

THE MPA NETWORK

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Note from the Director



Dr. Jeffrey L. Bernstein

Many of you know that two of my true loves are baseball and numbers. Bill James, one of the great baseball analysts, commented in an article some years ago that a true baseball fan can read a line of statistics and see the player. If I told you, for example, about a first baseman who hit .240 with 25 home runs, and about a centerfielder who hit .300 while stealing 30 bases, you can picture each player, down to their body types, based on just this description. My love for baseball, and my respect for what numbers can teach us, led me to immensely enjoy *Moneyball*, Michael Lewis's brilliant study of how a new generation of baseball executives use advanced statistics and analytics to give themselves a leg up on the grizzled veterans who insist on doing things the old way.

This issue of the MPA newsletter features three of our alumni who have been part of the increasing use of data, and analytics, in the field of public administration. Their work in a wide range of areas within the field suggests that the ability to understand data — its uses and limitations, and how to make better decisions when informed by data — is one of the most important skillsets we can teach our students. We are pleased to feature Nate Geinzer, Laura Shue, and Brittany Beaster, all of whom have been exemplars of this trend, in this edition of the newsletter.

I've been teaching in the MPA program for about fourteen years now and am struck by how our methods curriculum has always been in somewhat a state of flux, as we continually seek to adjust what we do to meet the needs of our students, and the field. I have personally enjoyed many conversations over the years with my colleagues as we seek to make the research methods course connect up with the statistics course in the best way possible, and as we seek to integrate the new capstone into the training we provide our students.

I always share with my students the fact that you *never* want to be at the mercy of someone with whom you are working because they understand something that you do not. When your co-workers understand statistics, or research design, or data-based decision making, and you do not, you are at a disadvantage. While we know that very few of our students will end up doing high-level statistics, we also know that all of you will end up having to make judgments based upon the statistical work of others. This drive for more data, and better data, will be a hallmark of our field (in fact, it is at the heart of our reaccreditation process through NASPAA, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration). We are pleased to be part of this trend in training professionals who are ready for the data-based future public administration will confront in the years to come.

Jeffrey L. Bernstein

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THE MPA NETWORK

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The MPA Network is published biannually by the Department of Political Science at EMU to inform MPA alumni, current students, public officials, and academics about the activities of the MPA program and its graduates.

WELCOME TO DR. KLEIN!



Dr. David Klein

David Klein, the new Political Science department head, comes to EMU after 19 years at the University of Virginia. The kindness of the students, staff, and faculty have made him feel at home here. A political scientist who primarily studies courts and law, Dave came with no previous experience with MPA programs but already feels a deep attachment to ours. It is not just that Jeff Bernstein, Rose Soliven, and the core faculty keep it running so smoothly. He loves both how the program connects the university to the regional community and how it benefits communities near and far by sending talented, enthusiastic, and well-trained students and alumni to lead the agencies and non-profits that serve them. Most professors never get to be part of a program that does such real and immediate good for people outside the university.

Dave's wife, Tina, is a psychologist in a practice just west of Ann Arbor. She and their two daughters, a high school senior and freshman, miss the Blue Ridge Mountains and friends in Charlottesville but love this area and are making new friends fast. They (Tina and Dave especially) look forward to forging ever-closer ties with the community and hope students and alumni won't be shy about getting in touch.

ALUMNI NEWS

Deborah Orlowski ('90) has taken over the management of the Advanced Leadership Program, a cohort-based change leadership program that is designed for middle and upper level University of Michigan staff and faculty. She was also recently certified as an Unconscious Bias and BrainStates trainer.

Margie C. Rose ('91) became City Manager of Corpus Christi, TX, in July 2016. For the past 14 years, Margie had served as Assistant City Manager and then Deputy City Manager of Corpus Christi.

Joe Koenig ('92) authored the award-winning *Getting the Truth*, a book about understanding the real message and being able to distinguish truth from deception. *Getting the Truth* won the 2016 Montaigne Medal Finalist and 2016 Indie General Non-Fiction Finalist Awards.

