



## Message from the Department Chair Shedding Light on Elections

In addition to their “day jobs” as classroom teachers, political science faculty members share their expertise as part of a wider educational mission to help the general public understand what’s at stake in upcoming elections, and the significance of elections that have occurred. They serve as volunteer news commentators, contribute to blogs, and give talks for community groups. This fall semester our faculty have kept busy commenting on everything from the Houston mayoral election to presidential elections in Argentina. For instance, in October the Department sponsored an event for alumni and students with a discussion about the upcoming Houston & Texas elections. From October through December you could catch election comments from **Professors Richard Murray** in *The Houston Chronicle* and the *Chicago Tribune*, **Brandon Rottinghaus** and **Francisco Cantu** in separate articles for *The Washington Post*, **Jason Casellas** on Fox26, **Jeronimo Cortina** on *Telemundo*, **Ryan Kennedy** in *Politico*,



**Pablo Pinto** in the Argentine media, and instructor and local politics expert **Nancy Sims** at multiple community election forums.

Providing this kind of outreach and community education is an important part of how our department helps the University of Houston to serve both our local and our national community.

--Susan Scarrow  
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### Contents

Undergrad News	2
Alumni Spotlight	2
Latino Politics	2
Faculty News	3
Grad & Alumni News	3
New Faculty Books	4

## Students Meet Members of Congress

In October UH students had an opportunity to discuss politics with two Houston-area members of Congress, Rep. Gene Green (D) and Rep. Randy Weber (R). These Members of Congress (both UH alumni) came to campus to participate in a forum organized by the Institute for Civility in Government and the UH Political Science Department. Students questioned their representatives about political issues with personal implications, ranging from immigration and Social Security funding to student loans. After the forum, students were able to talk one-on-one with the Representatives, and many got their pictures taken with them.



**Students line up to ask questions at the Congressional Student Forum**

## Undergraduate News

### Alumni Spotlight: Sylvester Turner

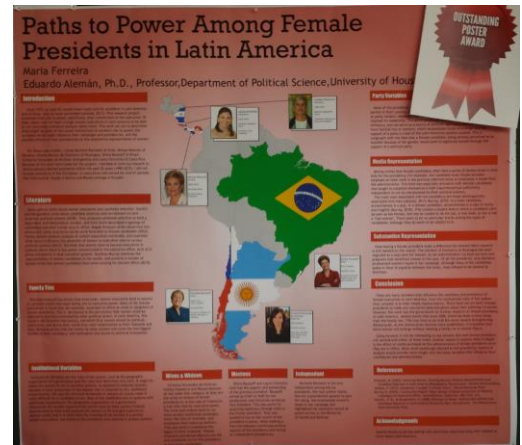
The next mayor of Houston is a UH Political Science major. In fact, by the time the 2015 election reached the run-off stage, it was clear that the next mayor of Houston would have a political science degree from the University of Houston, because Turner's runoff opponent, Bill King, also graduated from UH with a political science degree. Turner will start his 4-year mayoral term on January 2, 2016.

After graduating from UH, Sylvester Turner earned a law degree from Harvard University. He then returned to Houston to work as a lawyer, first with Fulbright & Jaworski, and later with his own law firm. Representative Turner was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1983, and continued to serve there through his successful mayoral campaign.

**Visit our [on-line Alumni Profiles](#)** What do our political science majors do with their degrees? Our faculty are asked this question all the time. To help them give useful answers, we decided to use our web page to offer some specific examples of the varied careers paths that OUR political science majors have followed. To complete this project we have been tracking down some of our thousands of graduates, trying to find examples of lawyers, journalists, politicians, business people, teachers, lobbyists, public opinion researchers, diplomats and others so that we could profile them for the web page. We have enjoyed getting in touch with some of you! We plan to continue this project, and to change the profiles regularly, so don't be surprised if you hear from us -- or please contact us if you have an unusual career and are willing to be profiled. Share your stories with us so that we can help to inspire our students!

