First of all, the department has a suite of beautiful new offices on the forth floor of Manderino Library, Suite 440. For the first time the whole department, Political Science as well as history, are in the same suite of offices. Come and see the new place!

The Department also became richer by two full time faculty members, Dr. Paul Crawford, who will be teaching ancient and medieval classes as well as the Craft of History, and Dr. Kelton Edmonds, who first joined our department as the Frederick Douglas Scholar. We were fortunate enough to receive another Frederick Douglass Institute Scholar, Professor Derrick McKisick. Please read further for interviews with these three new additions.

Dr. Andrae Marak will continue to be the interim director of Women’s Studies for the time being. Because of this, the Woman’s Studies Office has been moved from South Hall to Manderino Library 440.

September 12th, 2006 we held the Woman’s Studies Kick-off. Everyone was invited, especially those who had taught or taken women’s studies classes. There were twenty-five students, faculty and staff in attendance, and they discussed topics such as the PEACE project, Safe Zone, Office of Social Equity, and Women’s Studies. They also discussed the Women’s Studies Minor, the Audrey-Beth Fitch Conference on Women’s Studies, and the possibility of a Director of Women’s Studies hire.

September 14th, 2006 we held our annual Constitution Day. It featured a panel on "Comparative Constitutions: The Impact that Other Constitutions Have Had on the U.S. Constitution and Vice Versa" with Dr. Joseph Heim, Dr. John Cencich, Dr. Michael Slaven, Professor Derrick McKisick (Frederick Douglass Institute Scholar) and a special guest, Dr. Scott Morgenstern from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Mel Blumberg moderated. The panel was well received with over 200 students attending, many of who walked away with free pocket-sized copies of the Constitution provided by Representative John Murtha.

From September 21st to October 4th the department registered students to vote as part of the American Democracy Project. Through classroom participation of several faculty members and the relentless tabling efforts of our students we managed to register 211 students.


October 18th, the History Club hosted Patricia Bradley, who spoke about “Why Does Katie Couric Matter?” to several students, faculty and staff in LRC Auditorium.
Dr. Paul Crawford

Dr. Paul Crawford is one of the new professors here at California University of Pennsylvania. He is an Assistant History professor who specializes in Medieval history and the Crusades. He received his Ph.D. in History with an emphasis in the Crusades from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1998. When asked why he chose the Crusades as his subject he might tell you that he doesn’t know, but he remembers reading Ronald McNair Scott’s Robert the Bruce: King of the Scots and finding it fascinating. It inspired him to apply to the University of Wisconsin-Madison to study medieval Scottish history, only to find after his acceptance that none of the faculty taught in that field. He became good friends with a faculty member there who got him interested in the Teutonic Knights, and his interest grew from there. It is certainly a popular topic right now, as his expertise has been sought by encyclopedia editors and television producers. History channel buffs might have seen him in Lost Worlds: Knights Templar, where he goes to Syria to discuss the castles and the lives of this religious warrior order.

The road to this show was a complicated one. It all began with his work on ORB: The Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies. (You can check it out at http://www.the-orb.net/) It has received high praise from many academic quarters and has made it so that Dr. Crawford’s name is highly ranked in web searches for the crusades. This is why in 1999 a production company asked for his help for a History Channel documentary on the Children’s Crusade, which aired in 2000. In 2004, while at a crusades conference in Turkey, a British production company was scouting for people to do a general program on the crusades. They asked him to fly back to Istanbul, where he hit it off with the film crew. A member of that crew eventually went to work for the production company associated with the Lost Worlds. The episode featuring Dr. Crawford aired on the History Channel this summer.

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Professor McKisick is the newest member of the Fredrick Douglas Institute. He comes to Cal U from University of Arkansas Fayetteville. He is an American History Major and a candidate for a Ph.D. While at the University of Arkansas he was President of the Black Graduate Student Association. Also, he was a member of the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Achievement Program and Research Fellow. McKisick was a graduate assistant in the African American Studies Department at University of Arkansas Fayetteville and Adjunct Professor at Fort Smith.

Throughout his college experience he was a member of African American Studies Coordinating Committee, the Annual Pre-College Conference, Pea Ridge Interpretive Video Plan and Treatment Planning Committee, A Special Olympics Volunteer, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and a plethora of other committees and planning groups. McKisick has done a number of presentations including “Succeeding as a Graduate Student of Color: Tales from the Front Line”, “A Guide to Parliamentary Procedure” and many others.

Currently, he is writing his dissertation titled, “A Separate Peace: Emancipation and Citizenship of the Choctaw Nation”. His dissertation is on Native Americans and former slaves in Oklahoma and Arkansas. McKisick said, “I enjoy helping students understand the relevance of American History. American History gives us a deeper understanding of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going.”

McKisick is “enjoying his stay” here at Cal U. He will be here for 2 semesters teaching 4 courses in the History Department. McKisick is welcomed here by all in the History & Political Science department as well as the Cal U university as a whole.

