

PARTAGER

v. /partaze/: to share, to divide



This term IRSA destroyed norms, exceeded expectations and blazed new pathways. Transitioning from the winter to the spring term, we here at IRSA decided to create a space for positive change in 2014. This change manifested itself in several ways, including the revamping of the traditional annual debate competition between UBC and SFU to include training workshops and more networking opportunities. *{continued on p.2}*

Going Above & Beyond

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

{continued from p.1} This positive change also inspired us to create an entirely new layout for *Partager* and to chronicle old issues of the newsletter on the UBC website. Thanks to collaboration with staff at the UBC alumni department as well as the International Relations Department, we have improved the distribution of *Partager* significantly. This year, we have decided to recognize notable professors within the IR program who consistently go above and beyond in their efforts to be excellent educators. Popular favourite Allen Sens was featured in the Winter 2013 edition, and this term we are highlighting two outstanding intellects: Dr. Arjun Chowdhury and Dr. Steven Lee. Although each professional has considerable insight into both the international relations field and the program at UBC, they all approach teaching from their own unique and effective standpoint.

As alumni, I would like to thank you for your continued support and interest in the international relations program. I hope you enjoy the Summer 2014 edition of *Partager*.



Sarah Manshreck

Editor-in-Chief

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Alumni Updates

Khalil Z. Sharrif

After earning his B.A. in International Relations and Economics from UBC, Mr. Sharrif continued to Harvard Law School where he earned his JD magna cum laude. In 2005, he was appointed CEO of the Aga Khan Foundation Canada after working in many jobs in the international relations field including in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Mr. Shariff also previously worked in Toronto with McKinsey & Company where he advised governments, financial institutions and health care providers.

Karlson Leung

Karlson graduated from UBC in 2013 with a B.A in Honours Political Science and International Relations. During his time at UBC, Karlson was extremely involved in the International Relations Students Association and was the President in his final year. He now attends the University of Oxford where he is pursuing his MPhil in Politics, focusing on Comparative Government. Even when abroad, Karlson takes a strong interest in IRSA and we had the pleasure of catching up with him at our annual benefit gala this year.

Alyssa Kritsch

Alyssa graduated UBC in 2013 with a B.A. in International Relations. Working as the Community Liaison at IRSA in 2013, Alyssa founded *Partager* and was responsible for building a relationship between IRSA and the department with regards to the publication. After graduating, Alyssa worked as an intern at the social media giant Hoot Suite, and was later hired as a content writer for the company. She lives in Vancouver.



Discussing the IR Program and his Passion for History

An Interview with Dr. Steven Lee

Dr. Steven Lee is an Associate Professor in the History Department, and is a past chair of the International Relations Department. His field of study includes the history of the modern empire, the Cold War, and the social and political consequences of violence. Dr. Lee sat down with Julia Buckzek to discuss his research interests as well as his knowledge on the International Relations program

JB: What sparked your interest in studying and teaching history?

SL: It was always a subject that I enjoyed doing, and I think I had very good professors and teachers. Actually, my major field was Canadian history until I finished my MA, but increasingly over the course of my BA and MA, I looked at Canada and international relations. I was particularly interested in the Cold War, and that's what actually got me interested in international relations, Canada-US relations, and Canada in the Atlantic world. In my generation especially, the focus at the university was more on the Atlantic. It still currently is, in many ways, towards the further east. That's really when I began to grow interest in the Pacific.

You're working on two book projects at the moment. Can you brief us on what these books will be about?

*The big one is **Global History of the 20th Century**, starting in the late 19th century, and going up close to the present day. But it's a big, big project and it's equivalent to about 3 books. It's comparative and global at the same time. So that's kind of a project I'll be working over the next few weeks and probably over the summer. The next project is the history of warfare in modern Asian history, however modern is defined, but I haven't really gotten into the writing. I've just been mostly doing field research and reading. It'll be reaching back to at least 1894, probably a bit earlier, since it's East Asia it'll include Vietnam, and therefore the French conquest in Vietnam, and so on.*

You were an International Relations chair - when exactly did you hold this position?