**Senate Staffer/UH Alumna on campus** UH Political Science alumna Amber Moon visited campus in fall to talk to undergrads about her career in campaigns and political communications, including her current job as Political Communication director for Senator Gary Peters (Michigan). She gave advice to students about how to use an internship to open doors for advancement as a political staffer.

Congratulations to Junior **Maria Ferreira**, who won an "outstanding poster" prize for the research poster she presented at UH



Undergraduate Research day in October. This poster (see above) summarized the research she did as a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellow. Associate professor **Eduardo Aleman** supervised her project on female presidents in Latin America.

Congratulations to Senior **Charlotte Christian** and Assistant Professor **Patrick Shea**, whose article on "The Impact of Women Legislators on Military Humanitarian Interventions" has been accepted in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Congratulations to the 10 UH students who will work in Washington D.C. in spring 2016 as Mickey Leland fellows, one of the many political internship opportunities at the University of Houston. 9 of the 10 Leland fellows are political science majors. You can read their stories [here](#).

## The Politics of Latino Identity

In early December, the Department of Political Science hosted a conference on the politics of Latino Identity, cosponsored with the Center for Mexican American Studies and the Center for Public History. The conference kicked off with a lecture by **Professor Rodolfo de la Garza** of Columbia University, who discussed Latino identity within the context of the 2016 presidential election.

The following two days featured presentations by over a dozen scholars from all over the country exploring the politics of Latino identity from

multiple perspectives and methodologies.

**Associate Professors Jason Casellas** and **Jerónimo Cortina** will co-edit an edited volume based on the papers presented at the conference. The volume will explore the question of the complex diversity and identity within the Latino community and introduce new dimensions to the creation and reproduction of what it means to be Latino in an age of racial overtones and political polarization--all colored by a plethora of federal policies and congressional stalemate that shapes how Latinos identify themselves.

## Faculty News

This year **Professor Richard Murray** marks 50 years of teaching political science at the University of Houston. During these years he has taught popular courses on local and presidential elections, U.S. political parties, and urban politics. Read more about his impact as a teacher and a political advisor in the [UH magazine profile](#).

Welcome to new faculty members **Naomi Choi** and **Zachary Zwald**. Naomi joins our political theory faculty, and will be teaching 20<sup>th</sup> century political thought. Zach will be teaching international relations and is developing a new international politics internship program.

Faculty research has made the news this fall, with several articles cited as the basis for policy-related newspaper articles: **Assistant Professor Scott Clifford's** research on public attitudes towards candidates' religious views –or their atheism -- was featured in several newspaper stories that were picked up

nationally. The stories were based on, "Trust Me, I Believe in God: Candidate Religiousness as a Signal of Trustworthiness," Scott Clifford and Ben Gaskins, *American Politics Research*. **Professor Susan Scarrow's** research on differential participation in political parties was picked up this fall in a story distributed by Bloomberg on the increasing skew towards policies which re-distribute resources to older citizens. The story was based on "Declining Memberships, Changing Members? European Political Party Members in a New Era," Susan Scarrow and Burcu Gezgor, *Party Politics*.

**Associate Professor Jeremy Bailey** and Assistant **Professor Alin Fumurescu** were recently awarded a 2-year grant from the Jack Miller center to promote the study of political thought and politics issues at the University of Houston. This grant will sponsor campus visitors, and will help provide summer support for top undergraduates who are working on research projects in American political thought.



### Grad Alumni News

**John Garcia** (UH M.A., pictured above) visited campus in December to participate in a conference on The Politics of Latino Identity. Dr. Garcia recently retired from University of Michigan, where he was the Director of the ICPSR Resource Center for Minority Data. He taught at the University of Arizona before moving to Michigan, and he is returning there after completing his duties at ICPSR.

