



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Our Faculty
- 6 Stanfield Conversations
- 7 Special Guest Speakers in  
our Political Science  
Undergraduate Classes
- 9 Centre for the Study of  
Security and Development
- 10 Jean Monnet European Union  
Centre of Excellence
- 11 Undergraduate Program  
News
- 17 Graduate Program News
- 25 Alumni Vignettes

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## FROM THE CHAIR



dumped on even fewer people; and on top of that we're increasingly surrounded by a new cohort of "populist" reactionaries who hate universities and everything they represent. But we're still going, and finding ways to make things better.

Not exactly ideal circumstances for my first year as department chair, but it has really re-inforced my appreciation for my colleagues. I've asked the department's faculty and staff to think about ways to update and improve the curriculum, provide greater support for students, and streamline decision-making, and they have consistently responded with energy, good ideas, and good humour.

Our faculty have been enormously productive over the last year, and you can get a sense of all that they have accomplished in the faculty updates below. A few highlights: Peter Arthur became a full professor, Rachael Johnstone got tenure and promotion, and Ruben Zaiotti won the FASS teaching award. In addition to these individual accomplishments, there have also been notable collective accomplishments, including an exceptional Stanfield Conversations event, a bigger graduate cohort for next year, and some very useful conversations about how to respond to the challenges of AI and improve our curriculum.

Our students have also had a successful year, despite all of the chaos out there: Recent graduates have moved on to grad school, law school, and dozens of other great opportunities. The undergraduate student society held a very well-attended gala event and successfully launched another issue of *The Podium*. And two POLI students won Board of Governors awards. Again, you can find more details about these accomplishments, and many more, in the pages below.

As with previous chairs, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the department's admin staff, Tracy Powell and Mary Okwese. Their dedication and hard work have made my time as chair much easier than I'd expected, and I've really appreciated their friendship and support.

Last but not least, I want to offer thanks to our alumni and donors, whose support is so important to the life of this department. Without that support, many of the accomplishments below might not have been realized. A special note of thanks to Shawn Gallacher and his family, whose generous contribution has made possible the creation of a new graduate scholarship, which will be taken up for the first time in the fall of 2025. Especially in this time when provincial funding is so tight, your continuing support is indispensable to the success of this program, and it is sincerely appreciated by the whole departmental community.

**Dr. Brian Bow, Professor and Chair**

# OUR FACULTY



**DR. PETER ARTHUR** Chaired the department's EDIA committee during the 2024/25 academic year. The committee

focused on incorporating EDIA issues into the various aspects of the department's activities as colleagues, educators, and mentors. Along with this, he wrote a paper, "China and infrastructural investment in West Africa: Implications for environmental and political governance in the Sub-region," in Sabella Abidde (Ed), *The Pros and Cons of China and the Chinese in Africa*, which is in press and will be published in Spring 2025 by Springer. Additionally, he co-published with Emmanuel Arthur the paper, "COVID-19, Agency and Resilience: The Experiences of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Ghana". The article appeared in the *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Finally, his article, "Countering the Wave of Democratic Backsliding and the Crisis of Democracy in West Africa," was published in the journal, *Insight on Africa*. Also, Dr. Arthur, together with his co-editors, Vanessa Tang, Korbla P. Pupilampu, and Kobena Hanson, continued to work on their edited volume, *Green Development and Finance in a Globalized Africa*, and will be submitting a draft for review by Palgrave MacMillan by the end of spring 2025. Finally, Dr. Arthur will be presenting one of his ongoing research works, "Governance, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility: Are they the Answers to Green Development in Africa?" at the annual Canadian Association for African Studies (CAAS) Conference, to be held between June 3rd to June 6th, 2025, at the University of Toronto, Scarborough.



**DR. KIRAN BANERJEE** spent the 2024-2025 academic year on sabbatical and research leave, which had him based at the

University of Toronto, where he held a visiting faculty appointment at the Centre for Ethics as well as a Visiting Scholar at Massey College. During his sabbatical leave, Dr. Banerjee has focused on researching and writing, delivering visiting lectures, completing grant applications, as well as engaging in a number of collaborative research projects at both the national and international level. His research over the past year has consisted of a number of projects related to Canadian immigration and refugee policy, including a pair of studies now in-press focused on Canadian asylum policy, as well as both co-editing and contributing to a special issue devoted to the political thought of Joseph Carens, one of the foremost normative political theorists of immigration. The coming months will have Dr. Banerjee focused on the recent launch of the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and Research Nova Scotia (RNS) funded *International Migration Research Lab* at Dalhousie, alongside newer research projects related to Dr. Banerjee's respective work on climate induced displacement as well as the inclusion of forced migrants in the governance of the global refugee regime. 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.



**DR. DAVID BLACK** In addition to taking a turn as Acting Director of the CSSD, David continued to keep busy with a number

of research and publishing projects. The most recent of his interests is the relationship between disability and development, where he continued his work as a co-applicant on the seven-year, SSHRC-funded Engendering Disability-Inclusive Development (EDID) project and co-lead of the South African team. This led to spending much of July in South Africa, where EDID held a South African Policy Forum as well as an all-partners meeting in Johannesburg. It has also led to a new course on The Politics of Disability. Beyond this, David continues to pursue his longstanding interest in Canadian international policy, on which he and several colleagues are in the last stages of editing a new *Palgrave Handbook of Critical Understandings of Canada in the World*. Related to this is a new project on an old preoccupation with "middle powers" in global politics, focusing on how diverse middle powers from the global North and South are navigating an emerging period of world order disarray. Finally, he continues to pursue a number of interests concerning Sport in national and international politics, including two new book chapters with a former Honours student, Maya Hibbeln, on Sport in Canadian politics and policy, and Elite Sport Policy (including Sports Mega-Events) in Canada.



#### DR. BRIAN BOW

had been looking forward to a full-year sabbatical in 2024-25, but instead ended up serving as department chair.

You can get a sense of what that's been like in the Chair's Message, above. Prof. Bow has been working on a couple of new research papers this year: one on OECD states' experiments with industrial policy in an era of "deglobalization," and one on the evolution of US views of China in the 1990s. Work-in-progress versions of these papers were presented at the ISA and CPSA conferences, but progress has been very slow. He's cautiously optimistic that he might find time to work on actual research at some point this summer.



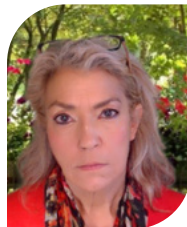
#### DR. CHEV

**EUGENE** As of May 2025, in addition to writing articles, chapter manuscripts, and book proposals, Dr. Eugene has

advocated for reparations related to transatlantic slavery and its ongoing legacies on a global scale, while forming research collaborations with academic institutions and international human rights mechanisms. In April 2025, at the 36th Session of the Working Group of People of African Descent (WGEPAD) at the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) in New York City (NYC), Dr. Eugene represented Dalhousie University as the only Canadian institution. There, he presented on how a research-intensive coalition that conducts work on the experiences of people of African descent internationally can collaborate with the WGEPAD in partnership with Harvard University Law School, St. John's University Law School, Georgetown University Law School, and Indiana

University, Bloomington. Moreover, in September 2025, Dr. Eugene will be in Nairobi, Kenya, to facilitate the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Dalhousie University and the University of Nairobi's (UoN) recently launched Pan African Research Institute. The partnership will provide research and exchange opportunities for faculty and students from both academic bodies.

Furthermore, Dr. Eugene serves as the Canadian and Caribbean representative of the newly established Human Rights Watch (HRW) global reparations research hub. The hub had its soft launch at the Fourth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent (PPPAD) in April 2025. For his presentation, Dr. Eugene emphasized the roles of academics and grassroots movements in Canada in the global demands for restitution.



