



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

## FROM THE CHAIR

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**HOW RELEVANT IS POLITICAL SCIENCE?** To the extent that power is a constant that exerts itself across and within communities, the study of power is evergreen. To the extent that the discipline focuses on processes and institutions that mitigate the crude exercise of power, there is more cause for dismay. As the world holds its breath watching the US veer toward an unprecedented electoral showdown, we see a growing social acceptance across the ideological spectrum for gaining power at any cost with less concern for the democratic ideals that, for a very brief period historically, seemed to provide a calm and orderly modus operandi for an increasingly diverse population. But as concern for democratic norms such as transparency, accountability, mutual respect, and good will evaporate in the face of the quest for power, so does governability fester and decay. As Rousseau warned, as soon as the disillusioned say, "What does it matter to me?", the state may be given up for lost. The test of our discipline, then, will be whether we engage with this disillusionment, or merely exacerbate it.

***Dr. Katherine Fierlbeck, Political Science Chair***

### Stay Connected

**Department of Political Science /  
Centre for the Study of Security  
and Development**

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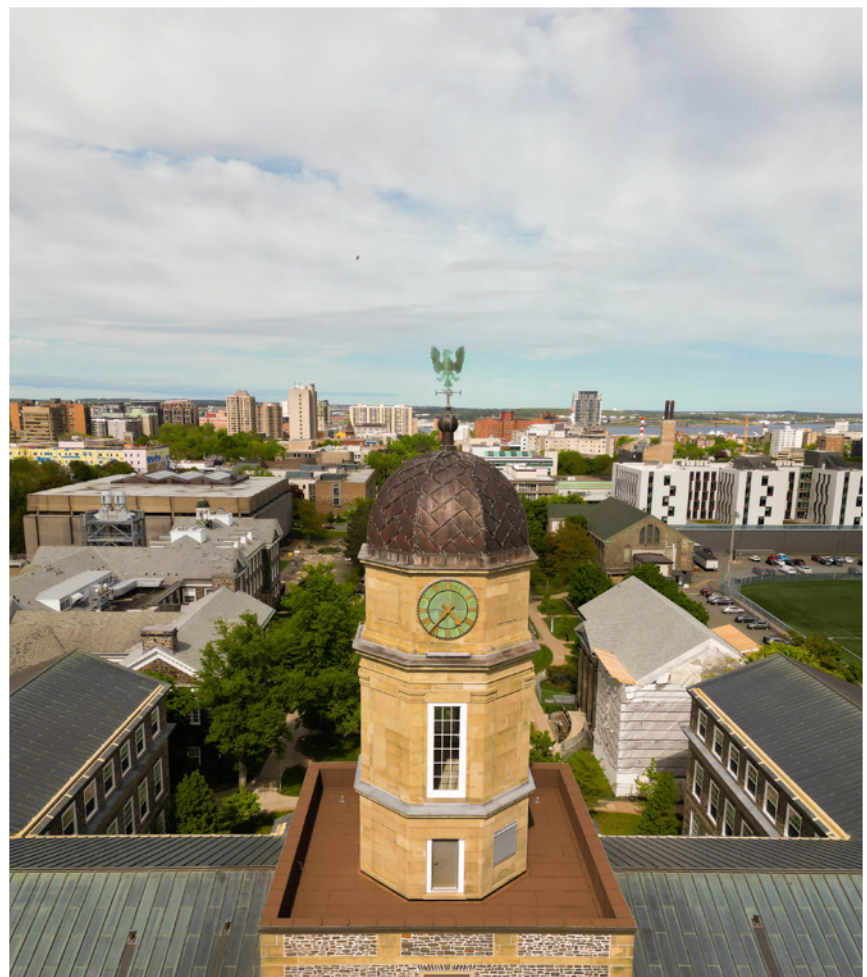
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For information on events within the Faculty or to plan a reunion, visit [dal.ca/fass](http://dal.ca/fass) or email [fassalum@dal.ca](mailto:fassalum@dal.ca)



# OUR FACULTY



**DR. PETER ARTHUR** served as Undergraduate Advisor during the 2023/24 academic year when Dr. Anders Hayden

went on sabbatical leave. In addition to assisting students with course selection, he provided advice to students regarding various academic matters. He participated in the Open House organized by the University in November 2023 for High School students who were planning on attending Dalhousie University. Along with this, he published a paper, “Extractive Sector Regulations in Africa: Old Practices & New Models for Change,” in Hany Besada, Cristina D’alessandro & Tefsi Golla edited collection, *Routledge Handbook of Natural Resource Governance in Africa*, Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge. He is also a part of a group of scholars (Vanessa Tang, Korbala P. Pupilampu and Kobena Hanson) who have submitted a proposal for an edited book, *Green Development and Finance in a Globalized Africa*, to Palgrave MacMillan and which is currently under review. Furthermore, he supervised the thesis of an International Development Studies (IDS) Honours student, as well as served as the external examiner for a PhD thesis at the University of Ghana. Moreover, he served as a reviewer for the *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Besides these, Dr. Arthur chaired the Department’s Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Committee. The Committee focused on incorporating EDIA issues into the various aspects of the department’s activities as colleagues, educators, and mentors. Additionally, he continued his membership in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences’ (FASS) Research Development Committee (RDC). Finally, Dr. Arthur will be presenting one of his ongoing research works, “China and infrastructural investment in West

Africa: Implications for political and environmental governance in the region,” at the annual Canadian Association for African Studies (CAAS) Conference, to be held between 12 to 16 June 2024 at McGill University, Montreal.



**DR. KIRAN BANERJEE:** During his fifth year as a faculty member in the department, Dr. Kiran Banerjee spent the academic year

teaching courses in the classroom, researching and writing, preparing several grant applications, as well as engaging in a number of collaborative research projects at the national and international level. His class offerings featured the third-year undergraduate course ‘Refugees, Migrants, and International Order: Understanding the Politics of Global Mobility’ as well as an upper-level undergraduate and graduate course ‘Democracy, Human Rights, War, and Peace: Ethics in International Affairs’. He also acted as an MA thesis supervisor, as well as supervised two honours thesis projects. Banerjee also had the opportunity to serve on both the FASS and Departmental EDIA committees over the course of the past year, served on the Scholars at Risk Committee at Dalhousie, as well as reprised his role as one of this year’s Stanfield Fellows. In addition, Dr. Banerjee has been involved in several new grant submissions. As this academic year comes to a close, he would like to express his thanks to the staff and his colleagues in the Department of Political Science, as well as his students across all his classes.



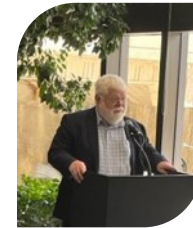
**DR. BRIAN BOW** has been working on two conference papers this spring—one on America’s commitment to an “engagement”

strategy with China during the 1990s, and one on government responses to the COVID pandemic and their impact on elite debates over industrial policy. He is developing a new 3000-level course on states and markets in the world economy, which he hopes to roll out in the winter 2026 term. He was Honours program coordinator in 2023-24, and again found that very rewarding, but will be handing off to Anders Hayden for 2024-25. He begins a three-year term as department chair this summer and is looking forward to working closely with colleagues in preparation for the upcoming department review.

