

# THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### Matthew Lebo, Chair Department of Political Science

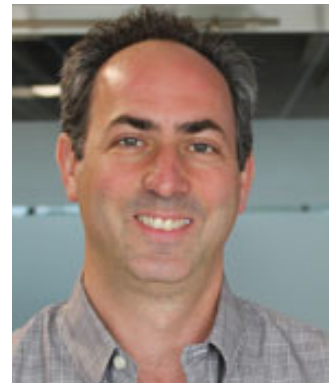
Last year was a more unusual year at Western than we could have ever imagined but we are ready to get back to (close to) normal in Fall 2021. While faculty and students stayed mostly off campus, we still managed to accomplish a lot from a distance in 2020-21.

We have made many changes to our programs – undergraduate, MA, PhD, and MPA – that will streamline them and improve the student experience and preparation for the job market. At the undergraduate level, we've added new classes in applied research methods and made it easier for new majors and honours specialists to take a broader set of courses within the field.

Our Political Science faculty have had many individual successes as well with dozens of publications, several forthcoming books, and a new SSHRC grant for Dr. Cameron Anderson. Among the many publications we have been working on is: *Across Boundaries: Essays in Honour of Robert A. Young*, edited by our Professor Cristine de Clercy, along with Anna Esselment (a graduate of our doctoral program) and two others. The tribute to Professor Young features essays by esteemed current and former faculty members in Western's Political Science and Economics departments (Carols Agocs, Andy Sancton, Martin Horak, Ron Wintrobe, Tom Courchene, Michael Keating), former graduate students (Allison Bramwell) and many noted analysts from Canada, Italy, and Scotland

Additionally, Dr. Anderson, along with Dr. Alcantara and Dr. Biswas-Melamphy are editing the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* and Dr. Laura Stephenson launched the new Centre for the Study of Political Behaviour and continues to lead the Consortium on Electoral Democracy (C-Dem) and the Canadian Election Study. These endeavors are raising Western's profile in the international community of political and social scientists.

Last, a new faculty member is joining us this fall, Associate Professor Amanda Friesen who studies political psychology, biology and politics, and race, gender, and politics. We look forward to welcoming Dr. Friesen and seeing our students in person soon!

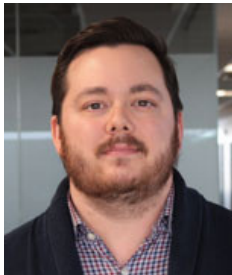


# GRADUATE PROGRAM

## A Message from the Graduate Chair

*Despite a very challenging year due to COVID-19, our graduate students were able to make substantial progress on their degrees and were active in winning scholarships, publishing papers, and participating in conferences. Congratulations to our students for persevering through this difficult year!*

## PROFILES OF RECENT SSHRC WINNERS:



**John Kennedy** is a senior PhD candidate in the Political Science department, where he specializes in Political Behaviour and Political Communication. His dissertation research, supervised by Dr. Mathieu Turgeon, focuses on understanding new framing effects of synthetic media formats, such as DeepFake video and voice-cloning audio technologies, on disinformation processing and acceptance. This research will also capture how these new synthetic formats can be utilized to understand technological barriers of vulnerable populations and how they are likely to engage with problematic information. He has published research in Governance, Politics, Groups, and Identities, Frontiers in Political Science, and Political Science Review.



**John Santos** has just finished his first year of PhD studies in the Department of Political Science. His interests are political behaviour, public opinion, and quantitative research methods. He hopes to use his SSHRC funding to conduct original survey research to explore how citizens form preferences on complex policy problems. He has co-authored book chapters on voting behaviour in the 2017 Calgary municipal and polling accuracy in the 2015 Alberta provincial election. Previously, he worked in the market research industry.

## Recent Student Publications (students in bold)

Alcantara, Christopher, Sheri Longboat, and **Shanaya Vanhooren**. 2020. "Improving First Nations Water Security Through Governance." Canadian Public Administration 63 (2).

