

November 2009



PLS post

YOUR MONTHLY CONNECTION TO MSU'S
UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISING IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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THIS MONTH in POLITICAL HISTORY

On November 5, 1844, Democratic candidate James K. Polk defeated Whig Party candidate Henry Clay to become the eleventh president of the United States. Democrats nominated Polk as the nation's first "dark horse" candidate on the ninth ballot of the Democratic National Convention, after former president Martin Van Buren lost his bid because of his opposition to annexing Texas, a position deemed unacceptable by Southerners and by former president Andrew Jackson.



President James K. Polk—Eleventh President of the United States, Currier & Ives, publishers, between 1866 and 1887.

United States should neither be sought nor declined. I have never sought it, nor should

I feel at liberty to decline it, if conferred upon me by the voluntary suffrages of my Fellow Citizens." Read Polk's acceptance letter in full in the American Memory collection Words and Deeds in American History: Selected Documents Celebrating the Manuscript Division's First 100 Years. News of his nomination was spread by the Morse telegraph system, which had just been invented.

Though a veteran of the House of Representatives (1825-39), where he had served as Speaker from 1835 to 1839; and a former governor of Tennessee (1839-41); *Continued on page 2.*

Provided by the Library of Congress



ADVISING APPOINTMENTS

Advisors are assigned according to the first letter of your last name. Use the online appointment system to book your next visit (polisci.msu.edu/under/advising.htm).

Express Advising: Tuesdays 1:30-4:00PM. No appointment needed!

Angie Debelak (A-K)
debelaka@msu.edu
306 South Kedzie Hall

Brian Egan (L-Z)
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348 South Kedzie Hall



Policy student excels at MSU & abroad



Juan in front of the Osaka Castle in Japan

Oftentimes, undergraduate students seek out opportunities to develop their academic and professional acumen outside of the classroom. This month, the Department of Political Science highlights Juan Loaiza for his commitment to his academic studies and extracurricular pursuits.

Currently, Loaiza is forging

ahead with his primary major in Economics and his second degree in Public Administration and Public Policy. In addition to his academics, Loaiza is assertive in his endeavors to connect to his local and global communities. His courage and persistence has enabled him to take part in many academic and professional adventures.

“When you are a Freshman, it is really important to become part of a group or an organization and take all of the extracurricular opportunities that they give you,” Loaiza emphasizes.

Currently, Loaiza is a member of the Brazilian Association and the Comunidad Latinoamericana. He claims, “both organizations, allied with my personal group of friends, give the necessary support to make my experience at MSU invaluable.” In turn, Loaiza has become an invaluable part of the MSU community himself. He is a Resident Mentor in South Hubbard, earned the Dean’s Assistantship Award, attended a semester in Washington, D.C., and completed an internship with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

Now in his final semesters of undergraduate study, Loaiza reflects on the memorable opportunities he has seized. Study abroad in Japan has been one of those memorable academic adventures. Through his time in Japan, Loaiza asserts that studying abroad helps “you realize the diversity of cultures, languages and people in our world. No matter what obstacles the road presents, my experience in Japan was one of the greatest of my life. Being in Japan gave me the opportunity to know great places such as Osaka Castle, Tokyo and Kyoto. Also, I used my time there to learn incredible things such as iaido (swordsmanship).” Loaiza serves as an excellent example of persistence and academic courage. He shows that no matter the place, the potential for learning abounds.



Juan practicing iaido in Japan

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Juan Loaiza near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Hometown:
Quito, Ecuador (born)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (since 1999)

Major: Economics

Second Degree:
Public Administration & Public Policy

Internship:
International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Study Abroad:
Japan
Washington, D.C.

ADVICE FOR PLS MAJORS

- ◆ Make every moment at MSU count!
- ◆ Be happy and take all the opportunities that come your way.
- ◆ If something goes wrong, keep trying.
- ◆ Read all the email that come to you. There is an incredible amount of opportunities that appear through the MSU mail system.
- ◆ Make yourself noticed. Faculty and staff could be extremely helpful and supportive.



This Month in Political History cont.

Continued from page 1. Polk entered the 1844 presidential campaign with little name recognition. “Who is James K. Polk?,” the opposition Whigs sniped, playing on his relative obscurity. An experienced and eloquent orator dubbed the “Napoleon of the Stump,” Polk campaigned vigorously, surprising many with his stalwart support of westward expansion—a hotly debated issue on which Clay disagreed. In the end, Polk’s policies won him 170 electoral votes to Clay’s 105. His margin of victory was only some 38,000 popular votes.

