

# DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

A COMMUNICATION OF THE PSIA DEPARTMENT OF UNG



## Greetings!

Welcome to our seventh Department Newsletter! As summer continues to unfold and we are again preparing to celebrate our nation's birthday with barbecues and fireworks, we would like to take this opportunity to stay in touch and share stories with the PSIA family.

We also want to keep you informed of changes within the department. With the end of the academic year, we said farewell to Dr. Kerry Stewart who retired to cabin life in Pennsylvania. Although we lost one faculty member, we also are welcoming a new one this summer, as Dr. Joe Gershtenson joins us from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas.

In addition to faculty changes, we are also changing how we communicate with our students. We recently began using UNG Connect to advertise and present events as well as to send group emails informing students of opportunities such as scholarships and internships. Our Fall Newsletter will present an in-depth look at this new capability.

If you are not yet following us on social media, please do so on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to learn more about the exciting things going on in our department. Please also check out our [blog](#) and our [YouTube](#) channel.

We hope you find this newsletter to be both informative and entertaining. We hope to hear of your activities and accomplishments as well. Please get in touch with us by filling out our [alumni information form](#), or simply drop us an e-mail at [polsia-dah@ung.edu](mailto:polsia-dah@ung.edu). We look forward to hearing from you!

Take Care,

Dr. Dlynn Armstrong Williams

Department Head

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## PSIA Alumnus Assists in Evacuation of Kabul Airport



We were able to catch up recently with Army 1st Lieutenant Dylan Martin, of Gainesville, GA. Dylan graduated from UNG in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs, with a Middle East concentration. Dylan then commissioned into the Army that same year, and is currently living in Fort Bragg, NC as a member of the 82nd Airborne Division. Dylan spent a couple of months during the summer of 2021 at a unique duty location with the U.S. Army and told us about his experience.

“On August 17th, 2021, my unit was activated and we were directed to the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, where we proceeded with the evacuation,” Dylan said. “It ended up being 130,000 American citizens, Afghan military and international refugees.”

Dylan described the feeling of that task as being an “absolutely wild experience... I was very blessed to have been able to participate in that moment in history,” said Dylan. “In that particular deployment, what struck me was the humanity of everyone involved, everyone coming together in order to achieve our goal.”

We asked Dylan if his time at UNG and in the International Affairs program had an impact on or contributed to his days in Kabul.

“The two most important things from my time in the IA program that helped me was the study abroad and international internship,” Dylan said. Dylan studied abroad in Fez, Morocco, and was immersed in the Arabic culture and language.

He also had an internship in Atlanta with the Arabic Language Institute Foundation (ALIF) where he primarily assisted with the relocation of Syrian refugees to the U.S. while simultaneously protecting their culture.

“Those two experiences placed a high value on a culture other than my own,” described Dylan. “It’s something that was incredibly instrumental in my ability to place an incredibly high value on the people that were evacuating.”

## Aaron Brock - UNG Young Alumnus Award Winner



Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Aaron Brock received the UNG Alumni Association’s (UNGAA) Young Alumnus Award at the Association’s annual awards banquet on April 22, 2022. This distinction is given to alumni with an extraordinary record of service and support to the University of North Georgia.

Aaron graduated from UNG in 2020 with a B.S. in Political Science. He is currently serving as an Intelligence Officer in the Army National Guard and is currently on Active Duty in Washington, D.C. He has also recently completed his Master of Arts in Strategic Studies from Norwich University, a Senior Military College like UNG.

Aaron holds two PSIA professors in particularly high regard--Dr. Carl Cavalli and Dr. Leander Kellogg--both of whom also served as his academic advisors. “Their classes were rigorous, deeply insightful, and very engaging. Both professors care deeply about their teaching professions and the success of their students. As a transfer student and full-time Cadet, I often had many questions about my academic progress; Dr. Cavalli and Dr. Kellogg never failed to provide me their patience, support, and guidance.”

## Meet Brianna Clay: Class of 2020



Brianna Clay is a people person, often framing her reflections of past experiences in terms of the friends she made and the people she met. Brianna graduated magna cum laude from UNG in May 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs. Since then, she has worked as a Teaching Assistant at Georgia Tech and then at the [Taipei Economic and Cultural Office \(TECO\)](#) in Atlanta as a Media Liaison, while simultaneously pursuing a Master of Science in International Affairs at Georgia Tech, graduating in May 2022.

