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SCSUSOPA

## Welcome message from the Dean

Dear Friends of SOPA:

Greetings from the School of Public Affairs (which we affectionately call "SOPA") at St. Cloud State University! This quarterly *Newsletter* helps us get news out to the extended SOPA community about our faculty, students, alumni, programs, and projects. Future issues will be posted on our website at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/sopa/default.asp>

In this inaugural issue, I want to introduce SOPA and tell you about our plans for the future. We are *very* excited about the school and all that it has to offer students, the university, Central Minnesota, and the World. As SOPA's first dean, I am excited and proud to be part of this new piece of the reorganized SCSU and look forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead.

SOPA came into existence last July 1 and is the first academic unit of its kind in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, as well as only the second of its kind in the state (the other is the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at University of Minnesota). Our working mission and vision statements capture fully what SOPA is all about:

### **SOPA's Mission:**

*Through active, experiential and global learning opportunities, we prepare our students to be stewards of the public interest and practitioners and leaders in the public and private sectors.*

### **SOPA's Vision:**

*We provide the highest quality and most comprehensive undergraduate and graduate public affairs education in the upper Midwest by engaging our students and faculty in the study and critical analysis of public policy and by serving as a rich source of knowledge for our stakeholders, both local and global.*

SOPA comprises four departments that were housed in the former College of Social Sciences – Economics (where I have spent most of my career), Criminal Justice, Political Science, and Geography & Planning. The first three departments have not changed as a result of the reorganization, but the last one has expanded to include four faculty members specializing in planning and community development and who were formerly part of the former Department of Community Studies. We have about 50 full time faculty and approximately 1,500 majors, of which approximately 150 are graduate students. While we employ just under 6% of SCSU's full time faculty, our students comprise over 8% of the SCSU undergraduate population and over 7% of the graduate population. Most importantly, enrollment in SOPA, measured by number of declared majors, is growing steadily in both the undergraduate and graduate categories. This trend reflects the growing demand by employers for persons trained in areas related to stewardship of the public interest. We have 9 baccalaureate and 4 Masters-level programs, taught by a first-rate faculty and supported by a fine staff.



# Meet the departments

## Criminal Justice

The Criminal Justice Department was founded in 1972, with the arrival of Dr. Bob Prout as its first faculty member. As of Fall Semester 2011, CJS has graduated 2,454 undergraduate CJS majors and 372 CJS and Public Safety Executive Leadership (PSEL) Masters degree students. As a result, we have alumni in virtually all major criminal justice agencies in Minnesota, in key federal agencies throughout the country, and in criminal justice organizations throughout the world.

In Fall 2011, we had 7 1/2 full time faculty. Our faculty has been productive in scholarly work, including publishing books on topics including environmental crime, juvenile justice, criminal profiling, serial killers, Automated Teller Machine crime, stress management, and law enforcement personality types. We had 16 adjunct faculty which include prosecuting and defense attorneys, judges, law enforcement officers, corrections officials, probation officers, private security executives and others. These faculty bring practitioner experience and resources to the classroom from their professional lives. Our faculty is active in criminal justice professional meetings, and often takes students to criminal justice conferences. In addition, faculty regularly takes students on international study trips, including to Croatia, England and Ireland.

Our department has 656 declared or intended CJS majors, 31 CJS minors, 55 CJS graduate students, 22 Public Safety Executive Leadership graduate students. All CJS coursework for the undergraduate and Master's degrees can be completed in online CJS courses. Dozens of undergraduate and graduate CJS students have completed all of their CJS coursework for their degrees all online.

The Criminal Justice Department hosts Alexandria Technical College's 10 week Minnesota Peace Officer Standards and Training (MPOST) Skills course on the SCSU campus in the summer months. In 2011, 62 students graduated from this Skills course. We also host the regional FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar (LEEDS) in May each year, for mid-career, upwardly mobile law enforcement officers in the Upper Midwest. More than 300 officers have attended the SCSU LEEDS programs.



