



POSC

POLITICAL SCIENCE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH

2025 - 2026 Newsletter

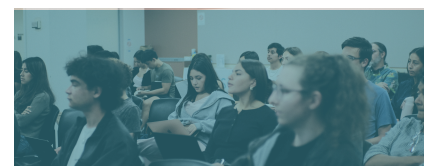


Table of Contents



CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

- A Letter from the Chair 3
- Department Updates: Our Mission, Vision, and Values 4
- POSC 2035 5

CHAPTER 2 - STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Moot Court 6
- Model United Nations 9
- PSSA & PoliSci Peers 11
- POSC Graduate Studies & PSGSA 12
- Legal Studies & Law Society 13
- Phi Alpha Delta, Pi Sigma Alpha, & Phi Beta Kappa 14

CHAPTER 3 - STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & SUCCESS

- Internships 15
- Panetta Congressional Internship 16
- Gender in Public Policy Internship 17
- Study Abroad Spotlight 18

CHAPTER 4 - DEPARTMENT EVENTS

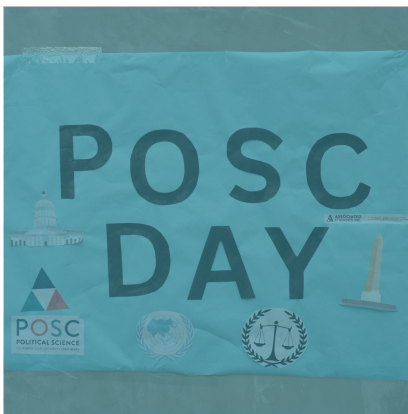
- Department Events 19

CHAPTER 5 - FACULTY & STAFF UPDATES

- Meet the POSC Department Staff 22
- Retirement Tributes 23
- Faculty Updates 25

CHAPTER 6 - KEEP IN TOUCH

- Alumni Updates & Stay in Touch 31





A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

This has been a year of vision. After two years of collaborative work bringing together students, faculty, staff, and alumni, our department is proud to share **POSC 2035**, our first-ever mission and values statement and strategic plan. This document is the product of the many voices across our department, and it articulates who we are and where we are going: building community, amplifying inclusive voices, cultivating global orientation, and fostering intellectual growth. I am deeply proud of what we built together, and you will find it reflected throughout every page of this newsletter.

Our strategic priorities are already bearing fruit. Over 40 students earned academic credit through our internship courses this year, including placements in Long Beach City Council offices, the LA County Public Defender's Office, and nonprofits serving refugee, environmental, and immigrant communities. Two students exemplify high-impact experiential learning: **Andre Achacon** completed the prestigious Panetta Institute Congressional Internship in the office of U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez, and **Katherine Garcia-Guerrero** spent the full academic year studying abroad in Guadalajara and Seoul, embodying our commitment to global orientation.



Dr. Kathryn J. Perkins
Political Science
Department Chair

Our student programs and organizations continue to excel. The **Beach Moot Court** team won all three invitationals, extended our national brief award streak to sixteen consecutive seasons, and saw **Kylie Barnhart** and **Emily Atherley** become the first CSULB team to win a Preliminary Round of the National Tournament, finishing sixth in the nation. Our **Beach Model United Nations** Advanced Travel Corps took home top honors at NAMUN in Toronto and the Outstanding Delegation Award at NMUN in New York, received on the floor of the United Nations General Assembly. Under the faculty mentorship of Dr. Jason Whitehead, the Law Society has launched a **Mock Trial** team and the **Beach Undergraduate Law Review**.

This year we bid farewell to two beloved colleagues whose careers embody the teaching and mentorship at the heart of our mission. **Dr. Larry George** retires after nearly forty years and **Dr. Edgar Kaskla** after more than thirty, leaving lasting legacies in our classrooms and our department culture. We are profoundly grateful to them both. We are equally delighted to welcome **Sherie Muro** as our new Administrative Services Assistant, who brings four years of experience from the CLA Dean's Office and a warmth that has already enriched our community.

Here we gather to teach and to learn, to equip students to navigate complex political landscapes, foster democratic engagement, and contribute to positive change in our communities and around the world. POSC 2035 gave us the rare gift of asking together what that mission means at the Beach. The answer is as old as this department and as urgent as this moment, and it will carry us forward no matter what happens around us.

Warmly,
Kathryn J. Perkins

POSC MISSION & VALUES

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

At CSULB, the Department of Political Science empowers students to become informed and active civic leaders who can critically engage with social structures, organizations, and systems at all levels. By blending academic inquiry with real-world applications, we equip our students with the skills to navigate complex political landscapes, foster dialogue to enhance democratic engagement, and contribute to good governance and positive social change - in our communities and around the world.



DEPARTMENT VALUES

Building Community: We connect what students learn in the classroom with real-world impact through internships, service learning, leadership development, and civic engagement to enhance the public good.

Inclusive Voices and Perspectives: We embrace pluralism and see diverse voices and backgrounds as essential for understanding and navigating power, politics, and justice.

Global Orientation: We foster and promote a global outlook, examining political issues across countries and cultures to inspire informed and impactful action.

Intellectual Growth and Exploration: We promote curiosity and critical thinking, encourage interdisciplinary learning, and cultivate a deep understanding of the philosophical foundations of politics to empower our students to chart their own paths.



POSC 2035

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Teaching

- Enhance the relevance and impact of our curriculum to ensure our students are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed after graduation.
- Cultivate theoretical and global engagement and analysis throughout our program to better ensure students gain a global perspective and a deep understanding of the philosophical foundations of politics.
- Expand the use of high-impact practices, such as internships, service learning, simulations, study abroad, and undergraduate and graduate research, to foster experiential learning and increase student engagement.

Scholarship

- Enhance departmental support for individual and collaborative faculty and student research.
- Nurture scholarly community and connection through regular opportunities for collaboration, gathering, and discussion.

Holistic Student Success

- Strengthen mentoring and enhance bridges to department, college, and university support resources that help students succeed in our program and in their professional careers.
- Support a vibrant and inclusive department culture by welcoming students into the department, expanding student leadership opportunities, enhancing peer connection, and encouraging community engagement.
- Develop resources and best practices to grow and sustain our enrollment through enhancing recruitment of admitted students, increasing retention and support of our current students, and strengthening pathways for connection and community with our alumni.





MOOT COURT

Written by Moot Court Director Dr. Lewis Ringel



Front Row L to R: Kylie Barnhart, Emily Atherley, Maggie Cruz, Kelly Bello, Shakhzoda Khodzakhonova, and Lucy Sanzobrin.
Back Row L to R: Nguyen Ngan, Isabel Sanchez, Angelo Leon, Mason Cao, Aiden Dauscher, and Nicole Morad.

THE 2025-2026 MOOT COURT SEASON

Wrap Up:

The nine-month saga that is the modern American Moot Court Association (AMCA) season came to a close on Sunday, February 22 just after lunch (yes, as you will see, that fact is important) when we dropped a close quarter-final round to the eventual champions. It was a very good season. I knew the 2025-26 Moot Court season would be a good one. So did other coaches. There was a buzz about the program all season long and deservedly so. For starters, we had a veteran squad – six returners from the 2024 squad, five of whom had competed at nationals and ten of whom had written team briefs in the fall or spring. What is more, I had a team that from day one was in the conversation surrounding who would win the Final Round of the National Tournament (FRONT). That team was Kylie Barnhart and Emily Atherley and they were the only team to head to the FRONT having gone undefeated in their regional and in their Preliminary Round of the National Tournament (PRONT). They finished the year with a record of 28-2 against non-classmates.

We came into the season with seven main goals:

- 1) Win the Rocky Mountain Invitational – a title we had won for five years in a row from 2019 to 2023.
- 2) Win a regional.
- 3) Win a PRONT.
- 4) Extend our streak of winning a top ten AMCA written brief award to a fifteenth season
- 5) Make a deep run at the FRONT
- 6) Bring a national trophy to campus
- 7) Extend the dynasty by winning a national title.

I am pleased to report that we achieved the first six and came fairly close to number seven.