#### DR. KATHERINE

**FIERLBECK** is honoured to have won the 2025 Justice Emmett Hall Laureate for her work on health policy. The

C.D. Howe Institute has also welcomed her as a Fellow-in-Residence and as the Institute's Health Policy Scholar. She has, this year, been an invited speaker at both the University of Saskatchewan's Health Innovation and Public Policy Conference in Saskatoon (in March) and the Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research in Ottawa (in May). She also participated in the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (in September) and in the Brocher Foundation's workshop on Public Health Governance in Geneva (in October). Her publications this year include an article in *Social Sciences and Medicine*, a chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Social Policy*, and a research report on the Canada

Health Act for the C.D. Howe Institute. Later this summer, she will have articles appearing in the journals *Healthcare Papers and Healthcare Management Forum*. Dr. Fierlbeck has been awarded a new SSHRC grant on the topic of healthcare governance and also has a new book project underway.



#### DR. ROBERT

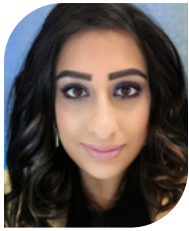
**FINBOW** turned his attention to populism as a constraint on ratification of the Canada-European Union

Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). He prepared an article on "Populism as an Obstacle to CETA Ratification: The Future of Provisional Implementation" for the *Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies*. The piece focused on how far right opposition in France and Italy has contributed to pauses in the ratification of this deal. He also examined EU-Canada trade and political relations in the face of Trump's tariff threats and the weakening of the liberal economic order. He wrote a contribution to a scholarly debate for the European Community Studies Association Canada (ECSA-C) on whether Canada should apply for EU membership. He continues participation in the Trade and Investment Research Project where he participated in discussions on Trump's tariffs and the Canadian economy and presented on options and obstacles to EU-Canada cooperation. He opted not to present his paper on "Applying the brakes? Transatlantic Trade faced with Populism" at the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) conference in Philadelphia in May in response to mistreatment of international scholars

*Continued on next page*

## OUR FACULTY *cont'd*

and travelers by agents of our formerly friendly neighbour. He hopes for publication of this piece in a follow-up collaboration with the panel. His chapter on *Halifax in City Politics in Canada*, 2nd ed edited by Martin Horak, Jack Lucas and Zack Taylor is still awaiting publication by the University of Toronto Press.



**DR. NATALIE GHOSN, ESQ.,**

part-time Instructor in Political Science, published two major works. The first, a monograph,

is published by Palgrave MacMillan and is titled *Religion, Law and Dispute Resolution in Canada and the USA: Case Studies of Islam and Judaism*. The second, an edited volume, is published by Lexington Books and is titled *The Fragility of the Lebanese State*. Dr. Ghosn's next book, an edited volume is titled *Non-Western Middle Powers in the Multipolar Order*. It is being published by Routledge and is now available for pre-order.

In addition, Dr. Ghosn delivered a keynote address in Jacksonville, Florida on "Faith, Democracy and Civic Engagement" at the Interfaith Center of Northeast Florida. She was honored to inaugurate the first annual Interfaith Awareness Day for the city of Jacksonville. This Fall, Dr. Ghosn will return to legal practice and will join the family law litigation team at Conrad, Dillon, and Robinson in Dartmouth, NS.



**DR. KRISTIN GOOD** published her new edited textbook (with co-editor Jen Nelles) entitled *Canadian Urban Governance in*

*Comparative Perspective* and enjoyed engaging students in the material in her first time offering a course on this topic

POLI 4234 and 5234. Dr. Good is also the pillar lead (for the Multilevel governance pillar) of the Canadian Municipal Barometer project, which is funded by a seven-year SSHRC Partnership Grant (2024-2031). More information about this project is available here: <https://www.cmb-bmc.ca/about/>

In addition, Dr. Good continues to work on research 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 conducted a mixed methods study of the Halifax Regional Municipality's election in the fall. Dr. Good also published a book chapter titled "Moving Beyond the 'Creatures of the Provinces' Doctrine: Exploring Pathways to Municipal Empowerment in Provincial Constitutions" in *Cities and the Constitution: Giving Local Governments in Canada the Power They Need*, edited by legal scholars Alexandra Flynn, Richard Albert, and Nathalie Des Rosiers. This book was published as part of her co-edited (with Dr. Martin Horak) book series, the McGill-Queen's Studies in Urban Governance.



**DR. RACHAEL JOHNSTONE** It's been another busy and rewarding year! As the recipient of the 2024-25 Burgess Research

Award – a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences wide honour that supports and promotes research excellence at Dalhousie – I received a course release to focus on completing a longstanding research project. I've used this time to make significant progress on my SSHRC-funded book manuscript on family-friendly parliaments in Canada, tentatively titled *Baby Steps? Towards Family Friendly Parliaments*, which I plan to submit to McGill-Queen's University Press by the end of the summer.

In addition, last fall I completed the first round of fieldwork as part of a collaborative project with Dr. Emmett Macfarlane (University of Waterloo), examining the effects of a nation's rights culture in shaping policies restricting hate speech, with a particular focus on efforts to regulate online content. In November, we traveled to London (UK) to interview parliamentarians involved in the development of the UK's Online Safety Bill. We'll continue this research with interviews in Ottawa this fall, with plans to begin producing outputs as early as the end of this year.

And last but certainly not least, in January I was thrilled to learn that I have been granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor, effective July 1st!



**DR. MARION LAURENCE** is grateful to the staff, students, and faculty in the Department of Political Science for providing

such a warm welcome in her first year at Dalhousie. She spent the year teaching a variety of undergraduate courses on international relations, foreign policy, security studies, and research methods. She also enjoyed getting to know some of the department's Honours students and graduate students as a guest instructor for in-class workshops on discourse analysis and qualitative research methods. Next year, she looks forward to teaching a new course that closely aligns with her research interests, 'POLI 3520: Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Statebuilding.'

On the research front, Dr. Laurence's first book, *Intrusive Impartiality: Learning, Contestation, and Practice Change in United Nations Peace Operations*, was published by Oxford University Press in November 2024. In addition to recent articles in *International Peacekeeping* and the *Canadian Military Journal*, she



has a co-authored book on social change in global politics that will be published by Cambridge University Press in May 2025. Over the summer, she will be working on a new project about the future of security force assistance (SFA) amid heightened geopolitical competition. This will include preparations for an interdisciplinary workshop, funded by the Department of National Defence and hosted by the Centre for the Study of Security and Development, that will bring together practitioners and national and international experts on SFA.



**DR. SCOTT PRUYERS** had another busy and rewarding year in the department. He added POLI 4207/5207 – the advanced

seminar in Canadian politics – to his teaching roster, while continuing to teach courses like POLI 3492 (the department's quantitative methods class). He continued to serve as Chair of the faculty's Academic Development Committee (ADC) and also joined the department's Curriculum Committee. On the research front, Dr. Pruyzers published a number of solo-authored articles in journals such as *Canadian Journal of Political Science* and *International Political Science Review*, alongside several co-authored pieces with graduate students in journals such as *Climatic Change*, *Canadian Public Administration*, and *Representation*. He will be on sabbatical in the upcoming year and looks forward to finally making progress on a solo-authored book exploring political ambition, recruitment, and nomination in Canadian party politics.



**DR. HEATHER TASKER** is wrapping up her first year at Dalhousie! She would like to extend heartfelt thanks

to the wonderful staff, students, and faculty in Political Science for the warm welcome and for all the support they have shown her this year. Dr. Tasker had a fantastic year teaching bright and engaged students in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society through POLI 3446, LJSO 3000, and LJSO 4300. Dr. Tasker contributed to the LJSO Steering Committee and serves as a member of an MA thesis committee, both of which she has thoroughly enjoyed. In addition to departmental and teaching work, 2024/25 was a busy research year with fieldwork in Liberia and Rwanda and the launch of a new project focused on legal decision-making following gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Dr. Tasker had two journal articles published this year, has another two under review, and signed a book contract with De Gruyter Press. Committed to research for policy change, over the past few months, Dr. Tasker has also written policy papers and blogposts, and delivering briefings to Global Affairs Canada, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in the UK, and the United Nations Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate. 2024/25 has been a full and exciting first year at Dal, and Dr. Tasker is very much looking forward to what 2025/26 will bring!