Brianna came to UNG in 2018 after receiving an Associate of Arts in Political Science from East Georgia State College. During the summer of 2018, right before starting at UNG, Brianna earned a spot at the [Alexander Hamilton Institute’s Washington Program on National Security](#) in Washington, D.C. The program presented her with the opportunity to make lasting friendships in the international relations community.

One of her most impactful experiences while at UNG was her internship with the [International Rescue Committee](#). Brianna worked in the education section teaching English, job skills, computer

literacy, and civics to people from all over the world. She states, “Honestly, just thinking about them often makes me emotional. Even now, I’ll think about a particular student and wonder what they’re doing now.” This internship helped Brianna have a better understanding of what she wants to do with her life. “It sounds so simple, but I just want to help people--give them something to smile about. What I like so much about International Affairs is that it gives me a perspective of so many different types of people and cultures, so I can understand how to best help others.”

Having just received her master’s degree, Brianna plans to continue working as a Media Liaison at the [Taipei Economic and Cultural Office \(TECO\)](#) in Atlanta. This foundation works to build both economic and cultural ties between Taiwan and the Southeastern region of the United States. When asked what she likes about this job, she exclaimed, “Everything!” She gets to make fun posts on their social media, as well as write speeches and letters for her coworkers. She enjoys engaging her creative side and loves the “positive and encouraging” environment.

Asked about her long-term dream job, Brianna chooses not to confine herself to one strict goal. “I’ve considered a lot, from being a security analyst to an aid worker. If possible, I’d like to do something that combines the two, though I’m not sure what that will be. So far, I’ve tended to just go with what feels right, and it’s worked so far.”

“My experiences have made me realize how fortunate I was to go to UNG. I wish more people knew how great of a school it is and how strong their International Affairs program is! I wouldn’t be where I am today without UNG!”

**Brianna Clay**  
International Affairs

## Share Your Story: Alumni Stories

### Reagan Griggs Pritchett, '15

Reagan Griggs Pritchett, UNG Political Science/pre-Law Class of 2015, has been keeping busy since graduation. Most notably, she ran for Chief Magistrate of Gilmer County in 2020. She and four other individuals were competing for the spot. Reagan and another candidate made it to the runoff, but ultimately, Reagan lost by a small margin. She reflects on her personal difficulties and that of the nation as a whole during that time. “It was almost impossible to run for office during a global pandemic, but I utilized things like social media in order to try to reach my intended audience. Regardless of the outcome, I am proud of what I accomplished. Not many 28-year-olds can say they have run for political office, I guess.”

## Yvette Zamudio, '23 Wins Clark Theodore Award



On April 13, 2022 the University of North Georgia presented political science major Yvette Zamudio with the Clark Theodore Traditional Student Award at the annual Student Honors and Awards Day on the Gainesville campus. This

position because she helps incoming students learn about the various resources available to them.

Yvette is a founding executive member of the Model UN Club on the Gainesville Campus. Thanks to her Model UN experiences, Yvette has “been able to get a better understanding of the vitality of having multiple perspectives on an issue and how this often leads to finding better solutions to these issues.”

Dr. Bibek Chand, who nominated Yvette for the award states, “I nominated Yvette for the Clark Theodore Traditional Student Award because of her unwavering dedication to her work and active participation in the university community. I am very happy that she received the award and cannot wait to see where her future vocational endeavors take her.”

Yvette plans to continue her education by attending law school with the goal of becoming an immigration attorney. “Because both of my parents immigrated into the US, I have been able to see firsthand the current shortage of Spanish-speaking immigration attorneys and believe that I can help remedy this.”

honor is bestowed upon students who demonstrate excellence in academics, leadership, and service. This is not the first time that Yvette has been recognized for her hard work and determination. She was awarded a scholarship through her participation in the Nesbitt Leadership Program during her freshman year and has been named to the President’s Honor Roll, President’s List, and Dean’s List.

A rising senior, Yvette is very active in both academic and extracurricular activities on our Gainesville campus. In addition to the Nesbitt Leadership Program, she also joined the Tri-Alpha honor society which focuses on first-generation students. At the end of her sophomore year, she became a “Nighthawk Navigator” -- an on-campus peer coaching job. She enjoys this

## Jenna Patterson, MAIA '22 -- Graduate Assistant of the Year

The Professional Development Committee of UNG’s Division of Student Affairs selected MAIA graduate student Jenna Patterson as Graduate Assistant of the Year for the Academic Year 2021-22. Originally graduating from UNG in December 2019 with her B.S. in Political Science, Jenna enjoyed her time here so much that she returned to UNG to pursue her master’s degree. While fully immersed in her studies in the MAIA program, Jenna worked alongside Drs. Jonathon Miner, Laurel Wei and Raluca Viman-Miller primarily in their respective Global Issues classrooms.



