Graduation Day brought staff together with parents and friends to celebrate our students’ achievements. Congratulations to all our graduates! And a special shout out to our undergraduate award-winners, whose names are listed on page 2. Presentations of degrees and awards took place in our fabulous, flower-filled Chapel, with guests filling the pews and overflowing into the Picture Gallery. We had good weather for the reception and photos in the South Quad; and our amazing, just-completed Emily Wilding Davison Library building was open to visitors. It was a memorable and thoroughly enjoyable day.

We hope our graduates will stay in touch by joining our new Alumni Mailing List (https://page.co/VDG6). We want to know how things are going, to invite you to alumni and other events, and celebrate your further achievements.

This was another busy year for PIR and Philosophy. Having both grown considerably, we will be constituted as two separate departments within a new School of Politics, International Relations, and Philosophy. We think this new school structure will allow us to continue on our growth trajectory while allowing each unit to retain and present a distinct identity.

We will also be welcoming a number of new Academic Staff. Three new scholars will be joining our new Department of Philosophy. Anthony Bruno is currently a SSHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. His research focuses on metaphysics and epistemology in Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy. John Sellars comes to us from King’s College London where he is a Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy and works on the ‘Ancient Commentators on Aristotle’ project. Daniel Whistler comes to us from the University of Liverpool. His research centres on early nineteenth-century German philosophy.

We also have four new colleagues joining the Department of Politics and International Relations. Our new Professor of Politics, Chris Hanretty, is well-known as a scholar of elections and campaigns and as a leading European scholar of judicial politics and constitutional courts. José Martinez is completing a PhD at University of Cambridge. His research focuses on the political economy of development, welfare regimes, food politics, authoritarianism, the politics of space and the dynamics of political struggle and contestation. Casside Schwartz recently completed a PhD dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh. Her current research focuses on political protests, migration, and informal institutions. Thomas Stubbs received his PhD from Cambridge in 2016. His current research focuses on slum urbanism in the Global South, IMF lending, and political settlements in East Africa.

We are really excited to be welcoming these brilliant new colleagues to the School of PIR & Philosophy.

I wish you all a restful and productive summer holiday, and look forward to seeing you in September. Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy the Newsletter; and for regular updates on what’s on in the Department please remember to follow us on Twitter and Facebook and look out for updates on the website.

PIR Staff and Visitors at AAME’s first Annual Conference, June 2017.
Undergraduate Awards

Congratulations to all our students, but in particular:

- The Rumford Prize (PIR Best Performance): Kelli Jones
- Philosophy Best Performance: Margherita Bernardi
- ES Best performance: Sarah Dill
- PPE Best Performance: Marco Chimini
- Highest Mark for a Dissertation: Jinal Parekh (title: ‘Post-Imperial Britain: the Kenyan Asian Conundrum’)
- The Driver Prize (Highest Course Mark): Johannes Leuschke, Sosha Bronfman, and Paco Tijdick
- Year 1 (best overall performance): Nina Immink
- Year 2 (best overall performance): Sarika Akter
- PIR Commendation Prize: Hannah Barker and Johannes Leuschke

In addition, Jinal Parekh also received the Harrison Prize (a faculty prize for best overall performance by a joint honours student).

Doctoral research at PIR this year

Congratulations to all our doctoral students who submitted their PhD this year, on a fascinating range of issues:

- Albena Kuyumdzhieva - Establishing a Common EU Anticorruption Framework: Institutional Enablers and Inhibitors
- Claudia Lueders - Britpop’s Common People – National identity, popular music and youth
- Erdem Ismail - Federated Entities in International Relations: the case of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq
- Matthew Hall - Liberal Democratic Surveillance: Rules, Legitimacy and the Institutionalisation of Domination
- Daniela Lai - Transitional Justice as Redistribution: Socioeconomic (In)justice and the Limits of International Intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Lyn Johnstone – ‘Rather a Special Family of Nations’: Ideas of the Family in the Commonwealth in Africa

This spring, third year students in the course Refugees and Migration in World Politics took on the roles of governments across Europe in a simulation where they attempted to find solutions to Europe’s current refugee crisis.

