

THE POLITICAL VOICE

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THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE

Realigning Focus on International Development
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FLORIDA



The Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City, one of the most iconic buildings in North America.

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS?

Interning with the State Department in Francophone Canada

by Catherine Eisenhut

How do you mime a curve in the road? One of the many things I learned during my stay in Canada was that my French vocabulary for giving directions is very limited. Of course, wayward travelers (none speaking English) seemed to think that I was an expert on the layout of Quebec City. Awkward moments aside, working for the State Department for a summer was an amazing experience, one that contributed to my understanding of foreign affairs and allowed me to investigate possible careers with the foreign service.

One of the most exciting parts of interning with the State Department in a foreign country was watching U.S. foreign policy unfold in 'real time'. Instead of sitting in a classroom, learning about American policy second-hand, I had the opportunity to do things like participate in videoconferences with Embassy Ottawa and attend public events with the Consulate staff. For students of political science or international relations, a State Department internship is the perfect way to augment academic studies with real world experience.

Interning at the State Department is also an opportunity to explore careers within the Foreign Service. Going abroad on your own and living alone in a foreign country is a taste of what life is like working in the diplomatic corps. While working at the Quebec Consulate, I was able to sample several different facets of the Consulate's functions. While I got to try working in American Citizen Services and public diplomacy, the majority of my work was working with visa applications in the consular section. As my internship progressed,

I found that consular service was my favorite area of work; I liked being able to interact with visa applicants while interviewing them. I discovered that something as simple as being pleasant and courteous during a visa interview can affect an individual's perception of the U.S. government.

It is difficult to pack up and go to a foreign country on your own, especially in an area where the language is not your own. However, the experience is so rewarding that I have to recommend it. By working with the State Department abroad, you will see U.S. policy as it is formed and implemented. You will be able to survey different career opportunities in the Foreign Service, and be able to get an idea of the type of work you enjoy doing. I know now, because I took this internship, that I want to work for the State Department when I graduate, and that I enjoy the work that the State Department does. Finally, the internship is immensely rewarding on a personal level; you will have the opportunity to go to a foreign country on your own and create your own foreign experience.

MY SUMMER IN SAN SALVADOR by Diego Velazquez

Land- ing at night at a humid, heated airport gave me a strong reminder that I was in a place I had not been in for several years. Central America, more specifically Nicaragua, was a place I called home for 5 years, and this summer gave me a new opportunity to learn more about a neighboring country, El Salvador.

Working at the United States Embassy in San Salvador with the State Department this summer gave me great insight into this small country I knew little about. El Salvador is a country similar in geographic and population size to Massachusetts. However most comparisons end there. As the country faces critical internal security and policing issues, infrastructure and reconstruction needs, narcotrafficking problems, and an economy hit hard by the recent global financial crisis.

The focus of the US mission in El Salvador is to help the country overcome these challenges and improve the overall life quality for the Salvadoran people. Aid comes in the form of bilateral aid packages and other regional agreements. My time there was able to give me some exposure on the work done at both the higher institutional levels of government

and at a more local level, working directly with the Salvadoran population. Projects on a macro level involved work such as construction and reconstruction of national infrastructure. Work done at a more local, interacting directly with the population in programs designed to: teach them English and grant them more economic opportunities, and awarding scholarships to youth from the country's rural areas. All are designed to ultimately improve the economic conditions of the country.

Day to day work activities consisted of lots of planning, deliberating, translating speeches, and staff meetings. But two-hour staff meetings involving large amounts of chocolate tend to make them better. One of my job duties I greatly appreciated was being able to share with local University students a little bit about the University of Florida. I spoke to a small

group of students about our amazing school, and some of the benefits they could receive by studying abroad in the United States. Another great aspect was being able to work with Foreign Service Officers that have fifteen and twenty years of experience. There is no better place to hear about the Foreign Service, than from officers themselves. Their experiences and advice gave me a broader perspective on the Foreign Service, which have been very useful in helping me determine my own future choices.

As graduation in December gets closer and closer, the experiences I have gained, and the people I met there will not be forgotten. The encouragement of my superiors to follow in their steps is something I have also been weighing heavily, and while I haven't made a final decision yet, I know that when I do it will be a big factor. As a piece of advice to all other political science and international relations students, I would highly recommend that you pursue opportunities that allow you to work abroad, whether it is with the Federal Government, an international organization, or NGO. Living and working abroad exposes you to different types of experiences and people that you might not encounter by staying in the United States. I wish the best of luck to you all in your future endeavors.

WHAT I LEARNED IN MARYLAND by Edgar Rodriguez

This summer I had the privilege of taking part in the University of Maryland's summer research initiative, a program that takes undergraduate students from universities across the country to conduct social science research at UMD's College Park campus. Each student came from one of eleven different colleges or universities, each conducting research within their particular major: political science, geography, psychology, etc.

I was working at the Center for American Politics and Citizenship (CAPC), a research institution within the University of Maryland political science department under the guidance of Dr. Irwin Morris and Dr. Paul Herrnson, two prominent professors within the field of American Politics. I worked alongside a student from the University of Puerto Rico, researching mid-term senate elections and presidential campaign visits, statistically analyzing whether those visits helped senate candidates get elected.

Since neither of us had any knowledge about American Politics, our mentors had us reading academic journals eight hours a day for two weeks; after which we began researching the public papers of the president, coding the variables

that we used for the project; and in the final week we put everything together, finalizing the project posters that we presented the last day of the program.

I was surprised and impressed by the high level of organization and teamwork within the CAPC institution. Undergraduates worked alongside graduate students, each helping with each other's projects. The teamwork element was further emphasized with weekly meetings where each CAPC member (us included) informed the group about the status of their projects and provided advice and insights.

In addition to the research experience, the program also provided excellent opportunities for enrichment and networking. Several presentations were given by the social science professors on campus, each informing us about their specific fields. Trips to the Library of Congress and the Baltimore

area were provided and meetings were set up with organizations and academic associations that matched each participant's research areas. Though this, I was able to meet with representatives from the American Political Science Association, National Science Foundation, and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

While I did get a lot from the research program, not everything was perfect; the hours were long, the work was challenging, the research had nothing in common with my research interests (my concentration is international relations). But when it was all over and I finally saw my work on the poster, I knew more than ever that a Ph.D. was something that I wanted to pursue.