## Economics

The Economics Department, a part of the School of Public Affairs (SOPA), offers an array of both undergraduate and graduate programs designed to help students develop the analytical skills necessary to gain a greater understanding of the private, nonprofit, and government sectors, and to help these sectors become better vehicles for improving society. The departmental goals support our School and University Missions by transmitting, creating, and applying knowledge. At the undergraduate level we offer a B.A. in Economics, a B.A. in Business Economics, and a B.S. in Mathematical Economics. For our graduate students we offer a M.S. in Applied Economics, and a M.S. in Public and Nonprofit Institutions. We also offer a five year program where students complete the B.A. degree and the M.S. in Applied Economics in a five year period. Through an articulation agreement with Nankai University-Binhai College (NUBC) in China we offer a similar opportunity to Binhai undergraduate business and economics students to obtain a bachelor degree from NUBC and a M.S. in Applied Economics from SCSU in a five year period. Each concentration offers its own unique focus – this diversity in our offerings helps guarantee that our students can choose the program that best fits their needs and helps them achieve their future goals.

The B.A. in Economics is a traditional liberal arts major that emphasizes the broad range of social questions answered by the economic way of thinking. Our B.A. in Business Economics adds to the economics core additional courses in finance, accounting, managerial economics and economic forecasting. The B.S. in Mathematical Economics is an interdisciplinary degree offered by the Department of Economics, the Department of Mathematics and the Department of Statistics and Computer Networking. The program offers students solid training in economic theory plus applications of mathematical,

statistical and computational methods in economics and other related areas. The M.S. in Applied Economics (MSAE) is a unique program in the MnSCU system and one of few in the region. Our students come from highly international and diverse backgrounds. We offer courses that build a solid foundation in economic theory and emphasize empirical applications. The M.S. in Public and Nonprofit Institutions is designed to enhance the administrative and analytical skills of those employed in the public and nonprofit sectors of the economy.

We have 15 full-time faculty members, all holding doctorates in economics, representing many countries from around the world. Our faculty has a very diverse range of teaching and research expertise. Our research has been published in textbooks, edited readings, and refereed journals such as *American Economic Review*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Games and Economic Behavior*, *Economic Journal*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Rand Journal of Economics*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Journal of Labor Economics*, *Public Choice*, *Economics Letters*, *Journal of Money, Credit and Banking*, *Journal of Economic Education*, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, *Experimental Economics*, *Southern Economic Journal*, etc. Our members are very active in the university and community, including activities such as the annual Winter Institute, the SCSU Center for Economic Education, the Minnesota Council for Economic Education, the SCSU Faculty Research Group on Immigrant Workers, the Council of Economic Advisers for the State of Minnesota, Minnesota State House of Representatives, the St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report, local non-profit Board Memberships, and international teaching and consulting.

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## Geography and Planning

The newly renamed Department of Geography and Planning consists of the faculty and programs from the former Department of Geography (Geography, Land Surveying and Mapping Sciences, Social Studies Education, Travel and Tourism and GIS minor), combined with the faculty and program in Planning and Community Development. All of the faculty in the new Department are excited about this change as we see this combination as being beneficial to all involved, faculty and students. There are clearly a number of potential collaborations in terms of faculty research, student projects and curriculum integration that will be possible in this new unit. We also see

ourselves as being able play an important role in fulfilling the mission of the School of Public Affairs and the University's mission asset forth by the Four Pillars: Community Engagement, Active Learning, Sustainability and Globalization. Faculty and students in Geography and Planning have for a number of years been engaged in a variety of activities that fit within the framework of the Four Pillars and our new unit will be in an even stronger position to achieve the University's mission.



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## Political Science

Our department is excited to be a member of SCSU's new School of Public Affairs. This new unit promises previously unavailable opportunities for us to collaborate with our colleagues in 3 closely related departments: Criminal Justice, Economics, and Geography and Planning.

The Political Science Department currently offers two undergraduate degree programs. The BA in Political Science is our general degree program covering the 4 major fields of political science in the United States: American Government,

Comparative Government, International Relations, and Political Theory. Our BA in International Relations prepares students in the scientific study of the political practices, institutions, and emerging norms of the international system. Both programs are designed to prepare students for further study in the discipline as well as with practical training for a wide range of career choices.

The department continues to offer courses in the field of Public Administration. However, with the reorganization of SCSU and the creation of the school of Public Affairs, our goal is to transform our previous undergraduate program into an accredited Masters of Public Administration (MPA) degree program. This program will provide students with more advanced training for careers in public service.

