Department Welcomes Visiting Scholar

Dr. Sungkyu Jang has accepted a position as a visiting assistant professor within the Department of Political Science for the 2014/2015 academic year.

A native of South Korea, Dr. Jang received his MPA from Indiana University in 2006 and his Ph.D. from Florida State University in 2012, where he specialized in public policy and public finance.

During his doctoral studies, Dr. Jang completed a dissertation entitled “Three Essays on Tax Collection: A Historical Review, A Formal Model, and An Empirical Test of the Government’s Contractual Choice of Tax Collection between Tax Farming and Bureaucracy” that looked at the financial causes and consequences of incentive-based contracting in the tax collection process. Currently he is working on research into performance-based contracts in the budgetary process, such as performance-based budgeting and performance-based pay.

Prior to coming to Indiana University South Bend, he taught at Georgia State University and Alanta Metropolitan State College, where he offered courses in policy data analysis, microeconomics, and macroeconomics.

Dr. Jang brings with him a variety of practitioner experience in the public sector. He has served as an officer in the South Korean Army and worked as a manager and activist with two nonprofit organizations, the Citizens’ Association Against Corruption and Fraud and the Korean Federation of Taxpayers.

Popescu’s Book Wins National Award

Dr. Gabriel Popescu’s book, Bordering and Ordering the Twenty-First Century: Understanding Borders (Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), has received the 2013 Gold Book Award from the Association of Borderlands Studies.

Dr. Popescu’s book introduces readers to the central question of borders in the twenty-first century. After familiarizing readers with border thinking and making from antiquity to the present, the author turns a critical eye on current border-making concepts, processes, and contexts.

Throughout the book, he offers a balanced understanding of borders, explaining why and how interstate borders have emerged, whose interest they serve, who is involved in border making, and how border-making practices affect societies. Assessing the latest theoretical approaches to border studies, the author deftly incorporates a range of disciplinary perspectives.

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including geography, international relations, sociology, history, security studies, and anthropology. Popescu explores recent world events, discussing how current issues such as global warming, pandemics, terrorism, migration, human rights outsourcing, the economic crisis, and digital technology relate to borders and influence our lives. Written with a clear eye and voice, this book makes a complex subject accessible to a wide readership.

The Association of Borderland Studies’ Gold Award includes consists of a plaque and certificate. Recipients of the award are also invited as a guest and keynote speaker at the association’s next annual meeting.

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The recent momentum in the implementation of smoking bans by various states, counties and municipalities is indicative of people’s inclination to give up some of the freedom of choice and let the government intervene with more extensive regulation in order for individuals to work, dine, socialize and enjoy recreational activities in an environment free of smoke.

The Midwest Public Affairs Conference is an annual regional conference of the American Society of Public Administration. Held on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne in March, the conference included more than 140 participants from across the midwest and the United States.

MPA Student Presents Research at Conference

Vlad Sorokin, a spring 2014 graduate of the MPA program, has recently presented a paper based on his research at the Midwest Public Affairs Conference.


On March 19, 2012, Governor Mitch Daniels signed into law the first comprehensive indoor smoking ban in Indiana, joining 26 other states and the District of Columbia. Based on the current pace of adopting anti-smoking laws, federal health officials predict that by 2020 every state may implement such bans.

The anti-smoking movement is continuously strengthened by the introduction of new technical and scientific information and the changing public opinion made possible by numerous studies and the long-standing debate about the effects of smoking on both smokers and non-smokers.

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Do you have news that you would like to share with the students and alumni from the Department of Political Science?

Whether you are finishing law school, getting married, or getting a promotion, we would love to hear about it and share it with the rest of the department.

You may submit your class and alumni notes for the Fall 2014 newsletter to:

*MPAInfo@iusb.edu*
McDonald Publishes Paper on Charter County Adoption

Bruce McDonald, assistant professor and MPA program director, has published a paper in the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, the leading journal in public administration.

The paper, “Determinants of Charter County Decisions: An Event History Analysis of Florida Counties”, was co-authored with Dr. Carl Cabrini from the College of Coastal Georgia and investigates the decision behind why a county would choose to adopt a “charter” or “home-rule provision.”

