Lessons from Two Decades of Change

Dr. Elaine Lacy, Professor of History

One year ago Dr. Val Lumans wrote a delightful piece for Polis about the changes that had occurred at USC Aiken during the almost 30 years he had been a part of this institution. As a fellow historian I feel a similar urge to reflect on the changes I have witnessed (and experienced) during my two decades at this institution. But I would also like to share with our readers some of the things I have learned over these years.

Among the most dramatic changes affecting USCA in the last two decades are those that relate to technology. When I arrived on campus in August 1991, I was provided a used desktop computer and was advised, in the absence of screensavers, to turn the computer off when I left my office to teach a class. It took my computer 12-15 minutes to reboot each time. No one had E-mail capability, so to get a message (or “Memo”) to colleagues across campus we typed it out, made photocopies, and walked them around campus to faculty mailboxes. We used overhead projectors in class, lectured from typed notes, walked to the library to read journal articles, and headed to archives to locate historical documents. We got news from radio (which some faculty kept in their offices), television, and newspapers, and talked on our land-line phones. Students visited our offices during (and outside of) office hours to discuss their progress in our classes. Technological improvements have brought dramatic changes to teaching and to our research practices. Blackboard, Power Point, You Tube, and online photographs and other historical documents enhance the learning experience for students, but at the same time, we find ourselves monitoring students’ classroom use of smart phones, laptops, and iPads. Students email us (or contact us on Facebook) at all hours of the day and night. While I am impressed with their knowledge and use of new equipment and the Internet, especially social networking sites, I have observed the inability of many students today to meet academic deadlines, and I suspect that the reason is their lack of time management skills in the face of so many distractions.

My research tactics have also changed tremendously. Some of the documents previously available only in dusty archives are now available online. The journal articles I drove to USC Columbia’s Thomas Cooper Library to read (or ordered via Interlibrary Loan) are now available through electronic databases. I store data on a “cloud” rather than floppy disks. I regularly engage in email chats about my research with colleagues in Mexico (one of my

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This year, we thought we would ask our faculty to comment on their scholarship, on current and future research projects. So we posed the following questions to our 2010-2011 colleagues, and will share their responses with you. As you can see, your teachers have a wide range of interests that span the world and the centuries!

“What research projects are you working on? What did you work on this year and/or what are your upcoming projects? And why have you selected that project or why do you find this topic interesting or important?”

DR. BOB BOTSCHE Professor of Political Sciences (bobb@usca.edu)

This past year has been an exciting one in national politics, one in which the polarization of politics continued. We see some of that in research that Carol Botsch and I began last year on how feelings of “ethnic antipathy” toward President Obama have affected popular reactions to his policy proposals. What we see is that those who hold these feelings oppose anything associated with Obama regardless of whether they support the policy proposals in principle.

Many of you remember taking the American Government general knowledge pre and post tests. That long term study comparing teaching traditional face-to-face and Web classes came to an end last year, after Carol Botsch and I graded some 6,400 of these tests with a sample of 3,200 students over 13 years. (At 15 minutes on each test for grading, coding, and loading on the computer, we each expended over 60 hours of work per year for just that aspect of the research.) The data show that students in face-to-face and Web classes have grown more similar over time, erasing gender differences and greatly reducing age and ethnicity differences that existed when we first began teaching on the Web. Teaching format made no significant difference in learning (pre to post test), but Web students increased newspaper reading more, but were also more likely to drop the class after it began than face-to-face students.

The last piece I have been working on for publication is one that examines the “Money Game” or “red/black game” that most of you played on the second day of your Introduction to Politics class. I look at that game in terms of trends in play over the last 30 plus years (men and women were equally likely to lie) and discuss about ten basic concepts and ideas that the game illustrates about politics (like the role of government in enforcing contracts). This game was such an excellent exercise illustrating so many important ideas that I thought I should share it with other political scientists who teach introductory courses. I will finish up this piece next year.

DR. CAROL BOTSCHE Professor of Political Science (carolb@usca.edu)

As a political scientist, I am well aware that most Americans know very little about their governmental system and have wondered how we, as teachers, might be able to help develop better prepared citizens. As one of the first to teach online classes at USCA, I was also quite interested in whether teaching format made a difference in knowledge gained and in political attitudes. As you have seen from Dr. Bob’s comments, we have been comparing knowledge gained by American Government students taking online and face to face classes, along with political interest, political trust, and political efficacy, for quite a long time!

