

# The Political Current

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SUMMER 2019

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## Alisa Moldavanova tenured and promoted to associate professor



Alisa Moldavanova

Alisa Moldavanova, Ph.D., joined the Department of Political Science in August 2013 as an assistant professor. She is the product of a superb graduate program at the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas. Moldavanova has published six articles in refereed journals; eight chapters in edited collections; co-edited a special issue of *Critical Sociology*; and co-edited *The Nonprofit Sector in Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia: Civil Society Advances and Challenges*. Four of her six refereed articles are published in the most highly ranked journals in her field: *The American Review of Public Administration*, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *Public Management Review*, and *Administration & Society*.

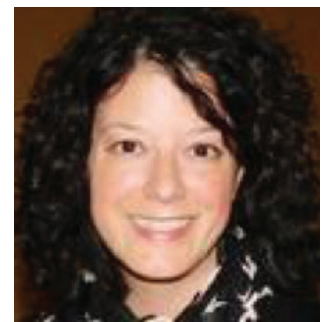
Moldavanova received the 2015 Paul A. Volker Public Service Award from the American Political Science Association and received a research grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2016. That same year, she received the Wilder School Award for Exemplary Scholarship in Social Equity and Public Policy Analysis. She is an executive committee member of the Public Administration Research Section of the American Society for Public Administration and the Theories, Issues, and Boundaries section of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action. She is a co-founder and facilitator of the Sustainability Scholars Forum at Wayne State.

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## Kristin Taylor receives tenure and promotion to associate professor

Kristin Taylor, Ph.D., joined the Department of Political Science in August 2013 as an assistant professor. She received her doctorate from North Carolina State University in 2012, with specialization in public policy and public administration. Before arriving at Wayne State, she taught at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington.

In her time at Wayne State, Taylor has published six articles in such highly respected journals as *Administration & Society*, *Review of Policy Research*, and *Policy Studies Journal*. She has also published three chapters in edited collections. In 2018, Taylor received two research grants from the National Science Foundation for studies on disaster-relief policy and infrastructure safety.



Kristin Taylor

Taylor's chapters appear in such outlets as Policy Press, Oxford University Press, and Taylor & Francis/Routledge. Her piece "Bureaucratic Policymaking on Natural Hazards" was published in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Natural Hazard Science* (Oxford University Press, 2018), and it speaks to the quality of her work that such a young scholar be included in such a prestigious collection. Her chapter "The Politics and Governance of Mitigation" appears in *The Handbook for Planning and Disaster Resilience* (Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2018) — yet another highly regarded publication.

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# Kyu-Nahm Jun Awarded a Humanities Center Faculty Fellowship



*Kyu-Nahm Jun*

Associate Professor Kyu-Nahm Jun, Ph.D., was awarded a Humanities Center Faculty Fellowship for her project, “Fiscal Crisis, Austerity, and the Prospects of Democratic Governance and Public Participation: Evidence from U.S. Municipalities.” The fellowship will fund data collection

for her research in understanding the impact of financial emergency and fiscal austerity on democratic governance and participation at the local level. This research will assemble information about public participation during times of fiscal crisis when local democracy is suspended by the state takeover of local governance. The main research questions are:

1. Does the fiscal health or fiscal emergency of a municipality affect the level of local participation?
2. What has been the impact of the state takeover of municipal finances and management on public participation in U.S. local jurisdictions?

Jun’s research is motivated by the fiscal crisis that many U.S. municipalities faced during and after the recent recession. Many states implemented intervention programs to resolve local fiscal exigencies with divergent strategies. In 2012, Michigan adopted a stringent “emergency manager” law that dramatically increased the authority of emergency managers in state intervention processes to address local fiscal crises. The law received a great deal of criticism for its impact on local democratic governance.

As the power of all democratically elected local officials is suspended under the current law, many communities are considered to be *de facto* disenfranchised by the installation of an emergency manager, making it crucial to investigate the effects of state receivership systems adopted by various states, such as the emergency manager system in Michigan.

“We need to understand its impact on democratic governance as the state takeover limits the self-determination of municipalities in order to resolve a dire situation,” said Jun. “The extreme measure that states have taken will provide crucial lessons in dealing with the local fiscal crisis without the blatant disregard for local autonomy and democracy. So far, there has not been a systematic evaluation of the effects of the state receivership system on democratic governance.”

Jun will conduct her research using quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques, and the funding from the Humanity Center’s 2019 Faculty Fellowship will support the data collection for the quantitative analysis component of a broader research project on the fiscal health of municipalities and democratic governance. This research agenda is grounded on her previous research efforts, which have focused on examining public participation at the community level, specifically the neighborhood or community council system in municipalities. To evaluate the effects of public participation in urban governance, she studied the implementation process of the citywide Los Angeles neighborhood council system. As an extension of this line of inquiry, her most recent work examines the implementation of Community Advisory Councils in the city of Detroit, the first citywide participation system in Detroit’s history. The prior and ongoing research projects have positioned her to evaluate the effects of state receivership systems on democratic governance and public participation in municipalities.