For any fellow gators interested participating in a summer research program I included a small section with helpful information. If you want to know anything more

RESEARCH PROGRAM

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CHALLENGES FACING U.S. HEALTH CARE

by Dayme Sanchez

Reforming the United States health care system has been a controversial issue in American politics for decades. Endeavors to pursue reform have often resulted in a restless battle between political ideologies. What both sides of the spectrum can agree on, however, is that U.S. health care is not as efficient and effective as it needs to be. Yet, the path on which to embark in order to reform the system is one that often results in a stalemate or as in recent times, an overhaul by one side.

With the rising cost of medicine and the number of Americans that cannot afford insurance increasing, there is a clear dilemma present in the system. Compared to other countries, the U.S. spends more of its GDP on health related services. The OECD Health Data of 2009 reported that the U.S. spent 16% of its GDP last year followed by France that spent 11% of its GDP.

The overall health status of the U.S. population is relatively low. It ranks in the bottom for life expectancy and infant mortality rate. Furthermore, it ranks high in obesity and smoking rates compared to other developed countries (OECD 2009). These are all indicators of a low quality in health, however, one must look further into the statistics to understand why this may be the case.

One of the reasons that may cause this skewed data is the large U.S. population. The U.S. has a population of 307 million, ranking third in the world after China

and India. Its inhabitants are very diverse in terms of nationality, religion, culture and race. Other developed countries have a much smaller and less diverse populations such as Britain with 61 million people and Canada with only 33 million people. Because these countries have a small population it is easier for them to afford health care for all of its citizens. Moreover, the U.S. will always have a larger amount of people with health related diseases because it shares a larger portion of the world's population.

Additionally, the U.S. is seen as the world's leader in medical innovations. It spends more on biomedical and medical technological research than any other country, which results in better treatment through the use of these new instruments. This leads citizens of other countries to travel to America in order to be treated here because of the high technological advancements in medicine.

The central question in analyzing the

current system is... what is the main problem facing U.S. health care? And the answer is simple; the high cost of obtaining coverage. There are over 47 million Americans that are uninsured. To understand why this is the case one must look at the social, economic and political context of America that formulates its current system.

The U.S. has a privatized insurance system with some public funding for government health programs. Employers are given tax incentives to purchase some kind of health care coverage for their employees from private insurance companies. Some employers, however, do not even provide health insurance options, which leave the workers obligated to find an insurance plan on their own.

Health care is very expensive and many Americans cannot afford the cost. The government provides health care for the poor and elderly through Medicaid and Medicare but this only covers a few low-income families and is often abused, costing the federal government thousands of dollars in losses. There are public hospitals and clinics but for the most part they are privately owned.

The fundamental challenge of the American health care system is the wasteful expenditures that increases the costs of attaining health insurance and makes it unattainable for many. The great amount of expenses is due to the high prices of medical goods and services that





Barack Obama signing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act at the White House.

are caused by insurance market power. Often there are problems with over screening, over treatment and billing the insurance companies for more money than the actual cost of the treatment. This corruption at the clinical level is only one part of the greater problems. At the administrative level the expenditures are due to the complex, fragmented multi-payer health care system in which money is wasted in administrative task.

The problem is that money is misplaced in tasks that are not pertinent to the actual health care procedures. At the operational level, services are duplicated or procedures are complicated on purpose to charge more money to the insurance company instead of reducing this waste by providing the most efficient procedure. The

matter is made even worse by the fact that most patients are uninformed about the costs and quality of their health care options. By being uninformed, patients are not able to make cost effective decisions that would improve the amount and quality of health services they receive.

Another factor that drives up cost is technology because new technological equipment is sometimes bought and then found to have little or no effect in improving health outcomes. The increase in technological innovations has, however, created new medical procedures. Moreover, the costs of pharmaceutical drugs are higher in the U.S. than any other developed country. There are no price controls in America for medicine and there are large monopolistic drug manufactures that raise the

price for these inelastic goods.

Some argue, though, that the high prices create incentives for new, more efficient drugs to be developed. The U.S. is the world's leader in discovering cures for diseases and medicines to treat them. The high prices of the drugs, companies explain, is to receive a return on the large investment they had to make throughout the years the drug was being formulated.

Another big issue with cost is the risk doctors take because they can be sued for malpractice. This risk makes practicing medicine more dangerous and costly for physicians because they can easily be sued and therefore have to spend a large sum of money on insurance. It also gives patients an incentive to sue their physicians because of the enormous amount of money they can get. Unfortu-

nately, this only raises the costs for doctors to practice medicine and encourages them to practice defensively; not taking patients that have high risks. Thus, there must be a solution to this problem because if patients continue to seek lawsuits against their doctors then costs will only continue to rise.

Aside from the many problems in the actual system there is a lack of practicing preventative care such as living a healthier lifestyle. Some Americans make unhealthy choices in their life by not taking the initiative to eat healthy foods and exercise. The U.S. has the highest level of obesity in the entire world with 30% of the population being obese and over 70% overweight (OECD 2009). This high level of obesity presents a substantial burden on the health

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HEALTH CARE CONTINUED...

of the population because it leads to more health and pharmaceutical consumption. Having to consume a larger proportion of health services strains the system and raises the cost of health care. Therefore, the U.S. needs to implement policies that encourage people to live a healthier life style by improving diets, stimulating exercise and stopping people from smoking, in order to drive the cost down and increase the overall health of the population.

There have been several reforms implemented by the federal government such as introducing health savings account, reforming Medicaid and the most recent pass of Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010. The health care reform act was signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 30, 2010 and it was enacted by



JOSEPH CABALLERO

congress through the means of the reconciliation process in order to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which was the alternative bill drafted out of the Affordable Health Care for America Act -- H.R. 3962.

The reform act signed into law proposes a 10-year plan costing nearly \$1 trillion, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, in order to make health care more affordable for Americans.

The new reform will require all Americans to have health insurance and unless they qualify for Medicaid, they will have to pay for their own insurance. Those that do not buy insurance will be forced to pay a penalty of \$695. Some Americans support the idea that more people will be insured. On the other hand, there are some who do not agree that people should be forced to buy insurance. They argue that if middle class Americans were not able to afford insurance in the first place they should not be penalized and have to pay a fee for not having insurance. The bill also mandates that people must carry an approved plan by the government and if they do not then they will have to pay 2.5% of tax on their adjusted income as a penalty.