As we concluded this study, the analysis of this data has been the primary focus of my research this past year. The project will continue into the fall, as we examine changes in voting behavior, a variable added midway in our project. We hope that our findings will be useful in improving the civic education of college students, our nation’s future leaders.

I have also returned to another interest of mine, women in politics. My newest project, just getting underway at this writing, is a case study of a Southern woman politician, perhaps a natural follow up to my recent book chapter about the life and career of South Carolina’s first woman state senator. I am interested in examining how a woman could succeed against the odds in politics in a traditionalistic state where most women saw their primary role in the private sphere of the home.

Although it remains on the back burner at present, I have a long-term interest in the domestic animal overpopulation problem, and how communities address or fail to address this issue. Little research has been conducted on this topic, and I continue to collect data on the topic. I hope to return to my study of this heart-wrenching problem after I complete the political socialization project. And why do I think this is important? My answer is simple: millions of adoptable dogs and cats are euthanized across the nation every year. About 10,000 are euthanized in Aiken County alone. In my view, that is a travesty. If knowledge is power, perhaps through my research I can help develop more humane solutions.

DR. REBECCA BRANON Assistant Professor of History (Dr. Brannon can be reached at James Madison University as of Fall 2011)

Dr. Brannon, whose primary research interest is American colonial
history, is currently working on a book and has a contract with the USC press. The topic is reconciliation after the American Revolution between the Patriots and the Loyalists, and is based on her dissertation. She has been working on this project for several years and hopes to complete it by the end of the year. Dr. Brannon noted that not much has been written on that particular process. She is interested in “how they incorporated in an enemy population after a civil war” and commented that there “weren’t many of those.” She is also working on a new side project on masculinity and aging in the 18th century in America. She is interested in how men perceived the shift from the “prime of life” to old age and whether it differs from how women perceived it.

**DR. TOM WOOD**
Assistant Professor of Political Science (thomasw@usca.edu)

I spent the summer working on former Soviet small state foreign policy. I am engaged in a comparative study of Kyrgyz, Estonian and Georgian foreign policy since 1991. After twenty years, we can begin to ask whether these former Soviet small states have constructed genuine “foreign policies” and begin to say something about their content and process of foreign policy decision-making. Despite their very different geographical locations (Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia), I am exploring the commonalities suggested by their experience as Soviet republics underpinning their behavior in the international system. Thanks to an NEH Summer Scholarship, in June I was able to spend three weeks at Columbia University in New York using their research libraries that contained many useful Russian and Kyrgyz-language sources.

**PROFESSOR ALEXIA HELSLEY**
Instructor of History (alexiah@usca.edu)

Since last June, I have published three books: A History of North Carolina Wine, Persevering in Faith: A Centennial History of Eason Memorial Baptist Church, Eastover, South Carolina, 1910 – 2010, and Wicked Beaufort: Murder and Mayhem under the Live Oaks. The wine book grew out of my interest in the history of Western North Carolina’s Catawba grape. Found near Fletcher, NC, this grape helped launch Nicholas Longworth’s first commercially successful winery in Cincinnati. The history committee of Eason Memorial Baptist Church asked me to document the church’s first hundred years. Wicked Beaufort is my third book on Beaufort, South Carolina. As a graduate of Beaufort High School, I have a long time interest in researching and writing about its history. In addition, I am revising a chapter for A Companion to George Washington which will be published by Wiley-Blackwell in 2012. In September, I was a book panelist for the Southeastern Independent Booksellers’ meeting in Daytona Beach, Florida and in May, I was a panelist for the SC Book Festival. I enjoy research and writing and plan to pursue my interests in colonial and antebellum migration routes of the Southeastern United States.

