

Public Policy Bulletin

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Welcome New Students!

Featured below are four students who joined the Public Policy Ph.D. Program in Fall 2012. Their brief biographies reflect the richness of experience that students bring with them to the program. The Spring 2013 issue will feature Shannon Carpenter, Pearl McElfish, Lindsay Turner and Jonathan Langner.



Britni Ayers - Family Policy

Britni Ayers earned a B.A. in Psychology from Northern Arizona University (2004), and a M.A. in Sociology from the University of Arkansas (2012). Throughout her undergraduate studies, she worked full time as a provider for children with Autism and Rett syndrome, focusing on mental health disorders and family needs. In 2004, Britni became a mother of two amazing children and an advocate for maternal care. During this time she volunteered as a lactation consultant through La Leche League (LLL) for five years and was a midwife's apprentice for a short time. In these positions she discovered an opportunity to aid women in the community and this led to a volunteer position. Her policy interests are motherhood and breastfeeding, birth, social welfare, and care-taking. Britni also enjoys running, biking, swimming, and playing music with her family. After completing her studies, she plans to be an advocate for mothers and children through grant writing, conducting research, and teaching.

Leslie Yingling - Education Policy

Leslie Yingling, from Winslow, Arkansas, is director of College Access Initiative and Diversity Affairs Outreach at the University of Arkansas, where she has worked with college readiness programs since 2004. Leslie has a bachelor's degree in political science and journalism and a master's in journalism from the University of Missouri. She will study K-12 education policy in the Public Policy Ph.D. program. She is interested in researching college readiness and retention and the gaps that exist between high school and college-level coursework, particularly in the areas of literacy and critical thinking skills. Leslie is also interested in focusing on low-income communities and students of color. She spends much of her work time on the road and in schools in the Arkansas Delta; at home, she works with her husband and son on their house, an ongoing construction and renovation project.





Elizabeth Smith - Education Policy

Elizabeth Smith earned an undergraduate degree in political science and master's degree in higher education leadership from the University of Arkansas. Elizabeth is currently employed in the UA College of Education and Health Professions as the Director of Field Placement. In this position, she works with superintendents, principals, and UA faculty to place pre-service teachers in local schools. She has previously held positions in Pre-College Programs and the Office of Admissions at the University of Arkansas as well as in student life and leadership at NorthWest Arkansas Community College. As a Public Policy Ph.D. student, Elizabeth hopes to study the impact of different types of teacher education programs on P-12 student achievement. Upon completing the Ph.D. program, she would like

to pursue a faculty position or continue in academic administration. Elizabeth is married to Nathaniel, a public school teacher and high school basketball coach, and they have two children, Grace (4) and Graham (1).

Lance Cheramie - Agriculture Policy

Lance Cheramie earned a B.S. in Human Environmental Sciences from Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, Louisiana in 1992 and M.S. in Human Environmental Sciences from the University of Arkansas in 2006. Lance is an Apparel Studies instructor in the School of Human Environmental Studies at the University of Arkansas. He teaches courses ranging from clothing concepts to visual merchandising, and serves as faculty advisor to three student organizations - Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society, Apparel Studies Student Association and Razorback Ballroom Team and Social Dance Club. He

also serves as a buying consultant for the University of Arkansas Razorback shops. After completing his Ph.D. he plans to become a Professor and to continue to teach students in the area of Apparel Studies and share his knowledge of merchandising. He will also conduct research in the area of international textile trade policies.



The Public Policy Bulletin is edited by Sonia Kapur. Please e-mail any comments or questions to Dr. Brinck Kerr at jbkerr@uark.edu

Welcome New Faculty

The Public Policy Program recently added a new Professor to its faculty. Below is a brief description of Dr. Song's role in the program as well as some other interesting information about his academic and personal life



Dr. Geoboo Song

*Ph.D. in Political Science
University of Oklahoma (2012)*

*Master of International Public Affairs,
University of Wisconsin-Madison (2003)*

*Master of Public Administration
Korea University (1999)*

In which department do you work and what is your role in the Public Policy program?