**DR. KATHERINE FIERLBECK:**

As Katherine Fierlbeck’s eleventh book, *Public Policy Challenges in Rethinking Public Health*, comes out later this month, she will be using her upcoming sabbatical to begin writing her twelfth, as well as producing outputs from her CIHR grant on comparative provincial public health responses to COVID. She has had a busy year with many invited talks, including a presentation for the OurCare exercise in deliberative democracy in primary health care last July; a presentation on public health care for the University of Ottawa in September; a talk on private health care at the University of Toronto in January; a podcast for the C.D. Howe Institute in March; a discussion with Althea Raj for the Toronto Star podcast in March; a webinar on *The Canada Health Act at 40* for the Health Care Coalition in May; and a talk on health system governance for uOttawa’s Health

Law Summer Institute this coming June. In June as well, she will be running a conference at the City University, London (UK) on pharmaceutical regulation in the EU. Her paper on private health care was published by the C.D. Howe Institute in February, and is on a top ten download list for SSRN. She was a co-author on the scoping review “*Strategies and indicators to integrate health equity in health service and delivery systems in high income countries*” (*JBI Evidence Synthesis*).



**DR. ROBERT FINBOW** hosted an International Workshop on European Union Trade and Economic Relations: Transatlantic

and Global Challenges. This workshop, hosted for the Jean Monnet EU Centre of Excellence, brought together scholars from Europe, the US and Canada to discuss the latest research and developments on the transatlantic economic relationship in turbulent times. He was hampered this year by vision issues, which improved after surgery. His chapter on “Asymmetry and Civil Society Backlash: Changing European Calculations in Trans-Atlantic Investment Relations from CETA to TTIP and Beyond” was published in Elaine Fahey (ed.) *Research Handbook of Transatlantic Relations* (Routledge), 337-35. He completed a contribution on the Canada EU Free Trade Agreement (CETA) for the *Elgar Encyclopedia of International Economic Law*, edited by Thomas Cottier and Krista Nadakavukaren Schefer. His completed his chapter on Halifax which is under peer review for the revised collection edited by Martin Horak, Jack Lucas and Zack Taylor, *City Politics in Canada*, 2nd ed for the University of Toronto Press. An article on “Populism and Plutocracy: A Theoretical Reflection”

is in revision for submission. He continues participation in the Trade and Investment Research Project and his research on populist challenges to free trade. Dr. Finbow was active on committees for the department and enjoyed reading enlightening papers as a member of the selection committee for the Irving and Jeanne Glovin Award, one of the FASS Essay Competitions. The essays, which addressed the meaning and underlying principles for “good human conduct”, revealed the rich and diverse character of scholarship and mentoring across the Faculty. He attended his 35-year milestone reception (pictured here) alongside other long serving members of the Dalhousie community.



**DR. KRISTIN GOOD:** Good’s *Canadian Urban Governance in Comparative Perspective* is in production and is scheduled

to be published in October. In addition, Dr. Good is continuing work funded by a SSHRC Insight Grant (2022) with Co-Investigators Drs. Zachary Taylor (Principal Investigator), Sandra Breux and Martin Horak to study the role of money in local politics. As part of this work, she is currently writing a paper that describes and assesses local property franchises from a democratic perspective. Dr. Good also continues to conduct research that critically examines the constitutional status of municipalities in Canada and has contributed a chapter about the status of municipalities in provincial constitutions to an edited collection that is expected to be published in the next couple of months. As founding co-editor (with Dr. Martin Horak) of the McGill-Queen’s Studies in Urban Governance book series, Dr. Good continues to review books and promote the series.

**DR. SCOTT PRUYERS** enjoyed another great year in the department. Among other courses, he returned to teaching POLI 3492, a class that provides students with an introduction to quantitative political science methods and techniques. While always



a challenge, POLI 3492 is among the most rewarding classes to teach as students develop entirely new skills and begin to face their collective fear of numbers!

He also continued his role on ADC, chairing the committee during the winter semester. On the research front, his latest co-authored book, *Voting Online: Technology and Democracy in Municipal Elections*, is set to be published by McGill-Queens University Press in June 2024. In addition to wrapping up this book project, he published a number of journal articles relating to party and electoral politics in journals such as *Party Politics*, *Government and Opposition*, *Representation*, and *Social Science Computer Review*. Moving forward, Dr. Pruyers is excited to carve out some time to begin working on a solo book project that explores political ambition, recruitment, and nomination in Canadian party politics.

*Continued on next page*

## OUR FACULTY *cont'd*



### **DR. LEAH SARSON:**

Since returning from parental leave last summer, Dr. Leah Sarson has had a year full

of new appointments and challenges. In addition to her promotion to Associate Professor, she took over as Director of the Centre for the Study of Security and Development, was appointed one of two editors-in-chief of *International Journal*, and continued her research and teaching. As Director of the CSSD, Dr. Sarson has focused on developing a long-term plan for a productive and inclusive organization that continues to support creative, compelling, and contemporary research in security and development. The CSSD hosted eight events this past year and Dr. Sarson participated in several, including moderating panels on discourse and dialogue in times of conflict and the institutionalization versus internationalization of human rights in partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces. She also presented at the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association annual conference with a six-month-old beside her, travelled to Northwest Territories for her research, and is looking forward to presenting her current research at the British Association of International Studies annual conference and the Arctic Congress in June. Dr. Sarson is in the process of completing her monograph on the contested relationship between Indigenous and state authorities and a book chapter on Indigenous diplomacies in the Canadian Arctic. She is also working with wonderful colleagues on two edited volumes on global Indigenous politics and feminist foreign policy. She is looking forward to delving into these and other projects during her sabbatical year ahead.



### **DR. RUBEN ZAIOTTI:**

My 2023/24 academic year was dedicated to adding new courses to my teaching portfolio

and expanding the experiential learning opportunities available to students at Dal. I am very excited about a newly developed course on borders in world politics, which I will offer next year. In it, I explore the multifaceted ways that political boundaries have shaped global politics, and, in turn, how recent events (conflicts, de-globalization, pandemics) have changed the nature of. I am also happy that this year I will lead the Summer Institute on Migration and Identity in Europe and Canada, a two-week intensive course that takes place partly at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 on the Halifax waterfront. In this course students have the opportunity to learn about population flows across the Atlantic in an immersive and hands-on environment, with the help of experts from the museum. The course also involves a trip to the Grand Pres National Historical Site, a UNESCO World Heritage site, to learn more about the history of Acadians in Nova Scotia. Talking about travelling and learning, as part of my role as Director of the Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence, in May I am sponsoring two groups of students headed to Toronto and Brussels to participate in a European Union Model simulation and EU Study tour (see piece on the JMEUCE in this newsletter). In my capacity as JMEUCE Director, I have also hosted various guest speakers throughout the year, including Russel Foster from King's College London. **See picture above: Dr. Russel Foster, King's College London (right) and Dr. Ruben Zaiotti (left). Dr. Foster visited November 2023 and gave us an engaging talk on the war in Ukraine and its impact on EU identity.**

**The Department of Political Science is very pleased to give a warm welcome to new scholars who will be joining our team effective July 1, 2024.**

Dr. Marion Laurence has taken on the role of Assistant Professor, Limited Term for 3 years, and Dr. Heather Tasker has taken on a joint role of Assistant Professor in both the Department of Political Science and Law, Justice and Society Program.



### **MARION LAURENCE**

joins Dalhousie from the Royal Military College of Canada, where she was an Assistant

Professor in the Department of Defence Studies, based at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto. Her research interests include global security governance, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and the political sociology of international organizations. Previously, she held research and teaching appointments at the University of Toronto, the University of Ottawa, Toronto Metropolitan University, and the Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security within the Canadian Defence Academy.



### **HEATHER TASKER**

has a PhD in Socio-Legal Studies from York University. Her research focuses on gendered violence and harm

in contexts affected by armed conflict, transitional justice processes, and international criminal law. Her teaching to date has emphasised critical legal studies, socio-legal theory, and gender issues in the law. Born and raised in the Maritimes, Heather is very excited to make Halifax her home and to be part of the Dal community!