Dr. Dlynn Armstrong Williams comments, “Jenna has been an invaluable graduate assistant for PSIA. Not only has she performed traditional graduate assistant duties of grading, providing limited lectures and assisting students via office hours and review sessions, but she has gone above and beyond. Jenna has also compiled video resources in support of the [Basics of Global Politics](#) textbook to improve the learning experience. In addition, she created Instagram posts in support of departmental social media efforts and proofread the position papers for our award winning [Model UN](#) teams.”

The Political Science & International Affairs Department appreciates all of Jenna’s hard work and dedication. We wish her continued success.

## Phillip Ly Adds to His Academic Accolades

Phillip Ly, a May 2022 Strategic and Security Studies graduate, has one final time during his undergraduate



career been recognized for his outstanding academic achievements. Shortly after his graduation ceremony and commissioning into the Georgia National Guard, Philip found out he had been awarded a Benjamin A. Gilman

Scholarship. This followed closely on the heels of his being named a “Rangel Scholar” earlier in his final semester at UNG.

Phillip, originally from Forest Park, GA and an alumnus of Forest Park High School, came to UNG courtesy of a University of North Georgia Military scholarship. He was drawn to the military aspect of UNG and chose Strategic and Security Studies due to its focus on international issues, the chance to study abroad, and the challenging coursework. He was initially impressed by the variety of concentrations within the degree program, including the chance to focus one’s studies on languages. “The opportunities here at UNG are quite amazing,” Phillip noted, expecting that prospective students will embark on “a rewarding journey if [they] come here.”

The Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Summer Enrichment Program accepts only fifteen students out of a potential applicant pool of nearly 800 in any given application cycle. This recognition of Phillip’s hard work and academic excellence is another addition to an ever-growing list of awards.

Designed to educate and train students in international affairs, the Rangel Program connects participants with both government and non-government professionals to prepare them for graduate and professional work in the field. The program invites young scholars to Howard University in Washington, D.C. where they take part in courses focusing on educating and training participants in U.S. foreign policy, economics, and the writing skills necessary to excel in foreign-policy making and international affairs. In addition to a \$3,300 stipend,

the program covers tuition, travel, housing, and a portion of the scholars’ daily meals. Looking forward to his time with the Rangel program Philip states: “I want to see how those professionals got where they are today so I can learn how to pursue the same path they did. I also want to learn more about the rhythm of their daily lives.”

Phillip’s recent Gilman Scholarship and acceptance into the Rangel Program adds to his extensive list of academic achievements, awards, and scholarships. In the past, he has been selected for the a Fund for Education Abroad scholarship (2020), the Freeman-ASIA Scholarship (2020), and the Boren Scholarship (2020). These competitive scholarships are a testament to Phillip’s dedication and ambition. As further proof of Philip’s academic and personal attributes, he was one of the first two students from UNG to win a Fund for Education Abroad scholarship and one of only 124 students to win the award nationwide in 2020. He was also selected to receive a Gilman scholarship in 2019, but was unable to use it due to Covid-related travel restrictions.

In 2020 when he received the Boren and the Freeman-ASIA scholarships, Phillip was looking forward to the opportunity to study in Japan. For Phillip, studying abroad in Japan was more than just a fulfillment of his degree requirements. The main reason he wished to study abroad then was “to learn more about...my target language, which is Japanese, and other opportunities such as meeting new people and making connections.” While COVID-19 restrictions made traveling abroad untenable at the time, Phillip was able to defer some of the funds from these scholarships.

When not applying for and winning scholarships or working with the Georgia National Guard, Phillip strives to improve himself both mentally and physically. Now that he has graduated, Phillip intends to fulfill his duty as an officer in the Georgia National Guard while he begins to pursue a career in the Foreign Service, leveraging the skills and knowledge acquired through his language concentration in the Strategic and Security Studies program.

