



**Pi Sigma Alpha Beta Pi
Pennsylvania State University, University Park
Chapter Activity Report 2016**

OPEN 25

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The Beta Pi chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha began the academic year with pride in having received a 2014-15 best chapter award and a strong commitment to continuing the work of the previous Executive Board by fostering the professional, social and academic development of political science and international relations students. This year's programming included more service activities and events that fostered cooperation and dialogue with identity based clubs. Members met biweekly over pizza with guest speakers to learn about and discuss current events, faculty research and professional development opportunities within and beyond Penn State. While the initiation banquet in the fall and the Alumni Career Workshop in the spring continue to draw the most participation, the club's sense of purpose is increasingly rooted in its ongoing programming and these activities have garnered the respect and appreciation of the faculty, alumni and administration at both the Department and the College level.

The Penn State chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha is grateful for the financial support of the National Office, which enabled the club to hold an initiation banquet for the fourth year. This event continues to be an effective means of promoting member participation and pride. Beta Pi seeks to provide an intellectual home for undergraduate Political Science and International Affairs majors where they can share conversation about politics, support each other in career planning and be recognized for their excellent research. Support from the National Chapter has facilitated the achievement of this goal by providing funds for a socially galvanizing signature event. Thanks to this support, Beta Pi has been able to raise funds to sponsor a best undergraduate thesis award. The club also appreciated the National Chapter's study break competition. They enjoyed posing with the Nittany Lion and were very happy to win funds for a party during December finals, which also enabled the club to say a proper good bye and congratulations to the outgoing president Rebecca Stanley as she graduated and welcome Terresa Adams into the role.

I. Community and Professional Development Activities

A. Initiation Banquet

Beta Pi held an initiation banquet on December 3, 2015 at the Atherton Hotel in State College, PA. 12 new inductees were welcomed into the organization and the chapter formally recognized 11 members inducted in spring 2015. The executive council, club advisor, members of the Political Science faculty and two members of the Department's Alumni Board of Visitors witnessed the induction. Rose Leqiu Luwei, a renown television journalist and pioneer of the blogosphere in China, who is also a PhD candidate in the Penn State Department of Journalism, gave the keynote address: "Can social media change China?" Ms. Luwei has been a major advocate of political transparency and a free press in China. She is a founder of the 1510 Foundation in Hong Kong, which promotes civic education among young people in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong through seminars and summer camps. Her blog has millions of followers in China. She launched a website to promote citizen journalism in China in 2007 that was enormously influential among Chinese netizens until the government shut it down in 2014.

B. Department Service

Alumni Career Workshop and Banquet

Beta Pi continued the role it has played for the last several years in coordinating the Political Science Department's alumni career workshop. This year's workshop, held on April 14, 2016, welcomed 20 alumni and over 60 political science majors. The workshop paired students with highly successful Penn State Political Science alumni working in government, law, business, communications, and finance to discuss the students' career goals in individual 30-minute sessions. Our alumni mentors brought a wealth of experience in defense, energy politics and law, legislative affairs, speech writing, marketing, finance, anti-trust law and politics to share with students. While all students benefit from the support of Penn State Political Science alumni and the examples of what one can do with a political science major, the event is particularly important to students whose family and social networks lack the resources to help them envision career goals and chart a path to achieve them. Pi Sigma Alpha promotes the event to students, handles scheduling and alumni communication, and manages the flow of students during the event.

Pi Sigma Alpha members also assumed the role of department liaison to undergraduates for the banquet following the workshop. Pi Sigma Alpha members generated undergraduate awareness and participation in the banquet and supported the department staff in hosting the event.

Consultation for Bachelor of Arts Revision

Pi Sigma Alpha devoted the second meeting of the Spring Semester to consultation with faculty about revisions to the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. The Political Science Department added a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and a Bachelor

of Science in Social Data Analytics to its repertoire of majors in the fall of 2015. With these new majors in place the Political Science Department began considering how the current Bachelor of Arts in Political Science could better prepare students to be political, economic and social leaders and for the job market in general. With the facilitation of the club advisor, Amy Linch, Pi Sigma Alpha members discussed what they valued about their Political Science or International Politics major and offered suggestions for enhancing the program based on their experience with concurrent majors and coursework that they found particularly useful. In addition to bringing the important perspective of successful undergraduates to the faculty spearheading the revisions, the meeting generated conversation between juniors and seniors about course selection, research plans and the decisions that helped them to secure jobs. Seniors shared advice they wished they had received with juniors and the students collectively discussed the value of the political science major.

C. Workshop: Marketing the Political Science Major

On March 14, 2016 Pi Sigma Alpha hosted Penn State Career Services for a workshop on translating the knowledge and skills they have developed through the political science major to potential employers. Students worked together to identify their attributes as job candidates and understand how to communicate the benefits of those qualities to employers effectively.