Oral Advocacy:

Invitationals and Scrimmages:

We competed in three invitationals. We won all three. We put ten teams into semi-final rounds and six teams into final rounds.



We closed out the City of Big Shoulders Classic finishing 1-2-3-4. Next, we headed to the US Air Force Academy during a government shutdown to face the Cadets in the Falcon Classic. We put three teams in semis and two in the finals. We finished up October by winning the Rocky Mountain Invitational for the sixth time in seven years – again putting three teams in semis and two in the finals. The squad was so deep we had four different teams qualify for final rounds of invitationals and three different teams emerged victorious. On any given Sunday, as they say, any team from CSULB could win.

Regionals:

We put six teams in regionals — each reaching the sweet 16. We did very well in preliminary rounds winning 30 of 36 ballots and going a collective 14-1-3. In elimination rounds we went 9-5. We went 23-6-3 in all rounds and earned three bids to the FRONT. We won seven top orator awards. This included: Aiden Dauscher (2nd at Drake), Maggie Cruz (3rd in San Francisco), Ngan Nguyen (3rd in Fitchburg), Isabel Sanchez (4th in Fitchburg), Kylie Barnhart (5th in Saginaw), Emily Atherley (8th in Saginaw), and Mason Cao (10th in Los Angeles). We won the Great Lakes Regional in a dominate fashion as Kylie Barnhart and Emily Atherley won all 7 rounds and won 18 of 20 ballots. Aiden Dauscher and Nicole Morad advanced to the finals of the Drake Regional and argued before a sitting member of the Iowa Supreme Court. Maggie Cruz and Kelly Bello earned a bid to the PRONT by qualifying for the semis at the SF State Regional.

Nationals:

PRONTS:

We earned two bids to the FRONT. Kylie and Emily won the Memphis PRONT (which was held over Zoom), and Maggie and Kelly qualified for the quarters at the UC Law PRONT. The PRONT title is the first in CSULB history. Kylie, who was voted a top 15 orator, became the first CSULB advocate to win two national speaker awards in a career. Good teams find a way to win close rounds and advance. Maggie and Kelly earned their bid to the Final Round of the National Tournament (FRONT) with a 3-0 win over a regional champ. Kylie and Emily clawed their way through a tough day one draw. Kylie and Emily slugged their way as the 14 seed through a series of split decisions to close out the tournament in front of a final panel that included the Solicitor General of Alaska and AMCA founder and Dallas County Commissioner Andy Sommerman.

FRONT:

Coming into the season we spoke about the need for this generation to make a “deep run” at the FRONT. The need for a “deep run” was essential to the generation’s legacy. A “deep run” is defining as qualifying for at least the quarter-finals or, put another way, making it past lunch. Kylie and Emily got the job done. – advancing to the quarter-finals and finishing sixth in the nation.

Maggie and Kelly had a tough draw. They fought hard and acquitted themselves well – Maggie was voted a top twenty peaker becoming the 13th CSULB mooters to earn such distinction and the first of her generation. Maggie and Kelly graduate as members of the thirty-win club, the 2025 Rocky Mountain Invitational champs, and the only CSULB team to qualify for two FRONTS.

Written Advocacy:

For the sixteenth straight season, CSULB won a top ten brief awards. This is the longest streak in AMCA history. CSULB finished fifth in team brief average. Only two programs won more awards. This is a credit to our teams and our coaches Ryan Chapman and Alex Lohman who teach the basics of legal writing and to Mindy Vo who, along with Ryan and Alex, looked over past year’s briefs to offer feedback. Shakhzoda Khodzakhonova and Lucy Sanzobrin finished sixth in the AMCA National Championship for Petitioner Written Advocacy.





This is Shakhzoda's second top ten brief award – she has a chance to become the first three-time brief award winner in CSULB history in 2026-27. Kylie and Emily earned a respondent brief award. They were one of just two teams to win a brief award and qualify for the FRONT. The other team was from Georgetown. CSULB had the only PRONT champion to win a brief award. This was a special team – one of the most balanced – and they had a great season.

More on Kylie and Emily:

Kylie, the 2025 AMCA national brief champ, became the eleventh CSULB mooter to win two top written brief awards and the eighth CSULB advocate to place in the top eight in the nation in both oral and written advocacy in a career. Kylie is sixth all time in wins for CSULB against other schools (42 wins) and is a member of the three-bid club. When one looks at her record of achievement, the youngest CSULB winner to win a national speaker award, the only CSULB mooter to win two national speaker awards, winning a regional and a PRONT, qualifying for seven semi-finals and nine quarter-finals in competitions with more than two schools, earning two national written brief awards, and winning a national title, one cannot help but conclude that Kylie is one very best mooters in CSULB history – in fact she may be the best of her generation.



From left to right: Emily Atherley, Kylie Barnhart, Lucy Sanzobrin, and Shakhzoda Khodjakhonova

Kylie was a part of every top achievement of her generation – winning a national title, making a deep run at the FRONT, winning a PRONT and winning a regional – she was “the straw that stirred the drink” for her generation.

Emily should not be overshadowed by Kylie. Emily graduates as a member of the thirty-win club and with one of the top records/winning percentages in regionals in CSULB history: 12-1 good for 92.3%. Emily won a regional in 2025 and qualified for a regional semis in 2024. Her legacy as a PRONT champion, the winner of a national brief award, and a FRONT quarter-finalist is secure. She is one of the best of her generation – and that is saying something.

Final Thoughts:

It is always bitter sweet to see a season end. I am proud of my competitors. This was my 20th season coaching at CSULB. I am truly honored, and astounded, to have been entrusted with the role that I am fortunate enough to have played in my competitor's lives and in the development of their talents. CSULB is very fortunate to have so many alumni from other schools who offer to assist and I suspect in part because of the class you all exhibited if and when we met in rounds. I am especially appreciative of those who judged our practices, our friendly scrimmage and bootcamp and to those who travelled to competitions to serve as guest coaches. It means a lot. I am very proud of what we accomplished this season and more importantly how we did it. Our mooters regularly got on the same of the same rope and pulled in the same direction at the same time. They practiced together, chopped wood for one another, rooted for one another, picked each other up, argued the case and case law straight up, and were a pleasure to coach. They kept the flame of the culture of winning alive, and they did so the right way.

Next year, the 7th generation will have titles to defend, a streak to extend, and it needs to get to the national semi-finals – further past lunch. I am hoping you will continue to help me get them there. As always, we will need your help and guidance whether it is by volunteering to judge practices and/or scrimmages, grading briefs for AMCA, or by helping to fund travel. This year we travelled to thirteen events and hosted one – next year I expect it will be about the same. We hope you'll consider investing in what we're building for next year in whatever fashion you can.

Donate to Moot Court

Follow Moot Court on IG: [@csulbmootcourt](https://www.instagram.com/csulbmootcourt)

MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Written by MUN Director Professor Alexandra Loham



From left to right: Alexandra Lohman, Emily Atherley, Alex Gryciuk, Josh Sheppard, Polina Solodukhina, Prince Plotena, Yashmini Sirisena, Ashwanth Achary, Som Chounlamounry, and Joseph Reyes

2025-2026 MODEL UN: THE ADVANCED TRAVEL CORPS & A REVIEW IN REVIEW

Model United Nations (MUN) at the Beach underwent some transformations in the last academic year. After a competitive application process, twelve students were selected as members of the Advanced Travel Corps. for the program. This group served as the dedicated travel and competition team for the MUN program and competed at conferences including: North American Model United Nations (NAMUN) in Toronto, ON in February; National Model United Nations (NMUN) in New York, NY in March; and Model United Nations of the Far West (MUNFW) in San Francisco, CA in April. Moreover, our Advanced Travel Corps. helped mentor and support novice delegates in the Politics and Practices of the UN Course (POSC 378) and in the MUN club at the Inland Empire Conference for Model United Nations (IECMUN) in Riverside, CA in March, as well as our home conference, BeachMUN in April of 2025. To say we had a busy season is an understatement.