# THE 2023 STANFIELD CONVERSATIONS: TALKING DEMOCRACY

**Dr. Kiran Banerjee, Dr. David Black, and Dr. Scott Pruyers**

During the fall 2023 semester Dalhousie hosted the third annual Stanfield Conversation: Talking Democracy. The series builds on the legacy of Rt. Hon. Robert L. Stanfield, a long-serving former Premier of Nova Scotia and celebrated former leader of the federal Progressive Conservative Party. This ongoing series focusses on critical challenges to democracy and imaginative and inspiring responses to them.

The third annual Conversation, titled 'Can Democracies Meet the Challenge of Climate Change?', took place on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, and featured leading figures from civil society, the academy, and government: Megan Leslie (President & CEO of World Wildlife Fund-Canada), Dr. Mark Jaccard

(Professor at Simon Fraser University & CEO of the B.C. Utilities Commission) and Naheed Nenshi (former Mayor of Calgary & current candidate for Alberta's NDP leadership). The moderator of the 2023 Conversation was CBC Radio Host, and Dalhousie alum, Jeff Douglas.

Accompanying the public lecture, graduate students at Dalhousie were invited to a special 'Master Class', with Leslie, Jaccard, and Nenshi leading a seminar. More than a dozen graduate students from Political Science, Public Administration, History, and International Development Studies participated in an engaging discussion that centered on one of the most important challenges facing contemporary democratic politics: the crisis of climate change. The conversation that followed, which was informed by key texts



provided by Leslie, Jaccard, and Nenshi, offered participants a chance to critically engage with and provide their own perspectives on key issues, such as whether existing liberal democracies have the tools, and even capacity, to agree on and implement sufficiently strong and consistent policies as to meet the challenge of climate change.

As with previous iterations, the Master Class was a tremendous success. A community building experience that brings together graduate students from a variety of disciplines across the faculty, the Master Class will continue to be a staple of future Stanfield events for years to come, serving as a crucial 'warm up' for the main public [Conversation](#) itself.



## DALHOUSIE POLITICAL SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN MODEL SENATE 2024 AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS



**Jessica Duffney, BA: Honours in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society (Graduated May 2024)**

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the Political Science Faculty, I had the opportunity to participate in Model Senate 2024. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity as I got to meet Canadian senators and simulate the senate process whilst sitting in the red chamber (and the green room of the House of Commons). The experience was inspiring and allowed me to practically apply what I have learned studying political science.



**Kristen Barnes, BA: Major in Political Science**

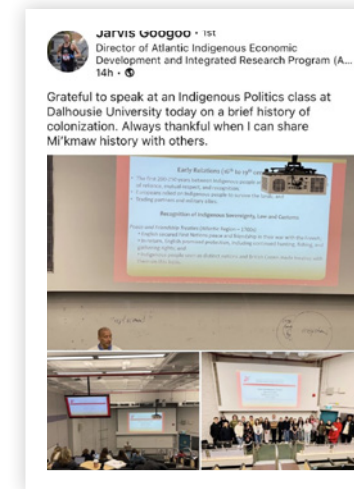
I was honoured to represent Dalhousie University at the SENGage Model Senate in Ottawa. This is a yearly event where university students across Canada come together to simulate Senate and Committee sittings. My role this year was as a Senator who would debate in the second and third rounds of readings of the bill. I would also like to thank our valued donors to the Political Science department for their financial support.



Students not highlighted here who attended Model Senate 2024 and were financially supported by the Department of Political Science were Evan Colclough (BA: Major in Political Science with Minor in History), Sarah Johnson (BA: Major in Political Science), John McConnell-Grant (BA: Major in Political Science with Minor in International Development Studies), and Jack Kielbowich (BA: Major in Law, Justice & Society and Political Science). A sincere thank you to our donors who make these invaluable opportunities possible for our students.

## SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS IN OUR POLITICAL SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE CLASSES

**Dr. Natalie Ghosn, Esq.,** taught POLI 2215.03 and POLI 2210.03 this year and was very pleased and thankful to be able to have several guest speakers in her classes. Some of those special guests are highlighted below.



**POLI 2215.03: Indigenous Politics in Canada.**

Students welcomed 12 Indigenous speakers to the course this semester including Chiefs from Glooscap First Nation and Milbrook First Nation.



**POLI 2210.03: Unity and Diversity: The Federal Dynamics of Canadian Politics.** Students welcomed US Consul General Lyra S. Carr to discuss how US-Canada relations are affected by Canada's federal structure.



Students in the **Canadian Federalism** class send Mi'kmaq language notes and photos to Karl Hele, Professor at Mount Allison University, New Brunswick who was interviewed for their group project.

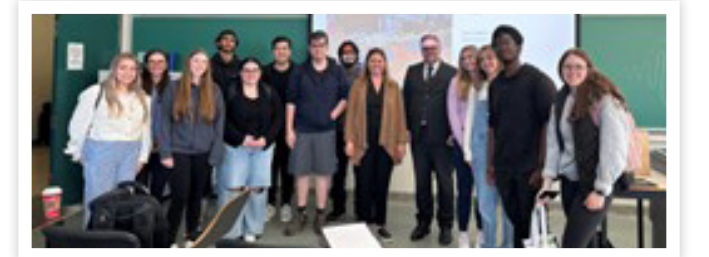
**Dr. Kristin Good** taught POLI 2220.03 (**The Structures of Parliamentary Government in Canada**) for the first time this year. She enjoyed engaging with the students on the fundamental constitution laws and principles of the Canadian regime and discussing current events in class. Her class was enriched significantly by four distinguished guest speakers including former Prime Minister Right Honourable Joe Clark and former Deputy Prime Minister (and minister in several other portfolios) Honourable Anne McLellan who generously agreed to participate in an interview-based and conversational style event that allowed them to share personal experiences in public service that brought the course material to life for the students. Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard also spoke to the class offering insights into the Senatorial appointment process and the work of the Senate in such a personal way that inspired the students. The class also enjoyed a lecture given by James Charlton, the Chief Clerk of the Nova Scotia Legislature who was able to highlight some of the differences in parliamentary procedure between the federal Parliament and the Nova Scotia legislature. What an amazing experience these talks were for our students!



*Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard with the POLI 2220.03 Class.*



*Right Honourable Joe Clark and Honourable Anne McLellan with the POLI 2220.03 Class.*



*Chief Clerk of the Nova Scotia Legislature, James Charlton with the POLI 2220.03 Class.*

# CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT (CSSD)

Dr. Leah Sarson, CSSD Director

## THIS YEAR MARKED MY FIRST YEAR AS

Executive Director of the Centre, an appointment I was delighted to accept from my predecessor, Brian Bow. My thanks to Brian, Centre administrative secretary Mary Okwese, and the Centre's stalwarts and friends for their assistance during the transition. Over the next few years, I plan to focus on supporting and expanding the CSSD's community of scholars, students, practitioners, and activists creating innovative research in the areas of security and development, broadly understood.

Over the past year, the CSSD hosted eight events that brought together more than fifty experts from across Canada and internationally from academic, government, military, and non-governmental sectors. Our events provided a forum to connect interdisciplinary scholars and specialists collaborating on various projects, introduce students to prominent thinkers and change-makers, and contend with current political events and crises at home and abroad.

Our events this year included a two-day workshop in August, "Untangling the Climate Change/Migration/Security Nexus" with funding from the Department of Defence, a November early career researchers' forum on engendering disability-inclusive development funded by SSHRC, panel events on discourse and dialogue in times of conflict, Canadian development cooperation, and human rights, a talk on military wives, and a series of online conferences related to a forthcoming volume on critical understandings of Canada in the world. Several of these events were collaborations with partners at Dalhousie and beyond, reflecting the community-building ethos at the heart of our mandate.

