



# POLITICA

A PROGRAM IN POLITICAL SCIENCE NEWSLETTER  
JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY

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## In This Edition

- ❖ Our Mission
- ❖ The PSA Corner
- ❖ Our Faculty
- ❖ Lessons From Our Alumni
- ❖ Words of Wisdom from Our Seniors
- ❖ First Year Student's Perspective
- ❖ Political Spotlight
- ❖ Political Science Academic Awards
- ❖ Picture Gallery
- ❖ Our Curriculum

## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

POLITICA, the Portuguese and Spanish word for *Politics*, serves the purpose of highlighting events, activities and achievements by the Program in Political Science, its faculty and students. It also serves as a space for scholarly and social engagement. If you have articles, news or events you would like to submit for publication to POLITICA or are interested in becoming a staff member please contact program coordinator, Dr. Terza Lima-Neves at [tneves@jcsu.edu](mailto:tneves@jcsu.edu) or (704) 378-1095.

## OUR MISSION

*The political science major is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the philosophical and practical issues associated with political systems, institutions and organization, and political participation and governance and to encourage critical thinking about the nature of citizenship, rights, and duties in the modern world. The program also aims to support the College of Arts and Letters' and Department of Social Sciences mission of providing quality professional preparation in the field of political science as well as academic preparation for graduate studies. It also aims to fulfill the University's purpose of producing graduates who are able to communicate effectively, think critically, learn independently and demonstrate competence in the field of political science while being responsible global citizens.*



*Dr. Lima-Neves (upper right) and students during a session for her course on Contemporary Caribbean Politics and Society, redefining the spaces where learning takes place*

## The Political Science Student Association Corner

### **Ramon Garibaldo**

*President, PSA*

*Junior, Political Science Major*

### **Learning to See Politics**

Soon after I took up the position of President of the Political Science Student Association, I went to a family reunion, where my mother proudly bragged about the achievement. The news was accompanied by questions about my future duties, responsibilities, and maybe even the possible privileges. My uncle Luis, however, posed me a question I have long pondered since: What do you mean when you say you study politics?

There are certain expectations that come to people's minds when mentioning one studies Political Science. The common belief is that we spend four years reviewing how the branches of government work and how a bill becomes law. We are supposed to watch C-SPAN with the same passion with which a future zoologist watches National Geographic. We are supposed to know the names of all the capitals of the world, along with their respective heads of government. These assumptions are not altogether false. Throughout our classes we are constantly reminded of the basic limitations of government, encouraged to stay tuned with current events, and given the resources to explore contexts beyond our own. However, we do much more than that. A bit difficult to describe, I can say the greatest ability I have gained from our political science program has been the ability to "see" politics. At its most basic, politics is the study of power relations and public resources; as Dr. Williams often reminds us, "who gets what, when, and how."

This task often takes us to unexpected places. Rather than keeping our eyes perpetually turned to Capitol Hill, we find ourselves studying Latino and black neighborhoods to assess the performance of criminal justice and economic relief programs – a task that, in the wake of the Ferguson and Baltimore controversies, is now timelier than ever. Instead of placing political parties and large bureaucracies as our main political actors, we analyze the political behavior of women-led community organizations, undocumented immigrants, or large international bodies. We learn how to “see” threats to and promises of democratic change in multiple settings, from the ways Afro-descendant communities in Brazil ask for greater visibility from the national government to the ways high school students in North Carolina are making their voices heard in school boards. From the Charlotte City Council to the European Union, we learn how to study the way power and resources play in multiple entities.

Every day, I am amazed at the projects our students and faculty engage in, as well as at the wide diversity of topics and theories we explore in class. At the end, everything comes together thanks to our common goal of understanding how power relations play out and how people may come together in the most unexpected places. During the family meeting, I failed to give my uncle an answer, but to my mind came a quote by American poet J.T. Barbarese: “Politics is what’s in their freezer, whose kid got killed, who’s got a job, who lost a house, and how all the bankers ought to be hanged.”