Jeffrey Lewis Williams ('92) was recently promoted to Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration at Capitol Technology University in Laurel, MD.

Adella Santos ('96) is currently a Transportation Specialist for DOT-Federal Highway Administration. As the program manager to the National Household Travel Survey, Adella has launched the 2016 NHTS series. Please visit the program website <http://nhts.ornl.gov> for more information about her program and the survey.

Mike Burns ('04) is now the City Manager of Lowell, MI. Mike had served as the Assistant City Manager of Fenton, MI, for more than seven years.

Michael Demand ('12) started working for the Detroit Tigers as the team's Community Affairs Coordinator in July.

James Krizan ('13) is now the Assistant to the City Manager of the City of Royal Oak, MI. James was previously the Village Manager of Decatur, MI.

David Palmer ('14) graduated from Leadership Detroit in June 2016.

SPOTLIGHT FACULTY RESEARCH

DR. BARBARA PATRICK

Dr. Barbara Patrick had her work "Performance Policies and Workforce Development: Can the Market Model Be Successfully Implemented in the Public Arena?" recently published in the December 2016 issue of *Politics and Policy*. Some of her upcoming research articles include:

- "Cooking the Books: The Ethical Implications of Performance Management on Timely Services for Veterans"
- "Altering Public Sector Accountability Models: The Case of the Atlanta Cheating Scandal"
- "Shifting the Blame in Public Education: Are There Parallels Between Opinion and Policy"

DR. JEFFREY BERNSTEIN

Professor Jeffrey Bernstein's edited volume, *Enhancing Teaching and Learning Through Collaborative Structures*, done with Brooke Flinders of Miami University, is due out in January from Jossey-Bass Publishers. In addition to his tasks as editor, Bernstein co-authored a chapter in the book with some fantastic EMU students/alumni.

He is presenting a paper on integrative learning in a campaigns and elections class (co-authored with four EMU students) in February at the American Political Science Association Teaching and Learning Conference.

DR. ARNOLD FLEISCHMANN

Dr. Arnie Fleischmann has been busy while on sabbatical, co-authoring an urban politics textbook titled *Understanding Urban Politics: Institutions, Participation and Policies* with his colleague Timothy B. Krebs with publication expected Summer 2019.

He is also in the process of developing proposals to create new course offerings.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL MEET-AND-GREET EVENTS

The two MPA Meet-and-Greet Events with current students, faculty, and alumni held this fall were a great success!

The November 7th event, held at Aubree's Northville near the Livonia campus, featured our own Interim MPA Program Director, Dr. Jeffrey Bernstein, offering a few remarks on the upcoming election.

The second event, held at Aubree's Depot Town in Ypsilanti on November 17th, featured Washtenaw County Commissioner, Executive Vice President and Director of Governmental Relations of Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber, and 2012 EMU MPA alum, Andy LaBarre, as guest speaker. Andy spoke on the future of local government in a Trump Administration.



EMU MPA alum Andy LaBarre chats with Interim MPA Director Dr. Jeffrey Bernstein and current students Nicole Ford and Alexa Timmreck.



Current MPA students Ebony Walls, Greta Bolhuis, and Dalton Floyd catch up at the Networking Event.



Andy LaBarre shares his thoughts on the future of local government in a Trump Administration.

Look for details on upcoming Meet-and-Greet Events in our [Facebook group](#), [LinkedIn group](#), and on [Twitter!](#)