**Long Le** (UH Ph.D) recently started a new job in California at Santa Clara University's Leavey School of Business.

## Graduate Students

This fall several of our recent doctoral graduates started new jobs, including: **Abdullah Aydogan**, postdoctoral research fellow at the Baker Institute for Public Policy and the Department of Political Science at Rice University; **Halil Bilecen**, Department of International Relations, Harran University (Turkey); **Alper Bulut**, Department of International Relations, Karadeniz Technical University (Turkey); **David Llanos-Paez**, position as a Data Scientist at Gallup.

Student/faculty research teams have been busy publishing their work this fall. Recently accepted or published articles include: Assistant Professor **Scott Clifford** along with **Ryan Jewell**, and **Philip Waggoner**, "Are Samples Drawn from Mechanical Turk Valid for Research on Political Ideology?" *Research & Politics*; and **Kenicia Wright** and **Assistant Professor Ling Zhu**, "Why do Americans Dislike Publicly Funded Health Care? Examining the Intersection of Race and Gender in the Ideological Context," *Politics, Groups, and Identities*".



Doctoral student **Paula Pineda** recently participated as a fellow in a workshop sponsored by the Oxford Consortium on Human Rights. The program included a visit to the United Nations (see picture above).

## New Books from Faculty Members

**Dept. of Political Science**  
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Houston, TX 77204-3011

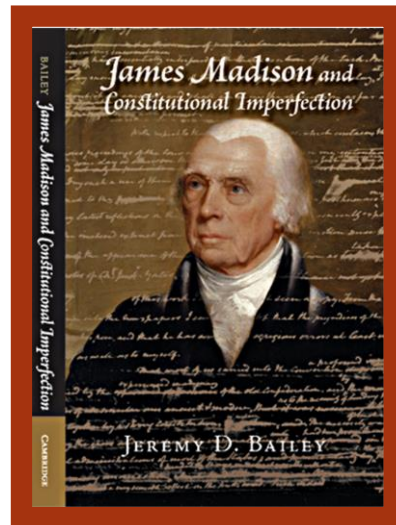
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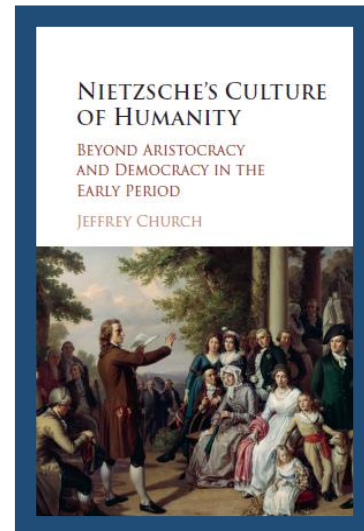
[Political Science Web Page](#)

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**Online Donations** (please designate to Political Science programs):  
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Jeremy Bailey, *James Madison and Constitutional Imperfection*, Cambridge University Press (2015).

Jeremy Bailey's latest book engages with the emerging scholarly debate on James Madison's political thought. In *James Madison and Constitutional Imperfection*, Bailey offers new evidence that challenges much of the literature's emphasis on deliberation by elites and on constitutional veneration. In particular, Bailey finds new proximity between Madison and Jefferson, and separates Madison's political thought from what he calls Madisonian constitutionalism.



Jeffrey Church, *Nietzsche's Culture of Humanity. Beyond Aristocracy and Democracy in the Early Period*, Cambridge University Press (2015).

Nietzsche scholars have long been divided over whether Nietzsche is an aristocratic or democratic thinker. Jeffrey Church's book finally overcomes this debate by proving both sides wrong. Church argues that in his early period writings, Nietzsche envisioned a cultural meritocracy that drew on the classical German tradition of Kant and Herder. The young Nietzsche's "culture of humanity" synthesized the high and low, the genius and the people, the nation and humanity. The book concludes by arguing that Nietzsche's novel defense of culture can overcome some persisting problems in contemporary liberal theories of culture.

### Stay in Touch!

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