In addition, there would be greater regulation over health insurance companies and providers. They would not be able to deny insurance to people based on pre-existing conditions and cannot cut someone if they get sick. Many people agree that there should be regulation over these kinds of activities that insurance companies undertake, yet, this may also lead to higher costs because insurance companies may just raise the rates for everyone to make up for their losses.

Many cited positives about the bill are that businesses with fewer than 50 employees will get tax credits covering up to 50% of employee premiums. The cut-off age for young adults to continue to be covered by their parents' health insurance rises to the age 27. New screening procedures will be implemented to help eliminate health insurance fraud and waste. A temporary high-risk pool will be set up to cover adults with pre-existing conditions. New plans must cover checkups and other preventative care without co-pays. Also, it would add 16 million people to Medicaid rolls and would subsidize private coverage for low-income people.

The cited negatives are that Medicaid patients will be further limited on their control over the choice of doctors they can visit. If more doctors begin to decline Medicaid and there are none in your area, then you would have to travel further to receive care. Also if you do not have a private health insurance plan before the bill goes into effect, you will not be able to get one because insurers will be prevented from writing new policies. In addition, the government will mandate how many beds and rooms a hospital can have and whether or not they may expand. The government will also decide what type of healthcare people should be getting and what type of research scientist should be working on.

The passing of the health care bill has caused tremendous controversy in the political arena. Democrats believe that this is a step forward in the right direction towards achieving better health care for all Americans. Republicans, on the other hand, disagree and argue that the only way to solve the problem is to cut cost not increase costs. They believe that the plan will only increase the cost of health care for Americans and create a larger national deficit. They also cite that it is unconstitutional because it forces Americans to buy something (insurance) they may not be able to afford and pay a penalty if they do not. Furthermore, they explain that the American people will end up paying for the new government plan themselves through the increase in taxes. It could also result in longer wait times to see a doctor or even a shortage of doctors.

The future of the U.S. health care system remains on the fence. American health care has many problems that need to be reformed in order to provide health care services for those that cannot afford it and better quality for everyone. The waste in the current system is by far the biggest concern facing Americans and can only lead towards greater deficiencies. The increasing costs and waste need to be reformed. There is still a long way to go in order to achieve affordable coverage for Americans. It will be a long and treacherous road ahead but it is one that must be taken in order to attain affordable, effective and efficient health care for Americans.

Obama
addresses
the United
Nations.

SAMANTHA APPLETON



REALIGNING FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Jeannette Paulino

In the words of John F. Kennedy, “there is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations—our economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that once helped us develop our own economy—and our political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom.” Upon the creation of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the 1960s, America’s foreign policy changed to encompass one of the most fundamental components to the U.S.’s involvement in international affairs.

It is now fifty years since that global development policy was officially announced, and the Obama Administration is espousing Kennedy’s vision and taking a reformed approach at tackling poverty and advancing global development. In September 2010, President Barack Obama announced this new approach as the President’s Global Development Policy to the United Nations General Assembly. The policy reaffirms the importance of

incorporating development in the foreign policy agenda, not only to help developing countries move forward economically and politically, but to protect national security. It also reinforces the U.S.’s commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The President’s Global Development Policy promotes the vital need to concentrate on results-based, sustainable solutions. It interconnects development, diplomacy, and defense to implement projects that are sound and promising for the international community.

The policy primarily aims to:

- Promote economic growth and democratic governance through a stronger emphasis on investments in economically progressive and accountable countries rather than through foreign aid alone

- Expand the competencies of USAID through partnerships with experts and leaders to facilitate cooperation and reliability between developing countries and donor countries, including G-20 countries
- Encourage mutual accountability to ensure that resources provided to selected countries are handled wisely through transparency and calculated measures; in addition to better cooperate on agreeable development policies and projects
- Improve science and technology through innovation in order to foster investments and tackle present and future challenges

Its results-oriented strategy demonstrates the U.S. government’s newly reformed focus on long-term, proactive solutions rather than short-term ones.

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U.S. NEEDS IMMIGRATION REFORM, NOT A COSTLY BARRICADE

by Jonathan Urrutia

There are more than 11 million illegal immigrants living within the United States. They are the reason for much debate regarding the proper ways to secure our borders and how to take back the many jobs illegal immigrants seem to have taken away from American citizens. Even though the issue seems to encompass both security and economic concerns, a comprehensive immigration reform is long overdue. The effort made by the past administration and the lack of priority in the current one has exacerbated the problem instead of solving it. It seems difficult to imagine a holistic solution to the immigration concern, however, that shouldn't keep us from enacting modes of procedures by which to manage the reality of an immigrant nation like the United States.

The notorious Arizona immigration law is but a clear example of the much-needed federal intervention regarding immigration reform. In the absence of a comprehensive federal immigration reform, states like Arizona resort to discriminative routes to manage the issue. According to the statute, law enforcement officers are encouraged to verify immigration status whenever there is reasonable suspicion that someone is an illegal alien during a lawful contact. What constitutes reasonable suspicion? There is no doubt that officers will employ discriminative procedure while utilizing this law. My question is, will a white man be asked for his migratory documents any less than someone with darker skin tone or with a distinctive English accent? The law assumes that law enforcement officers are unbiased and without any personal prejudices regarding immigration, while also ignoring the historic evidence of police racial profiling against minorities in this country. The Arizona immigration law is bound to institutionalize discriminative procedures

against minorities by resorting to stereotypes and racial social constructions. Furthermore, SB 1070 is unconstitutional; Arizona should not be implementing laws reserved to the federal government. Immigration, like national security or public education, is one of those issues that concern the whole nation thus it should be left to the federal government to enact laws regarding its best solution. When states enact their own laws concerning a national reality it only deters the legitimacy of the central government, promotes a tipping-point in which other states are persuaded to follow similar procedures which in this case leaves groups of people vulnerable to discrimination.

