

Department of Political Science

Department of

EASTERN
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES

New Lecture Series: The View from the Bench

Students Learn from Judges

In the first of a series of four lectures hosted by the Department of Political Science, Justice Marilyn Kelly of the Michigan Supreme Court spoke about the critical role of state supreme courts in our legal system. EMU junior Kenneth Foisy noted that Kelly's lecture was "a good opportunity to learn about the role of the Supreme Court and how it affects us on a day-to-day basis." Kelly also spoke about her career path, and discussed election versus merit systems for becoming a judge.

In the second View from the Bench lecture on November 14, Judge Daniel Opperman of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Michigan discussed the professional and personal changes that happen when a lawyer becomes a judge. As an attorney, Opperman concentrated on litigation, bankruptcy, and real estate. He became a judge in 2006. Opperman dispelled myths about bankruptcy and explained the process as a positive opportunity to give the debtor a fresh start.

Next up: Judge Melissa Warner, "The Hidden World of Administrative Law," February 6, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.



Justice Kelly



Judge Opperman

New Political Science Scholarships

In addition to the **Study Abroad Scholarship Fund** that began last spring with a \$5,000 pledge from an anonymous donor, there are now two more endowed funds that will provide scholarships to Political Science students.

The new **Robert O. McWilliams Memorial Scholarship** is fully endowed and will be awarded annually to Political Science undergraduates based on merit and need. The first was awarded this fall to Kaitlyn Hill, a Junior majoring in International Affairs and German Language and Literature.

The **Joe Ohren Internship Fund** was established this fall (see page two) to provide scholarship funds to Political Science students who are completing unpaid internships as part of their course of study.

A year-end donation to a scholarship fund makes a real difference in the lives of students, helping them to succeed academically, study abroad, or complete an internship. To contribute, go to emufoundation.org and click on "Donate Now." Select Fund #01868 for the Joe Ohren Internship fund or #18310 for the Study Abroad Scholarship.

Guest Lecture

"The Silence of the Lambs: The Political Quietude of the 'Black Church' in the Age of Obama."

Michael Leo Owens, Emory University

February 20, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.

In Memoriam

James Donald Johnson taught in the Department of Political Science for nearly 30 years, including 7 years as Department Head. He received his doctorate at the University of Michigan. Johnson's research and teaching interests included Canadian government, comparative European politics, law, and public policy.

Robert O. McWilliams was a faculty member of the Department of Political Science from 1956 until 1986. He earned his MPA from Wayne State University and his doctorate from the University of Michigan. In addition to basic American Government classes, he regularly taught specialized courses in Municipal Administration and Public Opinion.

New Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Gregory Plagens

This fall, the Political Science Department welcomed Gregory Plagens as the new MPA director and assistant professor of political science. Previously, Plagens was an assistant professor of public administration and urban studies at the University of Akron (2006-2011). He received both his doctor of philosophy and master's degree in public administration from the University of South Carolina, and a bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University.



Plagens' teaching and research interests include organization theory, personnel, and research methods. His most recent publications include journal articles on social capital.

Joe Ohren Internship Fund

Dr. Joe Ohren recently stepped down as EMU's MPA director to continue his 26-year career teaching both graduate and undergraduate courses in the public administration program. The *Joe Ohren Internship Fund* has been established in honor of Joe's exceptional service. Once fully endowed, scholarship funds will be awarded to Political Science Department undergraduate or graduate students who are completing unpaid internships as part of their course of study.

A kick-off fundraising event was hosted by Laura Shue, Bill Richards, and Larry Kestenbaum at the Polo Fields in Ann Arbor on October 28. Anyone wishing to contribute may do so online at www.emufoundation.org, by clicking on "Donate Now," and selecting "Fund #01868, Joe Ohren Internship Fund."

Alumni News

Eric Kociba ('95) attended law school at Wayne State University, and now has a commercial law practice.

Harvey Santana ('99), state representative, visited campus November 28 to speak to a class, tour Pray-Harold renovations, and have lunch with faculty and students.

Shawn O'Connor ('04) completed law school (Cooley) in 2007 and now operates a small law office in Garden City.

Derek Moss ('07) is a national security specialist with the United States Army Reserve, currently deployed to the Balkans.

Armen Boyagian ('08) is a Congressional Liaison for Congressman Gary Peters MI-09.

Cindil Redick ('09) works for Community Action Network in Ann Arbor as the Assistant Director of Bryant Community Center.

Katie Collins ('10) is a Peace Corps Volunteer currently serving in Ukraine, teaching English at a secondary school near Odessa.

Cindy Bedrosian ('11) began her studies at Indiana University Law School in August.

Jake Vorkapich ('11) began Law School at Wayne State University this fall.

Please join us at Oestrike Stadium on April 4, 2012, when EMU hosts Michigan State for a 6:00 p.m. baseball game.

First Annual Great Lakes Mock Trial Invitational to be held in January at EMU

Eastern Michigan University will be hosting a four-round (two-day) invitational mock trial tournament January 28-29, 2012. The tournament, which is limited to 24 teams, will include teams from Ohio State University, University of Chicago, Carnegie Mellon University, and Northwestern University. Visitors are welcome.

Website: <http://www.emich.edu/polisci/glmti/index.html>

Study Abroad Programs Expand

El Salvador Trip Expands to Include Cuba

For the past three years, Professors Judy Kullberg and Rich Stahler-Sholk have been leading a study abroad course in the Central American country of El Salvador. The travel course is part of a 2-course sequence, beginning with an on-campus prerequisite course on "Poverty, Human Rights, and Health."

This year the travel course will be expanded to add Cuba! The program will be among the first of its kind since the U.S. government relaxed travel restrictions to Cuba for educational purposes. The on-campus course (PLSC 390) will be offered in Winter 2012. The travel course (PLSC 391) will be May 3-23, including 10 days each in El Salvador and Cuba. For more information, contact jkullber@emich.edu or rstahler@emich.edu.

New Study Abroad Opportunity: India

The Department of Political Science and College of Business are pleased to offer a new study abroad opportunity in India, slated for July 2012. Students will spend time with students of a premier business school in India, visit Indian businesses, and interact with members of a NGO. Students will be exposed to the culture and economy of India, and spend time in a village, camping in the Thar desert, and seeing the Taj Mahal.

This unique program is offered as a 3-credit undergraduate or graduate course in political science or international business. For applications and more information, contact programs.abroad@emich.edu

Faculty News

Professor **Jeffrey Bernstein** delivered the keynote address at Marquette University's May 2011 celebration of teaching and learning.

Professors **Elaine Martin** and **Barry Pyle** published a chapter, "Making a Difference: Women in the Judiciary," in the edited book, *Women in Politics: Insiders or Outsiders?*

Professor **Raymond Rosenfeld** has received grants from the American Political Science Association and the U.S. Department of State to support his upcoming research in Latvia and Ukraine.

Professor **Edward Sidlow** (along with Beth Henschen) has published a new edition of his popular American government textbook. He also spoke to the Detroit chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Professor **Nitya Singh** received a Provost's Research Support Award for New Faculty and published an article in *African and Asian Studies*.