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School of Public Affairs invades Hogwarts’s

In the fall of 2015, St. Cloud State students studied and stayed at the Alnwick castle in Alnwick, England. The Alnwick Castle was featured as Hogwarts in the first two “Harry Potter” films, as well as appeared in the film “Elizabeth and Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves,” among other films. For the last 700 years, Alnwick Castle has been home to the Percy family and remains today one of the largest inhabited castles in the United Kingdom. Ralph Percy, 12th and current Duke of Northumberland resides in the castle with his family.

The “School of Public Affairs Semester” included political science and economics courses focused specifically on the British context. Both Michelle Kukoleca Hammes, professor of political science and Rich MacDonald, professor of economics taught courses as well as directed the program.

To further enhance students understanding of the United Kingdom, students also took courses on British history from British faculty Christine Mitchell and on contemporary British society from British faculty David Young.

In addition, students took field trips that included visits to places such as Hadrian’s Wall, the Lake District, Edinburgh, Holy Island, Durham, York and Newcastle. The group also went on a trip to London. Highlights of the London trip included a visit to the Bank of England, listening to debate in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, seeing a West End production of “Billy Elliot” and touring the British Museum. Students took advantage of opportunities to travel on their own to places such as Wales, Dublin, Limerick, Paris and several stops on the Mediterranean coast.

Now that the travel bug and desire to study abroad has taken hold, two students will further their British experiences. One will study at Mary Immaculate College in Limerick and one will study with the Oxford Programme of Undergraduate Studies.
Dean’s Welcome Message

I’d like to invite you to attend the 54th Winter Institute Feb. 10-11 here at St. Cloud State. This year our theme will be community wellness: How can we work, live and enjoy life in Central Minnesota?

Our keynote speaker is a special treat for us. Robert Putnam, author of “Bowling Alone,” “American Grace” and, lastly, “Our Kids,” will speak Feb. 11 about his work on civil society, education and the growing class gap among our youth. I have been a fan of Putnam’s work for more than 25 years, as have many of us in the community.

During the next few months the SCSU Survey is working with the Central Minnesota Community Foundation to survey and measure social capital in our community, a concept initially developed by Putnam in “Bowling Alone.” This is the third such survey done in the last decade, but the first that St. Cloud State and the School of Public Affairs have been involved in. The project includes faculty in the political science and sociology departments. Results are expected sometime in February, perhaps in time for Winter Institute.

Social capital has been something I hope the School is investing in. We recently held a food drive that brought in about 20 cubic feet of donations of food and household goods to two area charities. Not bad for a school with less than 60 faculty and staff! Our geography faculty are helping draw maps to let local leaders make decisions on everything from public safety to housing and transportation. And our faculty in the new Master of Public Administration program have been already active in several places around town with public presentations and service to local government and non-profit organizations.

In this way we are acting as role models for our students to gain a “public affairs perspective” in understanding how one’s actions influence the community. You will find examples of that elsewhere in this newsletter. Thanks for reading!

Winter Institute to target community wellness

Best-selling author, presidential consultant and Harvard social scientist Robert D. Putnam will keynote the Feb. 10-11 Winter Institute.

St. Cloud State’s economic summit, now in its 54th year, will focus on community wellness. Among the scheduled presenters are state economist Laura Kalambokidis and King Banaian, co-author of the St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report.

Still in development are presentations and conversations at the two conference locations: Best Western Kelly Inn in downtown St. Cloud and Atwood Memorial Center, the campus student union. Parking is $1.50 per hour in the 4th Avenue Parking Ramp. Putnam’s 2015 book, “Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis,” argues that America’s growing income inequality is deeply affecting families, neighborhoods and schools.

In his 2000 book, “Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,” Putnam documents a massive membership decline in traditional civic, social and fraternal organizations. That loss of social capital, he says, threatens America’s democratic institutions.