Our borders need to be secure. The effects of 9/11 have led us to believe that the U.S.-Mexican border needs to be close shut and every immigrant distrusted and stigmatized just as every Muslims is now assumed to be a terrorist. Unfortunately, extremists seem to have a louder voice than those of reason and tolerance. It is imperative for people to understand that

correlation doesn't necessarily imply causation. I guess it is too easy to conclude on what seems less problematic; it is easier to empower the old and futile dichotomy of "Us" against the "Other". Therefore we find ourselves entrenched in discussions that ignores our basic ideals as a nation. Immigration tends to be framed as a menace against the American culture, arguably a nationalistic dilemma, keeping in mind that for the most part we take pride in our diversity. The issue continues to be framed around issues of losing jobs, free riding, criminality, and resistance of assimilation. However, one can also perceive the issue in regards to illegal immigrants as a solution for a demand of low skilled jobs, an increase in tax revenues, as aid to impoverished nations, a result of globalization, or the failure of the international economic system. Nevertheless, the main solution remains closing the borders and the indiscriminative expelling of undocumented families. One of the most dominant arguments for border security is the construction of a massive fence in the U.S.-Mexican border. As if a fence was ever the proper solution to any international problem or as if the existence of a fence was never outmaneuvered by human ingenuity! The border needs to be secured from human and drug trafficking but a fence has proven inefficient, expensive, and insulting. If illegal immigration is to be stopped, a secure border is imperative, a fence is not. Americans are concerned with terrorism when it comes to national security, however they seem to ignore that no terrorist has ever crossed the U.S.-Mexican border. Most terrorists come by airplanes and some of them are even born in the country.

The fence argument has only resulted in the dissipation of federal money to the construction of a porous fence that has increased the number of casualties of migrants forced to take more dangerous alternative routes to cross the border. With the government's current federal



PHOTOS BY: ALEX STEFFLER, DARREN KUMASAWA, DON SULLIVAN, JOE MARINARO, JVOVES, PHOTO PHIEND, STEVEN JONES

deficit it seems ludicrous to argue for the construction of an ineffective infrastructure. If you complain about too much federal spending then you shouldn't argue for the construction of a costly barricade.

Qualified individuals, not minutemen, should be deployed to the region with the technology necessary to secure the border. According to the Associated Press there has been a 72 percent decrease in the number of arrest made by Border Patrol since 2000. Janet Napolitano, Homeland security secretary, credits the decrease in illegal immigration to Presidents Barack Obama's initiative to increase the number of Border Patrols to 20,500 in combination with 1,200 National Guard troops since he took office. However, besides the results, the procedure to secure the border seems to remain the same as the previous administration. With an increasing presence of drug cartels in the region, military intervention and an increase in Border Patrol personnel might not be such a bad idea, however, that will not solve the problem, it will only contain it south of the border.

Cooperation with Mexico is necessary. The eradication of organized crime in Mexico and its transnational nature is crucial for a secure border. Additionally, an effort to alleviate the economic necessity of much of the population in less developed countries through honest efforts of development can eventually eliminate incentives to migrate. One cannot ignore the repercussions that the "Washington Consensus" had among the countries that adhere to its policies. While prescribers of the policies hoped for the development of greatly indebted, less developed countries; the one-size-fits-all guideline drove most of these countries deeper in debt, creating greater dependency on foreign investment, and foreign markets where comparative advantage restricted them to the export of commodity goods. These, in turn, created economic deficits, vulnerability to international economic shocks, unemployment and/or a "race to the bottom" effect, where countries lowered their environmental and labor standards to attract investment. Efforts to solve these international political- economic issues may in fact help eliminate incentives for illegal immigration.

The number of illegal immigrants living in the country has declined by more than a million since the financial crisis. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that there is a correlation between job availability and illegal immigration.

Illegal Immigrants are incentivized by the availability of jobs in the country. Once that incentive is eliminated illegal immigrants will leave the country and illegal immigration will decrease over time. This conclusion, however, ignores cultural and historic realities of the migrant population in the United States. Immigrants, illegal or not, have settled all over the United States. They have bought properties; established families, created communities and deep national connection in a new country. Consequently, it is imperative to understand that immigration doesn't exist in a vacuum. It is not an isolated action or reaction to any one specific phenomenon. The reasons why people resort to migration vary over time. Illegal immigrants and immigrants in general are independent actors in a globalized world.

Immigration reform should not be on the political backburner any longer. It should not be utilized for campaigning purposes and later ignored for discussions regarding individuals' right to buy guns or how much xenophobia and religious hatred can influence our interpretation of the first amendment. Peoples' necessities will outlast our attempts to constrain those who are running away from poverty. One way or another, human instinct for survival will lead us further than a fence would have us believe. The immigration system needs much improvement. It is important to pressure employers in order to eliminate incentives for illegal immigration. It is also imperative to allow illegal immigrants to come out of the shadows. Simply deporting them back to their countries will only increase the amount of federal money that goes into the whole process, and what guarantees that they will not illegally enter the country again? Massive deportation is inefficient and unreasonable. Much funding

would need to go into finding all illegal aliens, apprehending them and keeping them in prison until they are ready to be deported. By allowing illegal immigrants to gain legal standing, the government will be able; not only to cut spending, but also to tax a population that even under illegal status contributes millions of dollars in tax revenues each year. With legalization, claims of exploitation, discrimination, even slavery from employers can be better handled. Guest worker programs and the Dream Act will be looked at in a different light, serving as tools to alleviate questions of labor, education and immigration in the United States.

As a nation, we cannot ignore our own responsibility in this issue. Immigration is beneficial when there is a need for cheap labor such as the case with slavery, Chinese migration for railroads construction, or Mexican workers during WWII. But immigrants become a menace once we no longer need their labor. The situation becomes a menace when they bring their culture, language, dreams, and hopes with them. Laws of supply and demand are forgotten and much effort is put in fighting for labor-intensive jobs that everyone seems to claim but no one really wants. We are a nation of immigrants but it seems that the more diverse we become the more xenophobic reactions appear all over the media. If a fence is the best solution we can come up with, let's at least engrave an American flag with words that read, "This is nothing like the Berlin Wall". I am sure that a fence will suffice for a day or two and after that we can always build it higher and higher, after all, here in the United States, the sky is the limit, unless you are undocumented.

**These views do not necessarily represent the views of Pi Sigma Alpha.*

THE STIMULUS DID IT WORK? BILL:

by Ian Martorana

In February 2009, the Obama Administration passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), more commonly known as the stimulus bill. With a price tag of 787 billion dollars, this amount of economic stimulus was disturbing to advocates of fiscal responsibility across party lines. The website Recovery.org, which is dedicated to keeping track of stimulus data, purports that the purpose of the stimulus bill is “to preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery...[and] to invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long term economic benefits...” The main question most people ask of the stimulus bill is, did it work? The stimulus bill is still in the process of being implemented, and has created some jobs around the country. More debatable is whether the cost of those jobs created or “saved” is worth the money spent to create or save them. Because this is a University of Florida publication, this article will focus on the money spent and the jobs created in US Congressional District 6, which encompasses Gainesville and the surrounding areas.