**DR. ROGER DEAN**
Assistant Professor of History (rogerd@usca.edu)

This year I have continued my work on the urban social history of Istanbul in the late Ottoman period with an emphasis on patterns of crime and violence. I have approached this issue in a variety of ways this year. In one article, I examined it from the point of view of a single group, asking what the role of war refugees was in patterns of interpersonal violence in Istanbul in the 1880s and 1890s. In another, I looked at different source of violence, namely terrorism. In particular, I was interested in the international component of terrorist activities, and the ties between ethnic separatist movements in the Ottoman Empire and anarchist terrorism in Western Europe and Russia. Currently, I am at work on an article which deals with a different aspect of the issue of crime and violence. I am examining the development of a professional police force in the Ottoman Empire. This parallels similar developments in Europe, but has not received nearly the same attention.

**DR. MAGGI MOREHOUSE**
Associate Professor of History (maggim@usca.edu)

My 2010-2011 sabbatical has allowed me time to conduct research and pursue scholarly activities. Collecting life stories and depositing the evidence into historical repositories, has been the primary goal of my scholarly work. What differentiates an oral history from an interview is that the scholar obtains the Human Subjects approval from an internal review board (HSA, IRB), establishes the questions, collects the data, transcribes the histories, and makes the full transcript and recording available to other scholars by depositing the oral history in an accessible repository or digital archive. In 2010, I was selected as one of 17 “Rising Stars” producing significant research in the USC system because of my work documenting the African American community, and in 2011, I was selected for USCA’s Scholarly Activity Award. I have collected and digitized over fifty oral histories of black men and women who experienced life in the segregated service. During my sabbatical, I have been preparing two manuscripts for publication. I am under contract with Fordham University Press to produce War Stories: Black Soldiers and the Integration of the Military to be published in 2012. Also, for 2012 publication, I am under contract with Routledge as the lead editor and chapter author of Civil War America: A Social & Cultural History of the Era.

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I’ve done most of my writing about Edmund Burke (1730-1797), a British politician and the “Father of Conservatism,” and Thomas Merton (1915-1968), a pacifist monk and spiritual writer. It’s difficult to imagine two more different figures, and I’ve often joked that the headline for my obituary may well read, “POLITICAL THEORIST: WROTE ON BURKE AND MERTON, DIES PENNILESS AND INSANE.” But there is a method to my madness. Burke lived through the tumult of the American and French Revolutions, and in the aftermath of the English Civil War. Merton lived through the two world wars and a Cold War that unsettled centuries-old institutions, and also lived to see the Second Vatican Council—perhaps the most important contemporary example of an attempt to update tradition without abandoning it. Both Burke and Merton, in different and in similar ways, dealt with the problem of how we maintain tradition while we renew tradition. Both Burke and Merton address the problem of history, which inevitably is a problem of politics. History imposes itself on us: none of us chooses to be born, nor into what circumstances we are born, but all of those things condition our lives. Our politics must address our lives today and plan for our future, but we never escape the past which intrudes on all we do. The good news is that we can rely on a treasury of human wisdom accumulated through centuries that can guide us as we struggle with contemporary problems. The bad news is that ancient hatreds and cultural chauvinisms can persist against our best efforts to elude them. What I am describing is the clash between ancient and modern perspectives on human life, which inevitably influences the values that shape our politics. Examining that conflict is the work I expect to be doing for a long time.

Given that she will be entering another life phase (she is unlikely to actually “retire”) in July of this year and moving to Asheville, NC, another settlement area for Mexican immigrants, Dr. Lacy hopes to continue her research and outreach efforts with that population. She finds that work very rewarding, and loves comparing the activities of and response to this immigrant population with that of earlier immigrant waves, including the Irish and Italians of the early 20th century. Dr. Lacy also believes that collecting and disseminating accurate information about Latino immigrants is critical to wise policy formation and to ensuring protection of human rights, especially in this era of immigrant-bashing.
We have an outstanding faculty and staff in the Department of History, Political Science and Philosophy, if we say so ourselves! But don’t take our word - others have recognized our accomplishments as well. Here are some of the reasons why. We extend our congratulations to each of these outstanding individuals!

Mrs. Carol McKay, Administrative Assistant for the Department of English and for the Department of History, Political Science and Philosophy, is the 2010-2011 recipient of the Classified Employee of the Year Award. As John M. Hutchens, Director of Special Programs, Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, noted, a recipient must exhibit “diligence and initiative in their work; cooperation with co-workers, students and other organizations...” and exemplify “the values of the University...” Your editors believe that the faculty she assists would all agree that there could be no more deserving recipient! The inscription on Mrs. McKay’s plaque written by Dr. Tom Mack, Chair of the English Department, sums it up well: “Since her desk is right outside my office, I bear witness on a daily basis to how effectively Carol interacts with faculty, students, and members of the larger community, both on the phone and in person. She handles every request with charm and grace.”