You can find photos and information about these and future events on the CSSD's new Instagram account, [cssd\\_dal](#). You

can also hear me representing the Centre in an [interview on CBC radio's Halifax drive-home program Mainstreet](#) in which I discussed Canada's engagement in NATO and the organization's future.

David Black will helm the Centre over the next year while I am on sabbatical. Please check the [CSSD website](#) for updates and events.



# JEAN MONNET EUROPEAN UNION CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (JMEUCE)

Madeleine Coffen-Smout, Centre Coordinator

The Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence continues to provide a focal point for academic, outreach and networking activities relating to the EU. The academic year began with an international workshop on European Union Trade and Economic Relations: Transatlantic and Global Challenges. Led by JMEUCE Deputy Director, Robert Finbow, this hybrid event brought together a multidisciplinary selection of participants from Europe, Asia and North America.

The autumn also featured a line-up of guest speakers giving public lectures on a range of topics. David Haglund (Queen's) spoke on *France-US Security and Defence Cooperation: Strategic Culture and Cognitive 'Antinomies'*; Tobias Schminke (Europe Elects & Dal) and Paulo Raveca (SMU) led a round table on *European and Latin American Populisms*; Heather MacRae (York) explored Gender, *Inequality and Intersectionality: The European Union at a Crossroads*; while Russell Foster (King's College London & Carleton) presented on *Europe and Europe - Ukraine and the Identity War*.

Around 60 people took part in this year's EU Day of Debate in February, when the Centre collaborated again with the



*In-person speakers at Trade Workshop (15th Sept. 2023, Dalhousie)*

Dalhousie-King's Debate Society on a weekend competition for local schools. This popular outreach activity gives young students the opportunity to learn about the European Union and EU-related issues while honing their debating skills.

The Centre also provided support for Dal student research and mobility. This included offering the annual EU Essay Prize – congratulations to Grace Alberts for her winning paper – and enabling participation in both the Model European Union Canada and the upcoming EU Study Tour & Internship Programme. For the former, congratulations to Massimo

Rigatto and Alexandra Westgard on being judged the best delegation, and for the latter, good luck to Grace Alberts, Emily La Rocque and Isabella Stefek as they head to Europe in May for 2-3 months.

Finally, the JMEUCE continues to value the opportunity for networking and collaboration with international scholars at all stages of their careers. We have therefore been pleased to host Erasmus Mundus Professor, Krishna Kumar Saha (Ghent University, Belgium), visiting undergraduate Kateryna Korpalo (Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine) and PhD student, Bakhtawar Nizamani (University of Sassari, Italy).



*Dal delegates Alexandra & Massimo at the Model EU (3rd-5th May, Toronto)*



# UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

Peter Arthur, Undergraduate Advisor

Serving as undergraduate advisor in the Department of Political Science has meant dealing with and responding to various inquiries from students. Among the main issues I have been involved in my capacity as undergraduate advisor has been to assist students with issues pertaining to course selections, as well as on plans relating to going on exchange programs abroad. During the

academic year, the department was involved in the recruitment of potential new students through the University organized Open House for high-school students. With assistance from my colleague, Dr. Kiran Banerjee, as well as members (Isobel Cameron, Emily LaRocque, and Kate Walker) of the Dalhousie Undergraduate Political Science Student Society (DUPSS), we conveyed to potential

students what is entailed in the discipline of Political Science and their future prospects with a degree in that field of academic study. Along with the Open House, the Department of Political Science, with assistance from Dr. Margaret Denike, was involved in the Advising Fair organized by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) Programs in March 2024.

# THE DALHOUSIE UNDERGRADUATE POLITICAL SCIENCE SOCIETY (DUPSS)

Isobel Cameron, DUPSS President



The Dalhousie Undergraduate Political Science Student Society's (DUPSS) 2023-2024 academic year was full of exciting new initiatives, and a growing council that helped make it all happen! With over twenty attendees at our Fall Annual General Meeting, we started the year off with a bang, and kept the momentum going with numerous events, both returning favourites and new ones! Over the year, the society hosted bingo, trivia nights, study sessions, the Honours panel, the Dalhousie Political Networking Initiative, and our annual gala. On top of these annual events, we introduced several new initiatives. We hosted an EU book club with the help of Dr. Zaiotti and put together a 2024 reading list (which can be found on our Instagram!). With the help of alumni Dong Ngo, we brought back the Political Science Alumni Networking Initiative, wherein students were matched with an alumni mentor.

Inspired by past DUPSS events, we brought back the headshot fundraiser, and provided a number of students with headshots while raising \$150 and collecting non-perishable food items for Hope Cottage here in Halifax. Another returning classic DUPSS initiative that we were happy to carry on the tradition of this year was the Podium Journal, which featured a cover designed by renowned political cartoonist Michael de Adder!

The cover, and the winning essay submissions, were celebrated at the 6th annual Political Science Gala that was hosted this March at the Oxford Taproom. This event (pictured) was an amazing opportunity for students and faculty to get together and celebrate all the accomplishments of the year, both for DUPSS and the larger Dalhousie Political Science community. The events and initiatives would not have been possible without such a dedicated executive team and the unwavering support of the Political Science department, especially Dr. Fierbeck and Tracy. Last of all, we would like to thank all the students that came and supported our events, their support is what keeps the society running. We are looking forward to another successful and exciting year!



# WOMEN IN POLITICS SCHOLARSHIP

## THE WOMEN IN POLITICS

Scholarship was established in September 2020 through the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences by Sarah Dobson, a Dalhousie Political Science and Law graduate and Grace Evans, then a current Political Science student. The Women in Politics Scholarship supports the next generation of women-identifying students in the field by encouraging and inspiring their career aspirations. This award is given annually to two students who have identified as female with preference given to applicants who have voluntarily self-identified as belonging to a designated group as defined by the University, declared a major in Political Science, and demonstrated academic capability. We are pleased to announce that the 2024 recipients of this scholarship are:

- **GRACE CATTON**, BA: Major in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society with Minor in French
- **EMILY LA ROCQUE**, BA: Major in Political Science with a Minor in Journalism Studies



## 2023-24 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD/PRIZE WINNERS

**MADDY BURD**, BSc: Major in Neuroscience, has been awarded **The H.B. McCulloch Memorial Prize**. This prize is awarded annually to the student who, among all the first- and second-year students registered in introductory classes in Political Science, is judged to have written the best essay in the second term.

**CORA FLETCHER**, BA: Honours in Political Science, has been awarded **The Eric Dennis Gold Medal**. Founded by Senator William Dennis and Mrs. Dennis, this medal is awarded upon graduation to the student who stands first among those taking First Class Honours in Government and Political Science. This is the University Medal in Political Science.

**MIRA POSLUNS**, BA: Major in Political Science, has been awarded **The Commonwealth Political Science Prize**. This prize is awarded annually to the student who receives the highest grade in Political Science POLI 2410 and POLI 2420. The Commonwealth Prize was established by John Beveridge, who graduated from Dalhousie University in 1971.

**COBY STEER**, BA: Major in Political Science and History, has been awarded the **Rear-Admiral F.W. Crickard Prize in Political Science**. This award is offered once a year to the undergraduate student who has been nominated by a faculty member for the best IR paper in a Political Science course.

**KATE WALKER**, BA: Honours in Political Science, has been awarded **The James H. Aitchison Award**. In 1979 Colleagues of Dr. J.H. Aitchison established a fund from which an annual prize would be awarded in recognition of the best undergraduate Honours essay. The fund was established to honour Professor Aitchison who was instrumental in founding the department.