I sampled twenty different projects, funded by grants, loans, or federal contracts, from the second quarter of 2010 (April 1st to June 30th) in Florida, Congressional District 6. In one instance, the University of Florida received a grant for \$126,351 with the purpose of “employ[ing] researchers to develop interactive virtual reality modules with haptic feedback to improve learning and promote interest in nanotechnology concepts,” and “can increase the number of successful engineering students who are well prepared for engineering jobs.” According to Recovery.org, this grant has produced .76 jobs; a number reached by the Office of Management and Budget by employing what they call “Full-time equivalent (FTE) calculations.” These calculations “allow for the aggregation of different types of jobs—part time, full time or temporary...” when counting jobs created. Admittedly, I am not sure how these calculations are done. Nonetheless, I still believe that spending \$126,351 to create less than one job is not money well spent. In another grant to the University of Florida, the purpose of which was to “investigate elastic computing,” the grant amounted to \$405,362, and created .55 jobs. Of the twenty projects I selected in District 6, they cost a total of \$10,029,879, and created a

total of 43.83 jobs. That is around \$228,000 per job. You may argue that my sample is not representative, because most of the projects in the sample are grants going to the University of Florida. As a student of UF, in this economic climate, I am grateful for the money UF gets because of the stimulus bill, as it is vital to the success of UF. As an impartial observer, however, there are many more critiques to be had.

This simply is not the kind of job stimulation this country needs. While the aforementioned projects are beneficial to the constituents of UF and some members of District 6, anyone else may argue that spending hundreds of thousands of dollars per job is simply wasteful spending. President Obama campaigned heavily against the Washington establishment. He claimed, as we all know, to bring change. In his signing statement accompanying the ARRA, Obama wrote “this recovery plan will help to save or create as many as three to four million jobs by the end of 2010, the vast majority of them in the private sector. It will make the most significant investment in America’s roads, bridges, mass transit, and other infrastructure since the construction of the interstate highway system.” District 6 of Florida presents a vastly different case.

Last time I checked, the University of Florida was a public institution that received public funding, which seems contrary to Obama’s statement regarding the creation of jobs in the private sector. The jobs created in this district, from my sample, did not involve infrastructure related projects. Instead, these projects seem to benefit a specific constituency within the district, and thus may not spend each dollar as wisely as possible. This seems to be symptomatic of a larger political problem: pandering to specific constituencies, instead of focusing on the good of the whole. I do not contend to say that the stimulus bill should be a one size fits all package. I would hope that the stimulus bill would be tailored to individual states and districts, in order to best serve the people of that state or district. However, when a dominant interest group within a state or district is able to influence the spending of federal funds, I believe we have a serious problem. As pleased as the faculty and students of UF are to receive these grants, imagine the displeasure of residents in Starke, Keystone Heights, Ocala, and other cities in District 6. They too have economic woes that often exceed that of Gainesville. While UF benefits from the stimulus money, deployed elsewhere, perhaps that money could be used to create a job at a cheaper cost than \$228,000. For example, spending \$405,362 to help stimulate the economy in Starke seems far more effective than creating .55 jobs in order to research “elastic computing.” While I am certain to the academic validity of the research of elastic computing, when considering that the purpose of this bill was to promote economic growth, spending approximately \$405,000 for research into elastic computing seems to be evidence of misplaced priorities; either that, or true stupidity. I am absolutely certain that money could be put to better, more immediate and productive use.

For the stimulus bill to be effective, it will have to stimulate jobs within the private sector. As businesses grow and employees get more money, their willingness to spend will increase. Spending is a huge part of what makes our capitalist, consumerist economy run effectively. Obama’s stimulus plan as implemented in District 6 of Florida, has been, in my opinion, ill advised and ineffective. \$200,000 is far too much money to spend to create one job, and is unfortunately representative of the spend-first mindset of the Obama administration. Whether or not District 6 of Florida is representative of districts around the country is another issue entirely. But in Gainesville and the surrounding areas, where I live, it seems the stimulus bill has far to go before meeting its intended goals.

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT POLITICS

by Neil Gundavda

Student Government at the University of Florida is one of the most corrupt governing bodies in the state of Florida. Aside from being an extension of the secretive and exclusive Florida Blue Key (FBK) society, SG can only be compared to Boss Tweed's Tammany Hall of the Gilded Age. Run like a well-oiled machine, those running for elections are not selected based on merit but rather on a system of quotas in order to provide adequate representation for the various Greek houses on campus. Positions in the executive branch serve as nothing more than resume lines. For instance, the various cabinet directorships, chairs, and secretaries within SG comprise a larger crop of positions than the cabinet governing the United States of America. Historically, Florida Blue Key has fielded the majority and continually victorious party through this system. Today's "system" party is the Unite Party, which holds a steady hand over all three branches of Student Government. Though there has been limited opposition throughout the years, these non-aligned groups have been fragmented, limited by lack of means, and thwarted by a powerful super majority.

The most famous case of FBK corruption in action occurred in 1995 when independent Charlie Grapski ran for Student Body President. In order to defame Grapski, Florida Blue Key—through its system party called FOCUS (F*** off Charlie, U Suck)—falsified Grapski's criminal record to state that he was a convicted child molester. These were then distributed around campus. Grapski sued FBK for defamation and eventually won. Most importantly however, in getting a jury to agree with him, Grapski was able to prove that FBK was indeed behind electoral manipulation and responsible for the sponsorship of a system party that characterizes Student Government to this day. FBK was found guilty of defamation and conspiracy to defame and was held responsible for the actions of the FOCUS party. The case was settled for \$85,000 and the charges against FBK were dropped.¹ Today, FOCUS is veiled under the Unite Party while Grapski's movement has manifested itself into the Orange and Blue and (more recently) Student Alliance Parties. The mantra of these new independent parties is something different than merely exposing FBK. For instance, the system party keeps its majority by ensuring that most students do not vote. Even though \$50,000 a year is spent on SG elections, the process is laborious, inefficient, and slow enough to keep students away. Online voting is cheaper alternative that would spur voter turnout and was suggested in 2008. Enough signatures were

collected to get the issue on the Spring 2008 ballot but the Supreme Court of the University of Florida (a group appointed by the majority party) denied the petition. The Court ironically cited the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and even though this interpretation was utterly false, such a constitutional interpretation is not under the Court's purview. The University is currently being sued in order to implement the common sense measure.²

Student Government controls the nearly \$16 million coming from the Activity and Service Fees (A&S Fees) paid by all students. However, the budget is hardly publicized and is rather murky as well. Though it is well known that SG funds the Reitz Union, Rec Sports, and the operations of Student Government, the specifics of such funding are entirely too opaque. For instance, Rec Sports is set to receive over \$5 million from SG. However, only three line items are listed under this budget: Administration, Facilities, and Programs. Similarly, the Reitz Union has been budgeted nearly \$6 million but only broad line items such as salaries, programs, services, facilities, and equipment and maintenance are listed.³ The Student Body deserves to know where their money is being spent. Instead of providing a transparent budget, SG resorts to broad accounting and trickery.