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Great teachers don't rely on instructing, instead, they facilitate the learning process and inspire their students.”

Dr. Kelton Edmonds grew up in Portsmouth, VA and graduated high school in 1993. He was accepted into North Carolina A&T, a historically black college, where he received his M.A. in 1999 in Secondary Education with a concentration in the Social Sciences. Dr. Edmonds’ love for basketball was what made him choose Secondary Education. He wanted to coach high school basketball, but this meant that he also had to be a teacher. However, his subject choice was not entirely due to his love for the game. Dr. Edmonds describes himself as a naturally curious person. He has never been the type of person to take people at their word. If someone tells him something, he has to find out for himself if it’s true. It seems only fitting, then, that he would choose social sciences, history in particular, as his field of study.

However things turned out differently for Dr. Edmonds when his advisor, able to see his potential, finally convinced him to apply for doctoral programs. He was accepted into the history program at the University of Missouri, Columbia where he was awarded the Gus T. Ridgel Fellowship.

If you’re taking History of American Sport, Social History, or African-American history, then you know Dr. Kelton Edmonds. Dr. Edmonds is one of California University’s recent additions to the Department of History and Political Science, and an interesting one at that. This young professor is only a year and a half into his teaching and history career, and already is doing great things at California.

Alumni News

Elizabeth Paiano, ’99, celebrated five years as a Paralegal for Grenen & Birsic Law Firm and now lives in South Park, PA.

Andrew Baraniak, ’01, graduated in May of this year with a Master of Arts in AME History from Duquesne University and is currently employed at Carnegie Mellon University Archives. He now lives in Pittsburgh, PA.

Phil Hnatkovich, ’02, married Melissa Bereznak in September of 2005. He also completed his Master of Arts at West Virginia University, is in the doctoral program at Pennsylvania State University, and was elected representative for the PSU graduate student association for 2006-2007. He now lives in Hastings, PA.

Leah Hughes, ’03, is now married to Marty Stutzman and is expecting a baby in October. She now lives in Meyersdale, PA.

Patrick Madden, ’04, is traveling the country doing GPS work for Spatial Data Partners, a company based in Medina, Ohio.

Laureen Schulte, ’04, is studying for a Master of Arts in AME History at Duquesne University, has passed her state licensing “Life, Health, & Accident” exam, and is working for Western Southern Financial Group. She now lives in West Mifflin, PA.

Brian Salisbury, ’04, is now attending his second year at Thomas M. Cooley Law School. He is now located in Lansing, MI.

Jordan Settle, ’05, was commissioned into the United States Army Military Police Corps and now lives in Altoona, PA.

Tiffany Eisenman, ’06, a Political Science graduate, is attending grad school at IUP.

Scott Simon, an ’06, Political Science graduate, is now attending law school at Duquesne University.

Emerti News

Leonard Siegel and his collection of historically significant autographs were featured on WQED’s On Q television magazine last spring.

Frank T. Edwards has suffered some health problems but is recovering near family in Wyoming and hopes to be back home but next spring.

Jack Bauman has a new book out with Edward Muller, called Planning in Pittsburgh, 1889-1943. It is available through the University of Pittsburgh Press.

J.K. Folmar recently saw the publication of his book, Drifting Back in Time, which focuses on Washington and Fayette Counties and the Mongahela River valley.
Dr. Crawford also brings a lot of classroom experience to Cal. He previously taught as a full-time instructor at Lamar Community College from 1985 to 1990. In 1991 and 1995 Dr. Crawford was a teaching assistant for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was an adjunct lecturer at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1996. From 1995 to 1997 Dr. Crawford was an instructor at the Senior Summer School in Madison. In 1998 and 1999 Dr. Crawford served as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh from 1999-2001. From 2001 to 2005, Dr. Crawford was an assistant professor at Alma College.

His theory of teaching is to do whatever works to get the message across. “You have to understand that you have things you need to tell your students,” he says, adding that he likes to use a combination of lecture and readings of primary resources to get the students thinking critically. “Learning history is fun, and I want to make them understand that. It’s hard work, but it is rewarding.” It is a responsibility he feels keenly: “Other people have made a lot of sacrifices to make sure I could get a good understanding of the past and I want to make sure I pass that on.”

Dr. Crawford has also published a book, articles, encyclopedia entries, and reviews on various topics all pertaining to either medieval crusades or some form of European history. He is currently working on a journal article on the involvement of the University of Paris in the trial of the Templars as well as a book on the Templars and Hospitallers. When asked what keeps him going, he replies, “It’s a field full of surprises. Almost everything the public thinks it knows about the crusades is wrong.”

California University of Pennsylvania is lucky to have an accomplished historian teaching our students. Dr. Paul Crawford says he feels honored and flattered to join the faculty here and is looking forward to working with Cal U and its students for years to come.