Dr. Tom Wood (Political Science) was honored with a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for its Summer Institute at Columbia University in NYC in June 2011. The topic of the Institute was ‘America Looks at Eurasia’. Dr. Wood stated: “...the Institute will gather US historians and political scientists working on the former Soviet Union and Eurasia to explore how Eurasian Studies as a field has been developing in the United States in the past twenty years.” You can read more about Dr. Wood’s research in the section on faculty activities.

Dr. Maggi Morehouse (History) was selected as the 2011 recipient of the USCA Scholarly Activity Award. Dr. Morehouse was on sabbatical during the 2010-2011 academic year, writing two books. You can read more about Dr. Morehouse’s research in the section on faculty activities.

Our department has been in transition for the past several years, as some of our long-time faculty began to retire and new people took their places. The transition continued during this past year. Dr. Val Lumans (History) and Dr. Elaine Lacy (History) both retired as of June 30, 2011. Dr. Lumans first began teaching at USCA in 1981 and Dr. Lacy joined our faculty in 1991. Dr. Rebecca Brannon (History), who had completed her third year on the USCA faculty, left to take a position at James Madison University in Virginia. We wish our departing faculty well in their new lives!

Three new historians joined us this fall, and Dr. Steve Millies (Political Science) is our new department chair. On July 1, 2011 he assumed the position Dr. Lumans had held for twenty-five years, beginning in August of 1986. Drs. Samuel Pierce and Dr. Heather Peterson are our new tenure track historians. In addition, Dr. Brent Morris assumed a one year position as Instructor of History. We welcome our three new faculty aboard! A little more information about each of them follows. Dr. Roger Deal, who chaired the Modern European History Search Committee, wrote the description of Sam Pierce. Dr. Rebecca Brannon, who chaired the Latin American History Search Committee, wrote the description of Heather Peterson. Dr. Steve Millies and Dr. Brent Morris provided the information about Brent Morris.

Dr. Sam Pierce will be our new Modern Europe historian. He received his PhD in Modern European History from the University of Florida in 2007. He comes to us with extensive teaching experience, having been a Visiting Instructor at Brigham Young University and most recently a Visiting Assistant Professor at the College of Charleston. He will be able to teach a wide variety of courses for us, including surveys of Modern European history as well as more thematically organized courses such as Religion and Society in Europe and Nationalism and Violence in Twentieth-Century Europe. He will also be teaching the World History surveys. Sam’s research focuses on political Catholicism in Spain in the first half of the twentieth century.

Dr. Heather Peterson holds a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin (2009) and has taught there as well. She has a distinguished history of holding outside grants, including a Fulbright for her dissertation research and postdoctoral fellowships at both the John Carter Brown Library and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. She is working on a manuscript entitled A Microcosm of Two Worlds: Mexico City’s Rise from the Ashes of Tenochtitlan. Dr. Peterson’s specialty is Latin American history.

Dr. Brent Morris served as an adjunct at USCA and at USC Sumter last year. He is a USC Columbia alumnus, where he received his undergraduate degree in 2001. His Ph.D. comes from Cornell (2010), where he specialized in 19th century US history. His research focus is the abolitionist movement and two articles on the antislavery movement were published in the summer of 2011. Dr. Morris will teach classes in American History.

Our Retirees then

Dr. Val Lumans
Dr. Elaine Lacy
Our students just keep on shining! Several of our department's students were recognized for their achievements and honored at the annual USCA Convocation on April 21, 2011.

Michael K. Bond, a senior Political Science major and Cum Laude graduate, was selected by the political science faculty as Outstanding Student of Political Science. Jaime E. Eagerton, a senior History major and Magna Cum Laude graduate, was selected by the history faculty as Outstanding Student of History. Sean A. Wills, a freshman History major, received the Oswald Freshman Writing Award from the English faculty.