Putnam’s 9 a.m. Feb. 11 address in Atwood Memorial Center is free and open to the public. All other events are limited to conference participants.

Feb. 10 highlights include economic outlook presentations 5-6:30 p.m. at the Kelly Inn. Kalambokidis will discuss Minnesota business conditions. Banaian will report on Central Minnesota. The national economic outlook presenter is pending. A poolside reception and musical entertainment will follow.

Most of Feb. 11 at Atwood Memorial Center is devoted to breakout sessions in three tracks: K-12 teaching, community engagement and public policy research. Lunch includes a discussion panel sponsored by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce.

Since 1963, the Winter Institute has welcomed national and international economists, thought leaders and policy makers. It is sponsored by the Department of Economics and the School of Public Affairs.

For general inquires or to sponsor the Winter Institute, email Cynthia Fitzthum at cjfitzthum@stcloudstate.edu. For registration questions, email Charlotte Kastanek at cekastanek@stcloudstate.edu.
Can We Run Government Like a Business?  
Jan. 14  
9:30-11:30 a.m., St. Cloud Whitney Senior Center  
The prevalent worldview of public administration in the United States held by civil servant practitioners, and echoed by various politicians and business leaders, is that to make government “work again” we need to “run government like a business.” In this talk, attendees will explore whether this proposition is a feasible solution.

St. Cloud Talent Summit  
Jan. 21  
9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., St. Cloud River’s Edge Convention Center  
This FREE full day event is designed to provide a structured environment for businesses, education institutions and job seekers to interact around talent related topics and opportunities for Greater St. Cloud.  
Register at: stcloud-talent-summit.pgtb.me/wvntfM

‘Matewan’ Film Showing & Discussion  
Jan. 21 (showing), 2-4:30 p.m., Miller Center Auditorium  
Jan. 26 (discussion), 2-3:15 p.m., location TBA  
Join Chris Jordan, Department of Theatre and Film Studies for a viewing of “Matewan.” “Matewan” connects a 1920s coal miner’s strike with issues on economic inequality, unions and more.

Careers in the U.S. State Department  
Jan. 28  
4 p.m., Centennial Hall 207  
Attendees will get an overview about the vast array of State Department opportunities: internships, professional fellowships, civil service and foreign service careers.

Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) Info Session  
Jan. 28  
5:30-7:30 p.m., Centennial Hall 207  
This detailed session will offer tips and suggestions on how to prepare for the FSOT. The FSOT is required for U.S. diplomats. There is a FSOT testing window opening in February.

Diversity Job and Internship Fair  
Jan. 29  
1 to 4 p.m., Atwood Second Floor  
Many of Minnesota’s largest business, technical, healthcare, government, non-profit and education employers will be in attendance. View employers attending and info: scsucareers.com.

54th Economics Winter Institute  
Feb. 10-11  
Atwood Memorial Center and St. Cloud Kelly Inn  
The Winter Institute provides the opportunity to gather the best minds in the region and the country to share their thoughts and ideas on various economic issues with attendees from Minnesota and the Midwest. The theme is “Community Wellness.” Register to attend at: stcloudstate.edu/winterinstitute/registration.

MN State Universities Job and Internship Fair  
Feb. 26  
11 a.m.-3 p.m., Earle Brown Heritage Center, Minneapolis  
Explore career opportunities at the largest job fair of the year. View employers attending and register online: mnsujobfair.org.

MN Heartland Economics Challenge  
March 15  
8 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Atwood Cascade Room  
More than 100 students from across the state will come to compete in tests about microeconomics, macroeconomics, international economics and current events.

Internship Fair  
March 23  
Noon-3:30 p.m., Atwood Memorial Center Ballroom  
Organizations with summer and fall internship opportunities will be in attendance. View employers attending and info: scsucareers.com.