Resolved to serve only one term, Polk acted swiftly to fulfill his campaign promises. In just four years, he oversaw annexation of Texas, a settlement of the Oregon boundary dispute with Great Britain that secured the Oregon Territory for the United States, and reestablishment of an independent treasury system. The U.S. went to war with Mexico in April 1846; when the war ended in February 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the U.S. acquired territory from Mexico that eventually became California, New Mexico, Ari-zona, Nevada, Utah, and parts of

Colorado and Wyoming. Polk had presided over an expansion of U.S. territory second in scope only to that of the Louisiana Purchase.

Polk’s relentless hard work and considerable political accomplishments took their toll on his health. Full of enthusiasm and vigor when he entered office, Polk left the White House at the age of fifty-three exhausted by his years of public service. He died less than four months later at his new home, “Polk Place,” in Nashville, Tennessee.

Undergraduate Research Workshop



Resume Workshop for Undergraduate Researchers

Monday, November 9
5:15-6:15 PM
313 Bessey

How do you effectively present your research experience on your resume? It's so much more than just listing that you've participated in a research experience. You've had an opportunity that will set you apart from so many other college graduates, so learn how to package and present the knowledge, skills, and experiences you gained on resumes, work or grad school applications, and during interviews. Bring along your resume if you have one. This workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Linda Gross from the Career Center.

Want to be a better public speaker?



MSU Simply Speaking Toastmasters

Every Monday
12:00-1:00 PM
252 Erickson Hall

Being able to communicate your ideas effectively can help you be more successful in your academic career.

Toastmasters is an international organization dedicated to helping people develop their public speaking and leadership skills. Toastmasters can help you get over your fear of speaking in front of groups. Or if you are already a good speaker, Toastmasters can help you become even better! Everyone is welcome!

Marathon of Majors



Thursday, November 12
5:00-7:00 PM
1st Floor Bessey Hall

Twice each year--in November and in March--UUD hosts the Marathon of Majors, where academic advisers from all MSU colleges and other academic support offices are available to answer questions. Held in Bessey Hall, this event is a great opportunity for students to gather information, meet College advisers, and learn about potential majors.

While at the Marathon of Majors, obtain information about: specializations, internships, careers, transfer credit, study abroad, and tutoring.

Hawaii Study and Internship Program



Thursday, November 12
4:00 PM
122 Berkey Hall

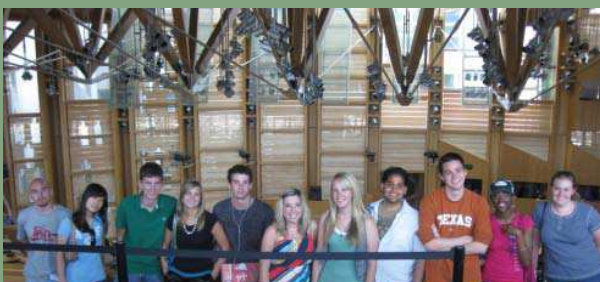
MSU's Hawaii Experience is an insider's view of native Hawaiian culture experienced on two distinctly different islands of Hawaii (The Big Island) and Oahu. Each summer, two unique programs are offered:

The **Study Program**, where students learn alongside University of Hawaii students.

The **Internship Program**, for MSU seniors, offers interns an opportunity to work alongside Honolulu professionals in a wide variety of venues.

For more info email hawaiiistudy@ssc.msu.edu to request an appointment.

UNITED KINGDOM: PLS Study Abroad



Earn Social Science (ISS) and/or Political Science (PLS) credit while studying British politics, society, and culture in two of the greatest cities in the United Kingdom, London and Edinburgh.

Visit the website for more details. Contact Professors Steve Kautz, Mike Colaresi or Brian Egan with questions.

Wednesday, Nov. 18
5:00-6:00PM
107 Bessey



November 2009

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Nov.26-27: University Closed for Thanksgiving Break



PLS post
Editor, Angie Debelak



12 Competencies Employers Seek in College Graduates

3 Acquiring Knowledge

Learning how to learn is just as important as the knowledge itself. No matter what your future holds, you'll continue to learn every day of your life. *To see all 12 competencies, click on the 12 above.*



CAREER RESOURCES:



Eva McSpartan continues to blog and provide insights on her career search as a senior here @ MSU.

PostGrad Ben is now blogging about his life after college. Working for a major company in Colorado, Ben comments about his work life, social factors, and other events that hit grads after college. He also offers a challenge to this year's grad in creating the ultimate "Spartan Bucket List."