I started in '96, and then I had a one year sabbatical. I was chair until spring 2001, so 96 to 2001, minus 1 year which was '97-'98. And then Allen [Sens] was chair for many years, I took over for one of his sabbatical years, which was 2006 to 2007.

As an IR chair, what were some of your responsibilities? What was an average day for you?

I don't really remember an average day, but when I first chaired the program, all of the advising was done by the chair. So I'd see students all the time with all kinds of administrative things like making sure they've got the right courses or if they wanted to settle something with the course. And I communicated with the heads of department to make sure that there were an appropriate number of seminars that are being offered. I also wrote letters in support of student initiatives and funding. But I think what has happened over the course of the decades since '95 is that students have become much more engaged, and I think Allen encouraged that a lot while he was a chair and worked very closely with students on the IR journal and the activities that IRSA was supporting, so that's carried over now and it's a regular part of the program. I've enjoyed doing all this when I came back to the chair position last year.

The IR Program seems quite popular, is competitive to get into, and has been growing larger every year. What makes UBC's International Relations program stand out in comparison to other Liberal Arts programs, and other IR programs at other schools?

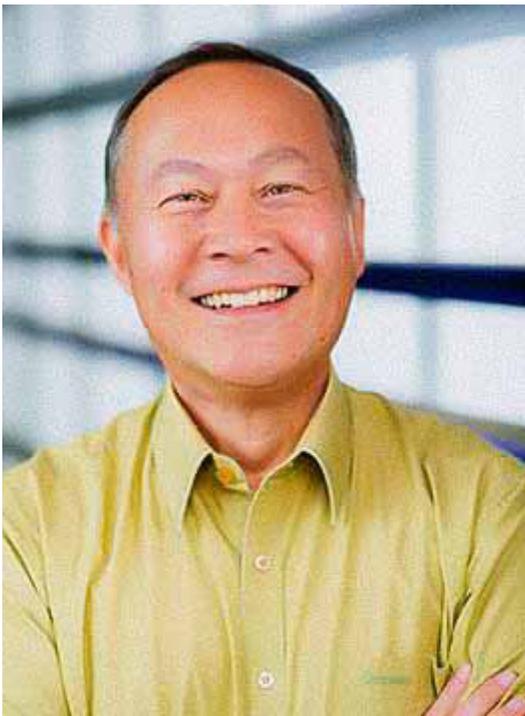
Well, within UBC it's the most successful interdisciplinary program by far, so that's one thing. The range of courses that we offer and the integrated character that we offer; those are all certainly strengths of our program.

Any basic advice you can give to current, prospective, and freshly graduated IR students? What can IR students do to maximize and fully benefit from UBC and the IR program whilst completing their IR degree?

Take advantage of the exchange program, think about where you'd like to go and think of the areas of the world that would help with your research and do work that would relate to it, go somewhere new that you can explore and develop. Think about your future a bit, because of the interdisciplinary nature of the IR program, and take your time. Do well; do better in your 3 or 4 courses rather than taking 5.

What about advice for prospective IR students?

I would say that students can do a very similar kind of degree in a different discipline. So if they do history or political science, it almost replicates an IR degree. I'd say, don't stress too much about the IR program. And don't worry too much if you don't get in, you can do an equivalent program. Just do as well as you can in your courses, stay active, and get involved in IRSA.



“take advantage of the exchange program... go somewhere new that you can explore and develop”



IRSA UPDATES

ANNUAL GALA

On January 8th, IRSA hosted its annual benefit gala at Granville Island Performance Works to raise money for the Canadian Harambee Education Society. CHES empowers girls through education in Kenya and Tanzania by providing scholarships and opportunity to high achieving women in these areas. Presentations for the night included Lorrie Murkirazi, a woman who had received a CHES scholarship, as well as Ibenzi George, a Kenyan foreign policy analyst. There were also performances from UBC Acapella, the Africa Awareness Initiative dance troop, and the VTech String Orchestra. The night featured delicious food, wine, and interesting conversation and was attended by the UBC community and supporters of the International Relations program. It was great to see mingling between students, faculty and alumni and we at IRSA cannot wait to host the event next year. A big thanks to Brenda Nguyen and Dhrti Chander for organizing an excellent event!