Congratulations to Dr. Jun on receiving her Faculty Fellowship!

# In Memoriam: Distinguished University Professor of Political Science Emeritus Philip Abbott

— by Daniel Geller



Philip Abbott

**M**y first meeting with Phil Abbott was on the initial evening of my interview for the chair's position in the Department of Political Science in 2004. Although we both received our doctorates from Rutgers University, he was years ahead of me in the program, and I knew him only by his reputation among the graduate

students. For my interview at Wayne State, the dean of arts and sciences invited Phil to the dinner with us at the top of the Renaissance Center, and the reason was clear: to introduce me to the department's most accomplished faculty member. I joined Wayne State as chair of the Department of Political Science that August, and one of the principal reasons for my decision was the opportunity to work with a scholar of the stature of Philip Abbott.

Professor Abbott is the author of 14 books and three edited volumes. These works are among the most important in the fields of political theory and the American presidency. His book *Political Thought in America* is the leading text on American political theory. Abbott's prodigious scholarly record also includes the authorship of roughly 10 chapters in edited collections. He published over 35 sole-authored articles in such prestigious journals as *Perspectives on Politics*, *Polity*, *The Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Political Theory*, and *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. This immense body of exceptional work established him as one of the leading scholars in the discipline of political science.

Phil received his Ph.D. from Rutgers in 1971, began as an assistant professor at Wayne State in 1970 and was promoted to full professor in 1980. Long recognized as one of the nation's foremost political theorists, Phil had a profound appreciation for the relevance of his subject matter to contemporary life and its value in illuminating real-world ethical dilemmas. His works exhibited uncommon sensitivity to such issues, setting him apart from others working in the field of political theory. In the 1990s, Professor Abbott began to receive national recognition for his research in an

additional field — the American presidency. It was in this area of specialization that Phil's reputation achieved even greater heights. Five of his last eight critically acclaimed books analyzed the office and role of the presidency, strong and weak presidents, untimely presidential successions, and a masterwork on Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In keeping with Phil's extraordinary record of scholarship, he was the recipient of prestigious external awards, including his appointment by the American Fulbright Association as the Thomas Jefferson Professor of American Political Institutions at the University of Amsterdam. Dr. Abbott was also the recipient of every major internal award for scholarship that Wayne State University confers. He was the first faculty member in the Department of Political Science — and one of the few faculty members in liberal arts — to be inducted into the Academy of Scholars. He was the recipient of two Board of Governors' Faculty Recognition Awards, one for his book *Furious Fancies: American Political Thought in the Post-Liberal Era*, and a second for his two books, *Seeking Many Inventions: The Idea of Community in America* and *States of Perfect Freedom: Autobiography and American Political Thought*. Among his other awards were a Gershenson Distinguished Faculty Fellowship, a Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award and the Michigan Association of Governing Boards of Higher Education Award. In recognition of his stellar accomplishments as a scholar, Dr. Abbott was named Distinguished University Professor in 2005 — the highest academic honor Wayne State University can bestow.

Phil's remarkable record extended to his teaching and service. He directed over 10 doctoral dissertations and over 25 master's theses. He taught a large number of undergraduate and graduate courses, including the required doctoral seminar in Philosophic Problems of Social and Political Inquiry. In recognition of the superb quality of his teaching, Abbott received both the university's Graduate Mentor Award and the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Lastly, Phil Abbott made huge contributions to the governance of the department, the college and the university. He served as an elected member of the department's Policy and Personnel Committee and as its chair for nearly 20 years. Dr. Abbott held the role of assistant dean and graduate officer of the College of Liberal

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# Yoonjin Song publishes in 'PS: Political Science and Politics'



Yoonjin Song

Yoonjin Song received his Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science at Wayne State University in 2012. He served as professor of political science at Kyungpook National University, Republic of Korea, and is currently a civil servant in the Division of Dokdo Policy, Maritime

and Fishery Bureau, Pan East Sea Regional Headquarters at Gyeongsangbuk-do, ROK. Song recently published an article in the latest issue of *PS: Political Science and Politics* (vol. 52, number 2, 2019), one of the discipline's highest-ranked journals.

His article poses the question, "Which regions and countries are favored (and disfavored) by studies in the field of comparative politics?" The article uses descriptive statistics and social-network analysis to examine which regions and countries were selected for study over a period of the last 25 years in two U.S. academic journals (*Comparative Political Studies* and *Journal of Comparative Politics*), focusing on the field of comparative politics. The analysis shows that these journals strongly favor research on countries in Western Europe and North America. Song concludes that there are several possible explanations for this, but that the uneven distribution of published research with respect to continents and countries could indicate an underlying bias that may be of concern for research conducted in this field of study.