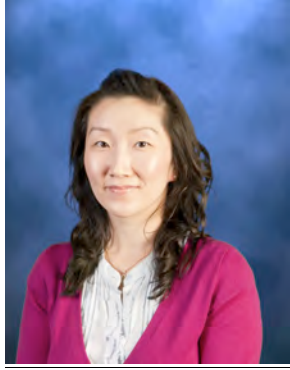
## A Word From Our Faculty



**Dr. Terza Lima-Neves, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Program Coordinator*

We were really busy this semester! From numerous keynote lectures and co-curricular activities to classes and conference attendance, our faculty and students were travelling across the country (and abroad), spreading the word about the work we are doing here in the political science program. We couldn't be prouder of our students, particularly our graduating seniors who are off to wonderful opportunities beyond our gates. I can definitely see growth and maturity on the part of our students, with every semester that passes. They are more prepared than ever for professional careers and graduate studies. The faculty strives to provide a wide range of diverse opportunities for our students to participate in academic conferences to meet scholars who are leading experts in our field. This semester our students attended and presented at the National Conference of Black Political Scientists and the North Carolina Political Science Association Conferences. We invited leading experts to campus for lectures on Latino politics and motherhood and academia. It was a fantastic learning environment for our students, faculty, staff and others in our academic community who were able to attend. We will continue to bring these programs to campus to enhance our learning experience with the hope that our students seize the opportunity!

[How to Contact Dr. T. Lima-Neves](#)  
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***Dr. Susan Shim, Ph.D.***  
*Assistant Professor of Political Science*

Our program is slowly but surely expanding and improving! With each passing semester I see not only a longer list of political science majors, but I also see their GPA climbing, their participation growing, and most importantly, their ambition rising.

As this semester wraps up, I am very proud of our students, especially our graduates, and I know they have worked hard to earn their degrees. I'm a firm believer that school is what you make of it—the more effort you put in, the better quality education you will take with you. There will always be a few who take the easy way out and do the bare minimum to graduate, but that is what makes the difference between mediocrity and success.

It is my sincere hope and belief that our program will continue to inspire and produce students who not only earn their degrees but give JCSU a worthy reputation, and I am very encouraged to see more of our students on that track.

How to Contact Dr. S. Shim  
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Telephone: (704) 378-1059



***Dr. Tonya Williams, Ph.D.***  
*Assistant Professor of Political Science*

Each academic year offers an opportunity to meet new students, assess the growth and maturation of our returning students, reconsider course content and evaluate whether what we do in the classroom is working. Each year is different, however. I always learn something new that informs my approach to teaching and learning. This year, I have learned a lot as an instructor. One of the most important lessons that I learned was that given the opportunity, students demonstrate a remarkable level of creativity in pursuing research topics they enjoy and can successfully present their research and/or interests in ways that are new and innovative. Finally, I have witnessed students challenge traditional expectations set forth in my course syllabi and insist on a more interactive, relevant and interesting classroom learning experience. Essentially, students are taking charge over their own learning process. I enjoyed *almost* every minute of these teaching and learning experiences! As we conclude this academic year, I implore you to return in the fall with that same spirit of independence, creativity, intellectual curiosity and commitment to academic excellence. And remember, "it's always a good day to be a political scientist!"

How to Contact Dr. T. Williams  
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Telephone: (704) 378-1192

## Lessons From Our Alumni

### *Kirstin Anderson-Hall '12*

While I love Johnson C. Smith with all of my heart, there was something about going to graduate school that enhanced the way I choose the frame of my life. Maybe it's from living in a city where everyone is on a power trip? Perhaps, it's just me getting older? Either way, I'm not the same woman I was last year or even the year before because graduate school forces you to grow as an adult and as a scholar. For months I stepped on campus feeling unworthy of my admittance to one of the best school of public affairs in the country. Once again, I was one of the only persons of color in my classes but had classmates who graduated from renowned undergraduate institutions. I constantly pressured myself to be the best simply because I was black *and* a woman, and wanted respect from my peers. That eventually burnt me out and I said to myself, "I have nothing to prove, because I'm doing this for me." I chose to do the best for myself and not the approval of others. I started to live my life carefree because I stopped caring what others thought about me in the classroom and in everyday life.