Yet, while it was busy, it was also transformative and rewarding. This season we represented several countries, including Belize, Benin, China, Egypt, Guinea, Mauritania, Panama. At a critical time in global politics, students rose to the challenge of representing countries from around the world, with socioeconomic and political beliefs different from our systems here at home in the United States.

At NAMUN in February of this year, delegates Josh Sheppard, Alex Gryciuk, Ethan Quirk, Joseph Reyes, Yashmini Sirisena, and Reigna Lomeli took home top honors with the Best Small Delegation award, in addition to individual honors for Josh Sheppard, Alex Gryciuk, and Joseph Reyes. At NMUN – a conference comprised of nearly 3,000 delegates – Josh Sheppard, Alex Gryciuk, Emily Atherley, Joseph Reyes, Yashmini Sirisena, Ashwanth Achary, Polina Solodukhina, and Prince Plotena again took home top honors with the Outstanding Delegation Award. It was a remarkable moment to witness as the team received this award in the United Nations General Assembly. Co-delegates Emily Atherley and Joseph Reyes, and co-delegates Alex Gryciuk and Josh Sheppard, took home individual awards that were given to them by their peers in committee. We look forward to our upcoming conference at MUNFW and are thrilled to have delegates Vivian Alvarez and Isabel Sanchez join us for this final conference.

This year marks many anniversaries significant to the UN itself and this program. This year is the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, and the 75th Anniversary of MUNFW. To celebrate, we were honored to invite POSC and MUN alumna Leani Garcia Torres (Ramos) from the Class of 2011 to chair the UN High Commission on Refugees committee, alongside current senior Emily Atherley.

As we traveled for conferences, we kept our alumni apprised of our successes, which allowed us to cultivate our alumni network and support. We look forward to connecting with other program alumni in the Bay Area during MUNFW as we introduce students to the generations of MUNers that preceded them.

The success of this team is primarily due to the work ethic and enthusiasm of each of the twelve team members. We are truly grateful for their commitment to the study of international relations and diplomacy – someday, they will take these skills to courtrooms, corporations, and the halls of government, to the benefit of all of us all. However, the success of this team is also made possible with the tremendous amount of support we receive from the POSC Department, including Department Chair Kate Perkins and our Department Coordinator, Janine Rodriguez. Additionally, our Assistant Interim Faculty Director, Professor Som Chounlamountry, is a wonderful support and asset to our program. In addition to advising our MUN club, Som is a wonderful moral support and advocate for our students in competition. I am appreciative to everyone who believes in these students and who contributes to their success, both in competition and behind the scenes!

Serving as Interim Faculty Director this year was a full circle moment for me. From 2007-2011 I participated in this program as a delegate, as program president from 2010-2011, and as Secretary-General of MUNFW in 2010. In that time, one of our former presidents, Ricardo Nunez, started a slogan for the program – “STRONG BEACH!” When I mentioned this to our current students this year, they brought back the chant to rally with each other ahead of conferences.

I am so proud that this year we could continue the program’s legacy of excellence and bring back its student pride. Let’s go, Strong Beach!



From left to right: Prince Plotena, Josh Sheppard, Alex Gryciuk, Som Chounlamountry, Ethan Quirk, Emily Atherley, Palina Solodukhina



From left to right: Alexandra Lohman, Som Chounlamountry, Alex Gryciuk, Joseph Reyes, Ethan Quirk, Yashmini Sirisena, and Reign Lomeli

POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Written by PSSA President Sonrisa Dhar



From left to right: Diana Del Castillo (co-event coordinator), Sonrisa Dhar (president), Jackie Lopez (co-event coordinator), Marisol Carlos-Herrero (treasurer)

The Political Science Student Association (PSSA) is a student run organization led by president Sonrisa Dhar and vice president David Hallworth. PSSA dedicated to helping students understand more about CSULB's Political Science department and what it has to offer. PSSA hosts both social and academic events that are open to all majors. During the academic year, PSSA has hosted academic workshops, trivia nights, debates, networking events, and even had a fundraiser with the LA Clippers. This semester, PSSA is working on officially launching grad school tours for students who are interested in getting a Master's degree in Political Science.

For further updates on events, follow @csulbpssa on Instagram.

POLITICAL SCIENCE PEER MENTOR PROGRAM

Written by Isabelle Cheng

This past year, the Poli Sci Peer mentoring program continued to be a valued resource for all Political Science majors. The organization led various meetings focused on professional development and bridging the gap between students and faculty by hosting meet-and-greets. Mentors and mentees were successfully paired, where this match will allow students to foster a relationship that will allow professional and academic growth.

Poli Sci Peers strives to promote academic and professional aid, where the organization preps students for job interviews, leads resume building workshops, and allows students to present their prior job experience. During meetings, students interact with one another to gain insight into the field, department, and major. Being a part of Poli Sci Peers will allow a student to develop both their hard and soft skills, becoming more involved and present within the Political Science Department.

The goal of Poli Sci Peers is to aid students on campus and become a resource where students can meet one another, foster meaningful connections, get to know the Political Science Department, and prepare to join the workforce. Joining Poli Sci Peers is not only be about meeting new peers but also being a student leader that will support both the department and students.



From left to right: Mariana Cortes, Grant Lotour, Ford Ruangprapaikitseree, Jennifer Wolk, Isabel Calabrin-Tribble, Sonny Ciampa, Isaac Obert, London Stansberry, Isabella Nguyen, Isabelle Cheng, Kaylee Kim.

POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDIES

Written by Dr. Cora Goldstein



Our MA program remains vibrant as we continue to advance our core mission of teaching and learning through small, discussion-based courses. Nine of our students took their comprehensive exams this academic year, with four graduating in Fall 2025 and five in Spring 2026! Our Fall 2025 graduates were: Julia Arce and Cynthia Haro, Karla Lopez, and Jac Rouillard. In Spring 2026, the following students are graduating with a major area of concentration in Law Politics and Policy and a minor area of concentration in Global Politics: Dana Ahmad, Victoria Ayala, Kasie Chavez, and Magali Vargas. Ford Ruangprapaikitseree is graduating with a major area of concentration in Global Politics and minor area of concentration in Law Politics and Policy. Please join us in congratulating these students for their efforts, dedication, and success. Several of our graduate student have received important academic awards from the university this academic year. We also warmly welcome our new students as they begin their journey in the program. At the same time, we encourage graduating undergraduates to consider applying to our program, and continue their academic trajectory with us at the Beach. Thank you for being part of our community!

POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Written by PSGSA President Dana Ahmad

The Political Science Graduate Student Association (PSGSA) is an organization dedicated to fostering personal and professional development for the POSC graduate students. PSGSA hosts monthly meetings that include professional workshops and social events. Our core value as an association is to promote friendship and support as we manage the demands of the masters program. Over the past year, PSGSA has hosted several workshops for COMPs preparation, the teaching practicum, and pursuing a PhD. We also hosted a game night to destress and connect with students in the program.

For the latest updates, news, & information, we invite you to follow PSGSA on social media: @csulb.psgsa"



LEGAL STUDIES

*Written by Legal Studies Program
Director Dr. Jason Whitehead*

The Legal Studies Certificate program continues to be the preferred academic pathway on campus for students who want to learn about law and legal systems in an interdisciplinary way. This past year, over 70 students from 16 different majors, including Political Science, Criminal Justice, History, Philosophy, English, Sociology, Psychology, Business, and many others, pursued the Legal Studies certificate. By pursuing the certificate alongside their existing majors, these students enhanced their academic profiles and gained valuable preparation for the rigors of law school and other legally oriented careers. In October, the Legal Studies program hosted its 7th annual "First Monday Supreme Court Preview" (co-hosted by the CSULB Political Science Department and the CSULB Center for First Amendment Studies). The event consisted of a panel discussion by three CSULB legal experts: Dr. Jason Whitehead (Legal Studies Director and Political Science Professor), Dr. Kathryn Perkins (Political Science Department Chair and Professor, and Dr. Kevin Johnson (Director of the Center for First Amendment Studies and Professor of Communication Studies). These experts previewed the major cases and issues on which the U.S. Supreme Court will be ruling in the 2025-26 term, including the extent of presidential power, LGBTQ rights protections, freedom of speech, and religious liberty, and more.