Minnesota State National Geographic Bee  
April 1  
9 a.m.-1 p.m., Atwood and Ritsche Auditorium  
More than 100 fourth-to eighth-graders from schools around the state will compete, answering a variety of world geography questions from a panel of judges. The winner will represent Minnesota at the National Geographic Bee in Washington, D.C.

Travel Career Day  
April 4  
1:30-3:30 p.m., Atwood Alumni Room  
This annual event brings speakers from some of Minnesota’s largest and most respected travel-related companies. Students will learn about career opportunities in the travel industry.

Student Research Colloquium  
April 19  
8 a.m.-8 p.m., Atwood Memorial Center  
Students will further their understanding of their field of study, through research and presenting their research. All students who would like to present their research or creative works, must register at stcloudstate.edu/src.

Spring Engagement Celebration  
April 20  
9-11 a.m., Atwood Memorial Center, Ballroom  
Students will showcase their service learning, internship or community project.

Nobel Peace Prize Forum: Inspiring Peacemaking  
June 6-8  
Radisson Blue Minneapolis  
This year’s Forum will focus on the work of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kailash Satyarthi (2014) who has dedicated his life to ending child labor and child trafficking. The Forum will also look at the peace and security implications of and connections between human trafficking, migration, refugees and climate change.
Research Institute updates

The School of Public Affairs Research Institute (SOPARI) is actively involved in applied research projects for CentraCare Health, the city of Waite Park and the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State. SOPARI is always looking for additional projects — particularly those that combine the four learning commitments that support an education at St. Cloud State: community engagement, active learning, sustainability in the broadest sense and globalization.

Alumni, businesses, foundations and non-profits are encouraged to reach out to SOPARI to share ideas for applied research opportunities. School of Public Affairs faculty, staff and students have a range of skills suited to a variety of research needs. The next time you are at St. Cloud State, stop by and visit. SOPARI is located in Stewart Hall 329. Alternatively, you can reach SOPARI by phone at (320) 308-4774 or email at soparesearch@stcloudstate.edu. Learn more by visiting the SOPARI website at stcloudstate.edu/sopa/research-institute/.

If you stop by, you may meet this year’s SOPARI project assistants, Joe Kucan and Paul Ryan. Kucan and Ryan are each in their second year of graduate work in St. Cloud State’s applied economics master’s program. Managing and analyzing data, writing and commenting on reports, preparing surveys, communicating with community stakeholders and identifying project opportunities are among their daily activities with SOPARI. They are on the front line of all SOPARI projects and are gaining rich experience as the end of their academic careers at St. Cloud State approaches.

Meet Research Institute project assistants

Joe Kucan ’13 is a graduate student in the St. Cloud State applied economics program. He is also pursuing a J.D. from George Mason University’s School of Law. Kucan has worked with the School of Public Affairs Research Institute for two years on various projects, including analysis of business formations with the Minnesota Secretary of State’s office. He has also worked with several clubs and organizations of campus, such as the Economics Association, APICS and the St. Cloud State Chess Club.

Paul Ryan ’14 is a graduate student in the St. Cloud State applied economics program. His studies of interest are forecasting and macroeconomics. “Working in the Reseach Institute has given me the opportunity to research a wide array of topics ranging from the Minnesota economy to local land use studies.” Ryan is also the Economics Association president. Outside of school and work his interests are bird hunting, reading and running.

Student reflects on United Nations Annual Summit on Youth by Michelle Hengel

September was an exciting and busy time for me. School was underway but then I left town for a week to attend the Annual Summit on Youth at the United Nations in New York. Representing St. Cloud State University, I attended the summit coordinated by the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy which was held parallel to the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The first day of the conference, we met inside the United Nations. The speaker list the first day was thrilling. I am working on a master’s degree in international heritage policy and practice (coordinated through St. Cloud State’s School of Public Affairs and College of Liberal Arts) and being able to attend a conference with U.N. representatives was inspiring. Speakers included Ambassador Katalin Bogyay, permanent representative of Hungary to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, high representative for the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations; and Marie Paule Roudil, director of the UNESCO Office in New York. That evening, the Hungarian consulate hosted a social event for the participants of the conference. The guest of honor was the director-general of UNESCO, Irina Bokova who was gracious enough to spend her first night in New York with conference participants.