Eventually, the good grades came every semester through hard work and dedication. And the respect from my cohort? That came as soon as I stopped seeing them as rivals and accepted them as my colleagues. My personal journey throughout graduate school was often emotionally grueling and stressful, but it helped make me who I am...for now.



*Kirstin Anderson-Hall and Dr. Lima-Neves during her visit to JCSU this Spring. In May, Kirstin graduated from American University with a Master of Arts Degree in Political Communication*

## Reflections From A First Year Student

### *Ke'Aira Wilson*

*Political Science Major*

My first day of classes, second semester was the true start of my college experience. I was punctual and came eager, but honestly a little fearful because I had no idea what I was in for. Dr. Williams walked in and began passing out her syllabus. I quickly realized I was the only freshman in the senior level class. She started talking about her requirements for the class and made a statement directed towards me, "I'm pretty sure you're not ready to take MY class. I suggest you drop it when you can." I was offended! This lady has already underestimated me in less than 30 minutes. I said to myself, "I will show her what I'm capable of."

Once she began her lecture on race, gender, and ethnicity in politics, I knew right then and there at that moment I was in the right major. These were the teachings I'd been craving for years but there was no one capable of giving them to me. And so my love/ hate relationship with political science began. I've endured a couple of classes and learned so much about myself, my major, and my future. Although I struggled, it was a great struggle and I can't wait for the next few years to come.

## Words of Wisdom From A Graduating Senior

**Vanessa Chicas**

*History Major, Political Science Minor*

Think! At first, it seems like an easy verb to achieve. Our brain is constantly thinking about what to wear for the day, what to do, or what to eat. I mean, our brain is thinking while we are asleep! However, can I think critically as a college student and graduate? Have I earned the right to call myself a scholar? Sure, I have not attained a master's degree and definitely not a doctorate degree, but in my time at Smith, the political science program has helped develop my abilities and thinking.

If you asked me four years ago where I saw myself in the future and what I planned to be doing, I'd probably have the same answer as now. I'm not sure. How I see it, college isn't about figuring yourself out, but about learning more about the world around you to help define yourself. Three amazing, determined, and dedicated women have helped fulfill this experience. Through the program I have developed my role as a citizen of the world. Although my Salvadoran blood, my U.S. identity, and my female features describe me they are not the only thing I am. As an educated, Salvadoran, and immigrant woman, the program has made me realize that I am the one that needs to advocate for change. Not only that I should but also that I have the abilities to do so now. My favorite part of being in the political science program has been having professors that I know on a personal level, that they know my name, and care about what I am doing with my life. They are truly invested in molding future leaders, thinkers, and scholars by challenging us to accomplish more than what we think we can do. Not just any professor is willing to write a

recommendation, mentor you, or dedicate that much time to their students.

In another four or ten years I most likely will not remember what case established right of privacy, how many years Supreme Court justices can serve in Mexico, or how the mayor-council and council-manager differentiate. What I will remember is that when I'm seeing a candidate's campaign advertisement or an article about tourism in El Salvador, I need to think twice and really assess what it actually entails. Overall, the experience as a political scientist here has encouraged me to flourish into a young scholar that can compete with others. My only advice for those still in the program is not to be discouraged by the amount or type of work, and stay motivated to challenge yourself and acquire the most you can from three established, brilliant, and wise professors.