**DR. RUBEN ZAIOTTI** The term that best describes my 15th year in the Department (I can't believe it has been so long, I feel old!) is 'rewarding'. I had the opportunity to interact with many outstanding students in the courses I taught in this period. The highlight

was the experience with the Summer Institute on Migration and Identity in Europe and Canada (see also a story in the Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence). The two-week intensive course was a long time in the making. I ran a successful pilot project in 2017, and, since then, I tried to hold it again, but, due to a combination of factors (including – I am sure you guessed I – a pandemic), that did not happen until now. The experiential learning component is what I enjoyed the most, in particular bringing students to the Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, the Maritime Museum, and the Gran Prés National Historic Site, and learning firsthand about issues of migration across the Atlantic.

On the research front, I continued to work on a project that I started in 2023 on digital borders, and I made good progress on a manuscript tentative titled "Border Control in World Politics", which I hope will see the light of day soon. Talking about borders, in February I travelled to Southern Texas and toured the US-Mexico "wall". And no, I did not try to climb it – although a few miles away I was able to walk across the border through an unfinished part of the structure...



I started this piece by talking about how rewarding last year has been. Well, what I said was not meant to be interpreted only figuratively. I actually won something (the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Award for Excellence in Teaching). In my resume, I can finally say that I am an "award-winning scholar"!!!

# CONGRATULATIONS, DR. RUBEN ZAIOTTI – AWARDED THE FASS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

The department is very pleased to have yet another winner of the FASS Award for Excellence in Teaching. The award recognizes “an outstanding contribution to teaching, mentoring, and serving [our] students.” This year Ruben Zaiotti was honoured, in recognition of his ongoing commitment to pedagogical innovation

and his caring and supportive approach to teaching and mentoring. Letters of support from some of Prof. Zaiotti’s students praised his creativity, empathy, and commitment to supporting students at all levels of achievement. “Even though Dr. Zaiotti clearly had numerous responsibilities and projects on his plate,”

one student wrote, “including his other classes, his position as Director of the Jean Monnet European Union Center of Excellence, and his own research, he always made me feel like a priority if I ever came to him with a question or problem.” Congratulations, Ruben!



# THE 2024 STANFIELD CONVERSATIONS: THE US ELECTION AND DEMOCRACY'S GLOBAL FATE

Dr. Rachael Johnstone and Dr. David Black

STANFIELD  
CONVERSATIONS  
TALKING DEMOCRACY

This year's Stanfield Conversation, on the theme of The US Election and Democracy's Global Fate, took place shortly after the United States' presidential election, on 20 November 2024. Hosted by CBC Radio host Piya Chattopadhyay, the event featured Debra Thompson, Canada Research Chair in Racial Inequality in Democratic Societies and associate professor of political science at McGill University, and Doug Saunders, an acclaimed international affairs columnist with the Globe and Mail.

This fourth annual Conversation was our best attended to date, with a large and appreciative live audience at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium and more than two thousand online viewers. Thanks to our partnership with the CBC, we also reached a national radio audience with much of the Conversation broadcast on The Sunday Magazine. The Stanfield Conversation on Democracy is now a fixture on the Dalhousie calendar, with growing national impact.

This year we also began a three-year partnership with the Trudeau Foundation to extend the reach of our Master Class, in which graduate students engage directly with our speakers. Previously, this event has been solely for Dalhousie graduate students, but this year we were able to bring in students from across Canada, including Trudeau Scholars. Next year, we have plans to increase the reach of the Conversation by organizing a graduate student symposium immediately prior to it.



*Left: Graduate Student Stanfield Master Class*



*Right: Graduate Student Stanfield Master Class - Brian Bow, David Black, Debra Thompson, Doug Saunders, Rachael Johnstone*



*Bottom: Piya Chattopadhyay, Host of CBC's The Sunday Magazine (guest moderator), Debra Thompson, Canada Research Chair at McGill University (panelist), Doug Saunders, Author and Globe and Mail columnist (panelist)*



# NORRIN RIPSAN GUEST LECTURE IN POLI 2520

Dr. Brian Bow

On November 6, 2024, Professor Norrin Ripsman from Lehigh University was in town to deliver a talk on a forthcoming book, "The Demise of the Western Liberal Order" (co-authored with Steven Lobell and Jeffrey Taliaferro). The talk was organized by the Centre for the Study of Security and Development, and held in conjunction with Prof. Bow's course on World Politics (POLI 2520). It was the day after Donald Trump was elected to the presidency for the second time, and both the speaker and the audience were clearly still struggling to make sense of it all. After Prof. Ripsman's very interesting outline of his book project, he very generously stayed around (despite being interrupted by a fire alarm) to answer about a dozen student questions, on the unraveling of democratic institutions in America, the prospects for a new global order based on spheres of influence, and almost everything in between.



## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITY IN POLI 3581 SIMULATION

Dr. Brian Bow

Prof. Bow has been developing and running a version of the same crisis negotiation simulation in POLI 3581 for most of the 20 years he's been teaching at Dalhousie. This year's version of the ABC simulation was ABC XVI, and because enrollment was over 60 students, the class was divided in half and there were two sessions. Nick Pearce from Design Service came to both sessions to take photos of students participating in the simulation, and got some great shots, some of which may appear in Dalhousie recruiting materials in the future. For now, a collage of some of the best group photos from the simulation.



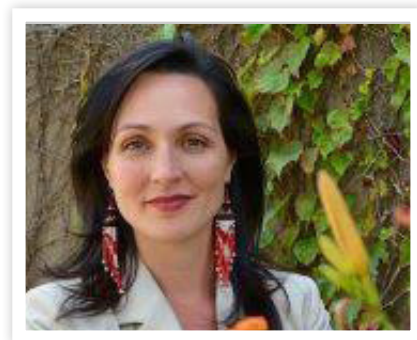
# DR. NATALIE GHOSN, ESQ., INVITED GUEST SPEAKERS TO THE POLI 4505.03 (HUMAN RIGHTS, LEGAL ISSUES) CLASSROOM AND OTHER SETTINGS TO ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Tova Sherman, diversity presenter for the Nova Scotia Barrister's Society** visited the class on January 23 to speak about Disability and the Law.

Tova Sherman is the CEO of Reachability (<https://reachability.org/>). In this role, Tova has transformed a grassroots agency into an award-winning, nationally recognized model for best practices in belonging. Tova's overarching vision is one of creating a welcoming community for all, where individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities can access the accommodations they need to equalize the playing field across Canada.



**Naiomi Metallic from the Schulich School of Law** visited the class on February 6 to discuss the historic evolution of Indigenous rights and the law in Canada and to think critically about where Canadian society, law and policy are today in that regard.



Naiomi Metallic

**Larry Cameron, global expert on human trafficking** visited the class on March 13. Larry has 25+ years' experience in the technology and cyber security industries. He is the President of Paradigm Intelligence. He has worked with several NGO's including ATII, NCPTF, PICDO, Sentinel Foundation, Traverse Project, and many others. He is also a trainer for Interpol, Special Operations at Fort Brag (Liberty), and many other agencies making up the 61 Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task forces, an Adjunct Professor for Computer Forensics and Cloud Security, and Head of Cyber Security for the Cyber Rights Organization in the Hague, the Canadian Center for Open-Source Intelligence and the Baracus Group. He works with local, state, federal and international Law Enforcement, along with military organizations on human rights violations, national security, counter human trafficking, child exploitation and missing children investigations.



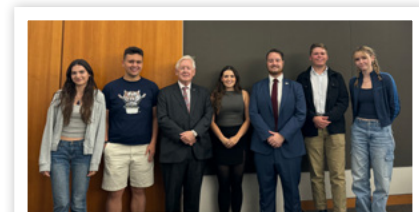
**Vanessa Fells from the Nova Scotia Barrister's Society** visited the class on March 27 to discuss the legal challenges the African Nova Scotian community has faced historically and continues to face in our contemporary context.