**Girard, Tyler**. 2021. "Reconciling the Theoretical and Empirical Study of International Norms: A New Approach to Measurement." American Political Science Review 115(1).

**Kennedy, John**, Christopher Alcantara and Dave Armstrong. 2021. "Do Governments Keep Their Promises? An Analysis of Speeches from the Throne, 1962-2013." Governance 34 (3): 917-934.

**McMahon, Nicole**, Christopher Alcantara and Laura Stephenson. 2020. "The Qualifying Field Exam: What Is It Good For?" PS: Political Science & Politics 53 (1): 94-99.

**Roberts, Jeremy**. 2020. "The Populist Radical Right in the US: New Media and the 2018 Arizona Senate Primary." Politics and Governance.

Samar El-Masri, **Tammy Lambert**, and Joanna R. Quinn (editors). 2020. Transitional Justice in Comparative Perspective – Preconditions for Success (Palgrave Macmillan, February).

Taylor, Zack and **Alec Dobson**. 2020. "Power and Purpose: Canadian Municipal Law in Transition." IMFG Paper.



Dr. Christopher Alcantara  
Chair, Graduate Program  
Contact :calcant@uwo.ca

## THE GRADUATE PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Graduate enrolments in the program: 21 MAs; 29 PhDs

MA research assistants hired: 3

PhD research assistants hired: 5

Number of academic publications by graduate students: 11

Number of external scholarship winners: 2 SSHRC (1 CGS-D; 1 CGS-DDF); 6 OGS;

This fall, we'll be introducing some exciting changes to our MA and PhD programs. Details can be found on our website:

<https://politicalscience.uwo.ca/graduate/index.html>

# GRADUATE DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI

## A Message from the Director of Placement

A few years ago, the Department created a new administrative position devoted to the placement of our doctoral students entitled 'Director of Placement'. Professor Rado Dimitrov held this position for an initial three-year term and made excellent progress toward instituting a range of professional support and training for our doctoral students. Following in his footsteps, I have taken on this role as of July 1, 2021.

The Director of Placement has come to be an essential piece of the architecture of professional training and mentorship that our Department provides its doctoral students. As Director of Placement, there are three key goals that I am working towards – culture, training, advice and support. At the top of the list is continuing our positive strides in fostering a vibrant professional culture amongst our doctoral students. Fundamentally, this entails communication to and interactions with doctoral students at all stages of the program around what is needed to build a 'hirable record'. Closely aligned with culture is providing professional training designed to assist students with identifying the features of and building a hirable record throughout their time in the program. Training includes workshops on academic conferences, article and book publishing and crafting job application materials like cover letters, CV's, teaching dossiers and job talks. The last piece is providing individualized advice and support to senior doctoral students to assist in preparing and supporting their entry into the job market. We trust that these focussed efforts in supporting our doctoral students will continue to enrich of doctoral program.

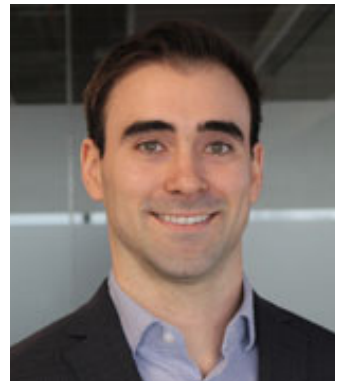
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## ACHIEVEMENTS OF RECENT ALUMNI:



**Dr. Zac Spicer** – After graduating from Western with his PhD, Dr. Spicer completed post-doctoral fellowships at Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Toronto. He is now an Associate Professor in York University's School of Public Policy and Administration. He has published widely on local politics and public administration with articles in the top journals in the field (such as *Urban Affairs Review*, *Journal of Urban Affairs* and *Urban Studies*), many book chapters and three books

**Dr. Tyler Girard** – Having just recently defended his PhD thesis entitled "Explaining the Origins and Evolution of the Global Financial Inclusion Agenda", Dr. Girard will soon commence a SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Duke University. His work on international norms and financial inclusion has been published in the *American Political Science Review*, *International Studies Perspectives* and *Journal of International Development*.