LAW SOCIETY

Written by Nicholas Nieto

The Beach Undergraduate Law Review is a student-led scholarly journal written, edited, and published by Long Beach undergraduate students addressing legal discourse as it pertains to our community, and established through the student-led club Law Society. This past spring semester, the editing team comprised of fourteen students has prepared a series of four distinct pieces of work all under the collective theme Federalism and Fundamental Rights: Reexamining Constitutional and Civil Liberties in Modern America. We are proud to announce that we are releasing our first publication on May 1, 2026! It can be found at beachlawreview.com alongside our future releases. We would like to give a special thanks for the faculty who have extended their support in our program such as Professor Alex Lohman and Dr. Jason Whitehead. Another special thanks to the Political Science program for their support in our program.



Lastly, to recognize the founder and Editor in Chief Nicholas Nieto. The Beach Undergraduate Law Review will now sit at the forefront of legal scholarship at Long Beach, alongside our other powerful programs for years to come. Beach Mock Trial, in its first year, competed at UCLA's regional competition, competing against some of the west coast's most accomplished teams! This past year, as an initiative from the student-led club Law Society, Mock Trial began its tryout process and recruited a team of 12 students who spend all of fall semester, and the first half of spring semester, studying and preparing their material. At the UCLA regional competition, Long Beach left its mark by beating out schools with decades of experience and outshining the competition. Unfortunately, Long Beach did not qualify for the Open Round Championship Series (ORCS), however they did set an exciting precedent by showing California schools what Long Beach is capable of. We would like to thank our two student coaches Shakhzoda Khodjakhonova and Ngan Nguyen, our President Nicholas Nieto, and our alumni coach Aleece Hanson! Another shoutout to Isabelle Palacio for being awarded the Outstanding Attorney Award at the regional competition! We look forward to seeing Beach Mock Trial grow in the next few years!

PHI ALPHA DELTA

Written by Lucy Sanzobrin

Through the 2025-2026 academic school year, Phi Alpha Delta Pre-Law Fraternity, International shone brightly in purple and gold at California State University, Long Beach. Established shortly before the start of the fall semester, the chapter quickly made history as the first and only pre-law fraternity on campus. Since its founding, the chapter has boomed, welcoming over sixty-five members rooted in a strong foundation of professionalism, academic ambition, and fraternalism. This growth reflects not only student interest, but also the reputation of Phi Alpha Delta as an organization. Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity, International (P.A.D.) is the largest pre-law and professional law fraternity in the United States and the world, offering members access to a powerful alumni network that spans across law schools, firms, and industries around the globe. This network provides invaluable mentorship and opportunities that extend far beyond the undergraduate experience, making P.A.D. distinct from other on-campus organizations. The mission of P.A.D. is to be the premier legal professional organization with a diverse membership while cultivating leaders in the field of law, and this vision was brought to life throughout the year.



Under the leadership of the chapter President, Lucy Sanzobrin, and the Vice President, Lily Ta, the fraternity hosted over thirty events designed to advance students' legal aspirations, while strengthening bonds among brothers and sisters. These events included law school tours that gave students firsthand insight into their future paths, LSAT preparatory workshops to support academic success, and guest speakers from various areas of the legal profession to offer guidance. Additionally, the chapter fostered a sense of camaraderie through events such as the Mentor-Mentee reveal, a favorite among members that created meaningful connections between experienced and newly initiated members.

In closing out the spring semester, Phi Alpha Delta looks forward to a collaborative beach bonfire hosted by the University of Southern California's chapter, alongside four other local chapters. This milestone event reflects the organization's continued growth and recognition, as well as its commitment to building a wide community. Being a member of Phi Alpha Delta is an all-encompassing and unique experience- one that creates lasting friendships at the Beach, while preparing members to become competitive and capable applicants for law school. At Long Beach State, Phi Alpha Delta breathes its motto: love of humanity and justice for all.

PI SIGMA ALPHA

Written by Dr. Kathryn J. Perkins



Pi Sigma Alpha is the National Political Science Honor Society for undergraduate and graduate students of political science and government. The Delta Omicron chapter at Cal State Long Beach was chartered in 1965 and has inducted nearly 2,000 members into its ranks over the past six decades. Membership is a lifetime distinction and a meaningful asset for academic and professional advancement. We congratulate this year's inductees and welcome them into a proud and growing legacy at the Beach.

PHI BETA KAPPA

Written by Dr. Richard Haesly

Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most prestigious honors society in the United States. We are one of only three CSU campuses that have been approved to grant membership in Phi Beta Kappa. We are also one of the most selective campuses across the country. We have selected 42 graduating seniors/recent graduates this year. Thus, our three initiates from POSC represents a significant proportion of the students who were selected entry into this prestigious honor society. This year we are proud to initiate: **Mariana Cortes, Kaelynn Romero and Giselle Vega.**



The PHI BETA KAPPA *Society*



INTERNSHIPS

Written by Dr. Charles Mahoney

The Political Science Internship Program (POSC 447/448) provides students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning in real-world settings across government, nonprofit, and legal institutions. At internships, students gain direct exposure to the impact that public service can have on communities while developing practical skills in research, communication, and policy analysis.

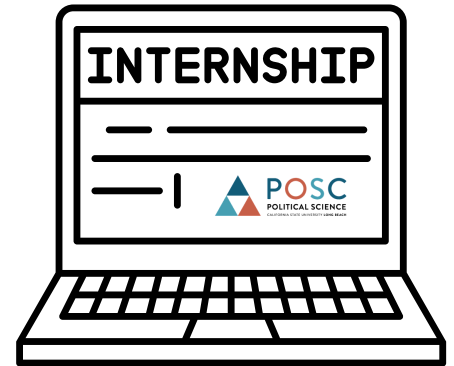
This year, students completed an impressive range of internships. Several students worked directly in local government, including placements with Long Beach City Council offices, the City of Torrance, and the City of Seal Beach. At these organizations, they conducted legislative research, supported administrative operations, and engaged in

community outreach on issues such as homelessness and access to public services. Other students contributed to municipal initiatives through programs like the Long Beach Public Service Corps, working within city departments to expand civic participation and improve access to public resources.

Students also made meaningful contributions in the nonprofit sector. Interns supported organizations addressing refugee integration, poverty, and environmental justice, including work with the United Cambodian Community, the Filipino Migrant Center, California Walks, and community-based advocacy groups in South Los Angeles.

In the legal field, students gained experience at immigration and family law offices and the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office, assisting with case preparation, client communication, and efforts to expand access to justice.

Together, these experiences demonstrate the POSC internship program's commitment to preparing students for careers in public service by combining academic training with meaningful, high-impact professional experience.



List of Internships

- Long Beach City Council offices
- City of Torrance
- City of Seal Beach
- Long Beach Public Service Corps
- United Cambodian Community
- Filipino Migrant Center
- California Walks
- Community-based advocacy groups in South Los Angeles
- Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office



Yovani Marroquin at his internship site at T.R.U.S.T. South L.A.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT: PANETTA

Written by Andre Achacon

ANDRE ACHACON

Andre Achacon is a third year undergraduate majoring in Political Science, concentrating in (Law, Politics, and Policy), and minoring in Communication Studies and Finance. Andre completed the Panetta Institute Congressional Intern for U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez (CA-34).

What skills did you develop or strengthen during this internship?

I strengthened critical skills like professionalism, official correspondence writing, conflict resolution, video production, photography, communication strategy, digital rapid response, and expanded my D.C. network to over 40 professionals.



What were your main responsibilities?

When I first arrived on Capitol Hill, I was entrusted with the essential administrative foundations of a congressional office—answering constituent calls, managing daily correspondence, and keeping operations running smoothly. But within just a short time, I earned the confidence of senior staff and found myself stepping into high-level communications work.