**Dalhousie University Model UN Students had a special session facilitated by Dr. Ghosn at the Canadian International Council with Bob Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations** on September 11. Students had the opportunity to discuss the future utility of the United Nations and gain insightful tips on developing debating skills. Some of their experiences are quoted below.

*"It was fascinating to learn from Ambassador Rae about Canada's place in the world and how Canada exercises influence within the UN."* – Evan Colclough

*"It was a pleasure to meet Ambassador Rae and discuss skills university students should focus on for tomorrow's world. His advice: learn to listen, and learn a language with a different alphabet"* – Jaegar Laird



# CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr. David Black, Acting Director

**WITH THE CENTRE'S REGULAR DIRECTOR, PROF. LEAH SARSON, ON SABBATICAL THIS YEAR,** I had the pleasure of returning to a previous role as Acting Director of the CSSD. As usual, the Centre hosted a lively and well attended series of [events](#) – assisted this year by the arrival of the Trump 2.0 Administration which kept generating new reasons to try to make sense of the maelstrom unleashed south of the border! Some of the events grappling with this new reality included a guest lecture by Professor Norrin Ripsman of Lehigh University, on *Making Sense of the Collapse of the Liberal International Order* (November 2024), a roundtable of *Centre Fellows on Adrift Abroad? Canada in a Post-Trudeau, Pre-Trump World* (January 2025); and a panel discussion on *USAID and the Future of International Development Assistance* (co-organized with the Department of IDS, March 2025). Similarly, this year's annual Glyn Berry Roundtable, co-hosted with the JMEUCE, brought together a superb panel of scholars and ex-practitioners (Amelia Hadfield, University of Surrey; Oliver Schmidtke, University of Victoria; and Ross Hornby, former Canadian Ambassador to the EU) to discuss *Canada, the EU, and the Trump Challenge* (March 2025).



Another key feature of this year's program was a number of events oriented towards and/or orchestrated by the department's students. These included a panel of four Political Science graduates discussing *Life After Dal*, reflecting on their careers in a range of governmental and non-governmental settings (September 2024); a presentation by two current MA students, Jekobe Craig and Cora Fletcher, on *Proxy Wars* (March 2025); and a panel discussion orchestrated by our practicum student, Emily Harrison, on *The Environmental, Economic, and Political Implications of Trump 2.0* (co-organized with the College of Sustainability, April 2025).



Other events included two book launches of Catherine Tsalikis's *Chrystia*; and Kirsten van Houten and Alex Neve's *Hand-in-Hand: Canada at the Human Rights and Peacebuilding Nexus*.



Finally, the Centre welcomed two new Faculty Fellows, Professors Marion Laurence and Heather Tasker, who bring their dynamic research agendas to our community. Thanks as always to Administrative Secretary Mary Okwese, Deputy Director Mirriam Mensah, and the department of Political Science for their support in making it all possible!





# JEAN MONNET EUROPEAN UNION CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Madeleine Coffen-Smout, Centre Coordinator

Over the last year, the JMEUCE has continued to serve as an important focal point for EU-related teaching, research, networking and outreach. This is particularly relevant at a time of unprecedented threats and disruptions to traditional partnerships and democratic institutions within North America.

Activities began with our second Summer Institute on Migration and Identity in Europe and Canada (3-14 June 2024) which provided students from multiple programmes with a unique experiential learning environment. Led by Ruben Zaiotti and Melanie Smith and taught partly at Pier 21, this for-credit course offered an interdisciplinary combination of seminars, readings, exercises and field trips. Extensive use was made of the museum's collections and the expertise of its curators and other guest speakers from various backgrounds.

June also saw the JMEUCE's first ever event in Europe, with an international workshop on *The Contours of Pharmaceutical Regulation in the EU*. Held at the City University of London Law School and co-led by JMEUCE associate Katherine Fierlbeck, this hybrid, multidisciplinary workshop brought together specialists from the EU, UK, and North America.



During the academic year, the Speaker Series featured Latvian Ambassador Kaspars Ozoliņš on *Security Developments in Europe and Russia's War against Ukraine*; Jürgen Wertheimer, University of Tübingen, on *Breaking Cassandra's Curse: Crisis Prediction through Literature* (in partnership with the German Department); *Roundtable on Canada, the European Union and the Trump Challenge* with Ross Hornby, former Ambassador to the EU, Amelia Hadfield, University of Surrey, and Oliver Schmidtke, University of Victoria (co-organized with CSSD as the 2025 Glyn Berry Lecture); and a *Conversation with the Nordic Ambassadors: Cooperation between Atlantic Canada and the Nordic Region on Security, Trade and Culture* with Heads of Mission from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and

Sweden (co-hosted with CIC-Halifax). In addition, a Baltic-Nordic film festival held collaboratively with the embassies of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden featured shorts from all eight countries... plus free popcorn!

Finally, the Centre provided support for student research and mobility with the annual EU Essay Prize – congratulations to this year's winner Emily La Rocque – and the participation of Kriti Maini and Cassandra Westbrook in the upcoming EU Study Tour & Internship Programme in Europe. Students also made valuable contributions to events including the 2025 Day of Debate for local schoolchildren, co-hosted with Sodales.





# UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

## Dr. Anders Hayden, Undergraduate Advisor

The main part of the Undergraduate Advisor's role is to help students make course selections and navigate their way through their program requirements. That role has grown over time, as more students are looking for advising, which may be a product of doing more outreach to first-year classes to ensure that students know of the resources available to them. Many of our students also study abroad for a semester or two, which requires assess-

ments of the courses they take for their equivalencies at Dalhousie. As for recruitment efforts to attract students to the department, this year that included participation in the university's Open House in November, the King's College advising luncheon in February, and the Academic Programs Advising Fair in March. We continue to find that current undergraduate and graduate students, as well as those who have graduated from the de-

partment, are the best ambassadors at such events, as they are able to share their experiences of how Political Science has benefitted them. If you have your own thoughts about the value of a Political Science degree that we could share with prospective students, please send us your thoughts ([anders.hayden@dal.ca](mailto:anders.hayden@dal.ca); [psadmin@dal.ca](mailto:psadmin@dal.ca)).



### 2024-25 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD/PRIZE WINNERS

**GRACE CATTON, BA:** Honours in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society with a Minor in French, 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.

**CHRISTIAN KENNEY, BA:** Major in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society, 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.

**MIA MCDONALD, BA:** Major in Political Science, 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.

**EMILY LA ROCQUE, BA:** Honours in Political Science with a Minor in Journalism Studies, 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.

**HANNAH SCHNEIDER, BA:** Major in Political Science with Minors in Journalism Studies and French, 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.

# THE DALHOUSIE UNDERGRADUATE POLITICAL SCIENCE SOCIETY

Emily La Rocque, President



The 2024/2025 school year proved to be an exciting one for the Dalhousie Undergraduate Political Science Society (DUPSS). Last spring at the AGM, we bid farewell to several valued members who graduated and moved on to different endeavours, including law school and master's programs abroad. However, the Fall AGM was a great success, with our general council growing to over forty members! The society was active beyond our bi-weekly meetings: we hosted trivia at

the Grawood, held weekly study sessions in the lounge, and organized headshot fundraisers during both semesters, donating 100% of our proceeds to the Elizabeth Fry Society during the Winter session. Our initiatives, the Dalhousie Political Networking Initiative (DPNI) and the Alumni Networking Initiative, also flourished. This year marked significant growth for the society: our gala was nearly triple the size it was last year, with 90 attendees at the Atlantica Hotel. The students published in our undergraduate journal, The Podium, were celebrated at the gala. On behalf of DUPSS, I want to extend a huge thank you to the department for their unwavering support. Student societies bring so much life to campus, and I am forever grateful for having joined the society three years ago. I am confident that DUPSS will continue to maintain an important presence on campus and provide a vital space for engaged students to forge new friendships and collaborate to create opportunities for political science students. All the best to the incoming council!