# HONOURS PROGRAMME REPORT

Dr. Brian Bow, Honours Coordinator

**THE HONOURS PROGRAMME HAD** a cohort of 10 students for 2023-24, pursuing research in a wide variety of areas (see thesis titles listed below). All of this year's theses were very strong, but Kate Walker's was judged best and

awarded the James H. Aitchison Prize for this year. Cora Fletcher won the Eric Dennis Gold Medal for the highest GPA over the 4-year degree programme. We're sorry to see them go, but very proud of their accomplishments so far,

and looking forward to seeing what they'll do next. On their behalf, sincere thanks to all of the faculty members who served as supervisors and second readers, and to Tracy Powell, for administrative support to the programme.

**JAMES CHADWICK**, "*Northern New England: Political-Cultural Unit?*" (supervisor Robert Finbow, second reader Brian Bow)

**JESSICA DUFFNEY**, "*Exceptionality Versus Essentiality: Canada's treatment of Temporary Foreign Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic*" (supervisor Kiran Banerjee, second reader David Black)

**ANNE KEELEY**, "*Exploring the Possibilities for Indigenous Self-Determination via Crown Articulated Self-Government: Non-domination, Relationality, and Re-surgence in the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan*" (supervisor Leah Sarson, second reader Jamie Snook)

**AVERY KELTERBORN**, "*Who's Chirping at Whom?: An Analysis of Canadian Party and Party Leaders' Implementation of Negative Personalization on Twitter*" (supervisor Scott Pruyers, second reader Rachael Johnstone)

**ALLISON KEOGH**, "*Calling the Shots: China and India's Approaches to Vaccine Diplomacy in the COVID-19 Pandemic*" (supervisor David Black, second reader Brian Bow)

**LYNN PHILLIPS**, "*From the International to the Local: Considerations for Engaging with Non-State Armed Groups Who Recruit and Use Children in Armed Conflict*" (supervisor Kiran Banerjee, second reader Kate Swanson)

**CAROLINE QUAID**, "*Bureaucratic Legacies: Explaining Differences in Post-9/11 Counter-terrorism in Western Europe*" (supervisor Ruben Zaiotti, second reader Robert Finbow)

**MASSIMO RIGATTO**, "*Democracy European Style: Eurocentrism, NGOs, and democracy promotion in Ethiopia and Kenya*" (supervisor Ruben Zaiotti, second reader David Black)

**REBECCA TOMLIK**, "*Not Too Long Ago the Majority Would Have Been Outraged': A Quantitative Analysis of the Impact of Anti-Trans Legislation on Trans-Centric News Media Coverage in Canada*" (supervisor Scott Pruyers, second reader Rachael Johnstone)

**KATE WALKER**, "*Drugs and Money: Regulatory Capture at the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board*" (supervisor Katherine Fierlbeck, second reader Sharon Batt)

# JAMES H. AITCHISON AWARD FOR BEST HONOURS THESIS

Kate Walker, BA: Honours in Political Science (Graduated May 2024)

**I FEEL VERY HUMBLLED AND GRATEFUL** to be this year's recipient of the James H. Aitchison Award. In the fall, I set my sights on writing the best possible thesis I could, and to be considered for this prestigious award is an honour. Of course, receiving this award would not have been possible without the support of my incredible supervisor, Dr. Katherine Fierlbeck, whose passion, and expertise in health care policy was instrumental in every step of this process. I also want to thank Dr. Brian Bow for his continued support in both current and future academic endeavours, as well as this year's Honours cohort. Everyone's hard work and dedication to the arduous process of writing a thesis was inspiring and I feel lucky to have worked alongside this talented group of students.

My decision to take Political Science stemmed directly from conversations my family had around the dinner table when I was growing up. Both my parents studied political science at Dalhousie, and they have always instilled in me a desire to engage in tough and sometimes uncomfortable conversations, while also holding space to listen to other perspectives and learn from them. My first year at Dalhousie was chaotic to say the least given the pandemic and the limited opportunities to meet peers due to social distancing measures, so I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to study. When I started my second year, however, my passion for political science was solidified, particularly in Dr. Fierlbeck's Political Thought class – where I also met some of the friends I still have today!



I honestly can't choose which is my favourite area of study within the discipline of Political Science. I became quite familiar with healthcare policy while writing my thesis (which I thoroughly enjoyed!) and I am also passionate about the study of international relations and foreign policy more broadly. While I have enjoyed all the political science classes I have taken at Dalhousie, one of my favourite classes was Contemporary Security Studies taught by Allison Chandler, which sparked in me a desire

to learn more about conflict studies in general.

After I graduate in May, I will be heading to the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University where I will pursue a graduate degree in International Affairs with a specialization in conflict analysis and resolution. While I am very sad to leave behind Dalhousie and the wonderful people in the political science department, I feel well positioned for a new academic adventure in Ottawa!

"Both my parents studied political science at Dalhousie, and they have always instilled in me a desire to engage in tough and sometimes uncomfortable conversations, while also holding space to listen to other perspectives and learn from them."

## POLITICAL SCIENCE TRAVEL FUND

For our graduate and honours students, field research (whether in Canada or internationally) and the opportunity to present their ideas at conferences and workshops are vital forms of educational and professional development. Yet supporting these invaluable opportunities for research and conference travel has always been a challenge for the department and our students, since there are few sources of financial assistance within or beyond the university. Now, thanks to generous alumni contributions, we have initiated

a new fund to support graduate and honours student travel. This will allow our students to undertake vital interview, archival, and participant observation research, and to share their ideas with audiences of peers and senior scholars. If you wish to contribute to this fund, please go online to [alumni.dal.ca/giving](https://alumni.dal.ca/giving).



# GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

## Dr. Kristin Good, Graduate Coordinator

**WE WELCOMED FOUR MA STUDENTS** this year Aliza Chow, Gala Palavicini Jauregui, Liam MacCarthy, and Samuel Ransley and one of our MA students from last year's cohort (Mirriam Mensah) was fast-tracked to our PhD program in January.

The MA students all participated in the department's third (first in-person) three-minute thesis (3MT) competition in March, with PhD students Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz and Xinyu Gong as judges. The presentations were all excellent, but the judges declared Gala Palavicini Jauregui the winner this year for her first-rate and engaging presentation entitled "Riding the Populist Wave? Populist Contagion in the 2021 Canadian Federal Election." As Gala describes her work: "Research suggests that populist parties, such as the People's Party of Canada (PPC), can disrupt elections through populist contagion, wherein established parties adopt a populist communication style to contend with emergent populist competitors. My project examines whether the populist communication style employed by PPC candidates resulted in a contagion effect in the rhetoric of the Conservative Party of Canada's (CPC) local campaigns in the same districts, during the 2021 federal election. To do this, I analyze the extent of populist rhetoric utilized by PPC and CPC candidates in Twitter, and present findings from six

semi-structured interviews to further explore empirical results".

Five MA students defended their theses since the last newsletter including Joseph Fitkowski ("Messianism in the Heart of Europe: Analysing Poland's Law and Justice Party, Narratives of Identity, and the European Union"); Austin Lees ("Redrawing Democracy: Exploring the Modern Landscape of the Electoral Boundaries Revolution in the Maritimes"); Drew MacEachern ("Everything in Moderation?: An Analysis of Foreign Policy Moderation in Left-wing Political Parties"); Caira Mohamed ("Violent Femininity: Exploring Representations of Women's Violence in Global Politics") and Leah Nicholson ("The Capacity for Care: A Care Ethics Analysis of Immigration and Settlement Policies in Three Canadian Provinces"). Adam MacDonald defended his PhD dissertation entitled "Fit over Function: Explaining the Differences in US Strategic Approaches Towards China and Russia in the Post-Cold War Era" with Prof. David Haglund as the external examiner. Congratulations to all of you! A special congratulations to Adam and thank you for your many contributions to departmental life over the years of your program!