Students debated ways to balance fairness with efficiency, respecting the particular desires of nation states with humanitarian responsibilities, and the rights of migrants with questions of security and border control.

Although we did not get a full solution, we got considerably further than the actual policymakers. Congratulations all!
Teaching Awards for Michelle Bentley and Ursula Hackett

Two PIR staff have won Excellence awards in the College’s Teaching Prize scheme.

The Committee awarded Michelle a prize and certificate for her highly innovative and transferable approach to developing research and critical analysis, where students got the chance to ‘re-do’ research by academics, finding the original sources and recreating the argument, undergoing real detective work rather than just reading the article.

The Committee awarded Ursula a Certificate of Commendation for her transferable approach to fostering students’ engagement with research. Ursula organised a Class Conference where student picked their own topics, presented their findings to each other, and gave each other feedback.

Congratulations to Michelle and Ursula!

Staff Profile: Oliver Heath

I joined the department of Politics and International Relations in 2008. At that time the department was still very small but over the years it has grown a lot. It has been hugely enjoyable to be part of this change and to see how we have developed and expanded, with the appointment of so many excellent new members of staff.

Last year we set up a new Democracy and Elections Centre and launched a new MSc in Elections, Campaigns and Democracy. Most of my research is in this area, and I don’t think there’s ever been such an interesting time to study elections.

When I did my PhD at the University of Essex, British politics seemed so predictable and boring. All the parties basically looked the same and there was little policy difference between them. It was hardly surprising that so few people bothered to vote.

In search of excitement I started to do research in other countries. I spent 18 months in India carrying out research on Hindu fundamentalism and the rise of the BJP. I then spent a year in Venezuela doing research on populism and the rise of Hugo Chavez. I also spent a year in Italy looking at political instability. All these experiences have helped me to understand contemporary patterns of political competition in Britain far more than I ever thought they would.

In addition to teaching courses on elections and voting behaviour I also teach quantitative methods. This is the course I probably enjoy teaching the most. One of the big changes I’ve noticed since I’ve been at Royal Holloway is how keen students are now to learn new skills. I get great satisfaction from seeing how far students are able to progress in a short period of time, particularly when they have no background or training in the area. It’s also very rewarding when former students tell me that it is the skills they learned on this course that helped them to get a job.

To find out more about the new Democracy and Elections Centre, check out https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/politicsandir/research/dec/home.aspx
Events at CIWAS: Gendered Orientalism

Dr. Nadya Ali, Lecturer in IR at the University of Sussex, gave a talk about how the Prevent strategy makes the citizenship of UK Muslims conditional on upholding British values. Gender equality is increasingly regarded as a British value and allows for the co-option of Muslim women into counter-radicalisation efforts as ‘mothers, wives, and daughters’.

PIR staff in the news

On 6 November 2016, Dr Jinghan Zeng was interviewed by Al Jazeera English on the protests in Hong Kong and their relations with Beijing.

On 7 April 2017, he was interviewed by the BBC World Service on Chinese Premier Xi Jinping’s meeting with US President Donald Trump Summit.

Congratulations Jinghan!

Student Philosophy Conference

On Thursday 15th June we held our first Philosophy PhD day. PhD students their ideas and research with academic staff and other student philosophers. The following papers were presented:

- **Thomas Waterton**: ‘Descartes and subjective presuppositions: a case study of Deleuze’s “Critique of Problems”’
- **Samuel Matthews**: ‘The Myth of Categorical Conceptualism’
- **Emily Harding**: “Love not the world, nor the things in the world”: nihilistic time and eternity’
- **Edward Thornton**: ‘Addicted to thought: from Hume’s concept of habit to a theory of addictive thinking’

AAME held its first summer conference in June, focusing on questions about how international relations are being reshaped by people working in politics, business, aid and the arts from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Themes included: how values and visions of the world are being reshaped by powerful emerging powers like China and India; how business interests and aid practices are forging new relationships between the BRICS and with African countries; and how the world has been and continues to be imagined from the global south. The conference is part of AAME’s ambition of exploring the world beyond the West.

AAME is the Centre of Politics in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The June conference was entitled A Shifting World: International Relations from beyond the West. For more details of AAME’s work, see [www.aame.london](http://www.aame.london)