MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It’s hard to believe that I just wrapped up my second year directing the Clark Center. I am very pleased to report that I will be staying on as Director and that I will be a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Government. Over the last two years, we’ve launched several new programs and research initiatives, and I look forward to developing these further in the years ahead.

The spring semester got off to a lively start. In early February, ANZSANA held its annual conference at UT-Austin. Both days of meetings were supposed to be held in the Julius Glickman Conference Center located in the new College of Liberal Arts building, but the threat of wintery weather caused the University to close on Friday. Uncertain as to whether we could gain access to our building in light of the closure, we held Friday’s sessions in the UT Alumni Center, which (we learned) remains open when the University closes for weather events. Perhaps I should say weather “non-events” because from our vantage point the predicted freezing rain did not materialize. The fact that the city nevertheless shut down caused the Canadian participants considerable amusement! We were incredibly grateful to Rosemary’s Catering for helping us make these impromptu arrangements and for the resilience of the conference attendees.

The Center hosted visits by three scholars during the semester. As part of a Distinguished Speakers Series, Howard Schueber, a 2011 Fulbright Flinders Distinguished Chair in Political Science, delivered a talk in the Department of Government on the constitutional politics of Australia’s “Washminster” republic. The Center also co-sponsored a visit by Margaret Jacobs from the University of Nebraska as part of the Faculty Seminar on British Studies. Focusing on the US and Australia, Jacobs discussed the late-nineteenth century policy of removing Indigenous children from their families and placing them in state institutions. The Center and the Moody College of Communication co-hosted a talk by Elizabeth Mitchell from the University of Queensland on media coverage of the unconventional gas industries in the US and Australia.

Showcasing the important ties between Texas and Australia, Prime Minister Tony Abbott visited Houston on June 13 to give a talk at the Asia Society Texas Center. He was accompanied by a large delegation that included representatives from Australia’s business community as well as its arts and sciences sectors. The Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Robb, and Australia’s Ambassador to the US, Kim Beazley, were among the notable political and diplomatic figures present. I was delighted to attend the event as a guest of the Australian delegation.
As this edition of Yacker elaborates, we’ve created a new funding opportunity to facilitate use of UT-Austin’s resources for scholars working on topics related to Australia and New Zealand, and we are in our second year of a program that offers undergraduates an opportunity to gain hands-on research experience. In addition, we’ve made progress in fostering the development of networks that link scholars at UT-Austin with their colleagues in Australia and New Zealand who work in the areas of energy policy and Indigenous studies.

*Rhonda Evans Case*

**CLARK CENTER FELLOWS**

In 2013, the Clark Center launched a program to expand opportunities for undergraduate students to gain research experience on Australian and New Zealand topics. The program begins each fall and consists of a two-semester sequence of courses that teach students how to devise and execute original research projects. These courses are offered in the Department of Government and enrollment is by invitation only. Students learn through lecture and discussion as well as through hands-on experience assisting faculty with the collection and coding of data for their research. Clark Fellows undertake individual research projects under the supervision of Dr. Evans Case. For this reason, they must also take Australian Politics (GOV 365N) in the fall if they have not already completed the course. Each spring, students in the College of Liberal Arts who have a GPA of 3.5 or above may apply to be Clark Fellows.

The first two Clark Fellows, Charlie Stephens (Government) and Kimberly Smith (Government), delivered strong performances. They assisted Dr. Evans Case with coding decisions of the High Court of Australia while also conducting their own research projects. Charlie examined the ways in which High Court decisions advanced or thwarted the political interests of federal governments between 1975 and 2013, and Kimberly examined the Howard government’s legislative agenda between July 2005 and December 2007, during which time the Coalition controlled both houses of Parliament, a rare event in Australia. Both students presented their projects at poster sessions held on campus during Research Week. In April, Dr. Evans Case, Charlie, and Kimberly travelled to Washington, D.C, where they visited the Embassy of Australia.

We welcome four new Clark Fellows who will participate in the 2014-15 academic year. They include Conor Danaher (Plan II and Government); Maureen Clark (Government, Humanities, and Liberal Arts Honors); Freya Berglund Bartosh (International Relations and Global Studies); and Brooke Noble (Government and Liberal Arts Honors). These new Fellows are getting a jumpstart on their research experience by working as summer interns in conjunction with the Center.
SMALL GRANT PROGRAM FOR RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Now in its second year, the Clark Center’s Small Grant Program for Research and Creative Activity provides funds for UT-Austin faculty and graduate students to conduct research concerning Australia or New Zealand. Awards are typically expended on travel to either country, but they may be applied to other uses.