After befriending a group of other conference participants, we spent the week attending informative sessions and utilized each other’s experience to delve further into topics of interest for all of us. It was beneficial to examine cultural diplomacy matters with professionals, professors, and students from all over the world. I spent a lot of time with Sandy Grubic, a native of Croatia, who works for the United Nations Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Netherlands. I was delighted to learn more about an international matter that I had never given much thought to but which will have a profound effect on the future of global accountability for serious crimes against humanity.

My trip was capped off with a chance sighting of Pope Francis. I wrote about it on the Master of Public Administration blog. I encourage you to read it by accessing it through the MPA Facebook page or blog at https://scsumpaprogram.wordpress.com/.
SCSU Survey: Majority of Minnesotans feel action needed to address climate change

Each fall the SCSU Survey conducts a survey of adult Minnesotans about their perspectives on relevant political and social issues. The environmental portion of the survey sought to gauge Minnesotans' perspectives on climate change.

The survey asked respondents about their beliefs about climate change and whether it’s important for the state to take action to prepare for climate change.

According to the results, 88 percent of Minnesotans believe that climate change is occurring now. As to the cause, 57 percent believe that it is human-caused while 31 percent believe it is the result of natural causes.

Seventy-eight percent of Minnesotans believe that taking action to address the effects of climate change is important or very important.

Almost 7 percent of Minnesotans do not believe climate change is happening and almost 4 percent didn’t know or didn’t have an answer. These views are held across party lines, 97 percent of those who self-identify as Democrats and 83 percent of Republicans believe that climate change is happening now.

Eighty-three percent of Democrats attribute climate change to human activities, compared to 55 percent of Republicans.

“This demonstrates that acceptance of climate change as an issue is growing, and far more than 50 percent of the Minnesota public accept that it’s both real and an important issue to deal with,” said Ann Finan, St. Cloud State associate professor and report author.

The 35-year-old SCSU Survey is led by an interdisciplinary team of St. Cloud State faculty and student directors who design the survey and analyze results. The survey conducts surveys each year for statewide Minnesota offices. The survey sample came from a statewide random sample of Minnesota adults. Responses were gathered from 623 randomly-selected landline and cellphone users Oct. 12-22 at the St. Cloud State University Survey Lab.

The Survey is substantially self-funded. In addition to the fall statewide survey and spring survey of St. Cloud State students, which are done in conjunction with appropriate classes, the Survey works with government and non-profit agencies.

The Office of Sponsored programs indicates the Survey brings in half or more of the external funds of School of Public Affairs. Total external 2014 funds of the School of Public Affairs were $187,212 of which $89,500 came from work done by the survey. Clients included the Minnesota Lottery, Minnesota Attorney General Survey of Small Business and city of St. Cloud tax survey.

The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. The St. Cloud State University Survey was one of three St. Cloud State projects recognized in 2013. The Survey only does surveys for local and state governments and non-profit institutions. No surveys are ever done for political parties or political candidates.

The SCSU Survey is positively recognized locally, statewide and nationally. In 2007 The Telephone Interviewer’s Handbook by Patricia A. Gwartney, a sociology professor at the University of Oregon and past director of their survey research center lists about 65 universities she considered major academic survey organizations. The SCSU Survey is one of them. The SCSU Survey is most likely the most underfunded major university survey operation in the United States. Even smaller operations have roughly no fewer than six faculty and staff devoted fully to their endeavor. The survey has no permanent staff, a part-time graduate student who is paid for out of survey funds, seven faculty who have one reassigned time and the good work of our volunteer student directors from a variety of majors.