Our students (past and present) have had many successes this year including winning major awards at Dalhousie Uni-

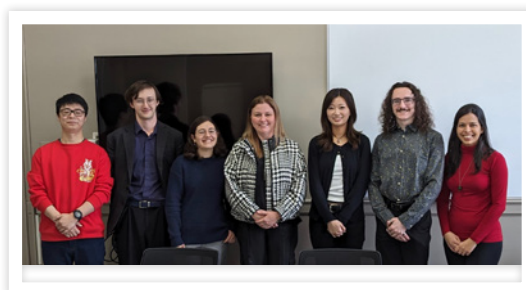
versity. Alumnus ('23) Tari Ajadi won the **Dalhousie Doctoral Thesis Award**, which recognizes "the best thesis submitted by Doctoral students in the 2023 calendar year." This award is granted to the university's nominee for a prestigious national award called the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS)/Proquest Distinguished Dissertation Award (to be awarded at a later date so stay tuned!).

Current PhD student Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz won **Dalhousie's "Outstanding Graduate Student Award"** which is awarded to a student who is "engaged in initiatives that improve the quality of the graduate student experience at Dalhousie" and whose impact "extend[s] beyond their academic program".

Mirriam Mensah, our newest PhD student (who was fast-tracked from the MA to the PhD program) won a Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship in this year's competition.

Congratulations to all of you for these significant achievements!

Finally, I am pleased to introduce our incoming cohort of MA students that includes Jekobe Craig; Cora Fletcher; Kegan Palmer; Scott Ripley and Michael Watson.



Left: 3MT Competition - Xinyu (judge), Sam (presenter), Gala (presenter), Dr. Kristin Good (Graduate Coordinator), Aliza (presenter), Liam (presenter), Patricia (judge).



Right: Adam MacDonald with Drs. Kristin Good, Brian Bow, Ruben Zaiotti, David Haglund, David Black, and Evangelos Milios (PhD Defence Chair Panel, FGS).

# GLYN BERRY SCHOLAR

## Xinyu Gong (PhD Candidate)

The past year has been challenging, but at the same time, colorful. As a part of the Political Science department at Dalhousie, and as the recipient of Glyn Berry Memorial scholarship, I am grateful to have the support of the scholarship, as well as the help I received from our faculties.

Throughout this year, I've encountered various experiences. I undertook additional TA responsibilities, assisting in four courses in total. Despite the increased workload, I found genuine enjoyment in these tasks. Interacting with young undergraduate students makes me feel young and passionate for my work. I want to thank Dr. Leah Sarson, Dr. Rachael Johnstone, and my supervisor, Dr. Brian Bow, for their guidance and patience during my TA duties, I am so thankful to work with them as they have taught me and guided me on how to be a good educator.

I also participated in my first conference this year. In October, I presented my paper at the Atlantic Provinces Political Science Conference at St. Thomas University, where the conference was hosted. Although my paper was not perfect, but it was an excellent experience to participate in academic events as meeting with other scholars and building academic network is an important aspect of my PhD studies. I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Shaun Narine from St. Thomas University for providing constructive feedback and support during my presentation at the conference. Furthermore, I'm thankful to thank Dr. Ruben Zaiotti and Dr. Robert Finbow for providing me with the opportunities to work as an assistant at the workshops hosted by our department. It enhanced my professional skills and confidence for future endeavors.

Another important thing I did in the past year was to visit my family back in China. After four long years of travel restrictions, I finally got a chance to return to China and reunite with my



parents. I am so grateful that my parents have always supported me. Despite the twelve-hour time difference, their unwavering support has kept me grounded and motivated throughout my PhD journey.

This year marks my tenth year in Canada. The world has changed a lot in the past decade. Ten years ago, the Crisis in Ukraine started, now, the war is still ongoing and even getting worse day by day; Ten years ago, Justin Trudeau was pre-

paring to challenge Stephen Harper for the upcoming election, now, it's the opposite and Pierre Poilievre is getting ready to challenge Trudeau for the next election. What has changed in the past decade? Why did that happen? These questions are waiting for me to answer, and as a political science major PhD student, it is my responsibility to find the pattern and solution to build peace, and to make our world a better place.



## MARGARET MEAGHER FELLOWSHIP AND KEENS-MORDEN SCHOLARSHIP

Liam McCarthy (MA Candidate)



I AM DEEPLY HONOURED TO BE THE recipient of both the **Margaret Meagher Fellowship and the Keens-Morden Scholarship** for the 2023/24 academic year. Margaret Meagher was the first Canadian woman to serve as an ambassador, and Reid Morden and Margaret (Keens) Morden have enjoyed successful careers as civil servants and professionals. I am truly grateful to the Keens-Morden and Margaret Meagher families for funding my graduate studies at Dalhousie

University. I am amazingly blessed to be given this opportunity to achieve my dreams. These prestigious awards recognize the exceptional achievements of these members of the Dalhousie community, which I have had the privilege of joining this academic year.

After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Political Science from Brock University in the summer of 2023, I was welcomed with open arms by the fantastic faculty, administration, and students at Dalhousie. I still remember nervously introducing myself to the other graduate students and Dr. Good—our Graduate Coordinator. After our introduction, I met with the other students for coffee. Little did we know that meeting over coffee would eventually become a weekly ritual for our cohort, spending hours chatting and debating anything and everything political, from upcoming elections to heated discussions about international relations.

While I thoroughly enjoyed the coffee breaks on campus, the Halifax waterfront,

and the vibrant nightlife downtown, some of my fondest memories were made in class. The passion for political science that our cohort shared extended into our classrooms, where we learned and collaborated with undergraduates and other graduate students from the History, International Development Studies, and Public Administration departments.

I am excited to continue my education as I begin at Osgoode Hall (York) Law School after completing my Master's degree this summer. With the support of the Keens-Morden and Margaret Meagher Scholarships, the guidance of Dalhousie's Department of Political Science and the encouragement of my new colleagues and friends, I feel confident and well-prepared for the next chapter of my academic journey. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities these scholarships have provided and eager to continue my research focus on the intersection of Indigenous politics and the Canadian criminal justice system.



## SHAW-PARPART SCHOLARSHIP

Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz (PhD Candidate)



I am also deeply grateful for receiving the **Outstanding Graduate Student Award**. Being acknowledged for my contributions to initiatives that enrich the graduate student experience at Dal brings me immense joy. In this regard, I owe special thanks to Mabel Ho, an inspiring individual who has significantly contributed to my personal and academic development over the past couple of years. I greatly value her trust in my potential and the nomination for this award.

Throughout the entire academic year, I have been engaged in various work, volunteer, and learning activities. This season of my life has been busy yet delightful. It marks my second year as the President of the Graduate Society of Political Science and as the Student Representative on the Admission Committee of my department. As well as my third year as a judge for the Political Science Graduate Students Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. These experiences demonstrate my enthusiasm for playing an active role within our department. Speaking

of which, I would also like to express my gratitude to the supportive individuals in our academic community, especially our coordinator, Dr. Kristin Good, and my supervisor, Dr. Ruben Zaiotti.

Moreover, in 2023–24, I volunteered as an organizer for Dalhousie's Black Health Awareness Week. I also continued my role as a mentor at Together@Dal (GradEdition), supporting hundreds of incoming students in their journey through graduate life. Furthermore, I worked as a TA for Prof. David Black, and I had the chance to teach a lecture on a topic I am passionate about: International Migration. Additionally, I successfully completed the Dalhousie Student Leadership Academy program, reached a crucial milestone towards completing my PhD, and began working on my research project. Lastly, I am working as a research assistant for the Dalhousie Centre for Learning and Teaching, and eager to discover what 2024–25 holds for me.