*Vanessa Chicas at Senior Luncheon*

## Political Spotlight

**Sergio Chisaca**

*Sophomore, Political Science Major*

### A Not So Peaceful Future In Colombia

For more than 50 years, the South American state of Colombia has lived a turbulent history caught between government inefficiency, an influential drug trade, and illegal groups of the left and right. After ex-president Alvaro Uribe finished his second term, he left with an astonishing approval rating that peaked at 91 percent. President Uribe had many successes during his two terms in restoring order, security, and stability to Colombia, a state that was engulfed in terrorism, drug violence, and wide spread corruption. Colombia was on the brink of becoming a failed state and the battle against left wing guerillas such as FARC and ELN was taking a toll on Colombia. However, during those eight years in office, president Uribe successfully launched military attacks against the rebel group, FARC, that resulted in the rescue of hostages from the group. FARC's increased size of more than twenty thousand fighters was cut to below eight thousand during Uribe's presidency. Ex-president Uribe also faced harsh criticism during his terms for changing the constitution to allow him to run for a second term. However, his greatest controversy was his creation of right wing paramilitaries to combat FARC in heavily controlled areas. Right wing paramilitaries or AUC have also been a contributing source of violence among rural communities in Colombia. International organizations for human rights have noted that paramilitaries in Colombia have violated numerous human rights likewise as FARC. However, president Uribe created *The Peace and Justice Law* for paramilitary groups in Colombia. The law successfully

demobilized the group, subjected them to criminal courts, and even extradited top leaders to the United States. During Uribe's presidency, American aid was increased to help combat the expanding cocaine cultivation that was heavily influenced by terrorist group of FARC under *Plan Colombia*.

In 2010, President Uribe left office with high approval ratings, the country had halved the percentages of kidnapping and bombings while heavily increased its military and regained control of the state. His successor, Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos under President Uribe would take on his legacy. When Colombians set out to vote for the new president, Juan Manuel Santos was a favorite for his support from the former president. The state looked forward to that August day when presidential candidate Santos would become the new head of state. Like Alvaro Uribe, President Santos would come in with an approval rating of over 80 percent. However, little did Colombians know that two years later President Santos would begin the handing over of Colombia to the terrorist organization of FARC in an elusive peace agreement.



*Translation: "Colombia Wants Peace"*

In 2012, current president Juan Manuel Santos announced that after successful years of combating FARC, the Colombian government had heavily weakened the group and would initiate a peace

agreement to end the five decade long conflict. The peace agreement tackles 6 major points: Rural Reform, Political Participation, Drug Trafficking, Victims, End of Conflict/Reintegration, and Implementation of the Agreement. President Santos stated that the peace talks would only last no more than 2 years. It is now 2015 and not only has the president put all energy and time into the peace agreement and forgotten all other issues, but the Colombian government and FARC have only been able to agree on 3 of the 6 points. Since the start of the peace talks in Havana, Cuba, there has been a large amount of criticism. First, many Colombians were outraged when the Colombian government spent money to personally fly FARC leaders from Colombia to Havana.



Many people asked themselves, “Why are you flying those criminals to Cuba?” However, that wasn’t even the worst controversy over this so-called peace agreement. On the point of political participation, many Colombians are fearful and angry with the government on why a group who has murdered, tortured, recruited children, bombed towns, and are actively drug traffickers would be allowed to participate in the government. The state of Colombia is divided on the issue; many see it as a democratic way for them to voice their opinions instead of turning towards violence. The other half, mainly supporters of ex-president Uribe state that by letting them participate in government, FARC leaders could be

elected in the future and radically change the politics and economy of the Colombian state. While this may seem farfetched, many Colombians feel that this is what FARC has been fighting for. FARC has a communist ideology and they won’t stop until they change the state of Colombia whether politically or by force.

Over the course of the talks, other controversies have risen such as what price FARC should pay for their crimes. The rebel group has said that they will not accept any agreement that puts them in jail. To the Colombian people, it is an outrage as to why the government would even consider coming to any agreement if FARC members would take part in government and also be free of any punishment for their crimes. Widespread protests against President Santos and FARC have occurred in Colombia over the issue of impunity.

The Colombian people have witnessed how this particular president of Colombia has simply surrendered himself as well as the government in the name of “peace”. The peace talks have only worked to put Colombia on a fast track to become a narco-state again. FARC has said they will not stop recruiting children, they will not pay a day of jail for their crimes, and they will not turn over their weaponry over to the government. FARC have repeatedly attacked civilians throughout these peace talks and violated the unilateral truce. On April 15, 2015, these terrorists massacred 10 soldiers while sleeping at a base camp, did that foolish president do anything? Not at all, he said that that’s why the government was in an agreement with the rebel group. Colombians have had to hear countless disappointments by the corrupt government since the start of Santos’s presidential.