Vanda Siposova and Laura G. Storey, both graduating Political Science majors, were among seven USCA students graduating from the USCA Honors Program in Spring 2011. Laura is a Cum Laude graduate who also served as president of the Pacer Law Club during her senior year. Vanda, who graduated Summa Cum Laude with a double major in Political Science and Business, was also recognized as Outstanding Senior Student. As Dr. Deb Klavidko, Vice Chancellor for Student Life, and Services, noted in her remarks, “The Outstanding Senior Student Award is designed to recognize a student who embodies a composite of …scholarship, leadership, and achievement.”

Following are excerpts from the remarks about Vanda delivered at the April Convocation ceremony by Dr. Deb Klavidko. We hope you will join us in congratulating each of these remarkable young men and women for their accomplishments. We expect to hear of the great things they do in years to come!

Outstanding Senior Student: Vanda Siposova

“This year’s recipient received 10 nominations for this award. And the nominations came from 5 different departments on campus, which indicates that she has made a significant impression on people throughout campus, not just in her major fields.

This is an incredible feat for any student, but particularly for one whose first language is not English. And speaking of languages, she is fluent in 5: Slovakian (which is her native tongue), Czech, German, French and English...

She has been described as someone who has a genuine enthusiasm for learning which is demonstrated by her lively contributions to class debates. A highly-motivated self-starter, she has also been described by several faculty members as one of the most gifted and capable students they have ever had the pleasure to teach.

In addition, Vanda has been involved in virtually every aspect of student life at USC Aiken, including Student Government and Globe. And if all of that wasn’t enough for her to have on her plate, she has also been a student employee in several offices on campus…”

Outstanding Student of History: Jaime E. Eagerton

“...as described by Dr. Roger Deal (History)

“A senior majoring in history, Jaime is determined to further her education in graduate school. While keeping up with her studies, she also works in the Office of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and this semester, she served as the student representative on a search committee to hire a new member of the history faculty with a specialization in Modern Europe. Both in and out of the classroom, she has shown herself to be both hardworking and insightful.”

Outstanding Student of Political Science: Michael K. Bond

“...as described by Dr. Tom Wood (Political Science)

“A non-traditional student with a prior career and family responsibilities, Michael exemplifies the way in which students who have not followed the high school-straight-to-college route can yet seize the opportunity to reinvent themselves and launch new career directions at USC Aiken.

In particular, Michael has made lively contributions to class debates over the years. And for a course on the European Union, he wrote a well-researched paper focused on the trend in some German cities to introduce unofficial voucher currencies as a protest against that country’s adoption of the Euro.

Michael’s future plans include either graduate school in political science or a career in financial services.”

Oswald Freshman Writing Award: Sean A. Wills

“...as described by Professor Karl Fornes (English)

“A history major, Sean wrote his prize-winning essay for an English 101 class taught by Dr. Amanda Warren. Entitled “Eve of Destruction,” his essay notes the dangers of new communications technology and argues that the resulting lack of social etiquette and nuance portends the end of civilization.

Sean cites part-time philosopher Dr. Theodore Kaczynski to support his Swiftian solution—a small nuclear detonation above the state of Kansas that will create an electromagnetic impulse large enough to knock-out all electronic devices in the U.S.”
the future, when you do return for a visit, you will see familiar faces on the walls. We hope you will drop by and introduce yourselves to other faces who occupy our hallowed hallway today.

Because of the emphasis on our “pioneers,” we asked current and retiring faculty to give short reports this year on their current research activities. You can see that all of us have remained very busy and are continuing to contribute to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

Faculty, grads and students continued to rack up awards and recognitions this year. We are proud of their accomplishments, and we have described them in this edition of Polis. Not mentioned is the fact that our department is the only department on campus that has had two “Carolina Trustee Professors,” Val Lumans and Bob Botsch. With Val’s retirement, we are back in a tie with a few other departments. But we are sure that one of our younger faculty will once again put us ahead in the years to come.

And speaking of awards, this past year our grads completed a “three-peat.” Cliff Webb (Political Science, 1980) delivered the December 2010 graduation address. He follows Gerald Maree (Political Science, 1988) in 2009 and Craig Wheeland (History, 1979) in 2008. These three are just a few of our outstanding grads!