## 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 2025 recipients of this scholarship are:

- **ABBY FARRELL-POWELL, BA:** Major in Political Science and Law, Justice & Society
- **MIA McDONALD, BA:** Major in Political Science



# HONOURS PROGRAM

## Dr. Anders Hayden, Honours Coordinator

In my first year as Honours Coordinator, I was pleased to work with a cohort of nine bright and hard-working students, who successfully completed their thesis projects. The James H. Aitchison Prize for the

best overall thesis was awarded to Emily La Rocque. Grace Catton won the Eric Dennis Gold Medal for the Honours student with the highest GPA over the 4-year degree program. Thanks to all those who

served as supervisors and second readers, and to Tracy Powell for her invaluable administrative support.

**LAURA BRADSHAW**, *“Sealing’ Where the Border Ends: Chinese Imperialism in the South China Sea towards Taiwan and the Philippines”* (supervisor Marion Laurence, second reader David Black)

**GRACE CATTON**, *“The Global South and the War in Ukraine: Investigating the Global South’s Voting Behaviour in the UNGA”* (supervisor Brian Bow, second reader Scott Pruyers).

**EVAN COLCLOUGH**, *“From Sunny Ways to Stormy Days: the Rise and Fall of Justin Trudeau’s Political Brand”* (supervisor Louise Carbert, second reader Alex Marland from Acadia University).

**MEAGHAN DE ADDER**, *“It Was Filmed with Consent’: Media Portrayals of Women in Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea”* (supervisor Ruben Zaiotti, second reader Marion Laurence).

**LAURA SAAD HOSSNE**, *“Never Again, Again: The United Nations and Genocide”* (supervisor David Black, second reader Larisa Atkinson).

**EMERSON HUNT**, *“Diverging Democracies: Institutional Development & Democratic Consolidation in Nicaragua & Panama, 1990-2007”* (supervisor Robert Finbow, second reader John Cameron from the Department of International Development Studies).

**EMILY LA ROCQUE**, *“You clueless bimbo!’: An Exploration of Gendered Incivility Received by Politicians on Twitter”* (supervisor Scott Pruyers, second reader Rachael Johnstone).

**KRITI MAINI**, *“Commemoration and Contestation: Asian Ethnic Minorities, Redress Movements and the Reimagining of Multicultural Canada Since the 1980s”* (supervisor Brian Bow, second reader Ruben Zaiotti)

**SINÉAD O’NEILL**, *“The Old Firm Rivalry - The Celtic-Rangers and Sectarianism in Glasgow, Scotland”* (supervisor David Black, second reader Ruben Zaiotti)



*Celebrating the successful completion of the Honours program with some excellent pizza*

## 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. Thanks

to generous alumni contributions, we initiated a fund to support graduate and honours students' travel. This allows our students to undertake vital interviews, 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 visit [alumni.dal.ca/giving](https://alumni.dal.ca/giving).





# DALHOUSIE WOMEN IN POLITICS (WiP) STUDENT SOCIETY

Marley Price, President, and Sophia Tallboy, Vice President

**THIS WINTER SEMESTER, DALHOUSIE WOMEN IN POLITICS (WiP) WAS ESTABLISHED AS A NEW STUDENT SOCIETY ON CAMPUS.** WiP aims to be an inclusive and empowering environment for women who are studying, pursuing careers, or interested in politics.

As politics is a deeply male-dominated space, many women may feel uncomfortable and unwelcome engaging in it. This is why WiP offers educational programming, professional development opportunities, and social events to establish a supportive community for women at Dalhousie and increase the representation of women in political spaces across Nova Scotia and Canada.

In March, WiP hosted a successful community roundtable exploring the impacts of American public and foreign policy on women and BIPOC communities. The event created a welcoming space for female students at Dalhousie to share their perspectives and engage in meaningful dialogue around U.S. policy issues. Looking ahead, WiP is excited to host more roundtable discussions and to expand our programming through collaborations with fellow women's societies, campus centres, guest speakers, and other key partners. We are also grateful to be working with Sarah Dobson and Grace Evans, Dalhousie alumni and founders of the Women in Politics scholarship, whose guidance and involvement inspire and strengthen our society.

In the long term, we are actively pursuing partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit sectors to support the development of more ambitious initiatives. We welcome collaboration with individuals and organizations who share our commitment to building a more inclusive and representative political landscape for women.

This semester has been an incredible start, and we're eager to continue growing the reach and impact of Women in Politics at Dalhousie and beyond.



*Pictured (L-R): Victoria Strom, Emma Andrews, Marley Price, Sophia Tallboy, Ava Green, Savannah Harding, Kyra Kirkpatrick, Gaby Frankovic. Absent: Laurel Service, Lauren Padfield, Maggie Aurini.*

# LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: UNDERGRADUATE REFLECTIONS

Kriti Maini, BA Honours in Political Science and History



As my time at Dalhousie is coming to a close, I find myself reflecting with deep gratitude on the many different experiential learning opportunities that have shaped my undergraduate years.

In the summer of 2024, I had the privilege of participating in the student internships offered by the Ditchley Foundation based in the UK. The first few weeks of this truly transformational experience in-

cluded virtual research-driven work on how the foundation connects people across the world to address global challenges. But the true highlight was the final residency week at Ditchley Park in Oxfordshire, a stately setting that felt straight out of a period drama. There, I had the chance to meet other interns, visit Oxford University, and engage in thought-provoking conversations with leaders from professional and business fields. It was equal parts intellectually stimulating and personally inspiring.

As I write this article, I am preparing for the upcoming [European Union Study Tour](#) organized in collaboration with the University of Victoria and the [Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence](#) at Dalhousie. This remarkable opportunity will take students through Brussels, Luxembourg, and Frankfurt, offering guided visits to the key institutions, including the European Commission, European Central Bank, the European Parliament, and the NATO headquarters. I am excited to gain a deeper understanding of the European governance and security infrastructure, and maybe to pick up a few European pastries along the way.

These immersive experiences have added incredible extracurricular value to my academic experience at Dalhousie. I was truly humbled to have received the [2024–25 Board of Governors Award](#), an honor that reflects the personal growth that these opportunities and supportive communities have facilitated throughout my degree.

# JAMES H. AITCHISON AWARD FOR BEST HONOURS THESIS

Emily La Rocque, BA Honours in Political Science with a Minor in Journalism Studies

I am honoured to be this year's James H. Aitchison Award recipient. Successfully completing and defending my thesis was such an exciting and rewarding endeavour in itself. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to learn how to create and interpret statistical analyses properly, as well as to understand the in-depth revision process. This process was made enjoyable thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Scott Pruysers, who patiently supported me every step of the way. I would also like to thank Dr. Anders Hayden for his hard work as Honours Coordinator and Dr. Rachael Johnstone for kindly agreeing to serve as my second reader.

My parents were undoubtedly my inspiration for taking Political Science. Dinner table conversations were consistently centred around discussions of politics. I was taught to always be curious. This ignited my passion for social justice, and Political Science seemed like a natural way to pursue this interest. Once I arrived at Dalhousie, this idea was confirmed. My professors went beyond just teaching the basics. From classes such as Dr. David Black's Politics of Disability to Dr. Robert Finbow's American Polarization and Crisis, I was constantly engaged in intriguing and thought-provoking discussions. These conversations encouraged me to explore the nuances of various issues and broadened my understanding with fresh perspectives.

It is difficult to choose just one area of Political Science that I love the most. I had initially planned to do an honours thesis in the realm of political theory, but I ended up focusing on Canadian politics. More specifically, I am passionate about gender equality in the political arena,

which led me to conduct a quantitative analysis of gendered Tweets directed toward Canadian politicians.

At the end of August, I will move to Montreal to begin my studies at McGill University's Faculty of Law. To say I am excited to begin this bilingual, transsystematic

program is an understatement. I am forever grateful to the faculty in Dalhousie's Political Science department for providing me with the necessary foundation and resources to pursue my dreams of becoming a lawyer.





# GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

Dr. Kristin Good, Graduate Coordinator

## WE WELCOMED FOUR MA STUDENTS

**THIS YEAR:** Jekobe Craig, Cora Fletcher, Scott Ripley, and Mike Watson. The students participated in a number of departmental events, including two important events for our graduate students – the Stanfield Conservations Master Class (discussed elsewhere in the newsletter) and the MA three-minute thesis (3MT) competition.

This 3MT event constitutes both the MA students' presentation of their thesis plans to the department for feedback (leading up to the submission of their formal written proposals) and a friendly 3MT competition. The 3MT event was held in March, with PhD students Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz and Mirriam Mensah as judges. The presentations were all excellent, but the judges declared Scott Ripley the winner of this year's competition for his first-rate and engaging presentation entitled "Challenging the Growth Imperative? A Study of Doughnut Economics in Three Municipalities." In Scott's words, his thesis "investigates how Doughnut Economics challenges, or fails to challenge, the structural forces that make continuous economic growth a dominant priority for governments despite the environmental costs."



*Mirriam Mensah, Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz, Mike Watson, Jekobe Craig, Dr. Kristin Good, Cora Fletcher, Scott Ripley.*

Since the last newsletter, five MA students defended their theses in a diversity of research areas, reflecting our department's strengths in multiple subfields of politics science: Aliza Chow ["The Ecological Impacts of the China-Africa Relationship: Case Studies of Chinese Engagement in Kenya and Ethiopia," supervisor David Black]; Noel Guscott ["Examining the Impact of New Public Management on Military Healthcare in Canada," supervisor Katherine Fierlbeck]; Gala Palavicini Jauregui ["Riding the Populist Wave? Populist Contagion in the 2021 Canadian Federal Election," supervisor Scott Pruyers]; Liam J. MacCarthy ["Smoke on the Water: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Reconciliation in the Case of the Mi'kmaq Moderate Livelihood Fisheries," supervisor Leah Sarsion]; Isabelle Ortnier ["Walter Rodney's Anticolonial Praxis in Post-Independence Jamaica," co-supervisors Brian Bow and Nissim Mannathukaren (IDS)]. The department extends its congratulations to our excellent group of MA graduates this year and thanks their supervisors and committees for their mentorship.

Our students (past and present) have had many successes this year, including winning major awards. Alumnus ('23) Tari Ajadi won the Dalhousie Doctoral Thesis Award in the 2024 competition, making him the university's nominee for a prestigious national award called the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS)/Proquest Distinguished Dissertation Award. The department is pleased to announce that Tari Ajadi's dissertation entitled "Power in Presence: Understanding Black-Led Coalitions and Policy Change in Halifax, Nova Scotia" won this highly prestigious national award. What an outstand-

ing achievement for Tari and recognition of the department's national excellence in political science research.



*Dr. Tari Ajadi*

Another highlight this year is the recognition of PhD student Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz's continued excellence in student leadership and community building among graduate students. She won Dalhousie's Outstanding Graduate Student Award last year and was recognized yet again this academic year with a Board of Governors Award for her student leadership efforts.

Finally, I am pleased to introduce our incoming cohort of graduate students, which includes four PhD students—Christian Akubueze, Kenisha Gordon, Jeff Stirling, and Stella Oliver—as well as five MA students—Laura Friesen, Alexia Koutoulas, Pyper Lane, Maya Pot, and Joao Tonello Verreschi. We look forward to welcoming you to the department in September.

# 2024-25 GLYN BERRY SCHOLAR

## Xinyu Gong, PhD Candidate

The past year has been both exciting and fascinating for me. It is truly an honor, and I am deeply grateful for the support of the Glyn Berry Memorial Scholarship, as well as for our wonderful faculty members who make each day more vibrant and fulfilling.

Throughout this year, I have fulfilled my regular TA duties for two courses with Dr. Rachael Johnstone. I have worked with her for the past three years, and to be honest, it has been the most extraordinary working experience of my PhD journey. Her kindness and patience have helped me improve my teaching skills every single day.

Over the past year, I also participated in two conferences and presented my papers at the Canadian Political Science Association Conference and the Atlantic Provinces Political Science Conference. Attending academic events has always been meaningful to me, as the opportunities to connect with scholars and engage in academic discussions are extremely valuable for my growth as a young scholar.

Another significant milestone I achieved this year was passing my dissertation proposal. Although there were major changes in my research topics and content, I finally made it to the final stage of my PhD journey. I want to thank my supervisor, Dr. Brian Bow, for his kindness and unwavering support. Every conversation we've had has helped me see my research more clearly and think more deeply. He truly is my Master Yoda!

A professor once told me, "Doing a PhD in your native language and home country is hard. Doing it in a non-native language, in



a different country and culture, is so much harder. You are not stupid—you are a legend." This really touched my heart. Pursuing a PhD has been a true challenge, but I feel incredibly lucky to have met so many amazing people along the way. From

our lovely faculty to my professors, colleagues, family, and friends—everyone has been so supportive and generous. Thank you all!

# 2025-26 GLYN BERRY SCHOLAR

Christian Akubueze, commencing PhD in September 2025

I am deeply honoured and grateful to the Berry family, DFAIT, and Dalhousie's Political Science Department for this esteemed award and for upholding Dr. Berry's legacy. The Glyn R. Berry Memorial Scholarship holds great significance for the Berry family, as it helps to preserve his legacy. This prestigious award recognizes Glyn R. Berry's remarkable achievements, contributions, and sacrifices in humanitarian efforts, particularly in improving the lives of ordinary people facing difficult circumstances.

My ambition has always been to pursue doctoral studies. After earning my Bachelor of Science with honours in Political Science from the Federal University Otuoke, Nigeria, I began exploring my options. After applying to various universities in Canada, on that fateful day, February 7, 2023, I received an email from the Graduate Director of the MA program in Political Science at the University of New Brunswick, informing me of my recommendation from the department to the School of Graduate Studies for admission to the MA (2-year thesis stream). This email began a new chapter in my life, as I had to leave my country for the first time. However, I must confess that it has been a gratifying step, as it has equipped me to navigate the rigours of acquiring the highest level of education: doctoral studies.

I am excited to embark on this next chapter of my academic journey as I begin my doctoral studies in Dalhousie's Political Science Department. I am immensely grateful and proud to have received the Glyn Berry Scholarship. As a graduate international student privileged to receive a scholarship for my master's degree, I cannot overstate the importance of funding and scholarships. Choosing Dalhousie for my doctoral studies was an easy decision for various reasons. Dalhousie's Political Science Department is an ideal fit for my academic and research aspirations, as it houses some of Canada's and the world's leading scholars in international politics, development and security, African poli-



tics, democratic backsliding, and the resource/extractive sector. These areas of study align perfectly with my research interests and my proposed research for my PhD dissertation, which focuses on democratic backsliding.

Finally, with the Glyn Berry scholarship's massive interest in Canadian foreign policy, defence and security policies, and Canada's role in international affairs, I am thrilled to receive this scholarship at this time, given the recent events and uncertainties surrounding these areas due to major occurrences such as Trump's return, Trudeau's resignation, and the emergence of Mark Carney as his successor. An exciting and strange time lies ahead as much is bound to happen in this period. With Trump back and his trade war with Canada, I look forward to understanding what this means for Canada's foreign poli-

cy moving forward; additionally, as Carney takes on his leadership role, I am eager to see his policy direction regarding immigration, which has polarized opinion over the years. As an international student, I will always pay close attention to immigration as a critical area of foreign policy. A lot is happening politically worldwide, and with Trump reclaiming the most powerful position, even more developments are anticipated. Therefore, political scientists and scholars of international politics should prepare for a very busy period. With Trump leading the charge, every day seems to bring something new – be it a fresh announcement, a new tariff policy, or some other development. The question remains: how do we keep up with it all? I suppose only time will tell...



# BOARD OF GOVERNORS' AWARD WINNER CHERISHES THE MOMENTS ALONG THE JOURNEY

Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz, PhD Candidate

This year, I've had the joy of receiving Dalhousie's top honour in student life – the Board of Governors award! When [Dal-News](#) interviewed me about this award, they asked me to choose a meaningful song, knowing that I am the lead organizer of the well-loved Graduate Student Karaoke and Games Night. I selected *Trem Bala* by Ana Vilela. Its lyrics compare life to a bullet train, passing by so quickly, and highlight a couple of things we should cherish along the way.