How many more people need to die because of landmines? How many towns need to be bombed? What more needs to



happen for this man who we can no longer call president do to end the talks? This man has ruined eight years of progress in 4 years. He is letting the narco-terrorists win. We ask ourselves, where is the justice in Colombia? Over half of the population is against the peace talks; though the president is still ignorant against the opposition. In addition to this president's ignorance, international leaders from the European Union and the United States have also been of no help. They claim to know more about the positive effects of the agreement for Colombia. They lack to think of what FARC has done in the state and what the future holds with those criminals in the government. World leaders need to examine closely the effects of this faulty peace process with terrorists. The so called "progress" under Santos has only led to increased insecurity levels all over the state, again rearmament of FARC, and an increase in cocaine production in the state. Recently, the president's approval rating is at a low of less than 25 percent, down from above 50 percent a few months ago. Colombians know the truth. We ask you Mr. Santos, and we, the Colombian people urge you, please show some compassion with Colombians and end the talks now. Your peace is not our peace! Don't turn Colombia into Cuba and Venezuela!

## The Second Annual Political Science Academic Awards Ceremony

THE JEWEL L. PRESTAGE AWARD FOR  
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

**RAMON GARIBALDO**

THE DIANE PINDERHUGHES AWARD  
FOR EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**SHAQUAN HARRIS**

THE HANES WALTON AWARD FOR  
BEST SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE PAPER

**LERATO MOTAUNG**

**BRIANA ROBINSON**

THE COUNTS-JONES AWARD FOR  
OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY  
LEADERSHIP

**WARREN RADEBE**



*Dr. Shim with our honorees, Warren Radebe,  
Ramon Garibaldo and Lerato Motaung*

## From Our Picture Gallery

*The Semester at a Glance!*

### **Black History Month Lecture and Film Series**



*Black History Month Keynote Speaker, former Professional Basketball Player and Business Owner Jamel Thomas (right) with political science senior, Nomar Rodriguez*



*Seniors Vanessa Chicas, Lerato Motaung and Helen Council-Davis*

### **International Women's Month Lecture and Film Series**



*Keynote Lecture by Dr. Mari Castaneda on women and academia*



*Learning Africa Through Dance event as part of Black History Month with Master Instructor Samba Djallo, Master Samba taught us traditional West African dance from Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)*



*JCSU Panel on Parenting and Academia with JCSU professors and alumni*

**Keynote Lecture by Dr. Tony Affigne on Latino Politics, White Supremacy and the New South**



*Dr. Tony Affigne with JCSU students and “little research assistant”, Ema Lima-Neves*

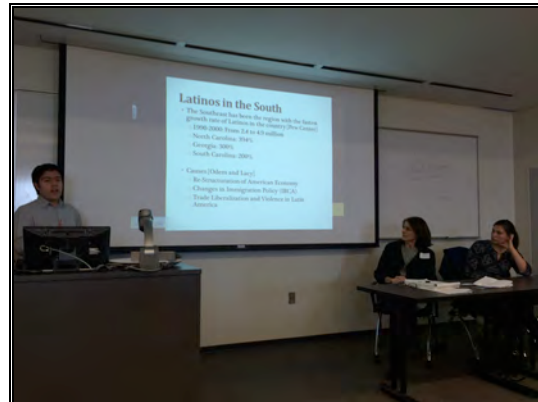
**CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**



*Political Science Students and Professors at the North Carolina Political Science Association Conference (NCPSA)*



*Immediately after his lecture, Dr. Affigne engaged in an intimate discussion with JCSU professors and students as well as local Latino media about the status of the Latino community in Charlotte in particular and North Carolina in general*



*Political Science Junior, Ramon Garibaldo presenting his research on Latino youth and activism in the South at NCPSA*



*Shaquan Harris presenting his research project with the help from little research assistant, Xavier*



*Dr. Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves with political science students, D'Andre Carter (left), Shaquan Harris (center) and Ramon Garibaldo (right) at the National Conference of Black Political Scientists*

## HONORS CONVOCATION

## POLI SCI IN THE COMMUNITY



*JCSU Student volunteers and Professors with Liberian Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Leymah Gbowee (center)*



