Welcome from the Head of Department

Welcome to our summer newsletter! My colleagues in the department continue to be recognised for their high quality research. Professor Andrew Chadwick, Professor Ben British-Polish views on security. Moreover, Dr Alexis Papzoglou has been awarded a grant from the Templeton Foundation for a project entitled ‘New Directions in the Study of the Mind’, and Dr Giacomo Benedetto has won a prestigious Jean Monnet Chair, which will allow him to develop new courses on European integration and public policy.

Sadly, in July we lost one of our long-standing colleagues, Professor Chris Rumford. Chris’s death came as a real shock to us all, and we will always value the major contribution he made to the department. A more detailed profile is featured in this issue.

This will be my last newsletter as Head of Department. It gives me great pleasure to announce that from September 2016 Professor Sandra Halperin takes over at the helm. I wish her every success!

Dr Alister Miskimmon
Head of Department of Politics and International Relations

Class of 2016

Congratulations to all our new graduates, and especially to this year’s prize winners:

Inna Yordanova – Best Performance in Politics and International Relations & Best Dissertation

Estelle Petrequin – Best Performance in European Studies

Daniel Leons-Marder – Best Performance in Philosophy

Ludovica De Santis – Best Performance in PPE & Martin Holloway Prize

Rupinder Gill, Sarah Villeneuve and Megan Karlshoej-Pedersen – Driver Prize (shared)

Claire Dodman – Harrison Prize
ALUMNA PROFILE: Hana Al-Izzi

Hana Al-Izzi (pictured above with Senator Elizabeth Warren) graduated from Royal Holloway in July 2016 with a first-class degree in BA Politics. Here she talks about her experience as a Year-Abroad student:

I spent the second year of my Politics degree at Mount Holyoke College, a women's-only liberal arts college in Massachusetts. I applied to study abroad for the academic and life experience, and I was also looking for a new challenge! I chose to study in the US primarily because of my interest in US politics. I also knew it would expose me to a very different academic environment.

One of the advantages of studying at a liberal arts college was the diverse range of classes available. During my time at Mount Holyoke, I studied subjects such as US constitutional law and the history of African women and power. It was also a very close-knit place to study, and I very much enjoyed campus life.

In addition to my studies, I was able to take advantage of a number of internship and volunteering opportunities. During the autumn term I was an intern on a gubernatorial campaign, and in the spring term I took on an internship in the office of Senator Elizabeth Warren, the senior United States Senator from Massachusetts.

These opportunities gave me a fantastic in-depth understanding of the US political system, not to mention real-world politics, and I think it has greatly strengthened my employability.

I found that the experience of studying abroad during my second year prepared me well for the last year of my degree. I became much more confident coping with a large workload and time pressures.

Studying abroad also opened my mind to employment opportunities elsewhere in the world and encouraged me to pursue my interest in US politics further. I have come to realise that studying abroad is not only an amazing opportunity in itself; it also opens the door to many more opportunities.

#Votebecause – the 2016 EU referendum

Ahead of the June vote on the United Kingdom’s membership of the European Union, staff and students in PIR led Royal Holloway’s drive to increase student registration and turnout. As part of the campaign, students were encouraged to use social media (using #Votebecause) to convince friends to get engaged in the EU referendum.

Several students from the department also worked with PIR’s Dr James Sloam as part of a project exploring young people’s views on the European Union. They helped conduct almost 100 interviews with fellow students.

PIR careers event

Ten of our recent alumni returned to Royal Holloway in March to offer some careers advice to the next generation of PIR undergraduates (below). With an emphasis on what students could do to make the successful transition from university to work, the alumni drew on their own experiences, which included careers in management consultancy, corporate banking, teaching, journalism, public affairs, doctoral research and parliamentary outreach.

Dr Jonathan Seglow, who organised the event, said: ‘We hope that this will be the first in a series of events that put our current students back in touch with former ones who have gone on to such interesting careers.’

Student wins essay prize

Many congratulations to Kelli Jones, a second-year PIR student, who has won Royal Holloway’s Mary MacPherson Prize for an essay entitled: ‘Is there Criminal Hypocrisy in Western Foreign Policy?’

The prize is awarded to an undergraduate for a piece of journalistic writing ‘of high distinction’, with the topic chosen by the student.

Kelli’s essay was first published in The GW Justice Journal. Commenting, she said she was ‘absolutely thrilled to have won!’
This issue’s staff profile is devoted to Chris Rumford, who very sadly passed away in July.

Chris Rumford first came to Royal Holloway in 2003 as a lecturer in political sociology. He became a founding member of the Department of Politics and International Relations when it was established a year later, and contributed enormously to its subsequent development and growth. In 2010, he was made Professor of Political Sociology and Global Politics in recognition of his many accomplishments.

Chris had enormous intellectual energy. His research interests embraced the contemporary transformation of Europe and European identity, the development of cosmopolitanism, and the place of borders in a globalising world. More recently he became interested in the notion of ‘strangeness’ that many of us experience as a result of globalisation.

As a researcher, he was prolific. He wrote or edited a dozen books and was the author of nearly 50 articles and book chapters.