Dr. Cameron Anderson  
Director of Placement  
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*For more information on the Development Program, please visit:*  
[https://www.politicalscience.uwo.ca/graduate/student\\_resources.html](https://www.politicalscience.uwo.ca/graduate/student_resources.html)



# UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

## A Message from the Undergraduate Chair:

The Political Science department encountered an extremely challenging set of circumstances in the past 15 months or so. With the arrival in full of the pandemic in March of 2020, we engaged in a complex process of placing all of our courses online for the final weeks of the term, and then made significant adjustments in our final exam procedures so as to enable proper evaluation of our students without placing excessive pressure on them. Over the next several months, we prepared for another year of fully online instruction. Some of our larger courses received university-level support for the creation of these courses, but most of our professors sought out all available information so as to do this work for themselves. Across the board, we put in a very substantial amount of extra effort to bring our offering of recorded lectures and Zoom-based class meetings as closely into line with our usual educational experience as we could. Heartfelt thanks go to all our faculty and staff for their continued commitment to our students despite the adversities of the pandemic.

## AWARD WINNERS

We are proud to announce our five major award winners from this year:

Anne Campbell – Gold Medal, Honours Political Science

Laurent Ruffo-Caracchini – Gold Medal, Double Honours Major

Zamir Fakirani – Gold Medal, Politics, Philosophy and Economics

Madison Pasternak – Gold Medal, International Relations

Julie Anker – Martin Westmacott Award

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR AWARD WINNERS!



## Program Developments

Our flagship 1020E course will still stand as a full-year introduction to the discipline. However, we have broken up our year-long second-year courses which introduced the sub-disciplines: Canadian politics, political theory, IR and Comparative politics. In their place we have developed half-year Foundations courses in each area, to be paired with additional half-courses intended to be topical or otherwise compelling to our students. Most of our other second-year courses have also been reworked as half-courses. We feel that these changes will produce a program that is more flexible as well as enticing. We have also created a second methods class, and so our honours students will get crucial training in qualitative and quantitative methodology at the second- as well as third-year levels.



Dr. Nandita Biswas Mellamphy  
Chair, Undergraduate Program  
Contact: [nbiswasm@uwo.ca](mailto:nbiswasm@uwo.ca)



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM



Dr. Joseph Lyons  
Director, Local Government Program  
Contact: jlyons7@uwo.ca



## MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

We are very proud of all that our Local Government Program students have accomplished this year. Apart from their coursework and research, many of our students have been actively involved in the fight against the pandemic. From emergency service workers like firefighters, paramedics, and police officers, to senior municipal leaders like department heads and chief administrative officers, to managers and administrators working more behind the scenes in areas like finance, IT, planning, and parks and recreation our students have been busy balancing their demanding course loads and family responsibilities all the while providing essential public services. We are very proud of all of you!

Congratulations and best wishes to our graduating students! We hope to get the chance to celebrate your accomplishments in person soon! We also look forward welcoming new and continuing students back to campus this fall!

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## Program Developments

The Local Government Program is pleased to announce that we have received university approval to offer a permanent online GDPA program! The initial cohort will begin this September. Details about the online GPDA program can be found here:  
<https://localgovernment.uwo.ca/diploma/online/index.html>

The Local Government Program (LGP) has also recently teamed with the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry to make our MPA and GDPA programs options for their new **MD+ Program**. The MD+ Program allows Doctor of Medicine students to obtain other Western University credentials to complement their medical degree. We are very excited to see what comes of this partnership!