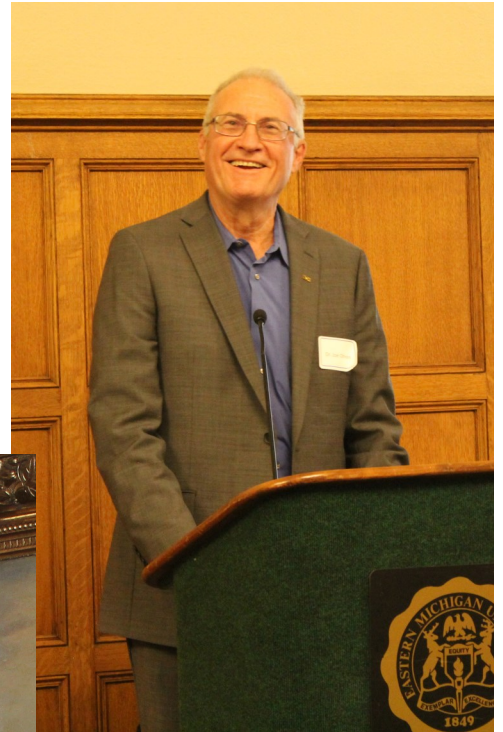
JOE OHREN RETIREMENT AND STUDENT INTERNSHIP FUND

A celebration took place on September 27, 2016, in McKenny Hall at Eastern Michigan University, in honor of Dr. Joseph Ohren, who provided 31 years of teaching, scholarship, and guidance to MPA students. The celebration also highlighted the Joe Ohren Student Internship Fund, which offers financial support to students doing unpaid internships. If you would like to contribute, please visit emich.edu/polisci/donate.

We all wish Joe a long, healthy, and happy retirement. Don't forget to come back and visit!



Attendees celebrate Dr. Ohren's contributions to public administration throughout the years.



Dr. Joe Ohren speaks at his retirement celebration on Sept. 27.

FOCUS ON FLEISCHMANN



Dr. Arnold Fleischmann

After seven years as the Political Science Department Head, Dr. Arnie Fleischmann will be returning to the faculty. We are very grateful for his leadership and support. When asked how he was enjoying his new status, he replied, "I'm ecstatic!" While on sabbatical, he has had the opportunity to stay active with research, course proposals, book proposals (a textbook titled *Understanding Urban Politics: Institutions, Participation, and Policies*), and publication in the area of urban taxation. Dr. Fleischmann's interest in state and local politics continues to drive his research, particularly in politics and growth and economic development, and he has completed writings about annexation politics. Dr. Fleischmann reports that he will be helping out with undergraduate advising. He will also be returning to the classroom for the winter semester teaching PLSC 565: Local Government and Politics.

A CLOSER LOOK: DATA IN THE FIELD

Our alums and members of our MPA Advisory Board share their perspectives on how data is collected and applied.



Laura Shue, 2011 MPA alum, is currently the Director of Health Data Quality, Compliance and Operations at the University of Michigan Health System. With regard to the value of data, she writes: “The conditions that gave rise to big data are etched in stone from a historical context, and no amount of regulatory or policy changes will reverse that. The horse is out of the gate. Big data is here to stay. Having well-developed skills in data management, data analysis, and critical thinking will continue to be important drivers of your success.”

Nate Geinzer, 2006 MPA alum and City Manager of Brighton, MI, highlights benefits of data in a municipal setting. “There is potential for data to play a larger role in the day-to-day operations of a City. Having staff with the ability to process and make recommendations based on data is critically important to developing creative ahead-of-the-curve service delivery solutions. Staff positions were whittled down to the most essential functions during the recession. All of these lost positions will not be coming back, and local government managers having to do more with less is not changing anytime soon. Local governments have been conditioned and incentivized to take a reactionary approach to data. We produce data to meet the requirements of regulations, state agencies, and/or public request. The focus on metrics (think “dashboards”) provides limited value. What brings value is first recognizing that data is more than just quantitative. Often times, the qualitative data tells the “real” story and makes for better informed decision making. As staff, our job is to weigh these inputs to provide the quality services our residents and businesses expect.”



Brittany Beaster, 2014 MPA alum and Data Governance Analyst at General Motors, describes her experiences working with data. “I have been afforded several rewarding opportunities to work with applied data in my career. As a Program Analyst at Mathematica Policy Research, my team worked directly with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to support the analysis of the Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System – a database used to collect Medicaid health claims data from the 50 states. Such analyses, focused on healthcare spending and utilization, provided administrators with information regarding the most prevalent healthcare needs and common illnesses within their populations. These analyses could also be used to shed light on opportunities for earlier health interventions, and reduction of spending through optimization of delivery models. In my current role as a Data Governance Analyst at General Motors, my team partners with Human Resources to standardize and improve employee data that is collected, maintained, and reported on in operations across the globe. This type of data management and analysis is applied to support core business processes – such as

onboarding and payroll – and is also used in analytics to improve the success of recruiting and speedier hiring processes.”