IRSA DISCOURSE

This term, IRSA managed to host three separate instalments of IRSA Discourse, a speaker series in which IR students can engage with professionals in a more relaxed setting. In collaboration with the Solidarity for Palestine and Human Rights Club (SPHR-UBC), the IRSA Discourse committee screened the documentary '5 Broken Cameras' and hosted a potluck and discussion after the film. It was a great opportunity to connect members of the two different clubs for positive discussion. Later in the term, IRSA Discourse presented Yonah Jeremy Bob, a journalist for the Jerusalem Post and a trained lawyer who previously worked in the legal department of the Israeli Defense Force. The conversation revolved around the relationship between the media and political affairs, and Yonah was extremely insightful on the topic. Finally, in April, IRSA Discourse presented its final instalment for the school year in the Global Lounge with Gerald R. Skinner, a former ambassador to Canada. IRSA Discourse has been a staple event for students of IR and we are excited to continue it next year.

NEW EXECUTIVE

IRSA is pleased to announce our new incoming executives for the 2014/2015 calendar year!

Beckie Che — *President*

Sarah Manshreck — *Vice President Internal*

Tiago de Souza — *Vice President External*

Mikayla Gross — *Vice President Administration*

Danny Aw — *Sport and Social Coordinator*

Terralynn Forsyth — *Treasurer*

David Markwei — *AUS Representative*

Umang Khandelwal — *Grad Representative*

Anita Hung — *Public Relations Officer*

Dhrti Chander — *Head of Alumni Affairs*



WICKED PROBLEMS:

Learning Strategies, Security,
and Life after Graduation with
Dr. Arjun Chowdhury

Dr. Arjun Chowdhury joined the International Relations Department in 2010, and researches autocratic survival strategies, the effects of counterinsurgency campaigns, and the transition from the imperial to the international system. Professor Chowdhury sat down with IRSA writer Julia Buczek to discuss his teaching strategies, international security and his advice to IR alumni.

JB: You teach several IR courses here, including *Introduction to Global Politics and Security Studies*. What course do you enjoy teaching the most, and why? And if you could teach a course on absolutely anything IR-related, what would it be about?

AC: I enjoy teaching Security Studies the most. We discuss issues that many students are interested in: civil wars, autocratic regimes, so it's always the most engaging class, and when students are most engaged it makes life a lot better. If I could teach a course on anything IR-related, I'd teach a course called "Wicked Problems", and it would be a course that would get the students thinking about how to understand critical problems. For example, civil wars that last a long time, dictators that aren't leaving power, and I would make them think how they would manage the problem and fix it. It would probably be an upper-level seminar.

You have published on sovereignty and the state. What is the greatest threat to state sovereignty today?

Probably civil unrest is the biggest concern. Whether its protest movements, non-violent or violent movements, civil unrest is probably the major thing that keeps coming up.

What is the most pressing security threat in the news today?

There's obviously the civil war in Syria which has claimed a hundred thousand lives, that would probably be the most immediate. But, in the Central African Republic, and still to some degree, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, there's a variety of local conflicts, which are seemingly not ending, and have claimed many lives. Those would probably be the two main issues that are immediate.

In your POLI 360 class, you employ in-class assignments to force students to apply their knowledge to scenarios. What are the advantages of using these in-class assignments versus regular tests?

I use regular tests as well, but the advantage of the in-class assignment is because it's a group assignment. One of the principles of learning best is "teaching teaches the teacher". So if several of you have to explain to others, you yourselves will learn better, and that's the principle. By getting everyone to explain the concepts to each other, the person doing the explaining is going to learn better. Over the course of the term, everyone will hopefully have done that and learned more than just from listening to me or reading things.