# Congratulations

*to the following graduates!*

## *Master of Public Administration*

### ***A RECORD NUMBER!!***

Stephanie Benton

Brian Darden

Tyler Dominy

Jacob Dooley

Kristen Feathers

Henry Haynes

Ashley Kessler

Tessa Kimbrough

Ambrya Myers

Derek Powers

Shiannah Scott

Amber Skidgel

Samantha Starkey

Michael Stone

Joseph Stull

Gabriella Walden

Rachael Williams

Secrett Wingard

## *Master of Arts in International Affairs*

Derrick Justin

Jenna Patterson

## ***Political Science***

Israel Boerman

Timothy Brown

Christopher Carrusca

Jason Castleberry

Dylan Clyne

Dawson Davenport

Brockton Davis

Isabella Hurst

Sue Lim

Guyline Malala

Anna Caitlyn Anderson | Pre-Law

Jacob Barnes | Pre-Law

Lisette Carrillo | Pre-Law

Clinton Garrett | Pre-Law

Stanley Smith | Pre-Law

Daniel Snoddy | Pre-Law

Sarah Wall | Pre-Law

Marquis Wallace | Pre-Law

Sierra Arnold | Political Science Pathway

Katherine Brunk | Political Science Pathway

Erik Burgess | Political Science Pathway

Susan Campbell | Political Science Pathway

Lisette Carrillo | Political Science Pathway

Jason Castleberry | Political Science Pathway

Caroline Hedrick | Political Science Pathway

Dylan Lewis | Political Science Pathway

Jacob Pruitt | Political Science Pathway

## ***International Affairs***

Mark Cordovado | Europe

Victoria Petrillo | Asia

Yolimar Rivera | Asia

## ***Strategic & Security Studies***

James Crisp | Cybersecurity

Marc Belciug | History

Bailey McLean | History

Jacob Pressley | History

Connor Hamilton | Intelligence

Ryan Jones | Intelligence

Christopher Yarman | Intelligence

Jackson Bernabe | Military Science

Geoffrey Winslow | Military Science

## Scholarship Winners

### Phillip Ly

Strategic and Security Studies, Military Science, '22

### Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

### Justin Wlosko

International Affairs, '25

### Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

### Edleen Henriquez

International Affairs, '23

### Council on International Education Exchange

## Our newest Tri Alpha member

### Litzi Garcia-Lopez

Political Science, '23

## PSIA Excellence in Academics

Congratulations to the following students who were recognized for their exemplary academic achievements:

*Highest GPA of a Graduating Senior—BS Political Science—Gainesville Campus*

**Katherine Torres**

*Highest GPA of a Graduating Senior—BS Political Science—Dahlonega Campus*

**Smavia Ashraf**

*Highest GPA of a Graduating Senior—BS Pre-Law*

**Anna Caitlyn Anderson & Daniel Snoddy (tie)**

*Highest GPA of a Graduating Senior—BA International Affairs*

**Evan Povolny**

*Barry Friedman Legacy Award—Highest GPA of an MPA Graduate*

**Derek Powers & Joseph Stull & Rachael Williams (tie)**



## Symposium Focuses on Higher-Ed's Impact on Security

[Portions of this article are drawn from an article from the UNG Newsroom that originally appeared in March 2022 (<https://ung.edu/news/articles/2022/03/security-impacts-of-education-in-focus.php>).]

PSIA's [Strategic and Security Studies](#) degree program, together with [UNG's Institute for Leadership and Strategic Studies](#) (ILSS) and the College of Education hosted the annual ILSS Symposium April 6-7, 2022 at the Convocation Center on UNG's Dahlonega Campus. Through a series of guest speakers and panels, the symposium, titled "[United States Higher Education and National Security](#)," explored ways in which higher education serves to strengthen U.S. security.

During his introduction to the symposium, [Dr. Edward Mienie](#), PSIA associate professor and executive director of the Strategic and Security Studies Program and Partnerships, said, "The civilian population plays a major role in supporting and promoting higher education institutions by encouraging the enrollment of students to pursue studies in a variety of disciplines... Higher education plays a crucial role in assuring that national security is protected and strengthened against a multiplicity of adversarial nation-state and non-state actors."