Every day looked completely different. One morning I'd be photographing the Congressman at an event or editing videos for press and social media; that afternoon, I'd be supporting the team during hearings, producing rapid-response clips, or helping shape the narrative around major events like mass ICE deportations.

No two days were the same—one moment I was the first line of connection for constituents back home, and the next I was contributing to the strategic communications that help drive a congressional office's voice on the national stage.



What advice would you give students looking for internships?

Don't wait for opportunities to come around, you must actively seek them. And when they do come around, seize them - you miss all the shots you don't take. I've missed a lot of shots, but I only needed to secure a few to make the major progress I've made in preparing for my career.

GENDER IN PUBLIC POLICY INTERNSHIP

Written by Dr. Melissa Maceyko

In the fall of 2024 Dr. Maceyko and Dr. Perkins worked together to create an internship for CSULB students that focuses on Gender in Public Policy. The internship comes out of a multi-year partnership between the State Board of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of California and the Department of Political Science (POSC) at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). The internship was designed to provide students with an opportunity to engage in hands-on activities within a non-profit organization to gain experience in processes for advancing gender equity via public education and legislative action at the state-level in California. Currently, Dr. Maceyko serves on the AAUW of CA Board, and is an acting Director of Public Policy, so interns work directly with her on projects and initiatives. In 2025, Dr. Maceyko was able to secure two years of funding, ensuring that 2026 and 2027 interns will be able to travel to Sacramento to lobby state legislative leaders and receive a stipend for their internship work.

In 2025, the call for applications went out to POSC students in November and, after a rigorous review and interview process, three new POSC interns were selected in January 2026: Sonrisa Dhar, Sofia Gurrola, and Jacqueline Lopez.



Sonrisa Dhar, a third-year Political Science major, has been creating public education materials to advance key legislation and authoring support and opposition letters for California Senate and Assembly bills aligned with AAUW's legislative agenda. One key issue Rohan has been addressing is human trafficking prevention. Sonrisa has worked closely with Dr. Maceyko to help build coalitions to raise awareness about human trafficking among young people, including on college campuses, and to offer potential legislative solutions.

Sofia Gurrola, a third-year Political Science major, has been developing timely resources for the upcoming 2026 midterm elections, focusing on candidate comparison guides in swing districts in California. Sofia has been leading a team that reaches out to swing district candidates, researches their voting records, and scours public records for their statements on policy positions important to AAUW California before creating guides. Sofia will soon launch a website to showcase these candidate guides.

Jacqueline Lopez, a third-year Political Science major has been representing AAUW California in a multitude of ways, including by reaching out to legislative offices to help coordinate AAUW California's annual lobbying efforts and by speaking up in committee hearings in Sacramento to express support for priority legislation. Jacqueline is also involved in an ongoing group research project to consider the need for crafting new legislative solutions to counter online misinformation about women and girls' reproductive health.

All of this year's interns have supported one another in their ongoing projects. They have also supported the California Public Policy Committee in the selection of priority bills for AAUW's 2026 legislative agenda, centered on advancing gender equity bills, backfilling problematic funding gaps, and opposing anti-trans legislation.

STUDY ABROAD SPOTLIGHT

Written by Katherine Garcia-Guerrero



KATHERINE GARCIA-GUERRERO

My name is Katherine Garcia-Guerrero, I'm a current third-year student double-majoring in Political Science and Global Studies, and I had the amazing opportunity to study abroad in 2 countries during the 2025-26 academic school year!

Where did you study abroad and why?

For Fall 2025, I studied abroad in Mexico, specifically Guadalajara, Jalisco, at the Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara. For Spring 2026, I studied abroad in Seoul, South Korea, at Korea University. Before starting college, I knew that studying abroad was going to be something I wanted to do, especially because I love traveling. Mexico was a top choice because my family is from there, and I wanted to be fully immersed in my culture as someone living there instead of as a visitor. South Korea was also a top choice because, besides the fact that I had never set foot in Asia prior, I always heard how much of a good time other exchange students had, for many reasons, and it piqued my interest even more.

What did you gain from your experience?

I learned what came with independence really quickly: rent, groceries, setting routines, work/life balance, etc. I could mention how I gained the skills of memorizing currency exchange rates, managing public transportation, or assimilating into the social practices in each country, but the most valuable thing I gained from both semesters was the connections I made with people from around the world, and the fond memories from all the side quests/hangouts.

Were there any challenges that you had to overcome, if so what?

In Guadalajara, my classes were taught in Spanish, and while I am a fluent Spanish speaker, there were many different academic terms that I had to learn quickly in order to not fall behind in classes. In Korea, the main challenge was the language barrier, especially because I couldn't read any hangul at the time I landed and heavily depended on translation apps to get by with locals.

What advice would you give to future students who are interested in the study abroad program?

Go, even if you're on the fence, walk into the study abroad office and start asking questions; they will offer amazing advice on where to apply, how to look for financial aid, and the next steps to take until you are on that airplane. The political science department makes assigning course credit from abroad super easy. Studying abroad 100% contributed to the way I view the world and what I learn in my classes as I continue pursuing my degree, and if I had the opportunity to do it all again, I would, because it was genuinely one of the best decisions I ever made in my life.





First Monday

The CSULB legal studies program, department of political science, and the Center for First Amendment Studies hosted their 7th annual First Monday: Supreme Court Preview event.

Major & Career Discovery Day

The POSC Department participated in the first annual Major & Career Discovery Days event. The POSC team prompted opportunities that POSC offers.



From left to right: Rich Haesly, Amy Aguilar, Prince Plotena, Luis Rodriguez



MA Mixer

Faculty joined POSC graduate studies members and gathered for a spooky Halloween gathering where they chatted and discussed their summer stories and their excitement for the Fall Semester.

POSC Day

The POSC Department was excited to announce its first annual POSC Day. Faculty and student leaders showcased organizations, clubs, and programs for students to get involved and network with POSC members.



From left to right: Janine Rodriguez, Amy Aguilar, Dr. Kathryn J. Perkins, and Sophia Martinez



From left to right: Luis Rodriguez, Lucy Sanzobrin, Lily, Isaac Obert, Josh Sheppard, Emily Atherly, Adam Bird

Student Leadership Retreat

Our POSC Student Leaders gathered for a Potluck where they shared their summer stories and discussed plans and ways to collaborate for the academic year.



Holidays at the Beach

Our POSC department staff decorated the office for the holidays, and participated in the office decorating contest

POSC Dept Staff Cart Parade

Our POSC department staff participated in CSULB annual Christmas cart parade for the second year.



From left to right: Janine Rodriguez, and Sophia Martinez



From left to right: Litzy Plata, Mindy Vo, Ryan Chapman, Dawn S. Theodora, J. Gary Hastings, and Ambi Thompson

Stockton Program: Careers with a Positive Impact

Students interested in law were able to learn from Dawn S. Theodora, Ryan Chapman, Mindy Vo, and J. Gary Hastings who range from diverse legal backgrounds and discussed their journeys throughout law school and their careers. The panel was co-moderated by Stockton Scholars Ambi Thompson and Litzy Plata.

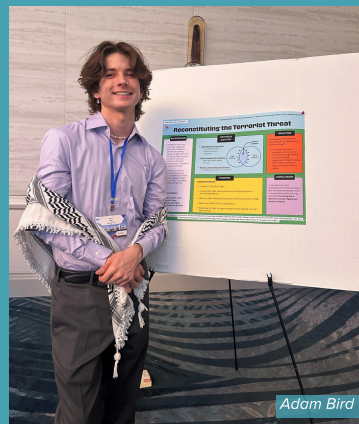
Day at the Beach

CSULB hosted its annual Day at the Beach event where incoming students and their families have a chance to see the campus, programs, and resources. Our POSC team participated and gave information about our program, clubs, and opportunities we offer.



WPSA Conference

The Western Political Science Association hosted their annual conference for political scientists. This year, the conference was held in San Diego, California. Our outstanding faculty members, students, and alumni attended the conference sharing their research, attending workshops, and building a community with other political scientists.