The quality of the SCSU Survey has been recognized nationally through the years. After the 2012 election, Nate Silver rated the Survey as the third-most accurate survey in the country for organizations performing five or fewer surveys (http://nyti.ms/1cusF32) and FiveThirtyEight.com recently awarded the survey a higher grade than many large, established organizations like Gallup, NPR and U.S. News and many Tier 1 higher ed survey centers (http://53eig.ht/1rohz8). The skills students develop from participating in the survey set them apart on the job market.
St. Cloud State veterans mark Patriot Day

St. Cloud State students, faculty and staff gathered in front of Administrative Services to observe Patriot Day and the 14th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

The Student Veterans Organization raised the flags to half-staff with the help of Sauk Rapids firefighter Tom Muehlbauer and Campus Area Police Officer Dan McClure ’03 ’14. Rebecca Wehe, Maple Grove, played “Taps,” and members of the ROTC Fighting Saints Battalion participated.

Student Veterans Organization President Brandon Askin, Sauk Rapids, an Army veteran and current member of the U.S. Army Reserves spoke about the 9/11 attacks and invited those present to remember that they are patriots.

“For a whole generation of Americans 9/11 has become for us a defining moment,” he said. “For an entire nation it has become a symbol of how precious our freedom really is and has reminded each of us what it truly means to be an American.”

He asked them to remember and honor the victims of the attacks as well as the firefighters, medics and police who responded that day. He told them to remember the soldiers who fought the war on terror and honor those who died in service along with the wounded veterans and those who are still serving.

MPA Program to host ‘The World Is Flat’ community book discussion

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program will host a community book discussion group, 5-6 p.m. Wednesdays Feb. 3-24 at St. Cloud Central Perk Coffee Shop, featuring facilitated discussions on Friedman’s “The World Is Flat 3.0: A Brief History of the 21st Century.” Discussions are open to the St. Cloud State campus community and to St. Cloud area community members.

“Captivating ... an enthralling read. To his great credit, Friedman embraces much of his flat world’s complexity, and his reporting brings to vibrant life some beguiling characters and trends. ... [“The World is Flat”] is also more lively, provocative, and sophisticated than the overwhelming bulk of foreign policy commentary these days. We’ve no real idea how the twenty-first century’s history will unfold, but this terrifically stimulating book will certainly inspire readers to start thinking it all through.” — Warren Bass, The Washington Post

Discussions will be facilitated by MPA faculty member Shawn E. Schooley.

MPA Program to facilitate Ethics of Public Administrators community learning sessions

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program will host, “Ethics of Public Administrators,” lifelong learning community sessions 2:30-3:30 p.m. Wednesdays Feb. 3-24 at the St. Cloud Whitney Senior Center.

Attendees will learn about the ethics of public administrators as related to the oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution, administrative discretion, the differing approaches to civil servants’ ethics and more. Learning sessions are free and open to the public.

Learning sessions will be facilitated by MPA faculty member Shawn E. Schooley.
**Alumni/Student Highlights**

**Blake Held** (criminal justice) coordinated a grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and its COPS Hiring Program. The grant will provide the St. Cloud Police Department with $375,000 to provide half salary and benefits to hire three additional police officers for three years.

**Landry Kabore** (political science) and **Oluwatobi Oluwagbemi**, (political science and women's studies) serve as SCSU Survey student directors and presented at the student poster session at the Minnesota Political Science Association Annual Meeting in October.

**Kelli Lindsey** ‘15 (geography and planning) is a GIS analyst for East View Geospatial, Inc., Minneapolis, East View Geospatial Inc., is a leading provider of authoritative geospatial data and GIS production services and solutions.

**Daniel Martínez** ‘04 (economics and Spanish) was named director of the new GW Cisneros Hispanic Leadership Institute at George Washington University. He is an assistant professor of sociology at the George Washington University Columbian College of Arts and Sciences.