We are always delighted to have our grads and students who were in our classes visit us. This past year we had a wonderful visit from Kelvin Coleman (Political Science, 2004). He had been working on cyber-security in the White House, tasked with coordinating state and national responses to this area of growing concern as more and more of our lives are tied to online data. Kelvin gave a guest lecture on cyber-security and shared lunch with several of our students, later helping one make contacts in Washington. A couple of months after this visit, Bob Botsch received a rather excited phone call from Kelvin. He had just left the Oval Office where President Obama had hosted Kelvin and his family for pictures in front of the president’s desk with the president standing in the middle, among his family. Some day perhaps some other USC family will have their picture taken in the Oval Office, but this time with a USC graduate doing the inviting as president!

So on this 50th anniversary of our school, read POLIS and enjoy, considering what new wonderful things you and our other grads will accomplish in the next 50 years. You are our future.

THANKS

Many thanks to all those who helped with this edition of Polis! We would like to add especial thanks to Christina Berkshire and Carol McKay.
As part of USCA’s commemoration of its fiftieth anniversary this fall, we thought we would contact some of our early graduates and professors and ask them for their reflections on their time at USCA. We would welcome your thoughts if you are also one of our early grads, and would be happy to include them in next year’s edition of Polis!

Our early student’s comments this year are from Garry R. Smith. Garry graduated in 1979 with a degree in History, and subsequently earned an MPA degree at USC in 1983. He serves in the SC General Assembly, representing the 27th district (Greenville County). Representative Smith (R) and his wife, Brenda, live in Simpsonville. He is part of a father and son team in the legislature. His dad, J. Roland Smith, is a long time member of the Aiken County legislative delegation and has long been a friend and supporter of USCA.

We also contacted one of our early professors, Dr. Patrick Cotter, who was one of the first political scientists to teach at USCA. Pat taught at USCA from 1975 to 1978, leaving to accept a position at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. He has returned to SC in retirement. Pat and his wife now reside in Fripp Island, just a few blocks away from another retired member of our department, Dr. Calvin Smith (History) and his wife Marilyn. The recollections of this early student and early faculty member follow.

Recollections of Dr. Patrick Cotter

“I began working at USC-Aiken in 1975. At that time, the campus consisted of the main classroom/administrative building and the newly opened library. George Bowdler was the other political scientist then on the USCA faculty. George was a good person and a wonderful colleague.

When I arrived in Aiken, political science and history were combined in the same department. Later, a social and behavioral science division was formed, including political science, history, sociology and psychology. The overall small size of USCA, plus the combination of different fields in the same department, got me involved in several interdisciplinary projects, such as a cross-discipline class in “Southern Studies.”

My first duty as a faculty member at the University was advising students at fall registration. Political science classes were then listed in the catalogue under Government and International Studies (GINT). I kept getting confused that fall because I was always looking for political science courses under “P” rather than “G” in the course schedule. I’m sure a number of students left that registration wondering about this new political science professor. I never adjusted to the Government and International Studies label. I later did a survey showing that most students did not know what “GINT” was. This evidence helped convince the faculty to change the name of the program to Political Science.

Student enrollment reached the level needed for the campus to become a four-year college the first semester I was at Aiken. As a result, I quickly found myself, despite being freshly out of graduate school, and never having thought much about what a major should involve, involved in the job of developing the curriculum for the school’s new political science program. Luckily, in doing the job, George Bowdler and I did not try to reinvent the academic wheel. Instead, we took the easier approach of closely copying the program then found at the Columbia campus. With this approach, we had few problems in getting a political science major approved for the Aiken campus.

In developing the major, George and I put together an (overly) ambitious list of courses. As a result, we both ended up teaching a large number of different classes. George covered all of international relations and comparative politics. Meanwhile, I taught an introduction to political science class, a research methods course, and all the American politics classes. I also recall teaching at least one course in Public Administration – an area in which I had no previous training.

Unfortunately, I don’t trust my memory to name many of my USCA students. I do recall giving Bill Weeks the “student
of the year” award at an honors gathering. I also remember that Bill Lott was one of the best, if not the best, student I ever had. Mostly, I remember that USCA students were quite tolerant as I stumbled through the process of changing from a know-it-all assistant professor to a somewhat competent teacher.