Panelists included U.S. Coast Guard Academy cadets, representatives from three other senior military colleges and four of our very own – Drs. Dlynn Armstrong Williams, Cristian Harris, Craig Greathouse and Eddie Mienie. These members of the PSIA panel discussed "How higher education fills the security gap in the post-Cold War era". You can watch their discussion on our YouTube channel at [Higher Ed & Natl Sec Panel 1 discussion](#)

In addition to the panelists, guest speakers included:

- Retired Army Gen. Robert Brooks Brown, president and CEO of the Association of the United States Army.
- Larry Wortzel, a retired Army colonel and Senior Fellow in Asian Security at the American Foreign Policy Council.
- Margaret Kosal, professor in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Institute of Technology.

- Retired Australian Army Maj. Gen. Mick Ryan, author of "War Transformed".
- FBI national security analysts.

Dr. Dan Papp, retired President, Kennesaw State University and the moderator for the PSIA panel said, "UNG's recent conference ... continued the University's standard of presenting high quality academic analyses of critical national security issues. Given on-going events in Ukraine, this year's meeting was more relevant and important than ever."

Other partners of the symposium included the [Association of the United States Army](#), [Army Strategist Association](#), [Atlanta Council on International Relations](#), and [Army War College Strategic Studies Institute](#).

According to Keith Antonia, UNG's Vice President for Military Programs, plans are already in the works for next year's symposium, with a possible focus on the implications for national security of various human security issues

You can watch the entire symposium courtesy of UNG's AV Team via the [ILSS Symposium webpage](#).



## Dr. Dwight Wilson -- Presidential Incentive Award

We are excited to announce that Professor Dwight Wilson has landed a coveted *Presidential Incentive Award* from UNG President Bonita Jacobs. Dr. Wilson is one of 15 UNG faculty and staff members granted this award this past spring in order to pursue new and innovative ideas in the upcoming academic year. Recipients are granted a full semester leave from teaching and service, as well as funding support of up to \$12,000 each.

Dr. Wilson states the award will support a book project collaboration on the topic of “Financialization in Latin America” he is working on with two colleagues from UNG’s Department of Sociology & Human Services. Dr. Wilson explains, “We’re examining how the growth of the size and power of finance has affected social policy and inequality in Latin American and the Caribbean. Nonfinancial industries and governments have come to rely more and more heavily on domestic and international financial markets since the 1980s, but the outcomes of such a shift are poorly understood.” This research is unique in that little literature exists on the effect of financialization in emerging markets like Latin America and the Caribbean. In his view, the award “will be immensely valuable in that it will provide funds and time for research, writing, and presentation at conferences that will allow us to finish a manuscript in the fall.”



Department Head Dr. Dlynn Armstrong-Williams offers her support by saying, “I am so excited for Dr. Wilson to receive this award. With this financial assistance, Dr. Wilson will be able to complete his book project and bring to light a very important issue in Latin American studies.”

## Meet Dr. Joe Gershtenson

A hearty “Welcome” to Dr. Joe Gershtenson! He is joining us just in time for the Fall 2022 semester. He previously taught at East Carolina University, Eastern Kentucky University, and, most recently, St. Mary’s University in Texas.



Dr. Gershtenson completed his Ph.D. in Government at the University of Texas at Austin. He completed his undergraduate degree in Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. and his Master’s in International Affairs at the University of California, San Diego. His primary research interests are in the areas of public opinion and political behavior.

Joe will be based primarily on the Dahlonega campus where he will be teaching Introduction to Political Science and Political Science Research Methods. He will also become an integral member of our online MPA program.

At previous institutions Dr. Gershtenson taught a wide range of undergraduate courses, including: Introduction to American Government, Introduction to Political Science, Political Parties and Interest Groups, Public Opinion and Political Participation, Congress, The Presidency, and The Politics of Soccer. He also taught several graduate courses: Research Methods, Public Administration and Policy, Policy Formulation and Implementation, and Public Policy Evaluation Education.

In his time away from school, Dr. Gershtenson likes to be active outside, running, hiking, and playing soccer. He also enjoys spending time with his family and pets. You can “meet” Joe at [PS -- Meet Joe Gershtenson, Ph.D.](#)

## Dr. Stephen Northam -- Teaching Excellence

We are pleased to announce that Senior Lecturer Dr. Stephen Northam classroom excellence was recognized with the *2022 Teaching Excellence Award for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty*. This award recognizes non-tenure-track faculty who consistently demonstrate outstanding teaching.



Dr. Northam received his M.A. in Government from Claremont Graduate University in 1975, his M.S. in Psychology from the University of Phoenix in 2010, and his doctorate in Public Administration from Valdosta State University in 2013. In addition to his academic credentials, Dr. Northam brings 24 years of experience with Hewlett-Packard to the classroom where he teaches in both our Bachelor of Science in Political Science program and our Master of Public Administration program.