The Student Body President, Vice President, Treasurer, Senate President, Senate Pro-Tempore, and several other

officials receive perquisites and compensation for their positions. All of these positions are salaried; the 2011–2012 A&S Fee Budget has reserved \$44,100 for "SG Officers/Director salaries."⁴ Furthermore, each official receives monthly re-imbursements for their cell phone use, expensive meal plans, and park anywhere "Official Business" parking decals. Even UF faculty members cannot obtain such decals. It is a culture of elitism and corruption that puts such "leaders" out of touch with the average student. Thus it should not be surprising that last year's SG administration even proposed to increase student fees to fund a \$42.5 million new student union.

The sad truth of these criticisms is buried in the mantra that you get the government you elect. Voter apathy in the face of blatant corruption and cronyism has led to the creation of perks and a mediocre Student Government. Turnout for the Fall 2010 election was 7,526 students, a mere smidgen of the actual student body.⁵ If students do not vote, then they cannot elect leaders that would revoke salaries and eliminate all the pretensions that surround the upper echelons of SG. Hopefully this brief exhortation has dispelled the cacophony that surrounds SG elections and can serve as motivation to partake in processes of governing that belongs to all students.

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1 The Fine Print has made nearly every court document from this case available at www.thefineprintuf.org/2010/03/31/2262/
 2 Students for Online Voting V. Student Government of the Student Body of the University of Florida; the Supreme Court of the Student Body of the University of Florida; and Bernie Machen, as President of the University of Florida. The full text of lawsuit is available at www.solveuf.com.
 3 2011–2012 A&S Fee Budget
 4 2011–2012 A&S Fee Budget
 5 "United They Stand." *Independent Florida Alligator*. September 30, 2010. www.alligator.org/news/student_government/article_cf36f420-cc50-11df-89be-001cc4c03286.html



DAVID SHANK/BONE KEVIN DOOLEY



CHRISTIAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL POLICY

By Alec Puig

A number of recent events, namely “International Burn a Koran Day” and its consequential protests, have helped to exacerbate an already tumultuous relationship within the framework of international affairs. Regardless of whether the motivation was spurred by “Islamophobia”, bigotry, or selfish desire for international recognition, Terry Jones and his non-denominational Christian group The Dove Outreach Center planned “International Burn a Koran Day”. Despite the fact that the event has not officially taken place, it may have nevertheless set Christian-Islamic relations back decades and directly caused the death of at least 18 people in riots in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Because there are undeniable anthropological connections between religions, cultures, and states this act has further marred U.S. and European relations with the Middle East. Although the event was meant to “commemorate” those lost as a result of the 9/11 terror attacks, it not only undermined their sacrifices but transformed a day of international mourning and patriotism into an abomination of hatred not significantly different than that which inspired the original act of terrorism.

The over-abundance of Western miscues in the process of settling tensions with the Islamic World has become an overwhelming detriment to international diplomacy and stability. For a better understanding of how frequent these instances are, solely within the past month or so, in addition to the now postponed “International Burn a Koran Day”, the French Senate voted, almost unanimously, to ban Muslim face-veils (niqaab) with only one senator opposed. In a similarly close-minded gesture, Thilo Sarrazin, a former executive board member of the Deutsche Bundesbank (German Federal Bank), was forced to resign after stating in multiple interviews that Muslim immigrants in Europe are unwilling or incapable of integration. Policies and individual acts of bigotry such as these do little to stymie Islamic migration and influence, rather, through media outlets; they serve only to justify extremist aggression and further magnify present misunderstandings.

The predominantly secular and Christian West would be prudent in revising both its attitude and legislation within the realm of Islamic relations. However, it should not be labeled as the sole entity accountable for the disarray that has characterized much of Western-Middle Eastern dialogue. Within the past month, a number of radical

Muslim groups have chosen violence and desecration of public images as a means of voicing their displeasure with the Dove Outreach Center and the Western world. One such organization: Islam4UK, used September 11th and the planned international burn a Koran day as impetuses to set the U.S flag in flames in front of the American embassy in London. In doing so, they tested the limits of a freedom they cannot fully express in their “home” countries. Religious freedoms are also frequently violated in a number of Middle Eastern states, namely Saudi Arabia, a diplomatic ally of the United States. Such violations include but are not limited to harassment, discrimination, and violence to the point where many religious organizations convene in secrecy to practice their beliefs.

The fact of the matter is that there are complex cultural identifications associated with both religion and secularism that unmistakably influence policy. When there is conflict between these identities, such as colonialism or terror, separate identities become fueled by fear into opposing factions, opposing policy follows suit. To mend these scars, in an effort to restore peaceful and diplomatic coexistence, common goods and identities must be addressed prior to grievances.

Constitutional freedoms of religion in the West must be promoted and defended staunchly by self-described secular governments while Islamic states that do not protect dissenting beliefs should remember that Muhammad himself provided for the freedom of religion in the Constitution of Medina in 620 AD. Mutual philanthropy into peace building organizations such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, the Forum of Concerned Citizens of

Europe, the Free Muslim Coalition against Terrorism, and others could demonstrate a common desire for reconciliation of hostilities. The U.S should seek stronger collaborative efforts in combating terrorist groups that would likely demonstrate Islam’s intolerance of radical violence to the lay people of the West while also ridding these states of criminal activity recruiting their youth. Furthermore, subsidies for Western investment into Middle-Eastern industries other than oil extraction and refinement may bolster the development of some of these nations while working to exonerate negative sentiments towards past interventions.

The abysmal reality that individuals can heavily damage international relations with solitary acts of evil while numerous IGO’s promoting peace and understanding remain virtually unnoticed to the casual observer of foreign affairs is a difficult obstacle to surmount. Optimistically, government policies, cultural identities, and economic disparities will progress with time and reveal a newer stable international social and political spectrum. Likely, however, these variables will remain stagnant for decades to come until a collaborative effort is made to normalize cultural and diplomatic relations among Secular, Christian, and Islamic spheres.

