Professor Louis Hayes Returns to China

This summer, Professor Louis Hayes, who first visited China in 1973, returned as a participant in a UM-sponsored, faculty educational tour of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Professor Hayes traveled with colleagues Ona Renner-Fahey from the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, Otto Koester from the Central and Southwest Asia Program and Richard Harris from the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit.

The purpose of the trip was to familiarize the faculty with the connection between Western China and the bordering Central Asian countries of Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and Kashmir. The tour consisted of lectures, museums, mosques, and meetings with different ethnic groups and officials.

According to Professor Hayes, the difference between the China he saw in 1973 and the one he visited this summer is “the difference between night and day.” Among the changes he noted were the diminished power of the Communist/Marxist regime and increasing individualism. On his 1973 visit, “people were all dressed alike. Men wore the same haircuts, and trousers and shirts of the same color. Today, people vary in their dress and style, and the introduction of western culture is evident in their individual expression.”

Professor Hayes was struck by signs of economic modernization. “In the past, where once the streets were filled with bicycles, they are now replaced with cars, a lot of cars, that are driving on new, wide roads.” As infrastructure continues to expand, skylines across Asia, and particularly in China, continue to change. “Construction cranes now litter the skylines.”

Professor Hayes also noted that there is more merchandise in local markets designed for tourists. Technological advances have affected a large portion of the citizenry, as evident by the wide usage of cell phones. And, of course, as with most regions in the world, there has been a “rapid increase in the knowledge and use of the English language.”

Professor Hayes teaches International Relations, Politics of Japan, American Foreign Policy, Theories of Civil Violence, Comparative Legal Systems, and Comparative Government. He is working on a book titled Political Systems of East Asia: China, Japan, and Korea.

View From the Chair – James Lopach

The Political Science newsletter connects the department to the campus and broader University community, but it reaches out most importantly to alumni. We know that our former students care about what’s going on at their alma mater and want to be assured that its academic quality remains high.

The actions of two of our alumni recently went far beyond just reading about departmental activities. David and Joyce Hunt established a scholarship for Political Science students. Each year a junior who exhibits “the attributes of hard work, commitment, and self-motivation” and demonstrates “an interest in local government public administration and policy making” will be awarded $2,500.

While the Hunt Scholarship celebrates undergraduate memories and school loyalty, it more importantly ties the achievements of David and Joyce Hunt to the formation of today’s students. As the Hunts noted, “Higher education can enhance one’s ability to be a productive and knowledgeable world citizen, but it is not a substitute for the vital attributes of critical thinking and personal effort.” Because of this philosophy, the Hunts are considering even greater support to the department: establishing an endowed local government internship.

The Political Science Department expresses its deep appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Hunt and to our other benefactors. For undergraduate scholarships we thank Susan Grebeldinger, Ellis Waldron, the Newberry family, the Paul Slitter family, the Alan Robertson family, the Bennett family, the Kain and McKay families, and James and Margaret Brennan. For a legislative internship scholarship we thank Bill Bronson. For faculty development funds we thank Mrs. Thomas Payne and David and Monica Paoli.

Kudos!
PSC undergraduate Jessica Reynolds and her debate partner, History major Blake Zollar, attended the 2006 National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence, to which they were invited based on their overall 2005-2006 rankings. At the tournament, held at the University of Oregon, Jessica and Blake had twenty minutes to prepare for an hour-long debate on a policy resolution.

Loretta Edwards, who served as the Department secretary for many years, retired in July. She will continue working in the Department on a temporary, part-time basis. Karen Boice is the new Department secretary.
**P.S.A. Update**

Hello Alumni, students, and faculty. I am Julie Rostad, the President of Pi Sigma Alpha. As a senior in Political Science, I am honored to serve as the President of an organization with a strong reputation. Pi Sigma Alpha is very active and allows students to be involved in a number of activities, such as political debates, career forums, and our annual spring banquet.