## Welcome message from the Dean Cont...

We have some exciting activities underway in SOPA:

- ◆ We are working to obtain state approval by January, 2013, to offer a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree. Last month, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) approved our application for *Associate Member* status; We intend to seek full *Member* status, as well as NASPAA accreditation, once the MPA program is underway;
- ◆ We have launched the *SOPA Colloquium Series*, a series of monthly presentations or panel discussions by internal or external experts on important policy-oriented cross-disciplinary issues of widespread interest to the extended SOPA community. We cordially invite you to attend our colloquia. Check our website for information about future colloquia;
- ◆ To invest in and reward significant scholarship projects in the school, I am providing faculty who get book contracts with some release time from the classroom to focus on writing;
- ◆ During Spring Semester we will welcome three full time employees to the dean's office – a student relations coordinator, an experiential learning and outreach coordinator, and an administrative director. In the meantime, the dean's office is being operated by myself, dean's office veteran Betty Schwarzkopf (who is currently on medical leave and being replaced by Alison

Kavanaugh) and several work study students;

- ◆ I am working with the SCSU Foundation on various external development projects, coordinating some community engagement projects, and working with the four department chairs and their support staffs on developing some school-wide policies.

A crucial part of building up a new academic unit is nurturing relationships with our alumni, employers, friends in the community, and other important external stakeholders. We not only want to keep you informed about what's going on in SOPA, but we need your ideas and support. We welcome you on campus. If you are coming to campus, please don't hesitate to contact me and it will be my pleasure to host you. My office is in Whitney House 101, telephone number (320) 308-2225, and e-mail [obbodvarsson@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:obbodvarsson@stcloudstate.edu).

It's truly a privilege and a pleasure for me to be leading SOPA. There's a lot to do with starting up any new academic unit, but I'm energized and excited about what we have to offer and the many opportunities that await us in training our students, developing our faculty, and serving the community. Thank you for your interest and support. Happy New Year!

Örn Bodvarsson  
Interim Dean

## Faculty Highlights

**Aref Hassan** (Political Science) presented a paper on Hezbollah in Lebanon and Chaired a Panel at the International Studies Association-Midwest conference held from November 11-13, 2011 in St. Louis. He also presented at the Minnesota Political Science Association's annual meeting which was held in Mankato on Saturday, November 5th on Syria in the Midst of the Arab Spring: Opportunities and Threats.

**Jason Lindsey** (Political Science) had his article, "Vattimo's Renunciation of Violence," accepted for publication by the journal, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*.

**Michelle Hammes** (Political Science) is serving as the Treasurer of the Minnesota Political Science Association's.

**Morgan Nyendu** (Political Science) co-authored a chapter, "The United Nations" in Kathy A. Uradnik, Lori A. Johnson, and Sara Hower (eds.) (2011) *Battleground: Government and Politics*, Battleground Series, Vol. 2, ABC-Clio LLC, Santa Barbara, California, pp. 535-544. Morgan is serving on the Minnesota Political Science Association's Board. He presented on Parliament and Democratic Governance in Ghana.

**Steve Frank** (Political Science) presented on Experiential and Inter-disciplinary Learning at the Minnesota Political Science Association's annual meeting which was held in Mankato on Saturday, November 5.

**Ming Lo** (Economics) had a chapter "Redefining Assets in the Age of Branding: Spatial Planning and the Fate of Cultural Landscapes," (with Kristof van Assche; Geography and Planning Department), published in *Spatial Planning and Management as an Instrument of Shaping Cultural Landscapes*, Branta: Krakow, 2011. Ming's article "Planning, Preservation, Place Branding: A Tale of Sharing Assets and Narratives," (with Kristof van Assche), was published in *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 7(2), 116-126, May 2011.

**David Switzer** (Economics) paper, "DVD Sales and the R-Rating Puzzle," co-authored with David Lang and Brandon Swartz (2009 graduate) has been accepted by the *Journal of Cultural Economics*.

**Örn Bodvarsson** was appointed a Research Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) in Bonn, Germany, for a second three-year term. His paper, "Customer Discrimination, Capital Investment and Sports Stadiums" (with Brad Humphreys) was accepted for publication in *Contemporary Economic Policy*.