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TURKISH ACCESSION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

A BRIEF SOCIAL OPINION

by Lauren Parater

As Turkey rests on Europe's doorstep, it is evident that the European Union and governments alike can no longer idly disregard Turkey's advances within society. These strong developments have attempted to ease many economic, cultural, social, environmental and human rights concerns. And while fears regarding religion and xenophobia lie deep within the cleavages of Europe, it has become increasingly obvious that these fears must be abandoned. Turkey's desire to evolve into a modern Western state out of the ashes of the condemned Ottoman Empire can be viewed with admiration as they often set personal positions and beliefs aside for the sake of a better Europe. The rationale behind the accession of Turkey will not only in the long term benefit the interests of both Europe and Turkey, but will establish a new symbol of deeper integration and collaboration between two distinct cultures. The European Union is not a distinct Christian club, and arguably the geographical frontiers have always been indeterminate and arbitrary. Turkey proves the universality of the Enlightenment values, the basis of the European integration project and will serve as an example to the development of a hybrid supranational identity.

As former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said, "Europe has been promising Turkey full member ship since 1963...if we fail to keep our promise which Europe has been making for 40 years due to reservations about allowing an Islamic country to join the Union, we

will pay a very high price." The symbolic nature of integration of a predominantly Muslim state into the European Union will have significant weight in a world that seems divided by religion. The social and cultural implications of Turkish Accession have been heightened in recent years

and if the European Union fails to embrace the Turkish society as an EU state, ultimately Europe and Brussels will suffer political consequences. Many tend to forget that Turkey became an associate member the same year the UK was vetoed. President de Gaulle argued that the UK was not entirely European, that the UK did not have the political will to join the EU, that it will distort the European project. It is useful to remind ourselves of past arguments against countries joining the European Union as this very same discourse can be heard echoing throughout modern EU institutions against Turkey.

European nations have a very rich linguistic, ethnic, religious and traditional diversity. The European Union promotes the recognition and respect of this diversity and tries to eliminate all kinds of discrimination within and outside its borders, especially in candidate countries. Already fifteen million Muslims live within European Union borders, a population larger than that of Slovakia and the Czech Republic nearly combined. Turkey has a willingness to overcome the differences and contribute to a culture of coexistence between Islamic and Western societies. The moment has come for two seemingly dissimilar political entities to set aside prejudices and come together for the sake of a better and united Europe.

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please feel free to contact me at rodrigueze51@yahoo.com or come to the next Pi Sigma Alpha meeting.

Why do a summer research program?

- Looks great on a resume. Research programs are viewed upon very favorably when applying to Ph.D. programs. The networking aspect of a research program also provides an opportunity to get great letters of recommendation.
- It can help you determine if pursuing a Ph.D. is really for you. If you're on the fence about doing a Ph.D. program later on, a summer research program will definitely help you make a more informed decision.
- They pay you! Unlike most internships or other summer opportunities, research programs pay par-

ticipants a respectable amount to take part in their programs.

Things to consider when applying to summer research programs:

- Is getting a Ph.D. something you are seriously thinking about doing? If you are not seriously considering pursuing a Ph.D., then a summer research program is not for you. Better summer opportunities exist for students that want to pursue other graduate programs.
- Are you serious about doing well in a research program? This may seem like a no brainer if you are willing to go through the process of applying but while most applicants would say yes, their actions may say no. Unlike a regular school semester, students are not

graded for their participation in a research program and are given a large amount of freedom in conducting research and managing their own schedules. Not all students work well in this environment and if you are one of them you should reconsider signing on to a research program.

- Personally contact program officials and professors. Contacting officials and professors shows them that you are serious about participating and allows you to get more information about their program, the type of research you might be doing, and what your living conditions will be like.
- Make sure your letters of recommendation came from professors. Getting a great letter of recommendation from an employer or

a prominent figure isn't going to mean anything to someone reviewing your program application, because it won't tell them why you would be good at doing research.

- In your statement of purpose, make sure you clearly and confidently outline what your research interests are, why you want to get a Ph.D., and what previous research experience you have. If possible, provide personal examples showing why you developed those research interests and why you would be a good teacher and/or researcher. Also, explain to schools why you are interested in doing research at their particular campuses. This shows that you are interested in being recruited into their programs.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPEMENT CONTINUED...

FOREIGN POLICY

Instead of reacting to natural disasters, the U.S. government aspires to play an integral role in building and improving the capacity of impoverished countries with efficacy and devotion. So how is this policy different from development policies in the past? Secretary of State Hillary Clinton articulated that America is "taking the principles and finally forcing our government to act on those principles in practical ways that have real results for people, and improve and further the national security objectives of the United States." In other words, improving the circumstances of deprived families and communities abroad, in areas such as health and education, will help reduce the possibility of a foreign threat directed at home.

Although the policy will continue to provide emergency assistance to humanitarian crises, eliminating the cycle of dependence on aid is an ultimate goal that the Obama Administration seeks to achieve. The policy will be accompanied by strict conditions that developing countries must meet in order to receive its

benefits. These conditions include efforts at upholding transparency, democratic governance, and the practice of entrepreneurial principles. The Obama Administration has declared that it will help countries in their effort to implement these measures. This new policy demonstrates the administration's reformed commitment to making global development an essential feature of American foreign policy.

This strategy of development is centered on targeting countries that have the potential to attain further economic growth, but need additional support in achieving prosperity. By heavily investing in developing countries in areas of agricultural development and health systems, the Obama Administration aims to ensure that assistance will be received by countries whose priorities are based on consistent economic progress and rightful leadership. According to Michael Froman, the Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economic Affairs, "the assistance provided by the policy hopes to ensure that the future generation of emerg-

ing economies [can contribute] to balanced and sustainable growth globally." The policy advocates for developing countries to lead their own projects towards growth by welcoming investment and developing trade. Specific projects include expanding on the provision of microloans for women to be able to earn a stable source of income as well as focusing on the development of infrastructure.