SOCIAL SCIENCES
& PUBLIC AFFAIRS



MEET THE POSC DEPT STAFF

SHERIE MURO

Hi everyone! I'm Sherie Muro, and I'm really excited to be joining the Department of Political Science team. I've spent the last four years in the CLA Dean's Office, so I've had the chance to work with a lot of amazing people and see a bit of everything across the College, which has been such a great experience. I'm really looking forward to getting to know you all, learning the ropes in this new role, and just being part of the great work happening here. Outside of work, I'm a mom, so that definitely keeps me busy and entertained most of the time! I'm excited to connect and work with everyone and can't wait to see what this year brings!

Welcoming
our New
ASA



Department
Coordinator
Shout-Out



JANINE RODRIGUEZ

Janine Rodriguez has been a key asset to our department as the Department of Political Science Coordinator. She contributed significantly to the department's success by taking on a leading role by providing support for faculty, students, and our Department Chair. Janine has also integrated her degree in Marine Biology through hosting her beach cleanups under the name _TrashyGurl, for our CSULB community to get involved in promoting and supporting sustainability. We are grateful for what she has contributed and look forward to continue working with her.

Student
Assistant
Shout-Out



SOPHIA MARTINEZ

Sophia Martinez is a third-year undergraduate student who is majoring in political science concentrating in Law, Politics, and Policy. She has been the creative visionary behind the department as the Department Student Assistant. Sophia has supported the office by offering assistance to faculty, students, and department related duties. She has taken the lead for the 2025-2026 annual POSC newsletter and we are excited to continue working with her.

A Retirement Tribute to Political Science Professor Dr. Larry George

Written by Dr. Teresa Wright

After nearly forty years at CSULB, Dr. Larry George is retiring. Along with expanding the minds of our students through his teaching and mentorship, Dr. George has been instrumental in building the strong and diverse department we have today. His dedication and contributions to our educational mission will leave a lasting legacy.

A native Southern Californian and first-generation college student, Dr. George was adopted by his parents from his Cuban birth mother around age two. He had an itinerant childhood, living in West LA, Malibu, Ft. Huachuca Army Base in Arizona, and the Coach Royal Mobile Home Park in Santa Ana. He earned his BA in History (with Special Honors) at UC Irvine in 1979, slipping out for morning surf sessions before class and cooking for his communal housemates. Next he traveled east to Princeton University, earning his MA in 1982 and PhD in 1987, in Political Science with a focus on Political Theory, International Relations, American Government, and Latin American Politics. His dissertation examined “Constitutional and Political Problems of American Democratic Foreign Policymaking.”

During Dr. George’s first tenure-track post at the University of New Mexico, he met his wife Carmella Garcia, the love of his life for over forty years. Together, they’ve raised two amazing kids, Silas (24) and Sofia (27).

Hired at CSULB in 1989, Dr. George has been around long enough to have taught some of our current faculty members while they were students here. From our large Intro to American Government course to upper division and graduate courses in International Relations and more recently Political Theory, upwards of 15,000 students have been enriched by his classes.

As anyone who’s met Dr. George knows, he’s a consummate intellectual, happiest when reading, discussing, and pondering arcane theoretical ideas. He owns so many books he had to build a personal library in his back yard to hold them. An active and influential scholar, he has pioneered thinking around the concept of pharmacotic politics, leveraging ancient Greek thought and post-modern perspectives to illuminate the nature and use of modern war and political scapegoating.



Happy
Retirement
Larry George

Always keen to explore, Dr. George has traveled to every continent, including a research stint in Antarctica as a young man. He has a special affinity for Mexico, Central and South America, and Spain, where his fluency in Spanish makes for deeper connections. He is a three-time Fulbright Fellow (Colombia, 1988; Costa Rica, 1992; Spain, 1996) and a Tinker-Mellon Fellow (Mexico, 1986). He has been a Visiting Lecturer at the National University of Costa Rica; University of the Andes in Bogota, Colombia; the National Autonomous University of Mexico; the University of the Americas, Choula, Puebla, Mexico; and the University of Madrid, Carlos III. He’s also conversant in French and able to read German, Russian, and Classical (Attic) Greek.

In retirement, Dr. George plans to stay active. At present, he’s a Visiting Research Scholar at UCLA and is co-writing an adaption of Ibsen’s “Enemy of the People,” due to be staged at the Odyssey Theater in West LA later this year. Meanwhile, Dr. George looks forward to spending time engaged in his more worldly passions, including baseball, backpacking, and skiing.

Most of all, Dr. George will continue to be a devoted and cherished husband, father, and friend.

We are grateful to have had him as a colleague and wish him a fascinating and fulfilling retirement!

A Retirement Tribute to Political Science Professor Dr. Edgar Kaskla

Written by Dr. Amy Cabrera Rasmussen

Dr. Edgar Kaskla will be retiring this year as a well-respected faculty member who has been uniquely of service to the Department's undergraduate students. It is quite likely that since he started in 1994, nearly every student who has graduated from our program took at least one class with Dr. Kaskla or was part of the supportive community that he sustained as the longtime advisor to the Political Science Student Association.

As a full-time lecturer in Political Science, Dr. Kaskla has taught an array of courses and could be relied upon to deeply dive into preparation and emerge equally adept across each subject. By last count, he had taught nearly two dozen different classes during his career, serving the major, minor, and general education curricula. He is known for a deeply held intellectual curiosity and capacity, one that inspires his students while also solidifying their essential skills and knowledge to take on post-graduation educational and career pursuits of their choosing.

Dr. Kaskla has maintained an active research agenda and utilizes his expertise to inform public debates both here in the United States and in Estonia (a nation with which he has strong family ties). Along with a textbook on California politics, more recently he has drafted (in two languages) a book manuscript on democracy and democratization. He also writes op-ed columns regularly for newspapers and websites. That "The Beach" is known at all in Estonia is surely due to his expert presence; to contribute to two nations' public discourses is quite rare and remarkable.

For more than two decades, Dr. Kaskla has also been the advisor to our main department student organization: the Political Science Student Association. Those serving as lecturers need not undertake such activities, and so his service is noteworthy in its existence—but even more so in its persistence. PSSA draws some of our brightest and most active students, and he encourages their activities in countless ways large and small. All that he contributes is greatly appreciated: including his connections to past students, facilitation of challenging issue-driven discussions, his steady and kind presence at all their events and meetings, and much more.



In this role, he has kept alive, semester after semester and year after year, a key space of community-building, peer learning, and civic engagement within our department. His efforts were so notable that he was honored in 2024 by the CSULB Office of Student Life & Development.

As you can see, through all of these efforts, Dr. Kaskla has been a model within our department for collegiality, pedagogical introspection, public intellectualism, and general good will.

I cannot imagine what we and our students will do without him, but am so glad that he will be enjoying his retirement, splitting time between the U.S. and Estonia. Look for more writing from him (op-ed pieces, as well as work on the Austrian theorist Otto Bauer).

Dr. Kaskla: your colleagues and students wish you all the best in this next chapter!

FACULTY UPDATES

Debito Arudou Beamer (International Studies; PhD, Meiji Gakuin University; MPA, UC San Diego; BA, Cornell



University) has entered his seventh year writing up monthly “Visible Minorities” newspaper columns for the Shingetsu News Agency. He is slowly shifting his focus from Japan into American politics, not only because the political gravity from Washington D.C. is irresistible these days, but also because that’s what his classes

are on. He still heads to Japan twice a year to take in the food, jump in hot springs, see friends and family, and remind himself that another world is possible. Meanwhile, his doctoral thesis made monograph, *Embedded Racism: Japan’s Visible Minorities and Racial Discrimination* (Lexington Books, 2nd Ed, 2022), can now be found, according to WorldCat, in more than 1100 libraries worldwide. Finally, his blog on life in Japan and sundry human rights issues, *Debito.org*, founded in 1996, is still going strong more than 30 years later.

Anand Commissiong (Political Theory; Ph.D., Rutgers University) Dr. Anand Commissiong researches and



teaches in Political Theory.