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## CAPPA/IPAC National Student Thought and Leadership Award Winner

We are pleased to announce that Michael Longeway has been selected as the Local Government Program's recipient of the National Student and Thought Leadership Award! The National Student and Thought Leadership Awards in Public Administration is a joint initiative of the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA) and the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC), which aims to recognize talent in Canadian public administration and policy programs at the regional and national levels. As part of this award, Michael will be invited to attend and present his research at the Annual IPAC National Conference in August.



***Congratulations, Michael!***

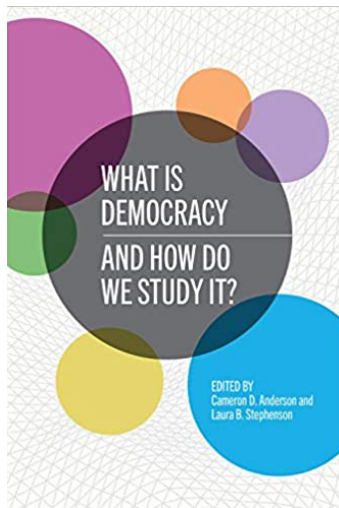
# FACULTY NEWS

The Department welcomed Dr. Amanda Friesen in August 2021. Dr. Friesen comes to Western from Indiana University, where she specialized in political psychology, religion and politics, gender and politics, behavioral genetics, and biology and politics. We are thrilled to have her join the Department!

Dr. Richard Vernon celebrated 50 years of teaching at Western in 2020. Dr. Vernon is a Distinguished University Professor and current Research Chair in the Department. Congratulations, Dr. Vernon!

Alexis Lerner, Presidential Data Postdoctoral Fellow in Political Science at Western, has accepted a job at the United States Naval Academy! The tenure track position begins in December and is in International Relations and Comparative Politics with a focus on Russia and Eastern Europe. Congratulations Alexis!

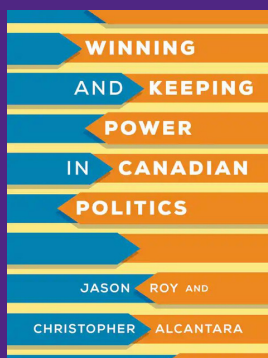
Dr. Matt Lebo, Chair of the Department of Political Science, has been named a co-recipient of the prestigious 2020 Excellence in Mentoring Award by the Society of Political Methodology. According to the citation, "Professor Lebo has been an active and engaged methods mentor, as reflected in his more than a dozen publications co-authored with students, many published in prestigious journals such as Political Analysis, the American Journal of Political Science, and the Journal of Politics." Of particular note is his work with underrepresented groups: "Of the nearly 20 nominations the committee received, a third were from women and more than 20 percent were from international students." According to one letter from one of the women scholars who nominated Professor Lebo, "Women are significantly underrepresented in political science and particularly political methodology. Efforts like Matt's go a long way toward encouraging women to be more active and successful in the field." Congratulations, Matt!



Professors Cameron Anderson and Laura Stephenson edited the recent book entitled *What is Democracy and How Do We Study It?* The book includes chapters from many Western Political Science faculty members past and present such as Charles Jones, Richard Vernon, Dave Armstrong, Bruce Morrison, Joe Lyons, Nandita Biswas Mellamphy, Dan Bousfield, Andy Sancton, Rob Leone.

This book takes a core question that motivates research in political science – what is democracy? – and presents, in a single volume, original research demonstrating a variety of approaches to studying it. The approaches and related methods covered by the chapters in this book include normative political theory, positivist quantitative analysis, behaviouralism, critical theory, post-structuralism, historical institutionalism, process tracing, case studies, and literature reviews. This book will be enlightening for students of democracy as well as those interested in research design and methodological approaches.