What is a piece of advice you'd give to current International Relations students?

Take some classes that give you a decent amount of numerical literacy: classes in statistics, some classes in mathematics, but take some classes in the Arts as well. Take an art history class, and with all that, take some time away from school once you finish. Go do whatever it is - your early 20s is a time when you can live without making a lot of money, and that's worth a lot. Enjoy that before all the responsibilities come in. Use your time at UBC to take courses that are interesting, and that will build your skills, don't worry too much about your Major. After that, take some time to work a while, and figure out what you're interested in.



*“TAKE COURSES THAT
ARE INTERESTING...
DON'T WORRY TOO
MUCH ABOUT YOUR
MAJOR”*

Julia Buckzek is a fourth year International Relations student, and is interested in European Diplomacy. This is her second year writing for IRSA.



The CIC *Thinks Local, Links Global* through Student Engagement

Fifteen different branches of the Canadian International Council (CIC) are established across Canada for the purpose of strengthening Canada's global role in international affairs. All operate with their own unique strategy for engaging a local membership composed of academic professionals, members of the business community, and other individuals who possess an interest in foreign relations. Since its original establishment as the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) in 1928, the CIC has undergone several transformations. Most recently, the CIC launched its digital media platform, openCanada.org, under the initiative of its main branch in Toronto. Although surrounded by a rapid pace of change, the Vancouver Branch of the CIC chooses to uphold its local relevancy while also fulfilling its global mandate by focusing on strategies for student engagement.

When active CIC Vancouver Branch President, Valerie Shapiro, first stepped into her leadership role of the Executive Committee, the CIC had just begun pursuing greater ties with Vancouver's student community. First initiated under the leadership of a student, Fernando de la Mora was attending the University of British Columbia (UBC) and was President of the International Relations Students Association (IRSA). She approached the CIC Vancouver Branch

seeking collaboration opportunities for student events. Now known as "IRSA Debates", IRSA and the CIC's first partnership entailed an inter-university debate competition, intended to provide IR students with an opportunity to engage in debate concerning issues in international affairs and public policy. Among many other achievements during his time with IRSA, Fernando initiated the first steps to building stronger relations with the CIC.

Over eight years later, IRSA and the CIC continue to build strong ties. IRSA has expanded its collaborations with the CIC to include events such as an annual evening panel, entitled "Diplomacy 101", which also includes the attendance of Vancouver Consular Corp Members. The event is held at the beginning of every academic year and includes a diverse group of panelists invited to speak on the changing scope of diplomacy, while offering students insight into a career of foreign service. This year's panel was re-engineered into "e-Diplomacy 101" to offer perspectives surrounding the digital aspects of global affairs in the 21st century. The insight of two former Canadian ambassadors, Chris Thomson and Gordon Longmuir, and former Assistant Deputy Minister for Public Policy and Communications at the DFAIT, Hugh Stephens, informed students on current challenges being faced in international public policy alongside a growing

amount of disruptive technology. Areas of discussion included reviewing current strategies for social media and digital communications in international affairs and the associated implications for traditional relations between states.

The ability to partner with CIC on such events has not only enabled IRSA to execute new initiatives for its student members, but has also empowered IRSA to connect students with strategic research and a dynamic discourse related to their area of study. As an agent outside of the classroom, the CIC brings the Diplomacy 101 “textbook” to life—offering a direct avenue to apply theory into practice as undergraduates.

Through its generous extensions of sponsorship, CIC also continues to contribute to IRSA’s annual UBC vs. SFU Inter-University Debate and annual IR Career Fair. Now marking its 8th year, “IRSA Debates”—this year also co-sponsored by the Liu Institute for Global Issues—provided undergraduate students with debate training through a professionally led workshop, as well as a Showcase Debate between the UBC Debate Society and the SFU Debate Society. The debate resolution engaged in current issues surrounding hyper connectivity and security and was judged by a panel of professionals actively involved in public policy and security issues. Recently held in March, IRSA’s annual Career Fair has also successfully expanded into “IR Pursuits: Career Conference”. IRSA was able to offer students a Saturday afternoon full of panelists, career services, and tabling booths relating to relevant careers in both the public and private sector that maintain an international focus.