MPA BLOG: RECENT POSTS FROM EMU MPA ALUMNI

The EMU MPA Blog features short essays written by faculty, alumni, students, university partners, and community partners about trends, reflections, and advice regarding public and nonprofit administration. The blog serves as a platform where we can showcase the experiences of our alumni and faculty and engage prospective and current students with the field. Read all blog posts on the MPA website: <http://www.emich.edu/polisci/programs/graduate/blog.php>

Check out some brief excerpts from recent posts:



Successful Relationships in Personnel Administration: Looking at University Administrators and Department Chairs

By Carl Abrego, Chief Administrator for the University of Michigan Residential College

For my MPA capstone, I wanted to focus on a project

that would have a direct impact on my current profession as a Chief Administrator for the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science and the Arts. From my perspective, public universities operate in similar ways to government and public entities. There is a fiscal responsibility they all have not only to themselves, but to the state government that provides various resources and funding. Transparency and freedom-of-information are two aspects that many private businesses do not always have to abide by. The role of the chief administrator is to make sure fiscal responsibility is being upheld within the department while balancing the resources and people needed to make sure the department runs effectively and efficiently...

Read the complete post at:

https://www.emich.edu/polisci/programs/graduate/blog/successful_relationships_university_administration_1024_2016.php

We invite our alumni and friends to read the blog (<http://www.emich.edu/polisci/programs/graduate/blog.php>), share posts on social media, direct your colleagues to the blog, and contribute your own experiences and reflections. Contact Rose Soliven (rsoliven@emich.edu) if you would like to submit a blog post.



Ethics and Public Administration

By Jeremy Rosenberg, 2016 EMU MPA Alum

An esteemed professor in the EMU MPA program once poignantly stated to his class: "Ethics is hard." While this may seem simplistic, it is nonetheless the truth, and ethics is made more difficult by

the fact that it is often taken for granted. We envision ourselves being the voice of reason. We are thus able to reassure ourselves, "If I were working in the department responsible for the Flint water fiasco, surely things would have been different."

Historically, ethics is the turf of philosophers. As they are wont to do, philosophers have taken a complex issue and made it exceedingly more complex. During my time in the MPA program, I engaged in an independent study that examined how Chinese philosophy contributed to what we today call public administration. I chose China for several reasons. China is a large, diverse, ancient culture with a need for quality administration on a large scale. I felt there was something of a western slight toward China in our current curriculum. After all, great Chinese thinkers were pondering effective administration long before Max Weber was born. I also wanted my study to be relevant to the future, and we are fast approaching a Chinese moment in world history. Finally, on a personal note, Chinese philosophy is far more accessible (albeit at times cryptic) than the indigestible word salads tossed together by many in the western philosophical tradition...

Read the complete post at:

https://www.emich.edu/polisci/programs/graduate/blog/ethics_in_public_admin_09.06.16.php

STUDENTS ON THE MOVE: FEATURED INTERNSHIPS



Chris Preston, Second year MPA Student and Graduate Assistant

Internship: **Michigan Department of Transportation – Office of Business Development**

"At the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) – Office of Business Development (OBD), I was given the opportunity to be a student assistant. The OBD certifies Disadvantage Business Enterprises (DBE), owned by female and minority entrepreneurs. In addition, OBD conducts Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance reviews for contractors receiving federal funds. During my tenure with OBD, I was able to gain practical work experience in both of these areas by conducting field interviews, DBE certifications, and EEO compliance reviews. Seeking an internship that provides practical work experience in your future field is critical. My success in finding internships has rested on my ability to seek out opportunities not conveniently advertised through Eastern Michigan University.

Attending professional development seminars and searching field-specific job boards will set you apart. My experience in OBD has led to an interview for an analyst position in the very office I interned at. Interning should be viewed as an extension of your education and the start of your professional career."