*Dr. Lima-Neves with political science students, Ramon Garibaldo and Selene Medina, recipients of the President's List Academic Awards*



*Dr. Lima-Neves with Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Political Science student Mpumi Nobiva and local young community activist Mongai Fankam (left)*



*Dr. Lima-Neves, Tiffany Packer (History) and Brian Jones (Dean of the College of Arts and Letters) with students Selene Medina (Poli Sci) and Shawn Murray (History), after receiving their President's List academic Awards*



*Dr. Lima-Neves with Dr. Tonya Williams, JCSU students, and "Junior Research Assistant", Xavier Williams as she receives the Excellence in Education Award from the National Women of Achievement Association Queen City Chapter. Also featured JCSU Alumna, Carolyn Ginyard (center), who was also honored*

## GRADUATION

## Congratulations to The Class of 2015!



*Political Science major, Lerato Motaung  
immediately after receiving her degree*



*Political Science Major, Briana Robinson with Dr.  
Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves*



*Political Science major, Amber Mallory with Dr.  
Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves*



*Political Science major, Danielle McCauley Jones  
with Dr. Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves*



*Political Science minor, Vanessa Chicas with Dr. Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves*



*Dr. Williams with, Laila Randerer, communications major and Poli Sci supporter*



*History major and poli sci supporter, Langston Hughes with Dr. Williams and Dr. Lima-Neves*

*"Donde haya un árbol que plantar,  
plántalo tú. Donde haya un error  
que enmendar, enmiéndalo tú.  
Donde haya un esfuerzo que  
todos esquivan, hazlo tú. Sé tú el  
que aparta la piedra del camino."*

*"Wherever there is a tree to be  
planted, plant it yourself. Whenever  
there is a mistake to be fixed, fix it  
yourself. Whenever there is an effort  
nobody wants to make, make it  
yourself. You ought to be the one to  
set the stone on the side of the  
road"*

*- Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957)  
Literary Pseudonym for Lucila  
Godoy Alcayaga, Chilean  
author & Recipient of Nobel  
Prize in Literature*

## POLITICAL SCIENCE FALL 2015 COURSES

### Dr. Terza Lima-Neves

POL 100A: Intro to Political Science  
TTH 9:30AM

POL 332A: Politics of the Dev. World  
TTH 1:30PM

POL 334A: International Relations  
TTH 12:00 PM

### Dr. Tonya Williams

POL 431A: Policy Analysis  
TTH 1:30PM

POL 432A: Seminar in American Politics  
TTH 9:30

POL 499W: Senior Paper  
Wed 3PM

### Dr. Susan Shim

Pol 230A: Intro To Political Analysis  
MWF 10AM

POL 434A: Constitutional Law  
MWF 11am

### Staff

POL 131A: American Government  
TTH 9:30AM

*The Program in Political Science at Johnson C. Smith University is located on the Second Floor of McCrorey Hall (MCH)*

*Join us on Facebook at Political Science Program at JCSU!*

## REQUIRED COURSES

*The required courses for the Political Science Major are (27 credit hours):*

POL 100 Intro to Political Science  
POL 131 American Government  
POL 230 Intro to Political Analysis  
POL 333 Comparative Politics  
POL 334 International Relations  
POL 335 Political Theory  
POL 398 Research Methods  
POL 431 Policy Analysis  
POL 434 Constitutional Law  
POL 499 Senior Paper

## Electives

*An additional 15 elective hours in the Major from the following courses:*

POL 231 State and Local Politics  
POL 235 Intro to African Politics  
POL 330 Public Administration  
POL 332 The Developing World  
POL 339 Black Political Thought  
POL 430 Women in Politics  
POL 432 Seminar in American Politics  
POL 433 International Organizations  
POL 435 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties  
POL 437 Foreign Policy  
POL 439 Internship  
POL 491 Special Topics in Political Science

*Majors must also take (12 credit hours):*

ECON 231 Principles of Macroeconomics  
HIS 136 History of the United States to 1865  
PSY 233 or SOC 233 or MTH 136 Statistics