Recently, Epsilon Mu, the University of Montana’s Pi Sigma Alpha chapter, won the Best Chapter Award for 2006. Our chapter has continually been honored nationally with Best Chapter Awards and Best Chapter Advisor Awards.

Best Chapter Awards are cash awards of $500 to up to three chapters in each of three college enrollment categories. The winning chapters may use the prizes for any activity they wish. The selection is based on chapters’ annual reports to the National Office, and other evidence of extra-levels of activity.


Students interested in joining P.S.A. should consult the P.S.A. website at http://www.umt.edu/polsci/.

---

**M.A. Students at Work in the World**

— Ramona Grey, M.A. Director

What do a college professor, a public information officer for the U.S. Department of Defense in Heidelberg, Germany, and an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer in eastern Montana have in common? All are alumni who earned their Master’s of Arts in Political Science at UM.

The majority of our M.A. graduates have entered Ph.D. programs in universities across the U.S. and Canada. Some of these former students are teaching at community colleges on the east and west coasts, and others are tenured professors at institutions of higher learning across the country, including Montana State University, University of Wisconsin, and Holy Family University in Philadelphia. Among them is Erich Root (M.A. 95) who, after finishing his Ph.D. at Claremont Graduate School, secured a faculty position in Virginia.

Other M.A. students have chosen careers as college administrators. One former student is Director of Student Affairs at a Texas college, and another serves as an Admissions Officer at a Michigan university.

Law school continues to draw a fair number of our M.A. graduates as well. From Spokane to Spain (and many places in between), our former students are now practicing law.

One alumnus, Andrew Campbell (B.A. 01; M.A. 02), has been at the top of his class at Indiana University. Mr. Campbell’s excellent Master’s thesis is still remembered among faculty, so it was not surprising for us to hear that he was invited to serve on the editorial board of the Indiana Law Journal.

Besides choosing careers in higher education and law, our M.A. graduate students have pursued careers in the military, law enforcement, public administration, and journalism. Among them are alumni who are teaching in Montana and California, serving as Judge Advocate General officers, and working for various public and private agencies. Tara Rigler (M.A. 98), for example, has served as a public information officer for the U.S. Department of Defense in Heidelberg, Germany.

Our former M.A. students have served and contributed to their communities at home and abroad. They have worked for non-profits and public agencies, including Missoula in Motion and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Agency. Many share a strong commitment to programs that will improve peoples’ lives.

One recent M.A. grad, Julianna Crowley (B.A. 04, M.A. 06), is presently an AmeriCorps Vista worker in Sidney, Montana. She is working on a number of projects related to Local Homeland Security, including reviving Neighborhood Watch and conducting Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) courses. In the future, Ms. Crowley hopes to use her experience, education, and language skills to advance human welfare in third world countries, such as Northern Africa, and work in programs that create healthy and economically sustainable communities.

If you are a former M.A. graduate student, we would like to hear from you! Please share your memories of the Political Science Department, the M.A. program, and the faculty with us. And be sure to tell us what you’re up to. Please drop me a line or email: ramona.grey@umontana.edu.

For more information about the Master’s program, please go to http://www.umt.edu/polsci/.

---

**The Political Science Papers**

This feature, written by Political Science students, is the 2nd in a series of debates between Publius and Brutus on the issues before the Political Science Department.

**Debate No. 2: Plus/Minus Grading System**

**Publius:** In the fall of 2004, the University of Montana switched to a plus/minus grading scale, and ever since, many students have characterized the system as being unfair. However, this characterization is false because the plus/minus system is actually a more equitable system. For example, if Jones earns 88 percent of the course’s total points whereas Smith earns only 85 percent, shouldn’t Jones’ grade reflect his higher achievement? Moreover, if Brown earns only 82 percent of the total points, Smith’s grade should logically be higher than Brown’s grade. Other than making the University fairer, the plus/minus grading scale has also made the University more competitive. Since most higher-education institutions use a plus/minus grading scale, University students who apply to graduate schools would be less competitive without the plus/minus system.