Dr. Northam got into teaching because his mother thought it would be a good fit for him. He states, “It was a couple of years after I graduated from high school and had flirted with college, still searching for a direction, that she made this observation.” Dr. Northam quite candidly admits that school up to that point “was never a pleasant experience.” It was later on when he went back to university and took a political science course “from a very dynamic professor” that his mother’s recommendation took hold. The year was 1969, and politics was “in the air.” This admission gives hope to students who had an initial aversion to school and also demonstrates the impact a great instructor can have.

Dr. Northam explains why he enjoys teaching. “I like to learn and share what I have learned, which may be a bit old fashioned. So, I see the students in my classes coming along for the ‘learning’ ride. My hope is that I can convey in class an interest in the subject as well as the desire to learn more.”

PSIA Department Head Dr. Dlynn Armstrong Williams is not surprised with Stephen’s award -- “[He] is a great asset to the program. He is a conscientious teacher who has made many adjustments to his online classes throughout the years to keep them relevant and engaging. I am so glad that his efforts in the virtual classroom are being recognized!”

## PSIA at GPSA 2021

PSIA faculty participated in the Georgia Political Science Association's (GPSA) annual conference in Savannah, GA this past November. Attendees included: Dr. Douglas Ealey, Dr. Jaimie Edwards, Dr. Craig Greathouse, Dr. Scott Meachum, Dr. Nathan Price, Dr. Ted Rossier, Dr. Zach Schwartz, Dr. Kerry Stewart, and Dr. Raluca Viman-Miller. In addition, then undergrad and political science major Ms. Anna Perry, '21 also attended. (see [separate article](#))

Founded in 1968, GPSA is the professional association of political science practitioners and educators in Georgia. Members come from the public, private, and academic sectors. GPSA was and it is a truly rewarding experience for any that choose to participate yearly. The 2021 conference theme was Recovery, Restoration, and Redemption.

All the attendees actively engaged with their peers in topic areas near to their hearts. Here is a quick listing: Dr. Stewart participated on the roundtable on the Presidency: Advice to the new President; Dr. Price was chair for the Authoritarian States and Conflict panel and a participant on the Comparative Politics and International Relations Theory panel; Dr. Edwards participated on the Theory and American Politics panel; Dr. Greathouse participated on the Topics in International Relations panel; Dr. Ealey participated on the roundtable on Understanding Gen Z Students: Sharing Variable Experiences in Teaching; Dr. Meachum participated on the Topics in International Relations panel; Dr. Schwartz participated on the Topics in American Politics panel; Dr. Rossier was a discussant on the Topics in Judicial Politics panel; and Dr. Raluca Viman-Miller was the chair/discussant on the South Asian and Eastern European Politics panel. In addition, Dr. Viman-Miller chaired a panel which presented an in-depth look at our newly-published **Basics of Global Politics** textbook (see [separate article](#)), ably assisted by Drs. Greathouse, Price, and Meachum.



(L-R) Drs. Viman-Miller, Meachum and Price and our **Basics of Global Politics** textbook

Asked about her experience at this conference, Dr. Viman-Miller said: "GPSA 2021 was a great return to normalcy after the anxious times we all had during the COVID quarantine and social distancing. It was a refreshing gathering of scholars and students from the region and it offered once again, the ability to listen to great research presentations and network among ourselves. The panels offered were diverse and the topics were varied, hence, we all had the opportunity to reconnect to our respective subjects of interest. The students' presentations were of high quality and often interdisciplinary and applied a variety of research methods."

Dr. Price echoed Dr. Viman-Miller's sentiments: "It was great to be back at the GPSA conference in Savannah after missing the 2020 virtual event...The best thing about the conference this year by far was having the opportunity to visit with friends from our department whom I hadn't seen in a year and a half. We all very much enjoyed sharing meals and having a drink together after a long period of not being able to do so. It was great to have that opportunity to catch up with old friends and get to know some of our new faculty members such as Jaimie [Edwards Kelly] and Zach [Schwartz]."

## Great Decisions at Forsyth County Public Library

As has become a spring semester tradition, several PSIA faculty members participated in the 2022 Great Decisions lecture series (presented by the Foreign Policy Association) sponsored by the Forsyth County Public Library and UNG's College of Arts and Letters. This series runs alongside our "normal" series geared to UNG students (details on our [blog](#)) and is presented to provide a public forum for the discussion of current foreign policy issues facing the United States.