Charters are formal written documents that grant residents the power of self-governance by conferring powers, duties, and privileges on the county. Although every county is required to elect a governing body, charter counties have considerable freedom to decide which officers to include, what duties and powers will be assigned to them, and whether they will be appointed or elected. Charters shift the burden of local affairs governance from the state to the local populace, granting decision-making power to those most affected and freeing legislators to focus on the business of the state. Although any individual or group within a county may initiate the process of adopting a charter, the final decision to adopt is based on a vote of county residents. Twenty-three states allow their counties to adopt a charter and another 13 permit some form of home rule.

Since 1968, Florida counties have had the option to adopt a charter, but only 20 of 67 counties have chosen to do so (see figure). Using theories of government reform and event history analysis, Drs. McDonald and Cabrini investigated those adoption decisions and identified the key factors that would lead some to adopt and others not.

According to the theory of constitutional contracts, a contract that dictates governmental structure will change when the conditions that gave rise to the contract change. Because of the direct democracy design of local governments, mechanisms established within the contract reflect incorporation of the population’s preferences into the governmental structure. People view alternative constitutional arrangements as alternative investments that are subject to related costs (taxes) and benefits (services). When a change in preference arises, reform is expected to align the preference for a particular constitutional arrangement with a particular governmental structure. Driving the preferences of a population is their prioritization of various governmental, political, demographic, and economic characteristics.

One important finding is the diffusion of county reform. Local governments become aware of policy options for current problems through counties in the area who have previously adopted the solution. As the elected officials of counties become aware that a change in policy is desired, they look to surrounding governments for policy alternatives that have demonstrated success in order to minimize the risks associated with innovation.

As other counties began the review process in anticipation of a change in resident preferences, the opportunity for increased citizen involvement and independence from the state became attractive options. As regional counties adopted charters, the options began to diffuse, or spread, throughout the area. Encouraging the diffusion of a charter was the reduced risk associated with “tried and tested” policies over uncertain alternatives.
Class and Alumni Notes

- Kate (Bathon) Shufeldt (MPA, 2012) has accepted a position as the Court Improvement Project Director at the Administrative Office of the Courts in Little Rock, AR.
- Daniel Crowder (BA, 2013) will be entering the Masters of Special Education program at Loyola University in the fall.
- Hannah Dill (BA, 2013) has completed her first year of law school at Indiana University's Mauer School of Law and has accepted a summer position in the City of South Bend’s legal department.
- Amanda Heideman (BA, 2014) will be entering the Ph.D. program in political science at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee in the fall.
- Branden Herron (BA, 2013) will be entering the Master of Public Affairs program at Indiana University South Bend in the fall.
- Anna Hutchinson (BA, 2014) will be entering the Ph.D. program in political science at Kent State University in the fall.
- Angela Johnson (BA, 2011) is graduating from the University of Notre Dame School of Law with honors and has accepted a position at the law firm of Faegre, Baker, Daniels.
- Matt Kavanagh (BA, 2014) will be entering the JD program at the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law in the fall.
- Lauren (McLennan) Burke (MPA, 2012) and her husband have welcomed a baby boy.
- Christopher Misener (BA, 2014) was accepted a position with Press Ganey.
- Nick Sheppard Patel (BA, 2014) will be entering the Master of Public Affairs program at Indiana University South Bend in the fall.
- Nick Prentkowski (BA, 2014) has accepted a position with Northwestern Mutual.
- Martha Thumbalamoto (BA, 2012) will be entering the JD program at the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law in the fall.
- James Turnwald (MPA, 2014) has received a promotion to executive director of the Michiana Area Council of Governments.
- Stefen Wynn (MPA, 2013) has accepted a new position as an assessment case manager for the Indiana Department of Child Services.

Congratulations!
The Department of Political Science would like to congratulate

Dr. Elizabeth Bennion

for her recent promotion to full professor!

In addition to her promotion to full professor, Dr. Bennion also earned several awards this semester, including: a Faculty Research Grant for her national research project entitled: “Developing Civic Skills through Student Organizations: Civil Society on Campus,” a campus-wide Trustees Teaching Award, a Vision 2020 Grant to improve internships in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and a special Resolution by the South Bend Common Council honoring her work in the community. Professor Bennion will be taking a research sabbatical next fall.