Top Report*, which analyses women’s political representation at the 2005 General Election. The report recommends that all political parties adopt equality guarantees to ensure that women are selected for party-held and winnable seats. The report also looks at the question of the difference women make in politics.

Dr Childs is involved in a week-long series of programmes celebrating *Woman’s Hour* 60th anniversary that will be aired this autumn. Along with Dr

Campbell, she attended a recording of *Woman’s Hour* in the presence of her Majesty the Queen in June. The Queen officially reopened the newly refurbished BBC headquarters in central London before taking a tour of recording studios.

The forthcoming *Woman’s Hour* anniversary programmes draw on specially commissioned survey research and discuss the changing nature of British women’s lives, exploring in particular women’s experiences of education and domestic and paid work, childcare and personal and sexual relationships.



Muslim media and the ‘war on terror’

Academics from across the world came to Bristol for a workshop entitled ‘Muslim media and the “war on terror”’. Since 9/11, there has been considerable research on media representations of terrorism, the war on terror, anti-terrorist security policy, Islam and the West. But these analyses tend to focus on the mainstream Western press.

In this workshop, attention was directed to the analysis of ‘Muslim media’ and their representations. The papers presented at the workshop covered a wide range of topics from ‘Terrorism and the status of the “martyr” in global Muslim media’ to ‘cyber-politics, terrorism and transnational Islam’. The papers addressed both Muslim media in the diaspora in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, and in ‘Muslim countries’ – those with Muslim traditions in both the Arab and non-Arab worlds.

Lorna Robins (BSc 2005) won the Political Studies Association Women and Politics Undergraduate Essay Competition 2005/06 for her essay ‘Is an attempt to develop an international women’s movement a manifestation of Western imperialism or a positive response to the emerging global order?’.



The Bristol-Vietnam Project: update >>>



Located in the University's Governance Research Centre, the Bristol-Vietnam Project was founded in 2005 by

Dr Martin Gainsborough, lecturer in the department and Vietnam expert. Standing at the interface between academia, business and policy-makers, offering ground-breaking research and consultancy on contemporary Vietnam and its neighbours, the Bristol-Vietnam Project's speciality is high-quality research tailored to the needs of international business and the donor aid community.

In 2006, the Bristol-Vietnam Project produced an in-depth report linked to Vietnam's Tenth Communist Party Congress entitled 'Vietnam After The Tenth Party Congress: Emerging and Future Trends'. The report was sold to a range of business and government clients and received wide publicity in the

Vietnamese and international press. The Bristol-Vietnam Project has expertise in corporate development, Vietnamese firms, political economy and governance, including institutional reform, corruption and civil society.

Through the Bristol-Vietnam Project research fund, the Bristol-Vietnam Project supports the development of research capacity in Vietnam and the surrounding states through postgraduate study and post-doctoral research in the UK and the Mekong sub-region. The Bristol-Vietnam Project is looking to offer its first scholarships to Vietnamese graduate students to study in Bristol in 2007/08.

In addition, the Bristol-Vietnam Project organises briefings, seminars, workshops and conferences in the UK and abroad as a way of supporting research and the dissemination of research on Vietnam and its neighbours.

Politics offers rapid response

People can access up-to-the-minute comments from the Bristol politics research community on current news, thanks to the launch of 'Rapid Repsonse', a new feature on the department's website. Academics' responses are posted in a 'mini-paper' format and are intended to inform and to spark discussion.

Dr Paul Higate and Professor Terrell Carver both commented on the allegations in February that British troops in southern Iraq assaulted unarmed Iraqis.

Find out more at www.bristol.ac.uk/politics/news/2006/060222_RR_1_AssaultVideos.

inbrief

ERIC HERRING

Dr Eric Herring has been appointed specialist adviser on economic sanctions to the UK House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs. The prestigious appointment will run from July to December 2006 and will include duties such as providing background briefings for committee members, preparing questions for witnesses, and being principal author of the committee's report. The report will be addressed to the UK government with the aim of improving policy on economic sanctions.

LUCIA QUAGLIA

A *Sunday Times* story of 28 May 2006 entitled 'Belusconi is no EU match for Aherne' featured research published by Bristol's Dr Lucia Quaglia and Edward Moxon-Browne of the University of Limerick. Their article 'What makes a good EU presidency?', was published in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* (44:2). Dr Quaglia also delivered a keynote address in June to an international conference on 'Economic Governance in the European Union' in Albania. Her research focuses on central banking in the EU, and the conference was sponsored by the University of Tirana and the Italian Embassy.

A year abroad

Politics student **Tim Crouch** (pictured) spent a year at Pitzer College, in the Claremont Colleges, California, USA, as part of the Study Abroad programme.

I chose to spend a year studying abroad to experience a different style of education. I also wanted to have a better understanding of American society and politics.

I love experiencing different cultures, so chose Pitzer College, which is comparatively multicultural for a higher education institution in the USA. It also provides a unique and flexible learning experience where students can tailor their course to fit around their interests and educational needs. Living in Southern California also had a certain appeal.

I studied a wide variety of courses, from the politics of water (a pertinent issue in the arid west) to issues of participation in American politics. My main area of focus was on developmental politics in Sub-Saharan

Africa through various studies into Tanzanian socialism, the proposed topic of my forthcoming dissertation.

I got involved in lots of extra-curricular activities as well. I took part in a talk hosted by the International Place regarding different countries' perspectives on Hurricane Katrina and was a member of the Pan African Students Association. I also had a job at the Pomona College Museum of Art and played rugby for the Claremont Dragons.

I absolutely loved every minute of my time in Pitzer and I learned so much from it. One of the most important things that I took away from the experience was to be more understanding about the American perspective, however much it infuriated and baffled me.



The aspect of American society that struck me hardest was the racial divide that still exists between black, white and Hispanic groups. I didn't come across any other single issue that was more significant in shaping present-day American society.

I would encourage anybody who is in the position to study abroad to grab the opportunity with both hands. It has given me some great friends, opened my eyes about many things and left me refreshed for my final year at Bristol.

If all goes well over the next year, I hope to pursue graduate studies in the field of international development with a particular focus on East Africa with view to a career in overseas development.'

inbrief



PROFESSOR TERRELL CARVER

Professor Terrell Carver has been appointed Consulting Editor to the leading US journal *Political Theory*, joining the new Editor Mary Dietz from the University of Minnesota.

DR AARON BELKIN

The Director of the University of California's internationally recognised Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, Dr Aaron Belkin, visited the department in June for a week-long programme of seminars, workshops, conference participation and research planning. The programme linked the Gender and Governance and Civil-Military Relations research communities at Bristol with Dr Belkin's work.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you would like to get in touch with your old Bristol friends, please contact the Campaigns and Alumni Relations Office. Email development-alumni@bristol.ac.uk or visit www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni.