The Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Mississippi State University offers a wide range of opportunities for students earning their undergraduate or graduate degree. While completing rigorous coursework, students can participate in such supplementary activities as the Model Security Council or the Stennis/Montgomery Association. Upon graduation, students are equipped with the skills desired for employment at all levels of government, academia and business.

Our program may be small but the impact of the department is worldwide. It is here, in the pages of our Official Newsletter, where we feature departmental highlights of the school year. Enjoy reading about student, staff, and faculty achievements that make us proud to be one department.
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Patrick Exmeyer, Ph.D. - Editor
Nikki Comby, Doctoral student - Editor
Dr. P. Edward French
This fall, the Mississippi State University Department of Political Science and Public Administration welcomed Dr. P. Edward (Eddie) French as Interim Department Head. Prior to accepting the position of interim department head, Dr. French served as Executive Director of the Stennis Institute of Government at Mississippi State University following his tenure as a full professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. In addition to his role as Interim Department Head, Dr. French is also serving as the Graduate Coordinator of the department. Effective July 1, 2017, Dr. French will become the permanent Head of the Department.

Dr. K.C. Morrison moves to Delaware
Minion Kenneth Chauncey “KC” Morrison is currently Professor of Public Policy and Administration at the University of Delaware. He was previously Head of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, and Senior Associate in African American Studies at Mississippi State University. From 1989-2009 he was Professor of Political Science at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he also held the Frederick Middlebush Professorship. He served there as a Vice Provost from 1989-1997. Prior to Missouri, Morrison was at Syracuse University, where he served as the Chair of Afro-American Studies for five years. He has a B.A. (cum laude) from Tougaloo College (1968), and M.A. (1969) and PhD (1977) in Political Science and African Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We wish K.C. the best in his new position.
Dr. Sawsan Abutabenjah is an Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Public Policy in the department of Political Science and Public Administration at Mississippi State University. She currently focuses on several aspects related to public procurement, including state preference policies, fraud, and the value of certification. Dr. Abutabenjah was recently awarded a grant to investigate cooperative purchasing programs in the United States. Her other research areas include: supply chain management, economic forecasting and policy analysis, local public finance, gender in public administration, and complex system governance. Her research has appeared in several journals including Public Works Management & Policy, Journal of Public Procurement, and International Journal of System of Systems Engineering. Dr. Abutabenjah has taught classes in Research Methods and Design, Public Procurement, Public Administration, Women in Public Administration, Public Budgeting and Financial Management.

After completing her PhD in Public Administration and Urban Policy at Old Dominion University in 2014, Dr. Abutabenjah was an Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Public Policy in the Department of Political Science and the Center for Public Management and Regional Affairs at Miami University in Oxford, OH. She joined the faculty at Mississippi State University in 2016.
Dr. Carolyn E. Holmes is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at Mississippi State University. Her research focuses on nationalism and post-conflict transitions to democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. She earned her Ph.D. from Indiana University in 2015. She has conducted extensive field research in South Africa, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Fulbright-Hays Program. She has also conducted preliminary work in Ghana, while teaching graduate students in Accra.


Dr. Julius A. Nukpezah is an Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Administration at Mississippi State University. His current research focuses on state and local government finance specifically, local government investments, sales tax revenue analysis, and state bond ratings. Dr. Nukpezah is also examining the intersection between poverty alleviation policies and rural economic development through microfinance and microenterprise development with particular focus on developing economies. Before Joining Mississippi State University, Dr. Nukpezah earned his Ph.D. in Public Administration and Management at the University of North Texas where he taught Financial Aspects of Governments, Public Management, Leadership and Organizational Behavior, Public Policy and Bureaucracy, among others.

Dr. Nukpezah comes into academia with public service experience. He was a senior policy advisor at the Ghana Ministry of Food and Agriculture and coordinated a youth program in Agriculture where his office collaborated with several international agencies active in rural economic development. Dr. Nukpezah has received fellowships and grants from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Chinese Ministry of Commerce, and India’s Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Program (SCAAP).
2006–2016:
A Decade of PSPA Influence in Academia

Boise State University

Abdulfattah Yaghi (2006)
United Arab Emirates University

Beth Rauhaus (2011)
University of Texas-Corpus Christi
Mr. Wesley Ammon died on August 28, 2016, after a 22-year career with Mississippi State University. He taught American National Government classes of more than 200 students, he was director of the University Academic Advising Center and he served on the Orientation, Dean and Directors, Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal, Interdisciplinary Studies, Residency Appeals, Students with Disabilities, Advisory, and Calendar committees and on the Associate Deans Council.

What he is remembered for, however, is his easy-going demeanor and his habit of helping students as if they were his own children. He made American National Government come to life using first-hand accounts that overflowed with tongue-in-cheek humor. His work, undoubtedly, will live on in the lives of those he influenced.

I was one of the luckiest ones — I knew him not only as my professor and academic advisor, but also as my boss while working as a Supplemental Instruction Leader. In the few years I knew him, he directed me onto a path that, if I am successful, will always be influenced by his genuine character, ingenuity in expressing himself and, most of all, his integrity.

Dr. Jerome Gilbert was MSU’s provost before taking his position as president of Marshall University. He lauded Ammon’s work at MSU. “I never questioned his total commitment to the success of students at MSU. I put a great deal of trust in him. I always deferred to his judgment.” Gilbert also praised Ammon as a strong student advocate—“He worked tirelessly in his efforts to serve students. He treated them with respect and truly wanted each student to be successful.”

Mississippi’s 30th lieutenant governor and current MSU Vice President for Campus Services, Ms. Amy Tuck, was a classmate of Ammon’s. “I witnessed firsthand how Wes excelled in his academic studies. Later, he became a very dedicated Mississippi State University employee who truly cared about the students he assisted.”

Dr. Marty Wiseman, professor emeritus of Political Science and Public Administration and emeritus executive director of the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, knew Ammon as a teacher and co-worker. “I knew Wes Ammon as a student in my classes and as a colleague on the political science faculty. Wes delightfully marched to the beat of his own drum. He was one whom you were glad to see coming toward you because a few moments with him was time well spent. He will be sorely missed.”
A Bulldog through and through, and a man who bleeds maroon: this is the best depiction of Dr. Joseph “Dallas” Breen, Interim Executive Director of the John C. Stennis Institute of Government and Community Development at Mississippi State University. After receiving his undergraduate degree in Finance, Dallas began work at the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at MSU. During his 12 years at the SSRC, Dallas served in several capacities, including Research Associate, Systems Administrator, and Research Fellow. In 2011, Dr. W. Marty Wiseman recruited Dallas to the Stennis Institute to develop the GIS capabilities in redistricting efforts and to establish a new survey research center.

In a collaboration with the National Strategic Planning and Analysis Research Center (nSPARC), Dr. Breen successfully launched the Center on Polling for Business and Government, which now resides at the offices of nSPARC. Dr. Wiseman then promoted Dr. Breen to the position of Associate Director in 2012, a role he continued through the retirement of Dr. Wiseman and hiring of now Interim Department Head for Political Science and Public Administration (PSPA), Dr. P. Edward French. Together, Dr. French and Dr. Breen worked to continue the work performed for the State of Mississippi through the Institute, initiating a more politically-neutral, research- and training-based approach. Following the departure of former PSPA Department Head Dr. K. C. Morrison, Dr. French was asked to serve as Interim Department Head of PSPA, and Dr. Breen was asked to assume the role of Interim Executive Director of the Stennis Institute, where he currently operates for the University and the State.

Dr. Breen's extensive experience continues to serve the State of Mississippi and Mississippi State University by informing decision makers of important policy issues, training locally-elected officials on the forms of government and policy formulation, and providing expertise in local government and applied research. Dr. Breen hopes to further strengthen the ties between the Institute and the PSPA department, through opportunities for faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Breen proudly notes that, “to build a rich culture of knowledge dissemination and policy education, the Institute capitalizes on the diverse talents and backgrounds of its staff and hopes to further these efforts through the utilization of the uniquely talented faculty in PSPA and other departments across campus.”

Dr. Breen also serves as an adjunct professor in the PSPA department, leading MPPA and Capstone courses. Dr. Breen’s work has been published in several journals and technical reports, presented at regional and national conferences, and has served as a keynote speaker on a number of occasions. Dr. Breen currently resides in Starkville, MS with his wife, Lacey, and six-year-old son, Cayden. He serves on the transportation committee for the City of Starkville and on the housing corporation board for the Delta Chi fraternity. Dr. Breen noted, “I am grateful for the opportunities afforded me and my family to be a part of the Institute, the PSPA department, and the rest of the MSU family, and I hope that I can give back to the University and the State what has been given to us.”
Mississippi State students will represent the university at the Southern Regional Model United Na-
tions (SRMUN) simulations in Atlanta from November 17-19. The event, an annual gathering of more than
50 universities from around the United States, is one of the largest international organization simulations
in the United States and presents a considerable challenge for delegates as they must prepare in advance to
represent the interests and geopolitical positions of countries with which they are not always fully familiar.
This year the MSU delegation will represent two countries, Colombia and the Czech Republic. Both
countries have multiple seats on different committees, including the High Commission for Refugees, the
Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Peacebuilding Commission. Given the significant events this past
year, including the difficult negotiations of peace between Colombia’s government and rebel groups and the
refugee crisis in Europe, both of these countries will be important players in the simulations.
In order to prepare for the difficult task of representing two very different countries, MMSC students
spent the better part of the fall semester learning about the histories and political positions of Colombia and
the Czech Republic. These preparations include the production of position papers on specific issues such as
effective forms of finance for peacebuilding operations, the implementation of policies to aid small business-
es in the developing world as a way to use markets to improve the life chances of the poor, and how to best
combat the spread of opiates.
Once the SRMUN conference is over it is back to work for the MMSC students as they must imme-
diately prepare for the spring semester and the Security Council simulations hosted by the Political Science
and Public Administration department each year at the Colvard Student Union. This year marks the 37th
year that MSU has hosted high school students from around the state as they represent countries on the UN
Security Council and deliberate the important international security issues of the day.
Department Faculty & Staff

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. P. Edward French</td>
<td>Interim Department Head, Professor &amp; Graduate Coordinator</td>
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<td>Dr. Sawsan Abutanbenjah</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Dr. Leslie Baker</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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<td>Dr. Vasabjit Banerjee</td>
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<td>Dr. James Chamberlain</td>
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<td>Dr. Jerry Emison</td>
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<td>Dr. Steve Shaffer</td>
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<td>Dr. Brian Shoup</td>
<td>Associate Professor &amp; Undergraduate Coordinator</td>
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<td>Dr. Dragan Stanisevski</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
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<td>Dr. Rick Travis</td>
<td>Interim Dean &amp; Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whit Waide Jr., J.D.</td>
<td>Assistant Clinical Instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caragh Boyles</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Career Center</td>
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<td>Kamicca Brown-Lott</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant I</td>
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<td>Quintara Miller</td>
<td>Business Coordinator</td>
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Tip Allen Scholarship

In honor of the contribution of this extraordinary man to PSPA and MSU, the Allen family and PSPA department have established the Dr. Tip Allen Undergraduate Scholarship. Up to three awards will be provided to majors toward participation in a public service internship.

We currently are soliciting donations and pledges in support of this effort. Please help us honor the rich legacy of Professor Allen by making your contribution or pledge today.

DO YOU HAVE A DESIRE TO GIVE?

Make checks payable to:
MSU Foundation (PSPA)
1 Hunter Henry Blvd.
P.O. Box 6149
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Contact Arts and Science Development Officer, Sara Frederic, who will assist you at 662-325-3240 or via email at sfrederic@foundation.msstate.edu
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www.pspa.msstate.edu