## Faculty milestones

The following faculty members have served the Department of Political Science and Wayne State University admirably for extended periods of time: **John Strate** (35 years), **Timothy Bledsoe** (30 years), **Kevin Deegan-Krause** (20 years) and **Daniel Geller** (15 years).

## Political science students succeed

### B.A./B.P.A. Students

#### Phi Beta Kappa: American Honor Society for Liberal Arts Major Designees for 2018-19

Abbas Abdallah  
Jake Clor  
Fatima Dakroub  
Dalia Ibrahim

#### Presentations:

**Kristina Curtiss** presented "Elections, Election Monitoring, and Venezuela's Political Crisis" at the Wayne State University UROP Conference, March 2019

**Dalia Ibrahim** presented "Examining the Role of Accounts of Past Atrocities (Collective Memory) in Mobilizing Support for Ethno-Nationalist Political Agendas" at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Kennesaw State University, April 2019

**Zoe Pidegon** presented "Examining the Rise of Heritage Populism in the Country of France in Relation to the 2017 Presidential Election?" at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Kennesaw State University, April 2019

**Sheham Saif** presented "A Look into the Constitutional Arrangement and Configuration of the Electoral Process of the 1990 Croatian Election which provided for Ethno-national Political Entrepreneurship" at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Kennesaw State University, April 2019

**John Sedarous** presented "The Success of Political Entrepreneurs Within Divided Societies" at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Kennesaw State University, April 2019

# David Jackson named Professor of Service Excellence at Bowling Green State University



David Jackson

David Jackson, who received his Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science at Wayne State University in 1999, wears many hats, including professor of political science at Bowling Green State University, Faculty Association president and political expert. Through these roles and others, Jackson has performed a

wide range of service to Bowling Green, his profession and the community. As a result, he was granted a Professorship of Service Excellence at Bowling Green State University's annual Faculty Excellence Awards on April 16.

The title is conferred upon BGSU faculty members who have established national and international recognition through professional service, public service and external engagement. In his nomination of Jackson for this award, Dr. Neal Jesse, Political Science Professor of Teaching Excellence, highlighted Jackson's service to BGSU as

president of the Faculty Association and his engagement with national media: "Dr. Jackson provides an invaluable service to BGSU as president of the BGSU-FA. Thus, through two contracts, Dr. Jackson has been central to not only the cooperative relationship between faculty and administration on campus, but he has also engaged with the national organization and earned national recognition for his efforts. Jackson's unique perspectives on U.S. politics have also earned him national and international recognition. His work has helped frame the emerging role of celebrity on political thought through a lens of academic research and civic responsibility."

In addition to these areas of service, Jackson is known for his interest in Poland, including the Polish diaspora in the United States. He has written about the role of music in the creation and maintenance of the Polish-American identity and hosts the *Sunday Morning Polka Show* on WXUT, 88.3 FM. This interest led to a Fulbright Fellowship to teach for a semester at the University of Lodz in Poland. While there, he taught U.S. Government, Media and Politics, and Canadian Government. Jackson arrived at Bowling Green State University in 1997 as an adjunct instructor, advancing to the rank of full professor in 2015.

**Zachary Szymanski** presented "Oil and Politics: The Dynamics of the US-Saudi Alliance: Does Oil or Geopolitical Interests Play a Greater Role in Justifying the US-Saudi Alliance Today?" at the All Politics is Local Conference, Walsh University, April 2019

**Jessica Thompson** presented "Political Trust and the Resurgence of Populism" at the 12th Global Studies Conference, Jagiellonian University, June 2019

## M.P.A. Students

### New positions:

**Will Cochran** started his new position as the constituent services representative at the office of Congressman Andy Levin.

M.P.A. student **Simone Bell** was named assistant to the city manager for the City of Novi.

## Ph.D. Students

### Dissertation Defenses:

John Girdwood (2018): Chair – Jeffrey Grynaviski

Amy Bromsen (2018): Chair – Michael Goldfield

Kevin Lorentz (2019): Chair – Brady Baybeck

Ilker Kalin (2018): Chair – Frederic Pearson

### Placements:

**Kim Saks McManaway** (2019): M.P.A. Director, University of Michigan, Flint. Chair – Ewa Golebiowska

**Nicole Gerring** (2018): Visiting Fellow, Kroc Institute, Notre Dame University. Chair – Sharon Lean

**Connor Sutton** (2018): Visiting Assistant Professor, Rhodes College. Chair – Daniel Geller

Moldavanova story cont.