Dr. Jonathan Miner presented "Outer Space." He explained, "The launch of Sputnik I in October 1957 marked the beginning of the space era and of the space race between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the 21st century, there are many more participants in space, including countries such as India and China, and commercial companies such as SpaceX. How will the United States fare in a crowded outer space?"



Dr. Dlynn Armstrong-Williams presented "Industrial Policy." She explained, "The current discussion of industrial policy in the United States is not simply about whether or not to support specific companies or industries, but about trust or mistrust of the government and its ability to manage the economy and deal with a rising China. The upheaval in supply chains during the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the international economy. What policies can the United States implement to deal with trade and the economy?"



Dr. Christian Harris presented "Drug Policy in Latin America." He explained, "The issue of migration to the US from Latin America has overshadowed the war on drugs, which has been underway for decades with little signs of progress. What are the roots and the bureaucratic logic behind today's dominant drug policies in Latin America? Is it time to reconsider punitive drug control policies that disrupt supply chains and punish drug possession?"



Dr. Nathan Price presented "Biden's Agenda." He explained, "The new administration in Washington promised to reverse many of the policies of the past administration, especially in foreign policy. How will issues such as climate, the pandemic, and alliances be treated under the Biden administration?"

## Diplomatic Speaker Series 2022

The Diplomatic Speaker Series returned in 2022. Spearheaded by Associate Professor Dr. Raluca Viman-Miller, the Series offers students, faculty, and staff the opportunity to engage with active and retired diplomats, having real-world experience and having made noteworthy contributions in diplomacy and diplomatic relations.

One of the main purposes of the Series is to connect the theoretical with the experiential. Presentations are meant to familiarize attendees with the diplomatic process and the important political questions and concerns central to issues in international relations and diplomacy. Particularly noteworthy for students, the Series provides an opportunity to take their classroom experiences and conversations into a unique setting where they can engage with speakers who are both knowledgeable and practiced in their field.

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## Diplomatic Speaker Series 2022 (cont.)

The Series is presented via Zoom. The online format allows for a wider participation across UNG's campuses and affords a convenient venue for all people wanting to attend. In addition, Zoom allows the guest diplomat to present and interact with a large audience directly. The online format also allows for unique opportunities to meet diplomats from across the globe who might otherwise be unable to join in person due to time or travel restrictions. Offering a multinational perspective on pressing political questions and the tribulations of politics, previous presenters serve or have served as diplomats in or from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Uzbekistan.

Our first event for the Spring 2022 semester was on April 22nd. Mexico's Consul General Francisco Javier Díaz de León presented: "Mexico and the US: Strategic Partners and Global Neighbors".

## Ukraine: Why, What, and Next Steps

Three of our faculty members brought their expertise to a joint panel held by PSIA and UNG's Department of History, Anthropology, and Philosophy (HAP) on Wednesday, March 2. Drs. Craig Greathouse, Jon Miner, and Raluca Viman-Miller from PSIA joined Dr. John Romero from the History, Anthropology, and Philosophy department (HAP) to discuss the on-going events in Ukraine. Organized within the first few days of the start of the conflict, PSIA/HAP members were timely in setting up the opportunity for students to learn from the expert panel in a direct Q&A fashion. The event was well-attended both in-person and virtually via Zoom.

Understanding the difficulty of processing the flood of information from media sources, panel members answered pressing questions from students and provide needed context to help attendees better understand the "why, what, and next steps" related to the crisis. Current geopolitics have been significantly influenced by the Soviet Union-era relationship between Russia and Ukraine, and the panelists brought their respective area knowledge to provide a variety of perspectives as participants discussed the contemporary and historical discourses surrounding the conflict.

Dr. Greathouse brought his expertise on security and defense policy and European politics to the panel. He offered perspectives on possible expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union, as well as what it would mean if actors involved in the conflict decided to increase their use of force.

Dr. Miner contributed his knowledge about U.S. foreign policy, international organizations, and comparative politics. He shed light on recent activity at the UN related to the crisis in Ukraine and discussed the impacts of nonstate actors seen thus far.