I left USCA in 1978 to take a job at the University of Alabama, where I stayed for more than 30 years. Overall, I have very fond memories of the people I met and the things that I did at USC-Aiken. Being at USCA when it was a new and growing institution gave me many opportunities that I would not have had elsewhere. I benefitted from these experiences throughout my career.”

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HON. GARRY R. SMITH

“Wow! 32 years!
When I arrived on campus in 1975 the campus consisted of 2 buildings.

All our classes were in what is the Administration Building, which also housed the student lounge where we played spades and the new electronic game of pong. Remember that one!

In those days we had to leave campus for lunch because we did not have a cafeteria or grill on campus. That was ok, because, that is how I met my wife....lunch trip to Hardees in the 51 (my 1951 Chevy Deluxe)!

Our basketball games were played at Aiken High! It was a big day when the new Gym and Student Center was opened. On-campus food! Of course, Basketball Coach Lew Perkins was more excited about his own gym to practice and play in. Priorities?

Memories; Circle K Club, The Double Knot, Chancellor Bill Casper, Dr. Bill Brockington, Dr. Bob Botsch, Mr. Lee, History Club trip to Savannah, the Hill, detergent in the fountain!

These were the days that set a foundation and beginning for the life I would have; marriage, graduate school, family, career, and politics. A life that I am still enjoying in large part [due] to that beginning.”

Once again, the faculty and students of the Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy express our heartfelt thanks to the alumni and friends who contributed financially to our department during this past year. Your donations help many of our deserving students to have the opportunity to complete their education, and they really make a difference. As you are probably aware, in recent years the state has been cutting the money it spends on higher education, so students have to make up some of the difference with higher tuition. So every donation really helps the next generation! We have included here the names of those who contributed during the past academic year, July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. We apologize if we have omitted anyone from the list of donors. We also have included here a list of the various departmental scholarships. If you would like to designate a gift for a particular scholarship or program, you should note it on the memo line or include a note so it is deposited to the correct account. Checks should be made out to Aiken Partnership and mailed to:

USCA University Advancement
471 University Parkway
Aiken, SC 29801

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Some of you have stayed in the Aiken area and some have traveled far afield. Regardless of where your life has taken you, we would love to hear from you! In the meantime, we thought you would like to hear about what some of your classmates have been doing.

We are pleased to tell you that for the third year in a row, one of our department’s graduates was selected as the speaker for the December 2010 Convocation Ceremony. Every year, USCA invites an outstanding graduate to speak to the graduating students, their families, faculty, and others who are present. This year’s speaker was R. Clifton (Cliff) Webb, who graduated in 1980 with a bachelor’s degree in Political Science. Cliff is certainly a role model for today’s students. He can look back on a successful career in which he has used the skills he gained both as a student and on the job to give back to the community. Cliff and his wife Donna still live in Aiken. The following is excerpted from the information that appeared in the program.

“Mr. Robert Clifton Webb…is vice president of Public Affairs with Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC – a company owned by Fluor Corporation, Northrop Grumman and Honeywell, currently serving as management and operating contractor at the Savannah River Site. He is a native South Carolinian from Columbia who graduated from Irmo High School, attended the University of South Carolina in Columbia before coming to USCA…

Mr. Webb began his career in 1972 with the Emergency Preparedness Division of the State of South Carolina. In 1975 he moved to Aiken and joined the U.S. Department of Energy at the Savannah River Plant, where, in 1981, he became deputy director of External Affairs. In 1989, Mr. Webb joined DuPont, serving the company in communications and government relations assignments in Wilmington, Delaware and Washington, DC. He was appointed director of DuPont Public Affairs in 2000 and became vice president of DuPont Government Affairs in 2006. In 2009 he retired from DuPont and returned to Aiken and to the Savannah River Site with SRNS. Mr. Webb was a recipient of the Department of Energy’s Silver Medal for Meritorious Service in 1984 and he received a DuPont Corporate Marketing Excellence Award in 1993.

Today, he is responsible for SRNS external communications, employee communications, community relations, government relations and education outreach between SRS and its neighboring communities.

Mr. Webb serves on the Board of Directors for the Greater Aiken Chamber of Commerce and the SRS Heritage Foundation. He is a member of Rotary International, and he is the Children’s Place Corporate Fundraising Chair for 2010-2011.”