Melissa Benson, Second year MPA Student and Graduate Assistant

Internship: **Health Information Management Department, University of Michigan Health System**

"Pursuing an MPA degree, as well as a graduate certificate in Management of Public Healthcare Services, was a perfect fit with a summer internship with the Health Information Management (HIM) Department at the University of Michigan Health System. I worked on defining the Legal Health Record policy, which specifies which healthcare records will be released for legal purposes. **One of the most valuable skills I learned was how policy is formulated from the ground up.** The skills I learned were predicated upon understanding how federal and state legislation and governing bodies regulate healthcare practices. My internship experience in the HIM department complemented my MPA coursework. The foundational knowledge I developed in our personnel and strategic management classes was extremely helpful. The strategic management course provides students with the opportunity to learn how to identify issues, organize a strategy for resolution, and seek long-term solutions."



Alexa Timmreck, First year MPA Student and Graduate Assistant

Internship: **Citizens Research Council of Michigan**

"I was fortunate enough this fall to spend time interning with the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, a nonpartisan, nonprofit, public policy research organization. My tasks included completing research and producing policy memos related to issues involving state and local government within Michigan. The opportunity to apply the policy analysis skills and writing skills that I've learned in classes to important issues that directly affect me was academically and professionally invaluable. Coming in to work every day meant getting the chance to learn something new. **As a traditional student with limited work experience, completing internships has been an integral part of my education at EMU.**"

Do you have internship or job openings at your agency?

Feel free to send them to rsoliven@emich.edu, and we would be happy to share them with our students.

EMU MPA ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- Nickie Bateson, CFO, Great Lakes Water Authority
- Brittany Beaster, Data Governance Analyst, General Motors
- John K. Bennett, Police Officer, City of Detroit
- Natalie Burg, Writer/Editor, Self-employed
- Jessica Cotton, Program Coordinator, Girls Group
- John Fike, Nonprofit Administration, MPA Adjunct Faculty
- Nate Geinzer, City Manager, City of Brighton
- Brian Keisling, Director, Bureau of Medicaid Operations and Actuarial Services, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Andy LaBarre, Washtenaw County Commissioner; Executive VP & Director of Government Relations, A2Y Regional Chamber
- Amy Malmer, Membership Manager, SEMCOG
- Barbara Niess-May, Executive Director, SafeHouse Center
- Debra Polich, President/CEO, Artrain/The Arts Alliance
- Bill Richards, Local Government Management, MPA Adjunct Faculty
- John Seto, Director of Housing Security and Safety Services, University of Michigan; Public Safety Administration Adjunct Faculty
- Laura Shue, Director of Health Data Quality, Compliance and Operations, University of Michigan Health System

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT & CAREER INFORMATION

Do we have your updated contact and career information? Do you have news you would like to share with us? Would you like to be more involved in the EMU MPA Program? Let us know by completing our [alumni form](#).

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Have you ever wondered what the MPA program was up to in between our semiannual newsletters? The MPA program has a Facebook group, LinkedIn group, and Twitter page dedicated to connecting alumni, current students, and interested individuals from the surrounding communities. Join our groups and follow us to receive updates about program activities, networking opportunities, and current events affecting Michigan public and nonprofit administrators. Search for us on Facebook under **Eastern Michigan University MPA Students, Alumni & Friends**, on LinkedIn under **Eastern Michigan University Master of Public Administration (MPA) Students, Alumni & Faculty**, or on Twitter **@EMU_MPA**.



MPA DEVELOPMENT FUND

If you are wondering how you can give something back to the MPA program, please consider making a contribution to the MPA Development Fund. All contributions are tax-deductible and are used to support student and alumni planning and events.

Click the title for hyperlink or visit: www.emich.edu/polisci/donate

Please mail contributions to:
Eastern Michigan University Foundation
344 McKenny Hall
850 W. Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Please make checks payable to:
Eastern Michigan University
Please designate "MPA Development Fund" on your checks to ensure your contribution will go to the MPA program.

Thank you for your support!