Although the CIC continues to play a dynamic role in student life through its extension of sponsorship, it is the internal organization that its Vancouver team has incorporated that allows it to go beyond a traditional partnership framework. Every year the Vancouver Branch involves at least two students in holding positions on the Executive Committee. This serves as a fundamental channel for student input. In total, this structure not

only enables CIC-student relations to remain strong by directly involving student members in its local planning and decision making body, but also empowers student groups, such as IRSA, to fulfill its own mandate as a global networking hub for students.



Terralynn Forsyth is a third year International Relations Student who worked with the Canadian International Council this past year, in the Administration and Membership Division

THE UBC CO-OP EXPERIENCE

IR Student Awarded Top Co-op Student in Canada

Alex Chen, recent UBC International Relations and Arts Co-op grad, was honoured as Canada's top co-op student by the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE).

It's the first time a UBC student has won the award in the competition's 20-year history. Alex distinguished himself through his exceptional work terms as a Junior Officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada.

What started as a 4-month co-op position quickly turned into an 8-month term. Alex's supervisor Eugenie Cormier-Lassonde found his level of professionalism "comparable to the best graduate students [they] have hired".

During his work term, Alex contributed to numerous projects, from managing ministerial correspondence, event logistics, and consultation work, to supporting and filling in for multiple colleagues in times of crisis. He also wrote briefs, conducted research and analysis, and created presentations for the department on political and trade matters that were acknowledged by his employer as "vital to the progress of important files for Canada".

To read more about Alex Chen's work accomplishments, visit www.artscoop.ubc.ca.

STAFF & CONTRIBUTORS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: *Sarah Manshreck*

Sarah is a third year International Relations Student and is ecstatic to bring the IR community closer together as the Community Liaison on the IRSA executive. Other than managing the IR Alumni Newsletter, Sarah is a Kappa Alpha Theta member as well as a lifeguard and swim instructor. After finishing her B.A, Sarah plans to continue graduate studies internationally and develop her French. Sarah hopes to use her knowledge in foreign relations to someday pursue a career as a correspondent in the field of journalism. In her spare time, she enjoys running, reading fiction and eating anything she can get her hands on.



SENIOR WRITER: *Julia Buckzek*

Julia Buckzek is currently in her fourth year completing UBC's competitive International Relations program, primarily focusing on modern European diplomacy. In addition, Julia also has a keen interest in graphic design and illustration, and is hoping to incorporate the arts with her interest in diplomacy. Aside from her studies, Julia is also President of the UBC Polish Students' Society, and is also currently the Chair of Quo Vadis Vancouver 2014, an annual international conference for university students and professionals of Polish descent. Julia finds joy in travelling, learning languages, snowboarding, skateboarding, modern art, interior design, and anything to do with the outdoors.



WRITER: *Terralynn Forsyth*

TJ is a third year student studying International Relations, focusing on economics. TJ served on IRSA as the Vice President External this year, and was responsible for many successful events hosted by the club including this year's e-Diplomacy 101. She will return to the club next year as Treasurer, and also served on the Canadian International Council Vancouver in charge of Administration and Membership. In her spare time, TJ works as an administrative assistant at UBC Rec.



LAYOUT & DESIGN: *Anita Hung*

Anita is currently in her fourth year, studying Gender, Race, Sexuality, & Social Justice. In addition to doing the layout for the IRSA Alumni Newsletter, Anita also does the layout and production for UBC's Journal of International Affairs. After graduation she hopes to work in advertising or graphic design. She was recently elected as IRSA's Public Relations Officer and is also a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity.