Chris was a world-leading figure in the field of global studies. He was a founding co-director of Royal Holloway’s Centre for Global and Transnational Politics, and in 2011 became Chair of the Global Studies Association (GSA). He provided the GSA with energetic leadership and promoted many new initiatives.

One thing that marked Chris out was his commitment to his PhD students. He was a hugely supportive supervisor and went out of his way to help the next generation of young scholars. He would encourage his students to organise panels at conferences, he would mentor them, and he would co-author work with them.

Chris was always very modest about his many achievements. He had a great love of cricket, which he managed to address in some of his research, as well as music and literature. He was a private man, but he was always kind and friendly and would argue a case without ever losing his calm.

His sudden death leaves a huge hole in the field of global studies and especially in the department. His colleagues and students, past and present, will miss him terribly.

Student societies and Model United Nations

The spring term saw students from the Department of Politics and International Relations attending a number of National Model United Nations (NMUN) and International Model United Nations (IMUN) conferences in Europe and North America.

These events allow students to learn about the work of the United Nations, as well as international relations and diplomacy, by simulating the work of different committees. Teams are usually assigned countries, which they then represent at the conference.

In February, the Politics and International Relations Society (PIRSoc) led a delegation to both the Reims IMUN conference in France and the London IMUN conference (pictured right). And in late March, PIRSoc led a delegation to the New York NMUN conference, which was attended by over 5,000 delegates from across the world. For this conference, Royal Holloway represented Germany (pictured below).

Meanwhile, the Diplomatic Society (DipSoc) led a delegation (pictured below) to the Harvard NMUN conference, which took place in Boston, Massachusetts, in February. This event was attended by over 3,000 students. DipSoc had previously led delegations to the Oxford and Cambridge IMUN conferences in November.

In addition to learning about diplomatic processes, participants at NMUN conferences are able to develop their research, public speaking, writing and leadership skills, as well as the ability to work as part of a team.
AWARDS FOR PIR RESEARCH

International Journal of Press/Politics Book Award 2016

Professor Andrew Chadwick, Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the New Political Communication Unit, has received the International Journal of Press/Politics (IJP) Book Award for his recent monograph, *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

The book explores the diffusion and evolution of new communication technologies and how they have reshaped media and politics. It proposes a new theory of how political communication works and how power is wielded in a ‘hybrid system’ of old and new media logics.

The UPP Book Award was established to recognise ‘internationally-oriented books that advance our theoretical and empirical understanding of the linkages between news media and politics in a globalized world in a significant way.’ Books published in the last ten years are eligible for the award.

The UPP award committee agreed that *The Hybrid Media System* stood out as ‘a creative, innovative, and genuinely interdisciplinary work with a strong link between theory-development and empirical examples.’

This is the second award for The Hybrid Media System. In 2014, Andy was awarded the American Political Science Association Media System. In 2014, Andy was awarded the American Political Science Association Best Book Award.

The International Communication Book Award 2016

Dr Alister Miskimmon and Professor Ben O’Loughlin have been awarded the 2016 International Communication (ICOMM) Book Award for their book *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order* (co-written with Laura Roselle and published by Routledge, 2013).

*Strategic Narratives* outlines an ambitious research agenda: to define and develop a more robust perspective on the foundations of world order. In making the award the book prize committee noted that the book was beautifully written and carefully researched with powerful, cross-disciplinary arguments. The prize committee said that the book will serve as a foundation that informs and impacts the next generation of political communication and international relations scholarship and practice.

The ICOMM Book Award is given by the International Studies Association to the book that is deemed to have made the most substantial impact in the area of International Communication. Books published in the previous five years are eligible.

Teaching and learning prizes for PIR staff

A team of PIR academics and PhD students has been awarded a Royal Holloway ‘College Team Teaching Prize’ for an innovative class project undertaken with first-year students.

Dr Oliver Heath, Dr Kaat Smets, Ms Daniela Lai, Mr Rakib Ehsan and Ms Ellen Watts, who all teach on the module ‘Introduction to Research Methods in Politics and International Relations’, worked with students to develop an online survey experiment that tested how language affects individuals’ sympathy towards people fleeing warzones. The experiment demonstrated that respondents were more sympathetic to Syrians when they were referred to as ‘refugees’ rather than as ‘migrants’.

After receiving the prize, Dr Heath commented: ‘Research methods are a hugely important transferable skill. This is why we tried to focus on how they can be used to examine real-world political issues.’

Dr Smets added: ‘Students were involved in every step of the project, so that they could learn first-hand about the different stages of the research project. The project was very ambitious because so much of its success depended upon the engagement and participation of everyone involved.’

Meanwhile, several other members of PIR staff were recognised for their commitment to teaching or supporting student learning.

Dr David Hughes, a Teaching Fellow in International Relations, was a recipient of a Students Union ‘Apple for the Teacher Award’, which recognises excellence in teaching.

Finally, Dr Antara Datta, Dr Julia Gallagher, Dr John Mattausch and Ms Sarah Sanders all received Outstanding Members of Staff awards from Royal Holloway’s Disability & Dyslexia Services.