Another one of our graduates, Troy Mothkovich, has been working on a master’s degree while working full-time at USCA’s Computer Services Division. Troy was honored at the April 2011 Academic Convocation as Outstanding Student of M. Ed. in the Educational Technology Program. Some excerpts from the remarks written by Dr. Tom Smyth (Education) follow.

“Troy is one of our own: He graduated from USCA in 1999 magna cum laude with a BA degree in Political Science. Since that time Troy decided to pursue a Master’s degree in Educational Technology and he has been a leader and model for excellent performance in a graduate program. For example, for his educational technology internship, Troy created an expansive set of well-designed, easy-to-use tutorials for the USCA community about using the newest version of Microsoft Office. Additionally, this past fall, Troy presented at the Tennessee Educational Technology Conference on the topic ”How Technology Can Reach Every Student through Universal Design for Learning and Web 2.0 Tools.”

According to one of his professors, ”Troy has a positive attitude and demonstrates a
tremendous breadth and depth of knowledge about the theory and application of educational technology. Furthermore, he is always willing to share that knowledge with others."

Recently Troy has been accepted to the Ph.D. program in higher education administration at USC Columbia. The faculty is confident that he will excel in that program as well."

Although we haven’t had the opportunity to catch up with most of our graduates here on campus, they are doing all kinds of interesting things with their lives. Here are a few examples.

Robena Barton (History, 2009) completed her first year at the University of South Carolina for its MLIS (Master’s of Library Information Studies) program.

Joseph Drye (History, 2010) is a manager at CVS in Aiken, SC.

Jason R. Kirby (History, 2000) returned to Aiken to assume a new job as a social studies teacher and coach (his first love, after his wife, Lauren!) at an Aiken County middle school in August 2011. Jason is also working on a doctoral dissertation on General William Westmoreland to complete a PhD in American History from the University of Georgia.

Bill Whaley (History, 2009) has put his degree to good use as a historical researcher for the documentary “Horse Creek: Lifeblood of the Valley.” The film is produced by SCETV and the Aiken County Historical Society.

Glen Boatwright (Political Science, 1987) is Vice President of Nixon and Associates, a firm that specializes in public affairs, reputation counseling, and emergency planning for the energy, utility, chemical, and transportation industries. A resident of Columbia, he also serves in the SC Air National Guard as a Lt. Colonel. He really loves piloting helicopters!

Tabitha Butler (Political Science, 1995) lives in Charlotte, NC, where she works in PepsiCo Sales with Advantage Sales and Marketing Company. Tab has also written two books, Breaking Through: The Journey From Within, and a sequel, Love Will Do That.

Christie Hightower (Political Science, 2008) assumed a new job as a Field Interviewer for the NIS (National Inmate Study) Project in May of 2011. She will be traveling to Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey to interview inmates at jails, prisons, and immigration facilities. Christie tells us that this is the third year for the program, which is funded under PREA, the Prison Rape Elimination Act, signed into law during the George W. Bush administration.

David M. Krupski (Political Science, 2000) graduated from law school in December of 2010. But he enjoys teaching so much that he plans to continue to teach AP World History and US Government at the high school level for the present. David hopes to go into administration in a few years, where we have no doubt that his law degree will be an asset!

Donald Miles (Political Science, 2004) is the new president of the USCA Alumni Association. Donald, who lives in Columbia, is the Director of Planning and Research at Aiken Technical College.

In Memorium: In the 2009 issue of Polis, we told you that Alex Bush, an English major and Political Science minor, had just completed a year as president of the Pacer Law Society. After graduation, Alex went on to attend law school at the College of Charleston. Alex and his girlfriend, Katie Scott, were killed in an auto accident in late December of 2010. Alex was 24 years old. Your editors note that he was one of the nicest people they ever knew, and we are sure he would have done great things with his life. We extend our condolences to the Bush and Scott families on their unthinkable loss.

Read more about the faculty and catch the latest department news at http://www.usca.edu/polisci/.
We love to keep up with our former students. Please take a moment to fill out this form and let us know where you are and what you are doing. Email Dr. Carol Botsch at carolb@usca.edu or mail to USCA, 471 University Parkway, Aiken, South Carolina 29801.