(L-R) Drs. Miner, Romero, Greathouse and Viman-Miller

Dr. Viman-Miller has concentrated her research on comparative politics and European politics, and she placed emphasis on the importance of understanding the structure of the Russian regime. Additionally, Dr. Viman-Miller highlighted the impacts of the conflict on civilians of a variety of nationalities in the region in addition to Russians and Ukrainians as a result of the use of force, sanctions, and exodus of refugees from the area.

Dr. Romero, whose expertise lies in Russian history and nationalism in European history, shed light on the historical elements of the conflict, ethnicity and nationalism, and precedents for Russian action and expansionism.

## Young Hall Classroom Named



UNG President Bonita Jacobs stands with Mrs. Sandra Deal and former Gov. Nathan Deal at the door of the classroom in Young Hall recently named for Deal, who served a three-year term as Regents Professor at UNG.

[Note: Portions of this article first appeared in a UNG Newsroom an article that originally appeared in May 2022. [<https://ung.edu/news/articles/2022/05/classroom-named-for-former-gov.-nathan-deal.php>]

Former Georgia Governor Nathan Deal's three-year term as a Regents Professor as well as his contributions to the University of North Georgia and the State of Georgia were recognized by UNG President Bonita Jacobs during a ceremony on April 28, 2022 where a classroom in Young Hall was named in Governor Deal's honor.



(L-R) Mrs. Sandra Deal, Gov. Nathan Deal; Dr. Dlynn Armstrong-Williams

Department Head Dr. Dlynn Armstrong-Williams remarked, "In addition to teaching 'Politics in the Peach State' to UNG students over the past three years, Gov. Deal contributed to the fourth edition of **The Basics of American Government**, a textbook written by UNG faculty and used widely throughout the state. He provided a unique view of politics both within Georgia and the nation as a UNG professor." Dr Williams continues, "Beyond describing his own time in elected office at the state and national levels, Gov. Deal was able to bring PSIA students face-to-face with many individuals who have dedicated their lives to the service of their community and the state of Georgia. I am sure that his classes will remain a highlight of their college experience."

In 2016, Mary Catherine Olive, who was then a junior political science major concentrating in American politics at UNG, had the honor and privilege of serving as an intern in Governor Deal's office. You can read a PSIA blog story about that internship here.

Gov. Deal served as Georgia's governor from 2011 to 2019. Prior to that, he served as a state senator and as a U.S. congressman.

## Alumni Weekend 2022 Recap

The Department of Political Science & International Affairs held its Virtual Happy Hour via Zoom on Friday, April 22, 2022. We had a great and lively discussion.

Thank you to those who joined us.

If you were unable to attend this year, we hope to see you next year.

## Introduction to UNG Connect

We are excited to share with all of our stakeholders a new communications platform we are utilizing with currently-enrolled students. As part of our departmental efforts to help our students succeed in all facets of their academic career, we have begun utilizing a platform called UNG Connect.

The overall purpose of UNG Connect is to provide a singular communications platform to inform and engage primarily students, but also faculty members. As such, it helps us not only standardize messages and better target message addressees, but also to track and monitor each student's individual engagement and progress along his or her individual development track. As a communications platform for the Department, we use it for information sharing and gathering within three broad categories: Current Events; Student Professional Development; and Administrative "paperwork."

Be sure to check out our Fall 2022 Newsletter for a more in-depth presentation of this new initiative.

The chance to attend a national-level conference or seminar, such as the Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization (AHI) or the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) is instrumental in helping prepare students for their upcoming careers. While the respective organizations cover costs once the students arrive in DC, that still leaves the student to face perhaps the greatest financial hurdle -- getting there -- a several hundred-dollar price tag.

Please consider helping our "future" leaders #experiencemore -- any financial support you can share will be sincerely appreciated ... guaranteed!



"From the professional perspective, having that opportunity [Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC)] meant a lot because we made contacts not only of peers, but of professionals in the community that have lengthy and very prestigious careers. Personally, it was just a great experience to get out and meet people that were interested in politics and the national security side within the political arena, not so much just, you know, defense or the military but to actually see national security as a political factor.."

**Mason Goad**

Strategic and Security Studies  
'20

Note: Several articles in this Newsletter have been edited due to space considerations. If you would like to see the complete article, please visit our [blog](#).

**If you have a need for an intern or know of internship opportunities, please reach out to us!**

**Email us at [polsia-dah@ung.edu](mailto:polsia-dah@ung.edu)**

**What have you been up to? Let us know **HERE!****

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