I work in the Department of Political Science. I will teach various levels of quantitative methods courses whose topics may include philosophy of science, multivariate statistical analysis, limited dependent variable analysis, multi-level modeling, time-series analysis, panel data analysis, spatial analysis, agent-based modeling, and survey methods. Also, I anticipate offering public policy courses, such as Theories of Public Policy Process, Theories of Individual-level Policy Behavior, Risk and Public Policy, Policy Analysis, Cost Benefit Analysis, and Health Policy.

What are your current research interests?

My general research interests lie in systemic explanation of the variations in individuals' perceptions of policy problems, their policy preferences and their behaviors under certain policy arrangements within highly contentious and controversial domains. More specifically, I have been intrigued by the ontological and epistemological nature of the inherent risks posed by the implementation of science and technology (particularly those related to scientific and sociopolitical controversies caused by high levels of embedded uncertainty and complexity), the different ways individual members of society interpret and perceive benefits and risks, and the related impact on society in general and certain individuals and groups in particular.

What are some of your recent publications?

*Ripberger, Joe, Geoboo Song, Matthew Nowlin, Michael Jones, and Hank Jenkins-Smith. 2012. "Reconsidering the Relationship between Cultural Theory, Political Ideology, and Political Knowledge." *Social Science Quarterly* 93(3):713-731.*

*Jenkins-Smith, Hank, Carol Silva, Rob Rechard, Kuhika Gupta, Matthew Nowlin, Joe Ripberger, Savannah Collins, Mark James, Geoboo Song, and Sarah Trousett. 2011. *Perspectives on Nuclear Waste Management: Fuel Cycle Research & Development*. Report prepared for US Department of Energy Used Fuel Disposition Campaign.*

*Jenkins-Smith, Hank, Carol Silva, and Geoboo Song. 2010. *Health Policy Survey 2010: A National Survey on Public Perceptions of Vaccination Risks and Policy Preferences*. Center for Risk and Crisis Management, University of Oklahoma, Norman.*

Other interesting information

I was born and grew up in Gwangju, South Korea and lived in Seoul where I went to college and graduate school for more than ten years before I came to the United States to study public policy under the guidance of Hank Jenkins-Smith and David Weimer. While enjoying researching and teaching various topics of public policy and methodology, in my free time, I like to play piano and guitar, watch and play various sports, and explore nature and out-of-the-way places.

Dr. Leah Hamilton graduated from the Public Policy Ph.D. Program in 2011. During 2011-12 she served as Visiting Assistant Professor, College of Social Work, University of Arkansas.



Dr. Leah Hamilton

*Ph.D. in Public Policy (Family Policy specialization)
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (2011)*

*Masters of Social Work
University of Denver (2006)*

*Bachelors of Social Work
Metropolitan State College of Denver (2005)*

In which department do you work?

I am Assistant Professor and Field Education Director position at Juniata College in Huntingdon, PA. In this position, I will teach Community Organization and Social Welfare courses and coordinate student internship placements.

What are your current research interests?

I am currently completing research related to my dissertation, which was a policy analysis of the Arkansas Foster Parent Support Act of 2007. I am also conducting research and policy consulting on economic justice and public assistance.

Other interesting information

In March, 2011 and February, 2012, I testified before various Arkansas State House Committees regarding HB 1882 "An Act to Encourage Financial Self-Sufficiency among Low-Income Arkansans." I continue to provide consultation on this piece of legislation, which will most likely be reintroduced in the 2013 legislative session. I have also been consulting for an upcoming piece on poverty in Arkansas on KUAF's Ozarks at Large.

Research and Professional Development (RPD) Series

The Research and Professional Development (RPD) series includes on-going research presentations as well as discussions/presentations regarding professional development both inside and outside of the academy. These sessions are organized as faculty and student panel discussions, or in the alternative, as research presentations.

Two RPD sessions were held in Spring 2012. During the first session, Dr. Margaret Reid and Dr. Brinck Kerr made presentations on vitas and resumes. The second session was on conference practice presentations; the first by Alexander Villarraga and Dr. Jeff Ryan on "Higher Education in Colombia: Comparative Financing Strategies and Potential Adaptability of Imported Models" and the second by Brenda Kilby and Dr. Bill Schreckhise on "Of Killers Silent and Sensational: An Examination of the Coverage of Deaths in Newspapers".