Steps to Success

Career Workshop Series

Internships 101
 113 Student Services Building
 Mondays 2:00-3:00PM
 Offered until Nov.16

Network or Not-Work
 161 Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS)
 Tuesdays 3:00-4:00PM
 Offered until Nov.17

Quality Resume Writing
 21 EPP (Lear Center)
 Tuesdays 4:30-5:20PM
 Wednesdays 11:30-12:20PM
 Offered until Dec.2. Not offered: Nov.25

Ins and Outs of Interviewing
 1345 Bessey Hall
 Thursdays 2:30-3:30PM
 Offered until Nov.19

Social Science Workshops

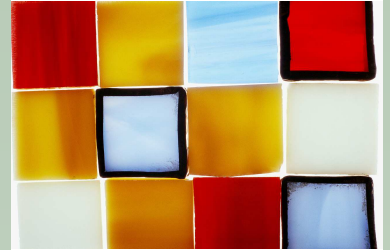
Resume Writing for Social Science Majors
 113 Student Services Building
 Thursday, Nov. 5 from 4:00-5:00PM

Choosing a Graduate Program
 113 Student Services Building
 Friday, Nov. 13 from 11:00-12:00PM

What can I do with a major in Social Science?
 113 Student Services Building
 Friday, Nov. 20 from 10:00-11:00AM



CREATIVE ARTS FORUM



Friday, November 6
 11:00-3:00 PM
 MSU Union, 2nd floor

The Creative Arts Forum brings together professionals from publishing houses, museums, galleries, theatres, and other creative venues.

Students come to learn more about what it takes to begin a career in fields like writing, editing, curations, acting, music, film, design, and arts management.

The Creative Arts Forum is an information sharing and networking opportunity, not a recruiting event.



Iraq Journal, Part Three

A visit to Saddam's chamber of horrors

By Jerry Weinberger

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of dispatches from Kurdistan, where the author spent four months.

The "Red Museum" in the city of Sulaimani, or Suli, isn't red or much of a museum. It's three hideous concrete buildings, erected in 1979 to house Saddam Hussein's security apparatus as part of his campaign to subdue the Kurds after their quixotic 1975 uprising—quixotic because they trusted Iranian and American promises of support. Two of the buildings had windows, but they were shot out by Suli's enraged

citizens in a spontaneous uprising after the Gulf War in 1991. The third had no windows, because it was a place where no one should be able to see in or out. Sunlight wasn't welcome in a chamber of torture and death.

Saddam's campaign began as a giant feat of social engineering and ethnic gerrymandering. By 1979, the regime razed over 1,000 villages along the borders with Turkey and Iran and moved their inhabitants to grim resettlement camps. Arabs were moved into, and Kurds expelled from, stra-

tegic and disputed towns in the region, especially Kirkuk. But Saddam also spent lots of money on economic development to dampen Kurdish nationalist zeal.

Things changed dramatically with the revival of the Kurdish rebel forces, the advent of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, and the formation of the Kurdistan National Front in Tehran in 1987. With Saddam now viewing the Kurds as an Iranian-backed fifth column, ethnic gerrymandering gave way to lethal repression, culminating...

Continued on page 6.

OUT & ABOUT CAMPUS:

Learning Resources Center



Together we can create a plan to efficiently maximize your strengths and help you reach your academic goals. Services offered include: tutoring, GRE prep, study groups, PC/Learning lab, seminars and workshops.

Come into the Learning Resources Center, located at 202 Ernst Bessey Hall, or call (517) 355-2363, or e-mail us at lrc@msu.edu



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS SPOTLIGHT:

Prelaw Study



The two most important law school admission criteria are the student's undergraduate grade-point average and his or her score on the Law School Admission Test (LSAT).

Students should seek to develop the ability to think carefully and critically. A Prelaw student may major in virtually any discipline, provided that the major is made part of a rigorous and broad education.

Religion in Modernity Revisited

In October, the LeFrak Forum and Symposium on Science, Reason, and Modern Democracy invited Professor Ronald Inglehart to present his lecture "Religion and Modernity: The End of Secularization?" This month, they are delighted to continue the lecture series, Religion in Modernity, with Francis Fukuyama, Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced

International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Professor Fukuyama will present his lecture, "Getting to Denmark: Where the State, Rule of Law, and Accountable Government Come From," at the Kellogg Center Auditorium on November 18 and 19 at 8:00 PM. The Department of Political Science continues to hope that their undergraduate students find these events to be opportunities of interaction and

collaboration. After each lecture, students have a chance to direct questions and comments to the guest lecturer. This may be just your time to do so! While Professor Fukuyama has been ardently studying democratization and international political economy for decades, he has also published a number of insightful books such as, *The End of History and the Last Man*. "What we may be witnessing is not the end of the Cold War but



Francis Fukuyama

the end of history as such; that is, the end point of man's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy." [Francis Fukuyama](#). (1989) "The End of History?" *National Interest*, 16, 3-18. We hope to see you at the lecture this month!