**Damon Nelton** ‘15 (geography and planning) accepted the position as the first GIS specialist at Ellingson Companies in West Concord.

**Alfredo Oliveira** ‘14 (political science) and **Christine M. Imbra** (higher education administration) presented, “Studying Abroad: A Faculty & Student Perspective,” at the Inter Faculty Organization LGBTIQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual, and ally) Minnesota State College and Universities conference in November.

**Karen Stay** ‘10 ‘13 (political science) is the lead SCSU Survey student director and presented at the student poster session at the Minnesota Political Science Association Annual Meeting in October.

**Tabitha Wood** ‘14 (criminal justice) was sworn into duty as a police officer at Columbia Heights Police Department. Prior she served as a community service officer also at Columbia Heights Police Department. Wood is also a human resource specialist in the United States Army Reserve.

**Faculty/Staff Highlights**

**Mikhail Blinnikov** (geography and planning) presented on the geography of Russia and Ukraine relations at CUNY Hunter College in New York City in September. He also presented, “On the Approaches to Estimate Geocological Footprint of a Mid-size Mid-western City of St. Cloud, MN, USA” at the seventh international scientific conference on Geocological Problems of Today at Vladimir State University in Vladimir, Russia, in October.


**Stephen Frank** (political science) and **Jim Cottrill** (political science) presented, “Results from SCSU's 2015 Minnesota Statewide Poll,” at the Minnesota Political Science Association Annual Meeting in October.

**Aref N. Hassan** (political science) presented, “Regional Competition and Religious Undertones: Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey in the Modern Middle East,” at the Minnesota Political Science Association Annual Meeting in October.

**Kenneth Rebeck** (economics) was promoted to professor in the Department of Political Science.

**Morgan Nyendu** (political science) received the Henry H. Villard Research Award at the Council for Economic Education National Annual Conference. The Henry H. Villard Research Award recognizes an individual whose leadership has had an extraordinary, positive impact in economic education research. Rebeck’s work on normed test instruments is considered a great contribution to the field of economics and his papers have been widely cited in economic and financial literacy education.

**Shawn E. Schooley** (political science) presented, “Three Top Legislative Issues in 2015 to Pay Attention to: 1) Affordable Care Act (re: judicial challenges), 2) Common Core Standards (re: testing), and 3) Corrections (re: judicial decisions),” at the Minnesota Political Science Association Annual Meeting in October.

**David Switzer** (economics) was appointed as the Faculty Fellow for Assessment for St. Cloud State University for the 2015-16 academic year.

**Kenneth Rebeck**, professor of economics receives the Henry H. Villard Research Award.
From the Air Force to travel and tourism

Nearly 600 students crossed the stage to accept their diploma at the Dec. 18 commencement of almost 1,000 fall semester graduates. One of those students was Betty Johnson. After 20 years in the Air Force, Johnson was searching for a transition to civilian work and she found it first at Anoka-Ramsey Community College and then at St. Cloud State.

After retiring as a technical sergeant in 2011, the wife and mother of three was ready for a new challenge, she said.

Education has always been important to Johnson, who earned her associate degree from the Community College of the Air Force while serving and a second associate degree from Anoka-Ramsey Community College in 2013. But she always had a goal of completing a bachelor’s degree. She graduated magna cum laude from St. Cloud State this December with her degree in travel and tourism.

Johnson attended St. Cloud State together with her husband, Josh, also a veteran, who graduated in May with a degree in history.

She was nervous about majoring in travel and tourism because she was the only non-traditional student, but her classmates and professors welcomed her completely.

“They’re great,” she said. “Everyone was excellent. … The teachers are excellent. You could tell they love what they do.”

Johnson served as treasurer of the Travel and Tourism Club, helping to revitalize the club this year with canoe trips on the Mississippi and fundraisers.

She’s excited for the next step. She’s hoping to pursue a graduate degree or work developing tourism in a historic town, Johnson said.