

The Department of Politics and Public Policy 2016 Research Update



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Introduction

This update is an overview of the research activity undertaken by the Department of Politics and Public Policy in the year 2016. It provides a record of the breadth of research, writing, income generation and public engagement that colleagues have been involved in. The Department's research is predominantly concentrated in the area of public policy, but also includes international politics, political theory and pedagogy within the discipline of politics. The Department has a strong research culture that is focused on delivering impactful research that engages with a wide group of stakeholders.

In the last year we were delighted to appoint four new staff to the Department: Dr Arianna Giovannini, Dr Davide Vampa, Dr Adam Fishwick and Dr Jonathan Rose. Dr Giovannini specialises in territorial politics and devolution in the UK; Dr Vampa specialises in multi-level party politics with a particular focus on the politics of welfare; Dr Fishwick focuses on the role of labour in the development of Latin America; and Dr Rose specialises on the politics of corruption.

A key feature of the Department's work over the last year has been the success of the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA) that is led by Professor Jonathan Davies. In a short space of time CURA has positioned itself as one of the pre-eminent global research centres on austerity and has developed international links that build upon the Professor Davies' major Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) award. The work of CURA spans across many areas of the Department's research and is fostering important cross-Faculty and cross-University links.

The Department's research continues to make a significant impact on policy-makers, with notable contributions from Professor Colin Copus, Professor Steven Griggs, Professor Jo Richardson and Dr Jonathan Rose. The Department has also continued to grow its reputation in the area of pedagogy, with Professor Alasdair Blair being selected as an assessor for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). A particular feature of the Department's work is its strong linkage between research and teaching excellence, with students not only undertaking study in a research-led teaching environment, but more importantly being challenged to engage in research projects themselves. A notable aspect of this work is the embedding of a Policy Commission module for final year undergraduate students, whereby the students undertake research and present their findings to policy-makers.

Department colleagues are regular presenters at national and international conferences and hold prominent positions in the scholarly community. Dr Clodagh Harrington is chair of the American Politics Group, Professor Colin Copus is a board member of the Campaign for Social Sciences, Professor Jonathan Davies is a member of ESRC Commissioning panels, Professor Alasdair Blair is editor of *European Political Science*. Our colleagues in the Department are engaged with fellow scholars, political decision-makers, community members and students.

Research Outputs and Publications

The following pages include key outputs from members of the Department published in late 2015 and during 2016. Many more articles, chapters, books and professional reports are in press. Colleagues are also involved in delivering conference papers and convening international panels – that work is not included in this update, but can be found on the Department web pages and individual researchers' profiles.

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<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Policy%20free%20download%20pdfs/GypsyTravellerSitesDec16.pdf>

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Vampa, D. (2016) *The Regional Politics of Welfare in Italy, Spain and Great Britain*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan

Income Generation

This section of the update includes new funding won during 2016; it should be noted that Department colleagues are working on multiple research and consultancy projects funded by grants and contracts won in previous years. The Department has a good track record of success in being awarded research grants and consultancy contracts.

- Jean Monnet Module Funding, European Commission, €30,000 (2016-19). (A. Blair).
- Innovative Pedagogic Practices in the Disciplines, Higher Education Academy, £8,100 (A. Blair).
- Grant of £2,920 from CURA for a project on Brexit, Devolution and Austerity (A. Giovanni and D. Vampa).
- Commonweal 'Freedom to Work' project evaluation September 2016 to March 2019, £44,294 (J. Richardson).
- RIF funded project, All Party Parliamentary Group: Shaping and Influencing Public Policy £33,829 Association of Public Sector Excellence, Public Accountability and the role of local government, £15,000 (C. Copus).
- Local Government Boundary Commission for England, Good governance and the role of the councillor and local government in the devolution process, £8,000 (C. Copus).
- PSA's 'Pushing the Boundaries Scheme' (£750 awarded in January 2016) to organise the conference 'European Democracy Under Stress' at the University of Turin (13-14 Jan 2017). This will lead to the publication on a blog series, a PSA report/publication, and a special issue. (A. Giovanni)

Public Engagement and Impact

Dr Jonathan Rose, Senior Lecturer in Politics and Research Methodology (VC2020), has continued to engage in the issue of standards in public life. He works periodically with the *Committee on Standards in Public Life* who said recently that they still make use of his research. He was recently (November 2016) invited to a seminar they were co-hosting with the Constitution Unit to discuss referenda, and had several interesting conversations with members of the *Committee on Standards in Public Life*, as well as other policy makers, journalists, and academics. Jonathan has also recently (December 2016) been to the Commons Select Committee on Standards to give oral evidence on the Code of Conduct for MPs. Ahead of this he submitted some written evidence, which has now been published as part of their evidentiary basis for their review¹.

Alistair Jones, Principal Lecturer and University Teacher Fellow, during the EU referendum campaign, appeared on BBC Radio Leicester and BBC Radio Coventry and Warwickshire on a number of occasions. Reference was made to his Britain and the EU textbook as evidence of his knowledge and expertise on the subject on both stations. One of the broadcasts for Radio Leicester included an hour-long debate with both Brexit and Remain campaigners, and he was one of two experts there to provide impartial knowledge and perspective.