Darin DeWitt (U.S. Politics; Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles) is nearing completion of *How Lincoln Won: The*



1860 Presidential Election and the Origins of the Civil War (with Thomas Schwartz, LSU Press), which reconstructs Lincoln’s two-year strategy to win the presidency by deliberately fracturing the Democratic Party. He also continued work on *Conservative Camp* (with Nicole Seymour), which examines how camp aesthetics and humor have

been repurposed on the political right as a mode of contemporary political spectacle. Finally, he began working on a new book project on Whit Stillman, part of the University of Mississippi Press’s *Conversations with Filmmakers* series, which explores the director’s use of cinematic form to portray community building and social change.

Matthew Mendez Garcia (American Politics; Ph.D., University of Southern California) Dr. Mendez Garcia



research and teaching are in American politics, with a substantive focus on representation, legislative behavior, race and ethnicity, political behavior, intersectionality, and immigration.



Larry N. George (International Relations, Political Theory; Ph.D., Princeton University)

Dr. George's research and teaching are in International Politics, with a substantive focus on political theory, religion and political violence



Cora Goldstein (Comparative Politics; Ph.D., University of Chicago)

Dr. Goldstein is enjoying teaching at the undergraduate level and looks forward to continuing to advise our graduate students as the Department's Graduate Coordinator. She is working on just war theory and its contemporary implications.



Marshall R. Goodman, Sr. (Public Policy, State and Local Government; MPA, CSU Long Beach)

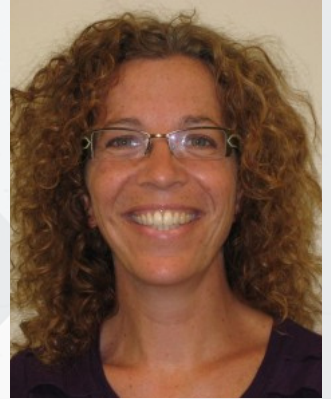
Mr. Goodman has co-authored a forthcoming chapter in The Handbook of Urban Planning and Social Justice titled "Representative Bureaucracy and Urban Planning: A Thematic Framework for Scholarship and Practice". In addition, Mr. Goodman is working with Dr. Adam Butts and Dr. Christopher Tyler Burks on two research projects for the



Journal of Social Equity and Public Administration: a manuscript engaging New Public Service and residential segregation; and, a study on Equity Tool Kits

Liesl Haas (Comparative Politics; Ph.D., University of North Carolina)

I am continuing my research on racial justice work in conservative spaces. "Both the Scissors and Glue: Sermonizing About Race in Multiethnic Evangelical Churches" (with Richard Haesly) examines the ways that the ethnicity of the lead pastor in MECs determined the ways the church addressed the killing of George Floyd in 2020. This paper was accepted for presentation at the most recent Western Political Science Association Conference in San Diego. I am in the data collection stage for a related project, which examines the gendered dynamics of racial justice work in Evangelical Churches. My research asks whether conservative communities can move forward in addressing racism without also challenging traditional gender norms around leadership in these churches. I remain active as department representative to the California Faculty Association, and with the CFA Immigration Response Working Group, which aims to build a more robust university system of protection for CSULB students.



Richard Haesly (Comparative Politics; Ph.D., University of North Carolina).

I received a revise and resubmit for my article, "Contact, Empathy in MEC Attempts at Racial Justice," which uses the Contact Hypothesis from social psychology and recent advances in deliberative democracy to explore the opportunities and challenges for multi-ethnic Evangelical churches as they try to wrestle with race. I presented this paper to the recent Western Political Science



Association conference. Dr. Haas and I are completing an article based on content analysis of sermons from MECs during summer 2020 to see if/how they discussed the murder of George Floyd and the attendant protests throughout that summer. I am the Chair of the Best Dissertation Award for the Nationalism and Politics Section of APSA. I remain the Department Director of Student Engagement and Success, working with students, faculty and CLA Advising to help deepen student experiences in their POSC majors and minors.



Edgar Kaskla (Comparative Politics, Ph.D., UC Irvine).



The primary focus has been on publishing opinion pieces, primarily in Estonian newspapers (both in print and online), mostly explaining the chaos going on in American politics. On occasion, some articles appear in English as well, on Counterpunch.org. The Political Science Student Association (PSSA) has been a focus as faculty advisor, but this will be the final semester for me working with the PSSA, sad to say.

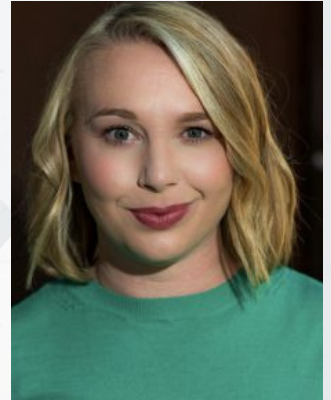
Matt Lesenyie (American Politics; Ph.D., University of California, Davis)



Dr. Lesenyie took the bold leap into teaching SPSS to undergrads and grads (POSC 422 and POSC 640) respectively (he is a Stata user). He expanded research opportunities in his graduate seminar on political behavior by requiring students to obtain Institutional Review Board approval, code into Qualtrics and conduct their own research surveys. It resulted in a rich research experience and faculty across the department supported their projects by providing extra credit to research volunteers in their POSC 100 courses. Matt provided expert analysis on electoral politics appearing in countless news stories this year, including appearances in Børsen (Denmark), The Japan Daily, and France 24. This year, 12% of the University's 1,150 earned media stories were associated with Dr. L. He presented his research titled "Barriers to the Ballot" at NCOBPS and WPSA conferences this year.

Alex Lohman (Public Law; J.D., Northwestern University School of Law; BA, CSULB)

This year Alex assumed the role as Interim Faculty Director of the CSULB Model United Nations program, creating a dedicated competition/travel team for the program – the Advanced Travel Corps. Alongside the program's Interim Assistant Director, Som Chounlamountry, the team traveled to Toronto and New York and took home top honors at both conference. She is thrilled



to share in the success of her Moot Court students along with Dr. Ringel, bringing home top awards in brief writing and in the national tournament!

Missy Maceyko (Public Law; Ph.D., University of Virginia)

Missy is a political-legal and linguistic anthropologist who

continues to do work as an educator, academic researcher, practitioner, and public scholar focusing on political participation, anti-discrimination, law & society, and organizational change. In the last year Missy has presented ongoing research on shifts in diversity, equity, and inclusion language and policy in the United States at the Society



for Applied Anthropology, the Academy of Management, and the American Anthropological Association's annual meetings. She has also served as the keynote speaker for a number of professional organizations, including the Association of American Medical Colleges and Genetic Counselors Education Association. Missy teaches Constitutional Law at the Beach and runs the Gender in Public Policy internship program, created in 2024 as a partnership between POSC and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in California, where Missy serves as a state Board member and Director of Public Policy.



Interns this year are once again amazing and have done excellent work helping to create a non-partisan primary election guide, conduct research on potential 2027 legislation, set AAUW's 2026 legislative agenda in California, and lobby for key legislation in Sacramento. Of all ongoing projects, Missy is most excited to be completing her ongoing book manuscript, *Redeeming Political Life: Learning from Shared Politics in a Polarized Town*, which centers political ethnography to examine the nature of political polarization in small-town Pennsylvania and offer recommendations for repairing community-based rifts. In November 2025, Missy won the Executive Director Award from the American Anthropological Association for work that demonstrates the power of anthropology in advancing equity, inclusion, and social change.

Charles Mahoney (International Relations; Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles) Dr. Mahoney's article



"Deterrence, Dollars, or Diplomacy? Why the United States Sells Arms to Taiwan," was published in the journal *International Relations*. Dr. Mahoney also published an article titled "Defense Contracting in the Final Frontier: Efficiency and Inefficiency in U.S. Military Space Markets," in the journal *Armed Forces & Society*. Dr. Mahoney

presented a paper titled "Venture Capital and the U.S. Defense Industry," at the 2026 International Studies Association annual conference in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Mahoney is currently working on several other scholarly projects including a book about the contemporary United States defense industry. Additionally, Dr. Mahoney is happy to report that over 40 POSC students enrolled in the Department's internship courses this semester. As the Department's internship director, Dr. Mahoney is glad to see so many students earning course credit for their internship work.

