PSPA Kudos Award

The Department of PSPA recently instituted an occasional award that notes a notable accomplishment of a faculty member, often in reference to a recent event. The award is accompanied by a small token, and is presented in a setting attended by other faculty. The first award was presented at the Faculty Welcome Reception in late September to Professor Eddie French, assistant professor of political science and public administration. Professor French is beginning his second year in the department from which he received the PhD in 2001. Dr. French has had a recent event that significantly elevated his academic profile and that of PSPA and the University—he had a recent article to appear this fall in the premier journal in the field -- the Public Administration Review (PAR). That puts Eddie in the select company of professionals that appear in this rigorous, top ranked journal. When one adds to this the fact that the PAR article is but one of nine authored by French this year, this single year record is stratospheric! Dr. French’s article is also timely: "Pandemic Influenza Planning: An Extraordinary Ethical Dilemma for Local Government Officials." This piece considers the state of preparedness of large states for the possibility of just such a pandemic as is upon us with the H1N1 flu virus. The findings are sobering indeed—most states have limited guidelines with little input from stakeholders, and seem woefully unprepared to manage the complex legal and ethical dimensions of such an eventuality. In short this is cutting-edge public policy research, with bases for immediate application.
Annual Retreat

The department had its annual retreat at Plymouth Bluff outside of Columbus, Mississippi, September 23. The entire faculty took one day to consider three big topics regarding department program and curriculum development. And over lunch, Dean Gary Myers of Arts and Sciences gave an overview of budget conditions in the college and the university, and sketched some of the scenarios under consideration for budget reductions this year. Below are descriptions of the broad subjects the faculty took up during the day.

Undergraduate Program Development And Curriculum Logic. The discussion took stock of aspects of our BA program in light of changes in the discipline and in teaching faculty. Some of the open-ended questions posed were: What should the vision of the program be given our resources and faculty skill set? How well are we meeting demands for internationalization, service learning, and student career choices? How well do we assess our outcomes? Considerable attention was given to methodological requirements for students, our pre-law offerings, international programs, and internships.

The Stennis Institute. The topic featured discussion of how faculty might take better advantage of this public policy laboratory attached to the department. Some of the activity of the Institute was discussed, while faculty members pondered ways to make engagement with the Institute a fundamental part of the instructional and research enterprise—grants and contracts for basic and applied research, internships, and collaborative projects with public and/or non-governmental organizations.

Assessment for Completion of Graduate Programs. This was the sole discussion item that was not open-ended. Rather, the purpose of this discussion was to come to some decisions about standards for assessing our increasing number of graduate students. There were aspects of assessment that the faculty sought to clarify, but in the process discovered that an even broader discussion of issues related to our graduate programs might well be taken up. The group decided that this should be an item for some sustained conversation perhaps this academic year.

On October 19 the MSU Pre Law Society named Justice William “Bill” Waller, Jr., its Distinguished Jurist for 2009. Justice Waller is the current Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court. He is a 1974 graduate of Mississippi State and a political science major. Justice Waller is the 32nd recipient of the award.

Justice Waller was presented with the Distinguished Jurist plaque at a luncheon attended by over 50 of his friends, family, and colleagues. Attendees included several current justices of the Mississippi Supreme Court as well as former justices of the Court, and a number of judges from the Mississippi Court of Appeals and state chancery and circuit courts. Former Lt. Governor Amy Tuck gave the presentation speech. Two local television stations and numerous print journalists covered the event.

Afterward, Justice Waller gave a lecture on the state judiciary to a standing-room only crowd of students in the Grisham Room of the Library.

In celebration of his award, Justice Waller and his family were invited to join President Mark Keenum and his family at the homecoming football game.

On November 19, the Pre Law Society will host the Mississippi Court of Appeals on campus to hear arguments in two appeals from state trial courts.
New Additions to the Department Faculty

Dr. Kweku Ainuson

It has been an especially good year for new appointments. Three new faculty arrived in August. Kweku Ainuson, who recently completed his PhD at Clemson University, joins us as Assistant Professor (with a joint appointment in African American Studies). He specializes in comparative politics and policy, focusing principally on interest groups and water quality policy in Africa. Brian Shoup, who recently completed his PhD at University of Indiana, joins us as an Assistant Professor and is also in the comparative politics subfield, specializing on problems of political conflict and ethnicity. Both professors Ainuson and Shoup also have an interest in international relations.

Dr. Brian D. Shoup

New department head of Political Science and Public Administration

Professor Minion Kenneth Chauncey Morrison focuses on both Comparative Politics and American Politics. He received his PhD and MA degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Morrison also received a Certificate of African Studies from the University of Ghana in Africa, and holds a BA degree with Honors from Tougaloo College. Morrison has served as an Associate Professor of Afro-American Studies and Political Science and as Chairman of Afro-American Studies at Syracuse University in New York, and comes to MSU from the University of Missouri, where he was Vice Provost for Minority Affairs and Faculty Development, and most recently the Frederick Middlebush Professor of Political Science.