**GRATITUDE FILLS MY HEART AS I** reflect on the past year. To begin with, I am honored to be the recipient of the **Shaw-Parpart Scholarship**. Undoubtedly, receiving financial support while pursuing a degree is invaluable, but it becomes even more meaningful when you admire the couple who made it possible. In addition to being distinguished scholars, Jane and Tim are very kind people whom I had the pleasure of meeting when I arrived in Canada.



Patricia with Dal President, Dr. Kim Brooks (Photo: Travis Price & Eduardo Ibarra)



## DALHOUSIE GRADUATE SOCIETY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE (DGSPS)

Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz (PhD Candidate)



(Photo: Nick Pearce)

**THIS YEAR, OUR SOCIETY HAS** accomplished important milestones and has been through exciting experiences. To begin with, we welcomed four enthusiastic MA students into our program. We also ratified our society under the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU), which allowed our executive members to receive training and develop essential skills to manage our society. At least one of our members completed the Primary Event Organizer (PEO), the Treasurer, and the Anti-oppression training. Other than enabling us to deal with bureaucratic matters, these workshops have provided us with the tools and skills necessary to create a welcoming and inclusive space for all.

Moreover, with the graduation of our former treasurer, Caira Mohammed, our society has appointed Mirriam Mensah as our new treasurer. Throughout the year, the DGSPS has planned and hosted events that allow students to interact, have fun, and create lasting memories. Like last year, in the fall term, Dr. Kristin Good invited all graduate students to the Grawood, and the new cohort got a chance to engage with older graduate students and learn about our department and Dalhousie as a whole.

Our next gathering, a multidisciplinary Games Night, was the DGSPS' first official event since the pandemic. Students from various Political Science cohorts, as well as members of the History Society, attended. During our winter activities, students from other departments also joined us. We visited local restaurants and met at other places to connect over good food, board games, and video games. For the summer, we have planned a Brazilian barbecue and visits to some beautiful places around Halifax.

Last but not least, the DGSPS would like to congratulate all Political Science graduate students for their many achievements. Keep up the fantastic work, everyone!"



## THE DORIS BOYLE GRADUATE PRIZE WINNER

**ALIZA CHOW, MA Candidate** has been awarded **The Doris Boyle Prize** for Best Graduate Essay. The prize is awarded for the best essay written by a graduate student in International Relations. Doris Boyle served for many years as Administrative Secretary of the Centre for the Study of Security and Development (formerly Centre for Foreign Policy Studies), from its creation in 1971 until her retirement. The prize was created by faculty and research staff of the Centre to honour her contributions to the activities of the Centre.

## GRADUATE STUDENTS VISIT AFRICVILLE MUSEUM

Tobias Schminke (PhD Candidate)

**ON 6 OCTOBER 2023, A GROUP OF** graduate students and faculty from Dalhousie University, with the kind sponsorship from AshMeg Seafoods Ltd., visited Halifax's Africville Museum. For most of them, it marked their first visit to this historical site.

The museum remembers the African Nova Scotian community of Africville, which has roots dating back to at least the early 19th century. In the 1960s, a so-called "urban renewal project" forcefully dismantled the community's homes and public spaces to make way for a

dog park and the then-yet-to-be-built A. Murray MacKay Bridge.

The visiting group included master's and Ph.D. students in political science, as well as history graduate students. A highlight of their visit was the insightful and personable conversation with Bernice, a former resident who shared personal insights into Africville's rich history.

Beyond its historical significance, the museum plays a crucial role in reconciliation efforts, raising awareness about systemic racism, and ensuring

that Africville's legacy endures. Despite facing challenges like the absence of government funding and limited transportation infrastructure, the museum ensures the preservation of Africville's historical legacy.

This visit marked the third consecutive private visit by a graduate cohort, with the first occurring with the master's student cohort in 2021.

The trip was concluded with a lunch get-together at the Brawta Jamaican Jerk Joint.



## MEET SOME OF OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS



**ALIZA CHOW**  
(MA Candidate)

The past year at Dalhousie has been nothing short of an extremely gratifying experience filled with wonderful people, amazing professors, and some of the

best classes I've had the privilege of taking. Having the opportunity to work so closely with incredibly accomplished professors was definitely a highlight and advantage of studying at Dalhousie. I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Black for his support and incredible patience throughout this year as I went back and forth on thesis topics and research designs, and flooded his inbox with numerous inquiries. It is an absolute privilege to have his guidance and expertise. I would also like to thank Dr. Bow for challenging me and pushing me to think deeper and more critically about the issues occurring worldwide. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Bow for nominating me for the Doris Boyle award, an honor I could not have achieved without his help. And of course, I must thank Dr. Good for being a pillar for us graduate students. Her encouragement has without a doubt helped me get through

this year and, hopefully, continue my academic career in the near future. Dr. Good also provided me the opportunity to attend the Future Leaders in Defence Forum which was an unforgettable experience that included not only breakfast with the Deputy Minister of Defence, but also several other fun and engaging activities exploring Canada's Defence Department. It was an event I could not be more grateful to have attended. Lastly, thank you to the friends I've made in this short snippet of time. Gala, Sam, Liam, Savandhi, and Kriti, I will miss you all dearly and I hope to see you all again. We only had a year together, but you have all had a profound impact on my life. I look forward now to focusing on completing my thesis on the ecological implications of the China-Africa relation, and exploring more opportunities in the field of international relations, either academically or professionally.



**GALA PALAVICINI JAUREGUI**  
(MA Candidate)

My MA has been an incredibly rewarding experience. This year, I've had the opportunity to work as an RA and with amazing co-authors on fun projects in Canadian and comparative politics. I presented at the 2023 APPSA annual conference and the 2024 Bell Chair Canadian Politics Graduate Conference and published in the Canadian Parliamentary Review. I couldn't have done it without the Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship, which helped fund my MA.

I'm also grateful for the support of my cohort and the department, particularly Dr. Scott Pruyers who has been always so optimistic, supportive, and generous with advice.

With coursework now completed, I'm excited to focus on my thesis, continue with my research projects, and attend the 2024 CPSA annual conference, where I'll be presenting on comparative prime ministerial power. I'm thankful for the department's travel grant that will help fund this experience.

## POLI GRADUATE STUDENTS *cont'd*



**MIRRIAM A. MENSAH**  
(PhD Candidate)

Embarking on my academic journey at Dalhousie University as an MA student, I set my sights on the horizon of knowledge. Today, as a Ph.D. candidate, I find myself on the cusp of a significant milestone: in the preparation of my comprehensive exams.

Beyond the rigors of academia, I am proud to serve as a committee member on the Department's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) committee, representing the voices of graduate students. Additionally, I currently hold the

esteemed position of Treasurer in the Department's Graduate Students Society, where I contribute to fostering a welcoming and supportive community.

Further, winning the Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship stands as a shining achievement in my journey, affirming my dedication to scholarly excellence.

While my path has presented challenges, I navigate them with determination and resilience. As I set sail into the coming year, I am excited about the opportunities for growth and success that await.

**TOBIAS GERHARD SCHMINKE**  
(PhD Candidate)

As democracy indicators show that authoritarianism is advancing globally, increasing our understanding of voting, parties, and elections is becoming more pertinent. 2023/2024 offered a lot for the electoral enthusiast's heart, with unfolding campaigns in India, the US, and Europe. Three weeks before June's EU Parliament election, I will be heading to Brussels, where I am not only set to further advise various organizations on the election but also plan to complete my first B2-level French course during a language immersion program funded by the Pierre-Elliott Trudeau Foundation.