Vilela talks about *singing and being able to listen beyond our voice*. This also speaks to the importance of listening to others, advocating for them, and carrying their voices when given the chance to speak. As a member of the Student Leadership Academy—and knowing that Dalhousie is committed to developing students' leadership skills and creating opportunities to put those skills into practice—I've taken on various roles as a student representative. To mention a few examples, I serve on the Budget Advisory Committee and as an [Open Thinker](#), acting as an ambassador for Graduate Studies. I have also been involved in the Working Group that discussed Human Rights Considerations for Dalhousie's International Partnerships, as well as on the Mental Health Week Planning Committee. I'm truly honoured to have had these opportunities to represent others and to study at a university where student voices are heard in many important decision-making processes.

The lyrics continue: *it's about being a safe place for others and having a home in their heart*. As an international student living in a place with cultural and linguistic differences, I understand the importance of a sense of belonging—and the challenges that come with its absence. That's why



I actively volunteer at the International Centre, offering support in various ways, from cooking to helping with events like the exciting Orientation Day. I've also been working with the Faculty of Graduate Studies as a mentor for incoming students for the past three years—and counting! I truly enjoy this role and find it meaningful to support new students as they navigate university life. Dalhousie offers many resources, and while students may arrive feeling overwhelmed by all the information, helping them figure out what to do at key moments and how to make the most of their experience is incredibly rewarding. Students' expressions of gratitude for the support they've received also highlight the importance of the [Together@Dal](#) mentorship program.

The song also reflects that *it's not about reaching the top of the world and thinking you've won – it's about climbing and*

*how the journey made you strong*. While I am ecstatic about being selected as the Outstanding Graduate Student of the Year (2024) and receiving the Board of Governors Award (2025), I do miss having the chance to celebrate these moments in person with my parents and childhood friends. However, their love and unwavering support cross borders, travel thousands of kilometers, fill me with happiness, and give me extra strength. Earlier, I was asked to select a song; now, if I were asked to choose a word, it would be gratitude. For every challenge that made me stronger, every role that allowed me to uplift others, and every person who has walked beside me on this journey—I'm truly thankful! As new chapters take shape, I carry with me the lessons learned and the deep desire to keep making a difference. I'm truly excited for what's to come!

# MARGARET MEAGHER FELLOWSHIP AND KEENS-MORDEN SCHOLARSHIP

Cora Fletcher, MA Candidate



**I AM HONOURED AND GRATEFUL** to be the recipient of both the Margaret Meagher Fellowship and the Keens-Morden Scholarship for the 2024/2025 academic year. Both Ms. Meagher and Mr. Morden were exceptional individuals with storied careers in the public service who made major contributions to Canadian politics, and I am honoured to be associated with both of their legacies, even in a small way. Without these scholarships and the generosity of the Keens-Morden and Meagher families, I would not have been able to pursue my MA studies, and I am forever thankful for their continued support of junior researchers and higher education.

Working towards my MA at Dalhousie this year has been an incredible experience. This year has so many things: enriching, challenging, frustrating, emotional, educational, joyful, and more than anything... busy! After completing my Honours BA, returning to Dalhousie for my MA has exceeded all expectations. This year, I've worked on several research projects, discovered a love of TAing, and co-presented a talk held by the CSSD. A major highlight was contributing to research on gender-based violence and displacement in Eastern DRC with SOFEPADI, a Congolese women's organization, led by Dr. Annie Bunting (York) and Dr. Heather Tasker (Dalhousie). I'm deeply grateful to Heather for her mentorship throughout this year and for the opportunity to contribute to forthcoming publications.

Another highlight of this year was being named the recipient of the 2024/2025 Doris Boyle Graduate Prize. Doris Boyle played a crucial role in both the creation and running of the CSSD and as someone who has benefitted so much from the centre's work, it is truly an honour to receive this prize. Big thank you to Dr. Ruben Zaiotti who nominated me for this prize- I learned so much in his seminar on International Relations Theory and our spirited classroom discussion and de-

bates always challenged me to think critically about global politics.

Finally, I just want to take a moment to shout out my amazing family, friends, and loved ones. You have all been there for me through all the ups and downs of grad school and I do not know where I would be without their constant love and support! I would also like to thank the entire political science department, especially Dr. Kristen Good, our dedicated graduate coordinator, for her constant support. Finally, a heartfelt thanks to my thesis committee—Dr. David Black, Dr. Marion Laurence, and Dr. Heather Tasker. I am so lucky to have such a dedicated and supportive group of thesis supervisors. It's been an honour to work with Dr. Black throughout both degrees; his guidance has shaped me into the researcher I am today.

This summer I am very excited to continue working on my own research on women's meaningful participation in UN peace operations and the ongoing challenges around engendering peace operations and implementing the WPS Agenda. I also look forward to contributing and assisting Dr. Laurence, Dr. Black, and Miriam Mensah with their Security Force Assistance Workshop this August.

## THE DORIS BOYLE GRADUATE PRIZE WINNER

**CORA FLETCHER, 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.

# DALHOUSIE GRADUATE SOCIETY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Patricia Porto de Barros Ayaz, PhD Candidate



This year, the Dalhousie Graduate Society of Political Science (DGSPS) welcomed a small but incredibly engaged cohort. Serving as a judge for our department's Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition alongside Miriam Mensah, I was impressed by how much passion

and deep connection these students bring to their research.

As Political Scientists, we were, of course, tuned in to the U.S. elections, and our first society gathering centered around watching the vote count, while enjoying good food and great conversation. Despite our busy schedules, we still managed to meet up a few times at a local café to stay connected and check in on each other's progress.

Together, we made efforts to strengthen the structure and governance of our society. This year, we welcomed a new treasurer, Jekobe Craig, who has already demonstrated great dedication to his role. Additionally, our executive team participated in training sessions offered by Human Rights and Equity Services (HRES), including Equity, Diversity, Inclu-

sion, and Accessibility (EDIA) workshops, as well as sessions organized by the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU), such as Primary Event Organizer (PEO) and treasurer trainings.

Many significant events—from trade tensions, such as U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods and Canadians' boycott of American products, to the latest federal election—remind us that it's never a dull time to be a Political Scientist. Through it all, the society remained a place to exchange ideas, support each other, and share a few laughs in the process.

Wrapping up the academic year, the DGSPS proudly celebrates the dedication and accomplishments of all Political Science graduate students—congratulations!





# MEET SOME OF OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS



**MIRRIAM MENSAH**  
PhD Candidate

It has been an eventful and fulfilling year! Over the past academic year, I successfully completed both my major and minor comprehensive exams and took on the role of Deputy Director at the Centre for the Study of Security and Development (CSSD). I am currently in the final stages of my dissertation proposal and look forward to beginning my fieldwork in Ghana in the coming months.

This summer, I am also teaching a course, World Politics, my first solo teaching experience. This has been both a challenge and a joy as I learn to design and deliver lectures independently. In addition to teaching and research, I am co-authoring a book chapter on global norm diffusion and “shadow norms” in environmental governance. This chapter focuses on mining and oil regulations in Ghana and Nigeria through the lens of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

I am excited to attend several conferences this summer, including the Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS), where I will share some of my work and learn from others in the field.



**SCOTT RIPLEY**  
MA Candidate

I have felt incredibly fortunate to have had the chance to participate in this program over the last year. Not only because we live in interesting times, but also because I have been privileged enough for this to have been an opportunity at all. I'm grateful to everyone in the department for their continued support and guidance, and especially to my supervisor, Dr. Anders Hayden, whose patience and advice has kept me afloat these many months now. Those in my MA cohort have shown themselves to be more than just my peers but also my friends, and I would like to thank them for their camaraderie during what has, at times, been a challenging year for all of us.