**Brutus:** The plus/minus grading system is, quite simply, unfair. Publius has only referenced students receiving grades in the 80% range. This, however, is not where the problem lies. I agree that students earning grades in the 80 percentage range down are benefitting from this system. However, the problem of inequity is for the students receiving grades in the 90 percent range. The plus/minus system prevents a student who earns a 98 percent from earning an A+. Therefore, if an “A” student receives an A-, that student can never make up those points and earn 4.0 GPA. I submit that the system is not making the University “fairer”; it is punishing the most academically-driven students on campus. Moreover, as long as an “A” student can not earn a GPA of 4.0, are the students applying to Graduate School, in fact, more competitive?
T his summer, Professor Paul Haber took 11 students from the University of Montana to one of his favorite destinations in México to study Spanish and Political Science for the seventh year in a row. The destination was Pátzcuaro, a small town located high in the mountains in the state of Michoacan. Students lived with host families and studied at a language school in town. The six-week academic schedule was intense; however, it was broken up with fantastic field trips that opened students’ eyes to different aspects of Mexican culture. The field trips included visiting an old fabric factory, climbing a volcano with the mayor of Uruapan, and a four-day trip to the beach of Zihuatanejo.

According to Professor Haber, this year’s trip was “truly one of the best. The group was very short on whiners. If someone was having a hard time, the individual tended to learn from the experience and the rest of the group did what they could to support that person.” “Another attribute was the large number of students who were truly transformed by the experience. A number of students were so moved that they changed their major or decided on which graduate program or career to pursue.

“This group played hard and worked hard. They came to class and field trips ready to participate in spirited conversation, and they enjoyed their time with fellow students, host families and new Mexican friends.” One student, Miranda, had the following to say of her participation: “For me it was a completely new experience. I had never traveled, so this program was great for me. I loved all the weekend trips and I encourage anyone who thinks of doing this program to go through with it because it was a wonderful, life-changing experience.”

Whitney, another student, said, “Going to Mexico this past summer was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I went to study Spanish, and I returned with a new perspective about life. I always knew that I wanted to incorporate my love of the Spanish language into my future goals. Now I know that I want to do something exciting like studying economics of Latin American culture.”

I, too, had the pleasure of being in this program. I fell in love with Pátzcuaro on the first day, and did not want to leave on my last, even after traveling around by myself for two extra weeks. It is a beautiful experience, and I encourage all who are interested to apply.

Professor Haber is in Chile for the academic year, conducting research and teaching, but he is available via email. I am the Program Assistant for this year, so please contact me for more information at erin.burd@gmail.com.

Our Summer in Mexico — Erin Burd

Faculty Activity

Professor Jon Tompkins is now serving as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Professor Jim Lopach has replaced him as Department Chair, and Professor Jeffrey Greene is serving as the MPA Director.

Professor Peter Koehn was the co-recipient of a grant from UMS’s Visiting Scholar Program to bring Dr. Juha Uitto, Senior Evaluation Officer at the United Nations Development Program, to campus in October. Dr. Uitto gave four presentations and met with interested students and faculty to discuss professional-development, internships, and career opportunities. Professor Koehn has recently published articles in Climatic Change and Academic Medicine, as well as two chapters in Handbook of Globalization, Governance, and Public Administration.

Professor Jeffrey Greene is writing a general public policy textbook and developing a new course, PSC 464, Public Policy Issues.

In August, Professors Paul Haber, Ramona Grey, Karen Adams, and Christopher Muste attended the National Conference on Dialogue and Deliberation in San Francisco, CA. At the conference, they explored ways to improve UM’s efforts to deepen civic understanding of critical political issues and cultivate citizens’ and political leaders’ capacities for spirited, yet respectful, policy debate.