Right after leaving Europe, I am set to present a paper on party funding regimes at the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) Annual Conference in Montreal, my second paper presentation in 2024 after showcasing my work on party leadership power at the Düsseldorf Graduate Conference on Party Research (GraPa). Besides, Trudeau Foundation study trips to Buenos Aires, Vancouver, and Washington D.C. deepened my understanding of global economies,

including their interaction with democracy. As [my first work](#) with Dr. Scott Pruyers is now published, I am working with him and Gala Palavicini Jauregui on a paper that explores the interconnection between personality and climate change denial. Beyond that, I am occupied with preparing a book chapter focusing on the membership selection processes of Europarties. I also assisted Dr. Pruyers in teaching a statistics course, while Dr. Louise Carbert and the department generously trusted me to teach the Canadian parties' class between October and December.

Lastly, some jovial stories off the democratic battlefield: My spare time was consumed by living in and DIY-renovating an entirely gutted house with my partner in Dartmouth North, earning us a self-awarded degree from YouTube university. Unexpectedly, this also involved my participation in a whopping cough study, which was not only a paid writing retreat for my now-passed Ph.D. proposal (three-week isolation in an airtight hospital room) but also funded our kitchen (after having relied on Costco poutine and hotdogs for almost



three months in the stove- and sink-less Dartmouth casa). Lastly, after organizing a cross-departmental trip to Africville and participating in FASS's weekly Ph.D. pizza corner book club, I passed my Canadian citizenship test, signalling the dawn of a seven-year administrative process.

I remain with a word of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Scott Pruyers who even after reaching his well-deserved tenure puts his students – including myself – first.

# ALUMNI VIGNETTES



## CHARLES HUMPHREY

**BA (Comb'd Hons) in 2006 and MA in 2009, Political Science (Dal)**

Fifteen years after completing my MA at Dal's Political Science department, I am thrilled to be reconnecting with the department as I prepare to move my family from Sudbury to Halifax to start a new position as a Mental Health Policy Analyst with the Department of National Defence (DND). My journey post-grad school was atypical, reflecting my strong intuition at the time that while I had excellent research and critical thinking skills, there was an experiential dimension to life that I was missing. At the time I endured much well-meant advice from Dr. Davis, my thesis advisor to get on with the business of a PhD or job in finance or government, but to borrow from Douglas Adams, "I may not have gone where I in-

tended to go, but I think I have ended up where I needed to be." After grad school I took a humanities and social sciences teaching position at a university in Beijing to complement my thesis research on China's national oil companies with street-level experience. I spent three and a half years in the PRC, writing numerous articles on Chinese politics and society. I then watched the country change for the worse when Xi Jinping took power and subsequently returned home. I was eager for more challenging direct experiences, this time in my home country, and so trained as a Primary Care (PCP) and later Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) to serve my home community in a grassroots way and develop strength of character in the process. I spent close to eight years leading inter-agency emergency response teams and providing high-level prehospital emergency care to the community of Greater Sudbury while raising my two young daughters. My ability to think critically and navigate public systems were indispensable as I served on the provincial medical advisory board for prehospital care in Ontario as well as in a research position at the Health Sciences North Centre for Prehospital Care (HSN CPC). In these roles I managed to make significant changes to prehospital clinical practice in Ontario through a clinical study and lobbying the Ministry of Health. Being a paramedic with strong foundations in political science positioned me well as a politician and I ran for the Conservative Party of Canada in the September 2021

election, returning a better result than the party had seen in my riding in any previous election. I left paramedic practice in 2022 as the stress of serving during the pandemic exceeded my mind's ability to cope and I had to leave the field for my own well being. I applied for the federal Recruitment of Policy Leaders (RPL) program in late 2022 and was accepted into the RPL Emerging Talent Pool in May 2023. I was approached through the pool by a manager at DND in February and signed my employment contract last week. If a student reading this were to take a lesson from my story it is to not be afraid to be weird, and to take the meandering paths in life. Although there are times when I reflect how much more comfortable my life may have been if I'd carried on to do a PhD or seek public sector policy work in my 20s, I would not trade all the comfort in the world for the confidence and insight that my atypical work experiences have given me, or the tremendous good I have managed to bring to my community. If you do follow your own path, you may mystify the vast majority of people, but my experience is that you can always find those rare spirits in any organization that will see the method behind your madness and will value you all the more for it. To have come full circle from a Dalhousie MA, to a broad range of unusual experiences and to find myself in a mid-career policy role with DND after it all is a wonderful validation of the art of doing things differently. Perhaps it is finally time to get started on that PhD!



## MATTHEW GOODWIN

**BA 2005, Political Science (Dal)**

Since my time at Dalhousie's Political Science department, I have had a varied career that has taken me from the City of Toronto civil service, active political roles in Canada and the UK to my current position based in the UK at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. I have also spent time in academia, receiving a PhD in Public Policy from University College London and publishing a book on British and Canadian foreign policy. I remember distinctly my first week at the department, as it was the same week as the 9/11 attacks. Naturally, much of the discussion in those years stemmed from this seismic change in global affairs and I was actually heavily involved in supporting our Institute's 20th anniversary reflections on the event and shaping the thinking of our Chairman. In my recent work on NATO, I drew inspiration from Professor Harvey's international

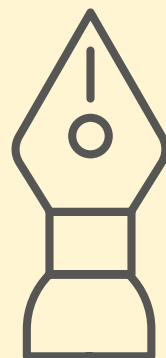
affairs lectures and based a recent article on our lively debates. I have also been scanning, with no small amount of nostalgia, Professor Fierbeck's political philosophy syllabus as I undertake research on revolutions vs democratic transitions. The ethics of politics has followed me through active and sometimes tumultuous political times, where I've had the honour of working with leaders I admire like Alexa McDonough, Jack Layton and now Sir Tony Blair. With the benefit of hindsight, the approaches and issues I encountered while at Dalhousie have been in continual application throughout my time in politics and public policy. Having spent time at other departments of politics in Toronto and London, Dalhousie is a seriously rigorous and stimulating place - undoubtedly at the highest level of scholarship and discourse. I will always remember our departmental drinks at the old Grad House and the next time I'm in town - drinks are on me!



## ROGER THOMPSON

**MA 1994, Political Science (Dal)** is in his final days at Kyung Hee University in Korea. He taught civic education, ethics in science fiction films, and English for 18 years but it is time to come home. During his time at KHU, one of the top 50 universities in Asia, his work garnered praise from Admiral James Stavridis, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Ambassador Caroline Kennedy,

the iconic Hollywood director Ralph Senensky, who directed several episodes of Star Trek, as well as best-selling author and movie producer Mark A. Altman and Susan Sackett, who was the late Gene Roddenberry's executive assistant on Star Trek for many years. Teaching in Korea for so long was both challenging and rewarding, and he looks forward to the next chapter in his life, back where he belongs, Halifax!



## DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

If you wish to share your alumni story in our next issue of the Political Science Annual Newsletter, please reach out to [psadmin@dal.ca](mailto:psadmin@dal.ca)



### **DALHOUSIE POLITICAL SCIENCE (WITH THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT)**

offers an excellent undergraduate program (with Honours option) and graduate programs (MA and PhD) in a collegial, small department. Our professors are known internationally for their outstanding research. We offer a congenial social environment, enhanced by the entertainment and environmental amenities of the City of Halifax. We offer courses and degree programs in four sub-fields:

- Canadian Government and Politics
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**Financial Aid:** Full-time MA and PhD Students are eligible for prestigious prizes, awards, and scholarships. These include the Glyn R. Berry Memorial Scholarship in International Policy Studies, Killam Memorial Scholarship, Margaret Meagher Fellowship in Political Science, Keens-Morden Scholarship, and other Graduate Scholarships and Teaching Assistantships.

**POLI NEWS** is published annually by Dalhousie's Department of Political Science in cooperation with FASS Alumni Relations.

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