D. Careers with the Federal Government

Every Friday before home football games students met with alumni in roundtable sessions to discuss the range of possible careers with the federal government and strategies for targeting and applying for jobs. Among the topics this year were presidential appointments for entry-level government employees, the typical day of a State Department staffer and civilian careers with the Department of Defense. Thane Fake, a presidential appointee by President Clinton who served as assistant to Attorney General Janet Reno before building a career as a budget analyst and emergency management specialist, helped students to identify and apply for government positions and to see how they might parlay volunteer experience into paid positions.

E. Community Service

In November the club participated in a Thanksgiving Basket Drive for families in Centre County by donating a laundry sized basket of the elements of a Thanksgiving meal and a gift card for a family of 6.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xDRsdUDK STRyH6-tjwTtP83Wbf07sc8c9Z-o8H Hg/edit?pref=2&pli=1#gid=0>

On April 2, 2016, Pi Sigma Alpha volunteered as organizers of "Run with the Law," a 5K race/walk co-sponsored by the Center for Alternatives in Community Justice, the Multicultural Undergraduate Law Student Association and the Black Law Student Association to strengthen relationships across campus organizations.

F. Social Media Presence

Check out Penn State Pi Sigma Alpha on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/pisigmaalpa/>

II. Intellectual Leadership Activities

A. Guest Speakers on Political Science Research and Global Affairs

Mr. Devron Lovick from World In Conversation spoke on NATO Dialogues on September 30, 2015

Dr. Errol Henderson from the Political Science Department presented on his book, *African Realism?* on October 15, 2015

Dr. DE Thomas, presented "Nuclear Weapons: The Sequel. How the 20th Century's Worst Idea is Making a Comeback in the 21st Century" on October 28, 2015

Dr. Laura Roost presented her work on transitional justice in Rwanda on February 22, 2016

B. Events Hosted by Pi Sigma Alpha

"Winter on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom"

Pi Sigma Alpha welcomed students from across the University to a screening of a documentary about Euromaidan on November 11, 2016. Dr. Lynch and Kostanca Dhima, a Political Science graduate student, spoke about the movement. Many students from the Ukrainian Students Association attended, some who had been in Kiev during the protests. A lively discussion followed the film.

Penn State's Washington Semester Program

Pi Sigma Alpha welcomed students of political science, international politics and economics to a presentation by Katie Sullivan, coordinator of the Washington Semester Program, on January 25th. Past participants in the program spoke about their experiences interning with different branches of the Federal Government and answered questions about the program.

"Great Britain at the Crossroads"

Donley Studlar from University of Strathclyde in Glasgow spoke about Brexit and political extremism in the UK on March 28th.

C. Group Activities

“Law and Human Rights in Afghanistan: The Status of Women and Girls” at the School of International Affairs on September 16th.

“Wealth and Democracy in American Elections”

Seven Pi Sigma Alpha students traveled to DC to meet with alumni and attend a lecture by Darrell West, Douglas Dillon Chair in Governance at the Brookings Institution and author of *Billionaires: Reflections on the Upper Crust*, sponsored by Penn State’s Center for American Political Responsiveness.

Washington DC Trip

Eight students traveled to Washington DC from April 14-16th to attend the conference, *Politics, Conflict and Development* at the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia International University. While in DC the students connected with alumni to visit the Department of Justice and the Department of Defense. The club worked with the Political Science Association and the Multicultural Undergraduate Law Association to meet the University Association of Student Affairs funding requirements for the trip.

D. Best Thesis Award

Each year Pi Sigma Alpha Beta Pi presents an award recognizing the best thesis in political science or international politics. The award was developed as part of the club’s mission to encourage excellence in the study of politics by bringing attention to the intellectual creativity, personal dedication and social importance of research done by their undergraduate peers. The award was initially funded through a chapter activity grant. After the first year the club began fund raising activities to support the award.

A committee comprised of the Pi Sigma Alpha advisor, the Honors Program director and a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha Executive Council selected Andrea Mitchell-Meyer’s thesis from a pool of candidates nominated by their thesis advisors. Ms. Mitchell-Meyer’s thesis, *The New Direction For Health Aid?: Examining Aid Effectiveness In Relation To Horizontal And Vertical Delivery Of Health Services*, examines the relationship between health outcomes and the sector through which health aid is distributed in developing countries. She shows that long-term infant and maternal mortality rates are most favorably impacted when funding is channeled through the public sector.