Moldavanova's research has been conducted on a variety of U.S. and foreign-based cultural organizations. A number of her studies focus on museums to illustrate the dynamic relationship that exists between two distinct narratives of intergenerational sustainability — institutional resilience and institutional distinctiveness. Her findings show that, in sustainable organizations, the tensions between these narratives are reconciled via sustainable management practices. Another work examines the social, political and demographic sources of variation in creative cultural capital in more than 3,100 U.S. counties, with results indicating that cultural industries are likely to thrive in communities that rely on different forms of social and religious capital as well as the presence of certain types of political culture legacy. This study links sustainability with intergenerational social equity and develops the notion of a socially responsible organization for the public and nonprofit sectors.

Among her book chapters, Moldavanova contributed a piece titled "Sustainability Research in U.S. Public Administration: Pillar Tensions and Synergies," which appears in *The Handbook of American Public Administration* (George Frederickson and Edward Stazyk, eds., MA: Edward Elgar, 2018). This chapter is based on a systematic review of sustainability research published in the top 10 public administration and policy journals during the past quarter-century. It discusses the major themes established in public administration sustainability research as well as the theoretical developments and empirical contributions that have emerged from this body of work. That a junior scholar such as Moldavanova was selected to write a chapter for a compendium of this nature speaks to both her reputation and stature in her field.

Congratulations to Dr. Moldavanova on her superb research record and well-deserved tenure and promotion!

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Taylor story cont.

Taylor's work focuses on how risk, hazard and disasters are managed in the United States. Her area of study encompasses policy learning, the generation of information in policy decision-making and the politics of disaster policy. Analysis of disaster mitigation policy is valuable because disasters often reveal physical and social vulnerabilities in a community. For example, findings indicate that women, children, minorities and individuals on the lower end of the economic spectrum are more susceptible to the effects of a disaster and find recovery more difficult.

Taylor has received funding from the Wayne State University Research Grant Program for the study, "Policy Learning after Disaster." In addition, she was awarded a grant in 2018 as principal investigator from the National Science Foundation for a research project titled, "RAPID: Constraints on Policy Learning after Disaster." The study will explore the limits on policy-learning about disaster mitigation after a community has experienced an event. Taylor will also seek to understand why one community may be more vulnerable to a disaster than its neighbor. According to her thesis, local governments often attempt to engage in learning about how to reduce future disaster

risks but find it difficult to see change enacted. Hurricane Harvey, which hit Texas in August 2017, provides a unique case for understanding the limits on policy learning because of the range of communities it affected. Taylor and her team will collect data through interviews with local government officials in communities affected by Hurricane Harvey. Research will focus on the types of sources a community looks to for information, whether the information received is credible and whether local government officials tend to be myopic in their approaches.

Taylor received a second grant in 2018 from the National Science Foundation as co-principal investigator. The umbrella project is titled "CRISP 2.0 Type 2, Collaborative Research: Water and Health Infrastructure Resilience and Learning (WHIRL)," and is under the direction of Shawn McElmurry and Matthew Seeger. Taylor, as co-PI, will receive a \$360,000 award over four years for her portion of the project.

Congratulations to Dr. Taylor on her exceptional research program and her tenure and promotion!

Abbott story cont.

Arts for three years, served one or more terms on over a half-dozen college committees, and, in 2001, was named president of the Liberal Arts Faculty Council. Professor Abbott was an elected member of the Academic Senate for over a decade, and he chaired the policy committee of that body over a period of multiple years. In toto, his service to the university included membership on over 30 different standing or ad hoc units and committees.

In closing, I wish to note that Philip Abbott's reputation as a scholar and the status he conferred on the Department of

Political Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Wayne State University is without equal. With his passing, the university and the discipline have lost a great scholar; the department has lost its leader; Patti, Megan, Josh and Kevin have lost a husband, father, and grandfather; and I have lost a friend. Nevertheless, the insight and wisdom provided in his works lives on.

Daniel Geller  
Chair  
Department of Political Science

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## New scholarship for undergraduate political science students



Keith Braun

The Keith Braun Scholarship, which became active this year, was created to support students in both the political science and economics departments at Wayne State University. Keith B. Braun is a partner in the Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, law firm of Comiter, Singer, Baseman & Braun, LLP. He received his J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law

School, where he was an associate editor of the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*. Braun studied political science and economics at Wayne State University and graduated with his bachelor's in 1981.

This scholarship fund is established to recognize scholastic achievement, encourage continued progress and provide assistance to students in financing their educations in the departments of political science and economics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wayne State University.

Our thanks to Keith Braun for his generous gift to the students of the Department of Political Science!



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# The Political Current

## Alumni news and information for future newsletters

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Year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Your current position (title and employer) \_\_\_\_\_

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Your news \_\_\_\_\_

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