**TOBIAS SCHMINKE**  
PhD Candidate

2024/2025 was full of ‘firsts’ and surprises. I successfully submitted my first single-author chapter (on Europarties) and co-authored two journal publications: one on political finance (with my exceptional supervisor, Dr. Scott Pruyssers; Dr. Rob Currie-Wood) and another on climate change skepticism (with Dr. Scott Pruyssers; Gala Palavicini). I also presented for the first time at the Canadian Political Science Association conference.

Beyond academia, I engaged the public on the European election, collaborating with organizations such as The New York Times and the Heinrich Böll Foundation (spending election night at the European Parliament!).

A significant milestone was securing the European Media and Information Fund grant, through which Europe Elects compiled a public database of 503 polling organizations across 49 countries, reviewing their work from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

The biggest surprise: a fourth-year grant from the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation (PETF), an organization through which I participated in several leadership training programs and improved my French level from low B2 to high B2 over the past year.





# ALUMNI VIGNETTES



**ALICE CRAFT**  
**MA (2022), Political Science (Dal)**

My time at Dalhousie can be best described as a growth experience. I thoroughly enjoyed being in an environment that facilitated deep enquiry, mutual learning and engagement, and individual exploration. This atmosphere was cultivated by then graduate supervisor Dr. Kristen Good, whose POLI 5100 course covered key research skills and allowed MA and first year PhD students to explore new tools and tricks and learn from one another. I was particularly proud to be the winner of the inaugural three-minute thesis (3MT) competition in which I presented a theoretical explanation for the detention of 'irregular arrivals' in Canada. The research I undertook as part of my thesis, under the thoughtful, expert su-

pervision of Dr. Kiran Banerjee, allowed me to further interrogate the politicisation and securitization of migration and was foundational to my next chapter.

Outside of the traditional curriculum, one of the most valuable experiences I participated in whilst at Dalhousie was the first private visit by a graduate cohort to the Africville museum. This opened my eyes to Canada's colonial history, and the legacy of systemic racism in Nova Scotia. This trip, organised by Tobias Gerhard Schminke (PhD Candidate), reinforced the importance of cultural education and critical self-reflection. Learning about this legacy alongside Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples and truth and reconciliation efforts was a rewarding and essential experience, particularly as a new immigrant in Canada.

Now, you will find me in Toronto (Tkaronto) working as a Senior Research Associate in the Immigration team of the Conference Board of Canada – an applied research institution. In my role, I apply the research skills I developed in my post-secondary education to policy problems in the immigration space. I also manage two research centres, which allows me to build strong partnerships with engaged and diverse stakeholders, which is the social and super rewarding part of my job. I continue to look for new growth and learning experiences in, and outside of my day job. This February, I was delighted to be invited to the European Uni-

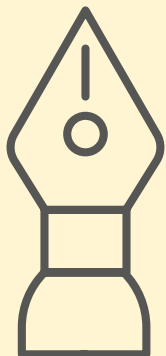
versity Institute's Migration Academy held in Florence, Italy, in which experts from all over the world discussed 'What the world thinks about migration.' It was an epic experience!

In my first few years since graduating, I have been supported by the staff and alumni of the PoliSci department (special shoutout to Dr. Nafisa Abdulhamid and Dr. Adam MacDonald!) It truly takes a village, and I look forward to contributing to the alumni community in any way I am able.



**HANNAH FORSYTH**  
**BA (2015), Political Science, with a Minor in Economics (Dal)**

I earned my Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, with a minor in Econom-



## 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)



ics, from Dalhousie University in 2015. During my studies, I was also a dedicated elite-level sprint kayak athlete, becoming a four-time National Champion and representing Canada at the Canamex Americas Cup in Mexico. My experiences in sports governance, combined with an early interest in politics and the examples set by my parents, sparked my passion for good governance, and fueled my commitment to a career in public service.

With seven years of experience at the Halifax Regional Municipality, I've worked in both the Chief Administrative Office and the Municipal Clerk's Office. My public service background spans all levels of government, including roles with the Nova



**DONG NGO**

**Bachelor of Management (2020),  
Major in Public Sector Management  
with a Minor in Political Science (Dal)**

I can't believe it's already been 5 years since I graduated from Dalhousie. During that time, I moved to Ottawa to pursue a master's in public policy and administration at Carleton University. Following this, I began my career within the federal government as a policy analyst, working at various departments such as Transport Canada and the Privy Council Office. Presently, I am at Canadian Heritage, where I have had the privilege of developing the regulatory framework for the Online News Act and overseeing its implementation to support the sustainability of Canada's journalism sector.

Scotia Health Authority, the Ontario Legislative Internship Program, and supporting a Member of Parliament. I'm currently the Coordinator for Halifax Transit, a role with a somewhat ambiguous title that involves working across all areas of transit operations. With a new Executive Director on board, I'm focusing on strategic business planning and managing operational issues as we prepare for the transformative projects ahead.

I am also pursuing a Master's in Public Administration and Management at Dalhousie University, where I enjoy bridging academic theory to the real-world challenges I've encountered throughout my career. The flexible nature of the pro-

My time in the Department of Political Science is unique compared to most students. I pursued a Bachelor of Management with a major in public sector management and a minor in political science. However, my studies in political science were the most impactful part of my experience at Dalhousie. I've always been passionate about Canadian politics, with long nights learning about key moments and individuals. The program connected with others who shared this interest and professors who strengthened my knowledge and perspective.

One professor who had a key influence in my academic career was Dr. Marcelle Firmini, who I had as a professor many times. Dr. Firmini was the type of professor every student wanted. She could explain technical and philosophical ideas in an engaging way and above all, cared deeply in the success of her students. A notable moment took place during my second year. Following our initial class reading discussion, Dr. Firmini complimented my remarks and encouraged me to continue sharing my thoughts. I would not have achieved the academic milestones I did without the support of Dr. Firmini, for which I am forever grateful for.

Through the program, I had the opportunity to meet insightful peers, make lifelong friends and work alongside remarkable people. One notable experience was my time on the Dalhousie Undergraduate Political Science Society

program has made it possible for me to continue my education, and I am grateful for the Halifax Regional Municipality's ongoing support. I'm hopeful that Dalhousie will offer more hybrid courses in the future, like the "Perspectives on the Contribution of Allan J. MacEachen" class I took this winter. It was great to be back in the classroom, and I'm looking forward to graduating in December 2025.

Outside of work and my studies, I live in Halifax with my husband, and in my free time, I enjoy hiking, planning my next travel adventure, and baking for friends and family.

(DUPSS) during my final year. We were a small group with limited resources. Yet, we were able to accomplish a lot, from helping students secure work opportunities in the political sector to organizing events to connect students with each other and those in the broader political science community.

My time in the program also left a lasting mark on my personal life, as I met my future fiancé in a Canadian politics seminar course during my final year. We were two studious political enthusiasts and have so many great memories walking around campus, talking about Canadian politics. It was only fitting, then, that we returned to the exact classroom in the Mona Campbell where we met when I proposed to her.

I am deeply thankful for the many memories and opportunities the program gave me. The political science community is a special one, and the program offers a wide range of possibilities for students. After I graduated, I helped create the Dalhousie Political Science Alumni Initiative in the hopes of helping students get the most of their degree by connecting them with alumni to ask for advice or insights on what awaits them in their time at Dalhousie. If there is one piece of advice I can offer to students, it's to determine what you want out of your time at Dalhousie. In my experience, anything is possible when you set your mind on it.





### **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 subfields:

- Canadian Government and Politics
- International Relations and Foreign Policy
- Comparative Politics
- Political Theory

**Financial Aid:** Full-time MA and PhD Students are eligible for prestigious prizes, awards, and scholarships. These include the Gallacher Family Scholarship, Glyn R. Berry Memorial Scholarship in International Policy Studies, Keens-Morden Scholarship, Killam Memorial Scholarship, Margaret Meagher Fellowship in Political Science, and other Graduate Scholarships and Teaching Assistantships. For additional information on these scholarships, please visit [here](#).

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