There are, however, specific features of the global development policy that must be clearly addressed and streamlined. It may take quite a while for the State Department and USAID to finalize these measures. Much uncertainty on the outcome of this policy and the U.S.'s direction will inevitably arise as it officially takes effect. There are many questions to keep in mind when evaluating the results of the policy once it is implemented in upcoming years, including: Will conditions imposed on developing countries, in reality, foster a country's path to prosperity or hinder it? What incentives are offered to countries in order to meet America's conditional demands? How will

progress and the deviation from aid dependence be measured? Is this policy another scheme for the United States to continue to assume a position of global hegemony? Does this policy foreshadow a persistence of American imperialism in foreign states? How will solutions, based primarily on development and diplomacy, specifically, incorporate the principle of defense and ensure national security?

Despite the magnitude and difficulty of these goals, the Obama Administration is hopeful that this new policy initiative will produce sound and successful results in tackling poverty. The heightened emphasis of development in U.S.'s foreign policy agenda procures that these reformed measures will effectively encourage global economic growth. Therefore, akin to Kennedy's vision in the 1960s when discussing the Global Development Policy at the United Nations Development Summit, President Obama concluded, "we're making sure that the United States will be a global leader in international development in the 21st century."

MEET A FEW OF YOUR POLITICAL SCIENCE PROFESSORS



PROFESSOR INGRID ERICKSON

by Trevor Myers

Ingrid Erickson is a doctoral candidate and professor of Latin American Politics here at the University of Florida. Originally from Green Bay, Wisconsin, Erickson attended Marquette University and graduated with a degree in Political Science and Spanish in 2004. While attending Marquette, Erickson developed a deep interest in Latin America, specifically Brazil. She earned her Master's Degree from the University of Florida in Comparative Politics and Public Policy and Administration in 2008. In October 2008, she began her dissertation fieldwork research when she spent six months in poor urban areas of Brazil. Her dissertation is focused on the creation of social capital in Brazil, specifically looking at education. Some of the questions she hopes to answer through her research include: Is social capital being created and what are the conditions? Do you need education for social capital? Currently, Erickson is revising six out of the seven chapters in her dissertation and plans to be finished with it by May 2011. She has plans to publish her dissertation as a book. Overall, her hope is that this dissertation will make a difference to the municipal and state governments with regards to education quality in Brazil. As a student of Professor Erickson's, I believe that she is a valuable asset to the university and anyone interested in Latin American Politics would greatly benefit by taking her class.



UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATOR: PROFESSOR AIDA HOZIC

by Allie Briggs

Aida Hozic, the undergraduate coordinator for the University of Florida Political Science department, describes her life as a "series of accidents." Growing up in Sarajevo, Bosnia, she planned on studying theatre and the arts, pursuing both interests at the University of Sarajevo, where she earned a B.A. in Philosophy and Comparative Literature. While writing production reviews, her opinions became more and more political, largely due to the economic turmoil in Yugoslavia at the time. Hozic's interest in economic affairs eventually led her to attend the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) Bologna Center in Italy, where she earned her M.A. in International Affairs. At the age of twenty-seven, she moved to the United States and attended the University of Virginia to secure a Ph.D. in Political Science.

Both of Dr. Hozic's parents were teachers in Bosnia and, following in their footsteps, Hozic taught at the Bogazici University in Istanbul, the University of Sarajevo, the Central European University in Budapest and Cornell University before accepting her position at the University of Florida.

Dr. Hozic is currently working on two political books she hopes to have published soon. Her work concerns post-conflict state building in the Balkans and the lives of three women in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia.

Now a ten-year veteran of the University of Florida, Dr. Hozic is an excellent source for academic advising in Political Science, as well as opportunities outside the classroom.



PROFESSOR ASHLEY LEINWEBER

by Trevor Myers

Ashley Leinweber is a doctoral candidate and Professor of African Politics here at the University of Florida. She was born in the Seychelles, an island country northeast of Madagascar, and lived there for nine months while her parents served in the Peace Corps. She grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and attended Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, where she graduated with a degree in Political Science and French. A fellow member of Pi Sigma Alpha, Professor Leinweber's interests of the continent was realized from her African Politics class during the first semester of her freshman year. She served in the Peace Corps from 2002–2004, serving in Niger and travelling to various parts of western Africa. Leinweber arrived at the University of Florida in 2005 to pursue her Ph.D. She began her fieldwork research in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 2008–2009, although her interest and initial research began in 1999 when she began writing an honors thesis for her undergraduate degree on the Congo while studying abroad in Geneva, Switzerland. She plans to finish her dissertation between May and Summer 2011. One of her greatest accomplishments in Niger was creating a Young Girls Scholarship Program, which provides girls who excel in primary school the opportunity to attend a secondary school in one of the bigger cities in Niger. A young girl from Professor Leinweber's Peace Corps assigned village is now pursuing higher education, in hopes of becoming a teacher. All and all, Professor Leinweber is an amazing educator here at UF and I would recommend her class to anyone interested in the study of African Politics.



PI SIGMA ALPHA'S ADVISOR: PROFESSOR RICHARD SCHER

by Sarah Penter

University of Florida professor and undergraduate advisor Professor Richard Scher received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D., from Columbia University. At Columbia his concentrations were literature and art history and did not focus his study on education policy and politics until the late 60s. However, he always has had a passion for politics; his earliest memory was when he was two when he went with his mother to vote and says that politics was always talked about at the dinner table.

At the University of Florida, Professor Scher teaches classes such as American Government, Politics of Food, Southern Politics, and The Politics of Education which will be offered in the spring semester.

His research focuses on voting rights, legislative districting political campaigns in America, state politics, Southern politics, political culture and regionalism, Florida politics, American federalism, and an ongoing project called "TRYING TO VOTE IN AMERICA: Disenfranchisement as Public Policy" which is a book-length examination of the American electoral system and its consequences.

Professor Scher volunteered for the position as undergraduate advisor for political science because he feels that advising is "hit and miss." He said that the best advice he can give students is to follow your heart, find out who the best teachers are and take their classes, and be ready to work hard. He can be contacted at richard.scher65@gmail.com



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GET INVOLVED

By Laura Mutis

Below you will find information about internships for the spring and summer semesters. With the link to the website, the student will be able to find all the information they need.

THE WASHINGTON CENTER

Spring Deadline: November 12, 2010

Summer Deadline: February 4, 2011

Website: www.twc.edu

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS INSTITUTE

Spring Deadline: November 11, 2010

Website: www.chci.org/internships

PROWORLD SERVICE CORPS

Deadline: Varies based on the destination country—Peru, Mexico, Ghana, or India

Website: www.myproworld.org/internships