Dr Valeria Guarneros-Meza, Senior Lecturer (VC2020) in Politics and Public Policy, has a research relationship with Instituto Ciudadano (a Mexican NGO teaching democratic rights to community groups across the country) which began in January 2015. This relationship is focused on applying a problem based learning approach in the curriculum of POPP3401: Public Policy Making. Although at this point in time the relationship has centred on the activities carried out by the students, her long term aim is to build a project that involves research and teaching simultaneously with practitioners helping in the design and implementation of the project.

Dr Davide Vampa, Senior Lecturer in Public Policy and Project Management, has engaged in meetings and seminars with Moldovan minister of Labour and Social Protection, Vice-President of the Moldovan Parliament, MPs and vice-president of Congress of Local Authorities to discuss financial impact of decentralisation reforms on social services.

Prof Jo Richardson, Director Centre for Comparative Housing Research, undertook a visiting Professor guest lecture *Conflict sites: negotiating a space and place for Travellers* (2016) for faculty and students in the Program on Negotiation at Harvard University on 12 May. She was also the invited academic expert panel member on the Local Government Association 'Housing Commission' which reported in 2016. Her research for the Joseph Rowntree

¹This is available as: Rose, J. (2016) *Public Attitudes towards Standards and the Role of Rule Design*. Written evidence submitted to the Committee on Standards (COC0001, available from <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/committee-on-standards/the-code-of-conduct-and-guide-to-the-rules/written/44417.pdf>)

Foundation was launched at an event hosted by Baroness Whitaker at the House of Lords, 12 December 2016.

Dr Clodagh Harrington, Senior Lecturer in Politics, saw unprecedented media and general interest in the 2016 US Presidential election which resulted in a range of media and academic activities relating to the elections. This involved regional, domestic and international radio, television and print media, as well as invitations to speak at institutions including the University of Oxford, University College London and the Barbican (London). Clodagh was featured as one of DMU's key researchers in the graduation films shown in January 2017.

Professor Colin Copus, Director of the Local Governance Research Unit, was appointed as academic advisor to the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for District Councils launched in May 2016 after a period of set up work with the Local Government Association District Council Network. The chair is Mark Pawsey MP, with four vice chairs Graham Jones, MP, Heather Wheeler MP, Lord Kennedy of Southwark and Lord Teverson. The APPG plans four inquiries for 2016-17: district council collaboration, devolution, local government finance; and, public sector reforms. The first inquiry is underway and will report to the secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. In addition to this, the Chair of the Communities and Local Government Committee requested Prof Copus launch a councillor commission to carry out an independent investigation of the developing role of the councillor and to report back to his committee. The commission, which has noted local government experts and practitioners as members, was launched in January 2016, and collected evidence until December 2016. The interim report was submitted to the CLG chair on 19 October 2016; the final report will be submitted to the chair in 2017. The commission's work will shape future government policy thinking on local government and provide demonstrable evidence of policy impact.

Dr Peter King, Reader in Social Thought, has been invited by Routledge to edit a new book series called *Housing and Philosophy*.

Dr Arianna Giovannini, Lecturer in Local Politics (VC2020), was invited to submit written evidence (with Dr Andrew Mycock, University of Huddersfield) to the House of Commons Procedure Committee on English Votes for English Laws. The evidence was submitted in December 2016²). Arianna was also invited to speak at the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee conference on 'Devolution in the West Midlands' (21 October 2016) to explore, with key stake-holders from across the West Midlands, the impact of devolution and how its link to regeneration, economic growth and central-local relations. Her contribution was taken as evidence and cited in the Committee's Report published on the 12 of December 2017³.

² Available from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldconst/61/61.pdf>

³ Available from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmpubacc/866/866.pdf>

In Summary

The Department has had a very productive year in terms of research outputs, income generation and pathways to impact. New VC2020s and early career researchers have made a significant contribution to this and it is anticipated that the research of the Department will continue to go from strength to strength.

Appendix: Department Staff Members

Professor Alasdair Blair	Head, Department of Politics and Public Policy
Professor Rob Baggott	Director of the Health Policy Research Unit
Dr Adrian Bua	Research Assistant
Professor Colin Copus	Professor of Local Politics, Director LGRU
Dr Merce Cortina-Oriol	Early Career Academic Fellow
Professor Jonathan Davies	Professor of Critical Policy
Dr Adam Fishwick	Senior Lecturer in Urban Studies and Public Policy VC2020
Dr Arianna Giovannini	VC 2020 Lecturer in Local Politics
Chris Goldsmith	Senior Lecturer in International Relations
Professor Steven Griggs	Professor of Public Policy
Dr Valeria Guarneros-Meza	Vice-Chancellor's 2020 Lecturer Politics
Dr Clodagh Harrington	Senior Lecturer in International Relations
Alistair Jones	Principal Lecturer
Dr Kathryn Jones	Senior Research Fellow
Dr Peter King	Reader in Social Thought
Ros Lishman	Senior Lecturer
Dr Stephen Parsons	Principal Lecturer in Politics
Dr Zoe Pflaeger-Young	Lecturer in International Politics
Professor Jo Richardson	Professor of Housing & Social Research
Dr Mark Roberts	Lecturer in Politics
Dr Jonathan Rose	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Alison Statham	Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Jennifer Thomson	Early Career Academic Fellow
Dr Davide Vampa	Senior Lecturer in Project Management
Dr Ben Whitham	Lecturer in International Relations
Frances Wright	Senior Lecturer