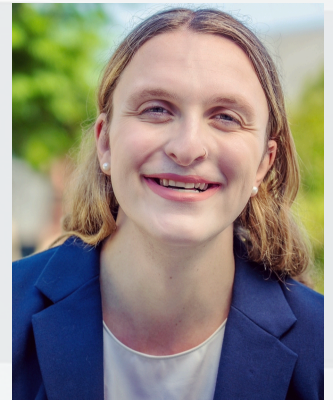
Angela Maione (Political Theory; Ph.D., Northwestern University) presented a paper titled *Arendt's Council-State "and the Voice of the People"* at the American Political Science Association (APSA) annual meeting in Vancouver, Canada in fall of 2025. Over the winter break, she submitted a chapter on Arendt and Global Populism for publication in an edited volume. She also presented another paper titled "Technocratic Digital Populism"



at the Western Political Science Association (WPSA) in San Diego. In addition to teaching a course she developed around political theory and storytelling (*Politics through Culture*) last year, she has been enjoying teaching *Modern Political Theory* and *Recent Political Theory* for the first time at CSULB this semester. She also looks forward to the fall when she will teach "Political Theory of the People," a course based on her own research around the place of the people in the history of political thought and in contemporary political theory.

Kathryn J. Perkins (Public Law; Ph.D., University of North Texas) Dr. Perkins continues her service on the Executive

Council of the Western Political Science Association, and she presented "Civil Religion and Public Monuments: The Rise of History and Tradition in Establishment Clause Jurisprudence", co-authored with Sierra Darwin (POSC B.A., M.A., University of Massachusetts, Amherst), at the 2026 annual meeting as part of



their ongoing book project. She and Dr. Joanna Wuest (Stony Brook) completed their co-edited special issue on LGBTQ Politics for *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. Following her nomination by Provost Scissum Gunn, Dr. Perkins joined the 2026 American Association of Colleges & Universities New Leadership Academy cohort and completed the CSULB President and Provost's Leadership Fellows Program.



Dr. Perkins was also appointed to serve on the CSULB Presidential Search Committee and was elected as Co-Chair of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. Now in her second year as Department Chair, Dr. Perkins led the department through the completion of our strategic plan, POSC 2035, articulating our shared vision, values, and priorities for the years ahead.

Amy Cabrera Rasmussen (American Politics; Ph.D., Yale University, MA and BA CSULB). Dr. Cabrera Rasmussen



continues research and writing on her project about the construction of “good work” in the United States context—past, present, and future. She also has been focused on many practical manifestations of this project through crafting new courses and learning modules, mentoring students and recent grads, and talking with those doing careers

of impact, including some of our amazing political science department alumni. Next fall she will be teaching a new set of courses she created for the College of Liberal Arts on this theme. CLA 380: Careers in the Public Good is designed to help students choose work with a societal impact, understand the skills and knowledge needed for work that matters, and craft professional lives that incorporate meaningful work and one’s well-being.

Lewis Ringel (Public Law; Ph.D., University of Maryland)



coaches CSULB's moot court teams and continues to chair the National Case Committee of the American Collegiate Moot Court Association (ACMA). In that capacity, he helped author the 2025-26 and 2026-27 national case.

Kevin Wallsten (American Politics; Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley) Dr. Kevin Wallsten researches and

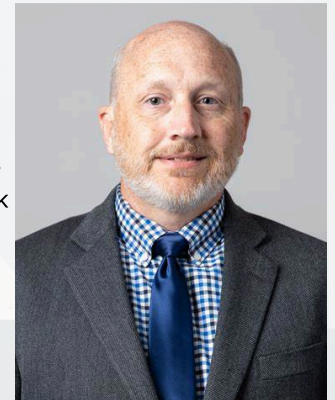
teaches in American Politics, Political Behavior, Mass Media and Internet.



Jason Whitehead (Public Law; Ph.D., University of Southern California, JD, Willamette University, BA, CSULB)

In April, Dr. Whitehead published his second book, *The Christian Conservative*

Constitution: Narrating the Demise of Liberal Democracy in the Age of Trump (Palgrave Macmillan Press). The book uses extensive ethnographic fieldwork with Christian conservative pastors, ministry leaders, attorneys, and laypeople to analyze the political, legal, and theological narratives circulating



within the Christian conservative movement between *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015 and *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* in 2022. The book demonstrates how Christian conservatives replaced liberal democratic constitutional narratives with authoritarian narratives, inspiring them to support Trump and to participate in MAGA attacks on American democracy. In May, Dr. Whitehead presented a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Law & Society Association, entitled, “Reform or Restore? Christian Conservatives, the Supreme Court, and the Future of Constitutional Rights.” In October, he organized and co-hosted the Legal Studies program’s 6th Annual “First Monday” Supreme Court Preview, where he and other panelists discussed the major cases to be decided by the Supreme Court in 2025-26. Dr. Whitehead continues to teach Jurisprudence and Constitutional Law and continues to serve as the director of the Legal Studies program, the campus-wide pre-law advisor, and the faculty advisor for the Law Society.



Teresa Wright (Comparative Politics, Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley) Dr. Wright's book manuscript,



Generations, Geography and Governance in China: Pathways to Political Liberalization, has been accepted for publication by Bloomsbury Press. In addition, she has two forthcoming book chapters: "Youth Activism in China, Old and New," in Colm Fox, Meredith Weiss, and Edward Aspinall, eds., *A New Wave of*

Youth and Student Activism in Asia (University of Michigan) and "China in 1989," in Melissa Feinberg and Lisa Kirschenbaum, eds., *Routledge History of Communism* (Routledge). She also reviewed Jeffrey Wasserstrom's *The Milk Tea Alliance: Inside Asia's Struggle Against Autocracy and Beijing*, for *Asian Perspective*. In March 2026, Dr. Wright presented on "Teaching and Mentoring in Chinese Studies" for the Society for the Social Science Study of China at the Association for Asian Studies conference, and in April she was the discussant on "The Revival and Evolution of Area Studies" at the WPSA conference. She continues to enjoy teaching, mentoring students pursuing independent research, and serving as the faculty advisor for the PSGSA. In June 2025 she traveled to Tokyo, Beijing, and Mongolia. In June 2026 she will be a Visiting Scholar at the East-West Center in Honolulu.





STAY IN TOUCH

Alumni News

Marc Jackson (BA '25) started the MPA program at CSULB and started a job last May as a case manager in the ReEntry program at WLCAC in Los Angeles.

Kiefer Topmiller (BA '25) Finishing 1L at USC Gould School of Law, and working at the Learning Rights Law Center in Los Angeles as a summer clerk for the Summer of 2026.

Alessia Perretti (BA '24) Selected as a 2025 Top 20 Advocacy Professionals for creating programs and bridging resource gaps for system impacted youth with disabilities.

Scott Richard (MA '22) recently started the Ph.D. program at the University of Southern California. He is focusing on American Politics, Political Communication, and Methodology, and is interested in studying social media use by politicians. This research is a continuation of ideas developed within courses in the MA program at CSULB.

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN OUR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS?

If you have a professional update you would like to share with our CSULB Political Science community and would like to be featured in a future newsletter, please email posc@csulb.edu



WANT TO STAY UPDATED ON THE LATEST CSULB POSC NEWS?

If you would like to keep up with the latest news and events from the CSULB POSC community, please scan the QR codes and follow us on social media.

ALUMNI:



BEACH NEXUS

STUDENTS:



SOCIAL MEDIA

California State University Long Beach
Department of Political Science
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach CA 90840-4605

Design By:
Sophia Martinez

Photo credits:
Spencer Otte



Support the department's work

You can help to fund student scholarships and programs, bring scholars and practitioners to campus, and build alumni connections by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Department of Political Science

Scan to Donate or Donate by Contacting:



Contact:
Marissa Garcia,
Director of Development,
College of Liberal Arts:

Marissa.Garcia@csulb.edu
562.985.1619