E. SCUSA and NAFAC Conference

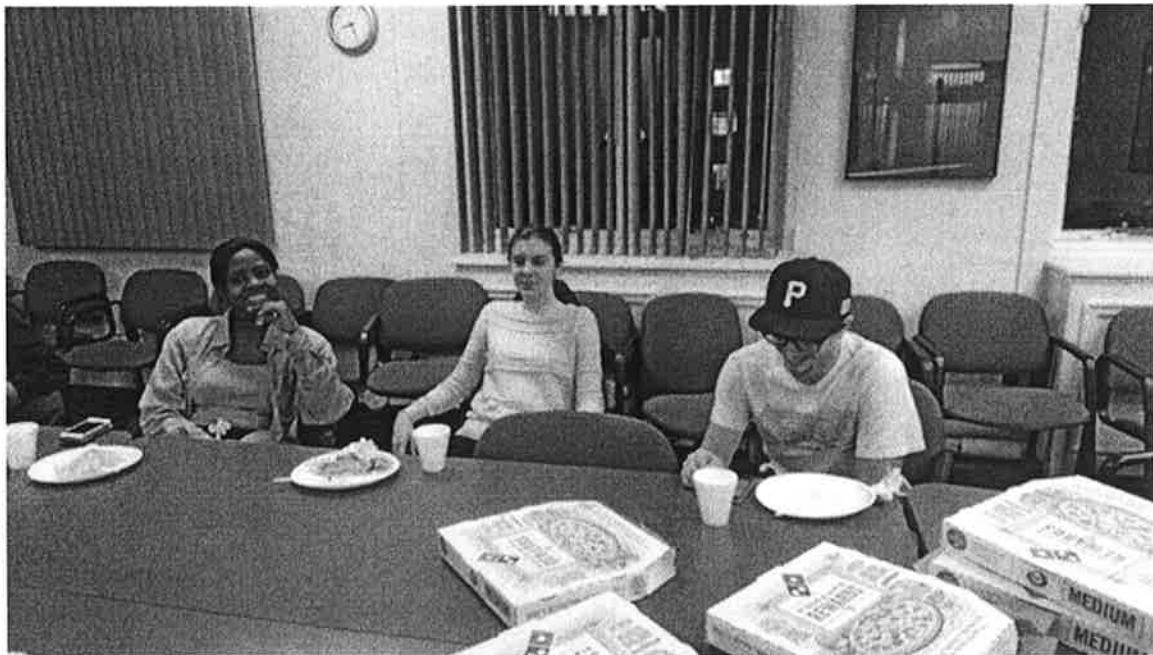
Each year the department sends two Pi Sigma Alpha students to the Student Conference on United States Affairs at West Point Academy and one student to the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference. Students are selected from Pi Sigma Alpha members in recognition of their excellent achievement and service to the Penn State community.

- Rebecca Stanley and John Macaulay represented Penn State at SCUSA in 2015.
- Hamsa Fayed represented Penn State at NAFAC in 2016.

III. Membership

At the beginning of the spring semester the club decided to establish a junior association membership for freshman and sophomores who are on track to meet the PSA requirements. The Executive Council encouraged members to bring potential junior members to meetings and created posters for outreach. Expanding the junior association membership will be a focus of the executive council during the 2016-17 academic year.

IV. Photos and Flyers



Fall 2015 president Rebecca Stanley (middle), Spring 2016 president Terresa Adams (left) and treasurer Marcus Spisso enjoy the study break party.



Students enjoy a study break thanks to the National Office photo contest!



Members of the new and outgoing executive councils gather after the induction ceremony with Lee Ann Banaszak, Chair of the Political Science, guest speaker Rose Leqiu Luwei and Amy Linch, Pi Sigma Alpha advisor.



Past president Yelizaveta Kotova, past vice president Shiva Darian, and future vice president Hamsa Fayed, celebrate president Rebecca Stanley's December 2015 graduation.



Club members listen to a guest speaker.



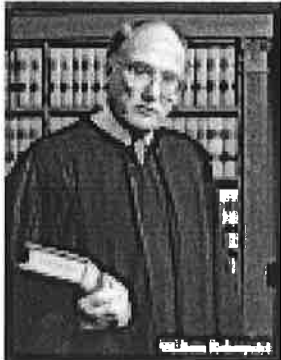
Marketing the Political Science Major workshop.



Professor Donley Studlar begins talk on Brexit.



Dr. Laura Roost shares her research on transitional justice in Rwanda.



William Roberts



Bill Clinton



Michelle Obama



John Q. Adams

What Do They Have In Common?



Pi Sigma Alpha -

The National Political Science Honor Society

Associate Member open to Freshmen and sophomores!

Membership Requirements: Juniors and seniors with 3.5 GPA or higher.

Biweekly Meetings: Start on Jan 25 @ 5pm.

Location: 302 Fund Lab.

FREE PIZZA!



Join Pi Sigma Alpha for a discussion of British politics and graduate school in the United Kingdom

*Monday, March 28th @ 5pm in 302 Pond Lab
Pizza Provided!*

Prof. Donley T. Studlar

University of Strathclyde

Professor in the School of Government and Public Policy and Director of the Centre for Government and Public Sector Policy in the International Public Policy Institute

Professor Studlar's research focuses on comparative public policy across Western democracies, including morality policy and risk factors for noncommunicable diseases such as tobacco, obesity, and alcohol.



Thanksgiving Basket Drive

Help Centre County families in need

Is your basket complete?

- Basket (Laundry basket size)
- \$20 Gift Card for the Turkey
 - Turkey Gravy
 - Bread Mixes (2)
 - Turkey Stuffing
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
 - Canned Yams (2)
 - Cranberry Sauce (2)
 - Canned Vegetables (2)
 - Canned Fruits (2)
 - Pie Crust Mix
 - Pie Filling
 - Applesauce (2 Jars)
- Bottled Beverages (Not requiring refrigeration)
- Decorative Thanksgiving Napkins and Plates