Three graduate students were awarded varying amounts in the 2014 round of funding. Catherine Palmer is studying towards an MFA at the Michener Center for Writers. She will visit Australia and New Zealand to conduct research for a novel. Kristie Flannery, Department of History, will conduct archival research in Australia for a dissertation that explores the increasing interconnectedness of the Pacific world between 1788 and 1850 and examines the Australian colonies’ entanglements within this regional system. And finally, Herschel “Trey” F. Thomas III, Department of Government, will travel to Canberra to work with a co-author on a project that examines the purposes for which interest groups use media.

The Center will issue a new call for applications in early October. The deadline for submissions will be 31 January 2015. For more information about the small grant program and last year’s recipients, please see the Center’s website. Profiles of this year’s recipients will be posted to the site when they complete their travel.

NEW GRANT PROGRAM
RESEARCH ON AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND AT UT-AUSTIN

UT-Austin offers access or proximity to many collections of archival materials and artifacts. Examples include the LBJ Presidential Library, the Harry Ransom Center, and the Blanton Museum of Art, to name just three. The Clark Center is pleased to launch a new grant program for scholars from around the world who wish to visit UT-Austin in order to make use of the various resources at the University. Their research must examine issues or phenomena of relevance to Australia or New Zealand. Projects that examine these countries in a comparative context are welcome. Beginning 1 August 2014, faculty and graduate students may apply for awards of up to $1,000. Applications will be received on a rolling basis until the program’s available funds are expended. Please see the Clark Center’s website for more details.

CENTER RESEARCH INITIATIVES

*Meeting Contemporary Energy Needs: Australia and Texas Compared*

The Clark Center has been facilitating relations between energy researchers at UT-Austin and their counterparts at the University of Queensland (UQ). Rhonda Evans Case attended an Energy Conference hosted by the Australian-American Chamber of Commerce of Houston in January. Finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding for Academic Collaboration between UT-Austin and UQ was formally announced. In April,
Elizabeth Mitchell gave a talk in the Moody College of Communications that compared media coverage of the unconventional gas industries in the US and Australia. Tina Hunter, Senior Lecturer at UQ’s TC Beirne School of Law, arrived in May to spend a month researching Texas’ regulatory approach to shale gas extraction as part of a comparative project that includes Australia. In October, Professor Eugene Gholz (LBJ School of Public Affairs) will travel to Australia to investigate the political economy of rare earths.

**Comparative Policy Agendas Project: Australia and New Zealand**

In 2012, the Clark Center joined the Comparative Agendas Project, an effort that grew out of the American-focused Policy Agendas Project headquartered in UT-Austin’s Department of Government and led by Professor Bryan Jones. Considerable progress has been made. While work continues on decisions of the High Court of Australia, coding of all New Zealand Supreme Court decisions from 2004 to the present is complete. Clark Fellows recently began coding all bills considered by the New Zealand Parliament between 2002 and the present. In April, Dr. Evans Case and graduate research assistant Sean Fern presented papers on the New Zealand Supreme Court at the annual meetings of ANZSANA in Austin and the Midwestern Political Science Association in Chicago. They have also contributed a chapter to a forthcoming book (see the Publications section below) marking the ten-year anniversary of the New Zealand Supreme Court’s creation.

**NAISA CONFERENCE COMES TO AUSTIN, TEXAS**

The Native American and Indigenous Studies Association held its annual meeting in Austin from May 29 to 31. In order to promote research collaborations that examine Australia and New Zealand in comparative perspective, the Clark Center and the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network at the Queensland University of Technology co-sponsored a luncheon in conjunction with the NAISA meetings on May 31. Forty scholars from UT-Austin, Australia, and New Zealand attended.

**PUBLICATIONS**


SPRING SEMESTER VISITORS

Michael Barber, Vice-Chancellor of Flinders Univ.
Margaret Jacobs, Professor, Dept. of History, Univ. of Nebraska—Lincoln.
Audrey Levine, Strategic Professor, Flinders Univ.
Elizabeth Mitchell, Senior Lecturer, School of Journalism & Communications, Univ. of Queensland.
Howard Schweber, Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Univ. of Wisconsin—Madison.
Tina Hunter, Senior Lecturer & Director of the Centre for International Minerals & Energy Law, TC Beirne School of Law, Univ. of Queensland.