Jodie Shappley

Office Staff

Jodie Shappley, who has been at the department for four years was recently promoted as the Administrative Assistant I. She is currently enrolled at MSU.

Quintara Miller

Quintara Miller is a new hire in the department as the Office Associate. Miller is a native from Ware, MS and is currently working on a B.A. in Human Resource Management.
Bitter Sweet Goodbye

As the semester comes to a close, graduation is right around the corner for several students in the department. One such student is Nick Catling, as he is featured sharing a laugh with Administrative Assistant I, Jodie Shapley. Catling is one of many students who will graduate on December 11, with a Master’s of Public Policy and Administration. He is currently employed with Starkville Parks and Recreation. Catling believes in giving back to the community by helping Starkville create a positive and safe environment for young children. Upon leaving Starkville, Catling’s future endeavors are to secure a job as a Human Resource Manager for a major corporation.

Jody Holland

In October, Jody Holland presented his research at the annual Southeastern Conference of Public Administration (SECOPA). By investigating the relationship between the policy implementation process and the utilization of information technology, Jody’s work examines how the utilization of an economic modeling tool alters the economic impact analysis (EIA), which is a requirement through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). According to Jody, “SECOPA is a great conference for students to present their work and to network with some of the top scholars in our field”. He recommends that all students should attend and present their research at SECOPA because the conference is student-friendly, and students receive excellent feedback and direction on their research.
Undergraduate and Graduate Program Growth

The four Programs in PSPA are experiencing growth, and this is particularly evident in the undergraduate BA and the professional MPPA Programs. Data below tracking majors over a six year period show that our undergraduate majors are at an all time high at 259 this fall. [Figure 1 from undergrad report in October faculty meeting packet.] Meanwhile, the three-year trend for the MPPA program is even more noteworthy. The figure below illustrates the point (note that the downturns represent summer sessions when far fewer students traditionally are enrolled.) [Figure two from MPPA report in October faculty meeting packet]

**Figure 1 Undergraduate Majors**

![Figure 1 Undergraduate Majors](image1)

**Figure 2 MPPA Student Profile**

![Figure 2 MPPA Student Profile](image2)
Undergraduate Scholars

Kathryn E. “Katie” Allen

Jamie L. Beene

Laura E. Hamm

Antoinette M. Jenkins

Matthew W. West

Patrick A. Young
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARS

Six PSPA students are the recipients of the department’s most distinguished scholarships this year. The scholar awards are given to top departmental majors who demonstrate leadership and academic achievements. [The Stennis Scholarship is a memorial to MSU alumnus and longtime U. S. senator from Mississippi; the Barbour Scholarship is named for the current Mississippi governor; and the Collins Scholarship is a memorial to the founding director of the PSPA Stennis Institute of Government.

Haley Barbour Scholars: Senior Kathryn E. "Katie" Allen of Jackson, (Murrah High School), who is in the pre-law program and a member of Shackouls Honors College. Her affiliations include the Mississippi Model Security Council (MMSC) and the Stennis-Montgomery Association, the National Organization for Women, Mississippi ACLU and MSU's Richard Holmes Cultural Diversity Center. Senior Patrick A. Young of Sparta, Ill., (Sparta High), has a double major in Communication/Broadcasting. He has been on both the Dean's and President's Lists; completed an internship with the NBC TV Network (New York); writes for The Reflector and, is now a publication intern with the campus Sustainable Energy Research Center.

John C. Stennis Scholars: Senior Laura E. Hamm of Tupelo, (Tupelo High) is on the President's List, a member of the Mortar Board Honor Society the varsity soccer team, the Panhellenic Council, Roadrunners (the student recruiting team), and the Stennis-Montgomery Association. Freshman Jamie L. Beene of Mantachie, (Mantachie High) is active in the MSU Day One Leadership program, SGA, MMSC, College Republicans, and the Stennis-Montgomery Association. Freshman Matthew W. West of Starkville, (Starkville High) is a member of Shackouls Honors College. In high school, West was active in the Key Club and MMSC, and the soccer and cross-country teams. He was also a participant in Habitat for Humanity and Biloxi-based relief work following Hurricane Katrina.

Morris H. Collins Scholar: Sophomore Antoinette M. Jenkins of Hernando,( Hernando High) is also a foreign language education double-major. She is a Dean's List Scholar, is active in the Residence Hall Association, Richard Holmes Cultural Diversity Center, Day One Leadership Program, and the Black Student Alliance. She also is a resident assistant in Cresswell Residence Hall.
Upcoming Events

Annual Holiday Luncheon will be held on December 2, at 12:00 pm.

Commencement services will be held December 11, at 7:00 pm, at the Humphrey Coliseum.

Winter Holidays begin December 22—January 1

Classes will resume on January 6

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year