Iraq Journal, Part One

A visit to Saddam's chamber of horrors

By Jerry Weinberger

*Continued from page 5...*in the genocidal chemical murder of the Anfal campaigns, which began with attacks around Suli in February 1988. When Iranian and Kurdish forces took the city of Halabja in March and threatened to take the nearby Darbandikan dam as well, Saddam's regime shelled and gassed that city and its surrounding villages. By the end of the Anfal campaigns in August 1988, according to historian David McDowall, Saddam's vast apparatus of murder had killed perhaps as many as 200,000 men, women, and children, produced hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees in Turkey and Iran, and left Kurdistan bereft of rural village life.

All of this is cold historical fact. There is nothing cold about the faces one sees on the walls of the Red Museum, where from 1979 until the uprising in 1991, Saddam tortured and killed in pursuit of the Kurdish rebels. Though Saddam usually buried his victims in mass graves as far as possible from where they lived, he had no scruples about compiling a photographic record of the killing. The first photo one sees freezes the blood. It looks like a picture in a college yearbook: a class of 13 young men, perhaps a debating or a Latin club, except for the anxiety evident in their eyes. The legend informs that it was taken in the prison in 1986 and that all but one of these young men were tortured and executed. Then photo after photo shows a bloody body crumpled at the foot of the stake to which the victim was tied to be shot. In one photo, two Baathist security men, grinning widely

beneath their mustaches, hold up a headless corpse, their free hands raised in the victory salute. Next comes a picture of three women—child, mother, and grandmother—with faces frozen in fear just before their execution for suspected connection with rebels in the mountains. Numerous images record the last minutes in the lives of such women and children.

Then we see photos of the villages: buses being loaded with dispirited inhabitants headed toward industrial-style execution; smoldering ruins; piles of the dead killed by artillery and bombs. And throughout, Saddam's soldiers filled with jubilant pride at their murder of the innocent and unarmed. The walls of the last room are covered with photos taken by Suli citizens during the Kurds' short-lived 1991 uprising against Saddam. We see Baathist tanks on fire, a person shot out of a wheelchair lying dead in the street, wounded Baathists getting first aid from the Kurds, and a heartbreaking picture of a young boy holding a sign asking, WHERE IS MY SISTER?

From the photo rooms, the museum's guide, Khalil Ali Mustafa, takes visitors to the rooms where the real business of the prison went on. They're surprisingly small: two 20-by-12-foot cells, on either side of a short hall leading to two

toilets, together housed up to 120 prisoners on an average day. From the cells, the prisoners could see, down another short hall, the "relaxation post," where prisoners fresh from torture were tied to a wall and kicked, pummeled, and insulted by the guards who walked by.

There are also two torture rooms, each about 10 by 15 feet, and each with a beam, suspended from the ceiling, to



Professor Jerry Weinberger

...apart from politics, Kurdish civil society is healing, and the Kurds are getting over the experience of being victims..

which are attached several meat hooks. From these hooks, prisoners were hung by their wrists tied behind the back: the effect was to dislocate the shoulders and cause slow and agonizing suffocation while the rest of the body was beaten with wire whips and shocked by a generator attached to the nipples and genitals. The shock machine and the whips are on display. Between the two torture rooms is a smaller "listening room," where the next victim would be held for hours to listen to the screams

and contemplate what he would soon endure. Many cracked and talked just from that pressure. And children were among the tortured, to extort information from their horrified mothers. Down another hall is a long line of isolation cells, roughly four by five feet, where particularly important prisoners were kept for up to six months of repeated torture sessions. Wires once attached to small microphones run outside the cells.

The cells' walls are scratched with the names of prisoners who tried to leave some vestige of their existence. In one is a small statue of a teacher, Ma Masta Ahmad, who after six months of confinement and torture was subjected to 24 hours of hanging by his wrists. To end this torment he told everything he knew—and then was shot. On the wall is etched his pathetic little calendar, which he kept to keep some contact with an outside world that he never saw again. Of the thousands of men, women, and children who came through the doors of the Red Museum, almost none came out alive. Those who did not perish were sent to Abu Ghraib in Baghdad to be hanged.