Deborah Brown and Kuatbay Bektemirov

Daniel Chand, Renee Deshommes, Kuatbay Bektemirov, and Leland Mc Queen received the Graduate Best Paper Award for their paper titled “Local Enforcement of Federal Immigration Policies: An Analysis of the 287 (g) and Secure Communities Programs in Arkansas” at the Arkansas Political Science Association (ArkPSA) Conference, 2012.

Deborah Brown was awarded third position for her presentation on “An Interpretive Analysis of Jamaica’s Agriculture Policies 2000-2010: Implications for Women and Food Security Decision-Making” at the Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Conference, 2012.

Kuatbay Bektemirov was awarded second position for his poster presentation “Agriculture as a provider of Public Goods: Identifying and Measuring Positive and Negative Externalities of Rice Production” at the Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Conference, 2012.

SPARK news



SPARK gatherings in November 2011, Diane Blair Library

From upper left to right: Picture 1: Noah Pittman, Everett Smith, Amanda Crandall, Henry Brooks, Sonia Kapur, Erika Grengrich, Danny Chand;

SPARK met on Saturday, June 22nd to discuss future endeavors and hold elections. SPARK agreed that the program should provide business cards for students that have candidacy status. During the meeting, the members elected new officers for the 2012 academic year. The new officers are student representative - Erika Gergerich, Treasurer - Noah Pittman, and President - Henry Brooks. As an act of community service, SPARK raised well over 60 perishables for the Full Circle Food Drive.

The 2012 academic year promises exciting new endeavors in the continued development of the organization. SPARK members can look forward to social activities aimed at building camaraderie. New students (as well as current members) can look forward to written “SPARKS of Wisdom”, an unofficial “What I wish I knew” forum designed to capitalize on the knowledge held by current students. SPARK members will also continue reaching out to the community by performing community service. Finally, SPARK will explore opportunities to promote interaction between our members and the community. We look to achieve this through increased participation in conferences such as the Arkansas Political Science Conference and building relationships with Arkansas based organizations that have public policy components.

The Spring 2012 Capstone Seminar completed research on the impact of immigration policies, such as 287 (g) and Secure Communities, on the Hispanic Communities in Northwest Arkansas.

The Capstone Project culminates the coursework for the public policy Ph.D. degree program. An intrinsic component of this course is the appreciation of the interdisciplinary factors affecting policy research and decisions. The course integrates various policy interests in a specific community-based project. Students of this course identify stakeholders and a policy issue of interest to them and to the community. They research the issue, and in consultation with classmates and the community, propose a range of policy options, implementation strategies, and evaluation tools. Students are expected to integrate relevant theory from their core and specialization coursework into the capstone process and into the outcome of their work.



Capstone group members
Left to right: Katy Evans, Abdullah M. Alshanbri, Dr. Valerie Hunt,
Anita Thompson, Deborah Brown and Amanda Crandall

The Spring 2012 capstone project pursued the previous capstone project footsteps adding new perspective to the issue of immigration in Northwest Arkansas. The project focused on the impact of immigration policies, such as 287(g) and Secure Communities, on the Hispanic community in Northwest Arkansas. This was accomplished through qualitative study.

The methodological path used in the study was phenomenological interviews. The study also utilized several public policy theories and policy analysis methods such as faces of power, street-level bureaucrats, social construction of target populations, and discourse analysis. The rich information collected in this study substantiated what was found in the research regarding the impact of 287(g) on the Hispanic community. More importantly, these results have given a human element to the findings from the Fall 2011 capstone. These results have established a need for further research regarding how law enforcement agencies are implementing the 287(g) program at the state and local level. Some implementation does not comport with the intent of the policy. The project team believes that there is an opportunity for further re-

search in this area -- research that could assist in educating policy makers as well as the general public about the enforcement of 287(g) and Secure Communities and how these policies are affecting the lives of a group that to this point has had no voice.

For more information on this report please contact Dr. Valerie Hunt (vhunt@uark.edu).