Professor Ramona Grey is working on a text book, tentatively entitled A Political Theory Primer, to be used for upper division theory seminars. This book will not focus on the causes that political theorists have championed or condemned, or on how political theory has been affected by specific events (real or imagined). Instead, A Political Theory Primer will ask an even more fundamental question: what is the purpose of political inquiry? This may seem like a simple question to answer, but in fact political theorists have never agreed on what it is they do, or should be doing. And their disagreement spills over onto the way they approach political questions. This Primer will examine how these different approaches influence the kinds of questions thinkers ask.

In March, Professor Karen Adams presented a paper on international system membership at the International Studies Association meeting in San Diego. Thanks to a Junior Faculty Research Grant from the Smith Richardson Foundation, Professor Adams is on research leave to finish her book on state survival and death.

Professor Gregory Koger received a research grant from the American Political Science Association for work on his book on filibustering, entitled Going to the Mattresses. Professor Koger also received a research grant from the Dirksen Congressional Center to study party leadership elections in Congress. This study is part of a larger project with Matthew Lebo of Stonybrook University on the nature of legislative parties.

Professor Christopher Muste received a research grant from the American Political Science Association for his research on the effects of news coverage of immigration on public opinion. At the annual Midwest Political Science Association conference, Professor Muste presented the results of a national public opinion survey experiment he designed to measure how people respond to questions about different social groups. Professor Muste has been interviewed by national and local news media, including the New York Times, U.S. News and World Report, and BBC’s “The World” radio program, about the Montana senate campaign.

Adjunct Professor Mark Johnson was an international observer at the 4th annual conference of the National Democratic Party in Cairo, Egypt. He also held meetings with senior Egyptian government officials.
Calendar


October 13 — PSC Homecoming Gathering for Alumni and Students, 4-6 pm, Liberal Arts 344.

October 18 — PSC Major’s Meeting, 4-5 pm, Gallagher 123.

October 26 — Presidential Lecture by Josef Joffe, Publisher and Editor of DIE ZEIT newspaper in Germany, "Europe in the 21st Century: Too Big to Be Left Alone, Too Weak to Go It Alone," 8 pm, University Theatre.

November 14 — PSC Film Series, "Wag the Dog," 7 pm, Gallagher 123 with Professors Greene, Koger, and Muste. Free popcorn and beverages.

November 20-21 — Montana Model UN High School Conference, Univ. Center.

December 4 — Presidential Lecture by Kenneth Maxwell, Harvard University, “The Red Wave in Latin America: What the Turn to the Left Means for the United States,” 8 pm, University Center Ballroom.

Alumni Bulletin Board

Keeping an email address list for our scattered-to-the-winds alumni can be tough. To help us, please let the Alumni Association know your current email address. Email support @umontanaalumni.org or call the Alumni Records Staff at (406) 243-5211. Then we will be able to notify you of upcoming events, department news, and more.

Where are you now? Please let us know where you are living, what you are doing and how you have spent your time since leaving the University of Montana! Email information to erin.burd@umontana.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!

Would you like to donate to the PSC department? Send a check to The University of Montana Foundation, PO Box 7159, Missoula, MT 59807-7159, with a note on the memo line indicating that it is for the Political Science Department. For more information on gift-giving, contact Julia Horn of the UM Foundation at (800) 443-2593, (406) 243-2646 or Julia.Horn@mso.umt.edu

Visit the Department of Political Science website!

www.umt.edu/polsci/

Alumni

Find out about courses, scholarships, advising, requirements for the department’s undergraduate and graduate (M.A. and M.P.A.) degrees, opportunities for study abroad, careers in Political Science, and PSC-affiliated clubs and organizations.

Students

Read about the department, update your email address, learn about the newest department-affiliated clubs and programs, keep apprised of upcoming department events, and read about the newest achievements and publications of the faculty.

Check us out online!

“...a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. It is the gargoyle of little Understanding.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Email: karen.boice@mso.umt.edu
Fax: 406.243.4076
Telephone: 406.243.5202
Missoula, MT 59812
Liberal Arts 350
University of Montana
Department of Political Science

University of Montana, Fall 2006