In the basement of the Red Museum, a dark and dank and stinking place, is a small room with pictures of the 1988 chemical attack on Halabja. Many in the West are familiar with the photo of a man lying prone on the threshold of a house, on top of a small child whom he tried to shield from the gas. It's heartbreaking, to be sure, but it's almost abstract and thus suitable for newspaper display. I doubt that many of the photos in the Red Museum have been seen in the West, because they're so gruesome as to turn the stomach of anyone who sees them. The one I found most disturbing was a close-up of a little girl, maybe six or seven years old. Her ashen white face is surrounded by brownish hair and her mouth is frozen in a ghoulish grin. Her eyes are open, but are so crossed as to make her look like a little fiend from hell.

Continued on page 7.

Continued from page 6. The gas not only killed her; it turned her corpse into what looked like a monster.

A few weeks later, I went to Halabja with a young woman and her husband. Both were seven when the city was gassed. We first stopped at the memorial building on the edge of the city. The memorial was ransacked in 2006 and is still a mess. Angry Halabja citizens attacked it in protest against government indifference. They had a point: Halabja is drab and sad and has few paved streets. It's a monument to government neglect as well as to the misery of the Anfal campaign.

In the city center is an old graveyard surrounded by a fence, on which a sign reads: BAATH NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER. Amid the old single graves are three new mass graves in which about 3,000 victims of the attack are interred. Beyond them is an expanse of small headstones,

each representing an entire family. The young woman accompanying me said that she was lucky that her father, a *peshmerga*—a rebel fighter, one of “those who confront death”—had told her and her mother to leave the city because an attack was sure to come. They fled to one of the vast, squalid refugee camps in Iran and after six months made their way back to Suli. Her father was gassed and eventually died of the effects. Her husband, too, remembers clinging to his mother's dress as they fled into the mountains to escape the gas. At one point they had to choose between paths to two separate villages. Both villages were bombed by gas, but the bomb hitting the village they chose turned out to be a dud. It's sheer luck that he's alive. The young woman's brother did not live to see this horror. In 1981, she told me, at the age of 14, he was murdered by his best friend, also 14 but even at that age a Baathist agent.

The mountains above Halabja are dotted with empty villages, monuments, and mass graves, some barely large enough for a few families, one the size of a football field. Many small mass graves lie near two natural springs whose water was poisoned by the gas, instantly killing those who drank it. On the day I visited, throngs of picnickers were enjoying their Friday in the country, barbecuing, playing music, and dancing. It was hard to believe that in these now serene mountains, old men, women, and children were once mowed down by helicopter gunships and chemical bombs.

In politics, the legacy of suffering has made the Kurds hard. They trust no one, look out for themselves, and engage in double-dealing, often to the chagrin of their friends in America and elsewhere. But apart from politics, Kurdish civil society is healing, and the Kurds are getting over the experience of being victims. In fact, one problem in Suli, notes Judith

Bass, a Johns Hopkins professor of public health working here with the Heartland Alliance's Victims of Torture Project (which provides mental health services), is that the victims, especially disabled and shell-shocked *peshmerga*, feel that they're being forgotten as the Kurds get on with making the most of their freedom. Few citizens of Suli visit the Red Museum. When they go to the silent graves of their murdered beloved, they go to picnic and dance—to celebrate life and freedom.

Jerry Weinberger is a professor of political science at Michigan State University, director of the LeFrak Forum at Michigan State, and an adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute. His most recent book is [Benjamin Franklin Unmasked: On the Unity of His Moral, Religious, and Political Thought](#).

Weinberger, Jerry. “Iraq Journal, Part Three: A visit to Saddam's chamber of horrors,” *City Journal* (May 2009).



Each November, Michigan State University joins institutions across the country in celebrating International Education Week. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education, International Education Week was established “to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future leaders from abroad to study, learn, and exchange experiences in the United States.”

MSU considers international education and engagement to be

cornerstones of its institutional mission. It is our desire that the wide range of MSU International Education Week activities will

- foster a greater sense of global community on campus;
- encourage a greater awareness of other peoples, other countries, world affairs, and their influence on our lives, among the University's various constituencies;
- inform the MSU family and surrounding community of the various ways the university is engaged in international teaching, scholarship, and engagement; and
- inspire an even stronger commitment among students, faculty, and staff to becoming more globally educated.

We encourage your participation in the many events being organized for this year's MSU International Education Week. As the events are scheduled, they will be listed on the [MSU International Education Week Calendar](#).

Background information on International Education Week is at the [U.S. State Department and the Department of Education](#) site.