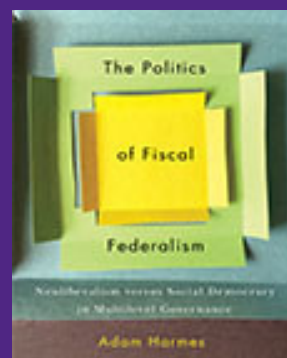
## New Books from Faculty:



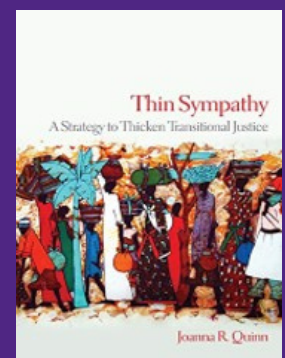
Chris Alcantara



Marta Dyczok



Adam Harmes



Joanna Quinn



# DEPARTMENT NEWS AND EVENTS



The Consortium on Electoral Democracy/Consortium de la démocratie électorale (C-dem) is a nationwide research network addressing issues central to a robust nation – political engagement, representation, public opinion, electoral behaviour and systems, electioneering and factors that shape and make policy. Dr. Laura Stephenson is principal investigator of the project, newly awarded \$2.5 million from SSHRC.



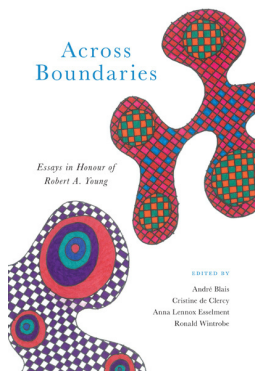
Dr. Stephenson has also recently launched a new research centre – the Centre for the Study of Political Behaviour. The CSPB brings together researchers from across the Faculty of Social Science, as well as King's University College and the Ivey School of Business, to study political behaviour. "Our goal is to enhance the study of political behaviour at Western, to bring people together and to facilitate interdisciplinary discussions,"



Professor Nigmendra Narain will be the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association President for the 2021-2022 year.

In speaking with UWOFA, Prof. Narain said "I think the journey to get involved with the union is not just making a choice to get involved, but it's also realizing that you're part of a collective effort to do things," Narain said. "It doesn't ride on any one individual; it rides on all of us folks working together, which is another thing that attracted me to the union: I like the teamwork aspect of being involved in UWOFA."

Congratulations, Prof. Narain!



A book of essays honouring our late Department Faculty member Robert A. Young (1950-2017) has been released, co-edited by Faculty member Dr. Cristine de Clercy.

"Young's body of work is exemplary in its attention to concrete policy issues as well as in the breadth of his interest across many subfields of political science. Across Boundaries honours his distinguished career and gives students, professors, and practitioners further insight into his scholarship" (McGill-Queens University Press)

## POST DOCTORAL FELLOWS



Dr. Alexis Lerner



Dr. Andrew Basso



Dr. Joanie Bouchard



Cameron Anderson  
Co-editor  
Codirecteur



Christopher Alcantara  
Assistant Editor  
Directeur adjoint



Nandita Biswas Mellamphy  
Assistant Editor  
Directrice adjointe



Martin Horak  
Book Review Editor  
Responsable des recensions

English Editorial  
Team of the  
Canadian Journal  
of Political Science  
2020-2023



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*If you would like to be profiled in a future newsletter please contact [sdoyle3@uwo.ca](mailto:sdoyle3@uwo.ca)*

# ALUMNI PROFILE-----

## Dr. Mike McGregor

Dr. Mike McGregor is a graduate of the PhD program at Western where he was co-supervised by Professors Cameron Anderson and Laura Stephenson. After teaching at Bishop's University, he is currently in a tenure-track position at Ryerson University's Department of Politics and Public Administration.

His work is on attitudes, motivations, and voter behaviour at local and national levels in Canada. Dr. McGregor has published widely in journals such as Canadian Journal of Political Science, Electoral Studies, Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties, Nations and Nationalism, Political Psychology and Urban Affairs Review. He is the co-author or co-editor of three books, most recently Big City Elections in Canada (University of Toronto Press). He has also won numerous research grants, is the lead investigator of the SSHRC-funded Canadian Municipal Election Study, and was awarded an Early Researcher Award by the Government of Ontario.



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