

**Criminology**  
**Bruce Jacobs, Professor of Criminology**

Bruce Jacobs is currently analyzing a qualitative dataset with former doctoral student Mike Cherbonneau. The dataset is based on in-depth interviews with active auto thieves. Jacobs and Cherbonneau have authored or are in the process of authoring numerous peer-reviewed papers based on these data.

**Political Science**  
**Harold Clarke, Ashbel Smith Professor of Political Science**  
**Marianne Stewart, Professor of Political Science**

Dr. Harold Clarke and Dr. Marianne Stewart write on their current project entitled “A Tea Party in the Pub: The Rise and Electoral Prospects of Britain's UKIP:”

Similar to the U.S. Tea Party, several European right-wing populist parties have enjoyed considerable electoral success in recent years. Great Britain's United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) is a prime example. Capitalizing on widespread anti-immigrant and anti-European Union sentiments in the electorate, UKIP Leader Nigel Farage argues that none of the mainline parties will protect the economic, cultural and security interests of 'ordinary British people'. Since the 2010 general election, UKIP's message has resonated strongly—the party's support in public opinion polls has skyrocketed and it came first in the May 2014 elections for the European Parliament. Subsequently, UKIP has won two by-elections, giving it representation in the national parliament at Westminster for the first time. With the May 2015 British general election now on the horizon, there is a real chance that UKIP will win enough seats to become the third largest party in Parliament.

EPPS Professors Harold Clarke and Marianne Stewart are studying public support for UKIP as part of their research for a forthcoming book with Palgrave Macmillan on the 2015 British general election. Analyses of data from their long-running series of monthly national surveys of the British electorate funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and Britain's Economic and Social Research Council show that UKIP has indeed capitalized on the widespread anti-immigrant, anti-EU mood. Clarke and Stewart emphasize that the prevailing political context has helped as well. With Britain's traditional
"third party", the Liberal Democrats, serving as the junior member in a Conservative-led coalition government, disaffected voters have turned to UKIP to voice a broad spectrum of discontents with the performance of the economy and policy delivery in key areas such as health care. The Lib Dems also are suffering because their leader, Nick Clegg, is deemed toxic by many voters. Labour, the principal opposition party, has difficulties too. Clarke and Stewart's surveys show that the party's "competence brand" was severely tarnished because it was in power when the economic crash occurred and that voters are decidedly unenthusiastic about Labour Leader, Ed Miliband.

With the election only 14 weeks away, UKIP clearly has a potent combination of public discontent and contextual advantages on its side. That said, Clarke and Stewart caution that Britain's "first-past-the-post" electoral system makes it difficult to translate even very sizable vote shares into seats in Parliament. Will UKIP be able to "break the mold" of contemporary British politics? We will soon know.

**Public Policy and Political Economy**

*Lloyd Jeff Dumas, Professor of Public Policy and Political Economy*

Dr. Lloyd Jeff Dumas is currently working on a new book, tentatively titled, *Building the Good Society: On the Power and Limits of Markets, Democracy and Freedom*. It is an exploration of what constitutes a "good society" --- not a utopia, but an achievable society that allows all of its members the opportunity to live what they consider to be a good life. And it examines the power and limits of the economic market system and political democracy as forces for creating and maintaining such a society.

**Public Affairs and Sociology**

*Meghna Sabharwal, Assistant Professor of Public Affairs*

Dr. Meghna Sabharwal’s research concerns public human resource management, specifically related to workplace diversity, performance, high-skilled immigration, and international public administration. She has published in several public administration and policy journals and has presented at over 3 dozen international, national, and regional conferences. Since 2012, Dr. Sabharwal has been the principal investigator for a National Science Foundation grant on “Return Migration of Academic Scientists and Engineers from the United States to India.” She received the best paper award for her work on “Advancing Underrepresented Populations in the Public Sector: Approaches and practices in the Instructional Pipeline” by the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* in 2013. Dr. Sabharwal is the co-author on the book *Public Personnel Administration*. In 2013, Dr. Sabharwal also undertook comparative research that received the best paper award in the *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, for “Charting Ethics in Asia-Pacific HRM: Does East Meet West, Ethically?” She has done comparative international work
on issues of transparency and government policy making, published in the journal *Government Information Quarterly* (GIQ), and which is one of the most cited articles in GIQ during the past five years. She co-edited a book on *Public Administration in South Asia*, published by Taylor & Francis in 2013, which involves participation from many leading authors in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. She received an internal advisory grant to study the state of wellness across local governments in the US. She is currently working on disseminating her results, and has been accepted to present at two national conferences. In recognition of her work, she was recently awarded the Julia J. Henderson International Award this year by the American Society for Public Administration Section on Women in PA, which recognizes demonstrated commitment to international public administration, in particular, or to international public service.

**Texas Schools Project**

**Rodney J. Andrews, Assistant Professor of Economics and Director of the Texas Schools Project**

Dr. Rodney Andrews, in joint work with Jing Li, a recipient of a doctorate in economics from The University of Texas at Dallas, and Michael Lovenheim, a professor at Cornell University wrote a paper entitled, “Quantile Treatment Effects of College Quality on Earnings: Evidence from Administrative Data in Texas,” which was recently accepted for publication in the *Journal of Human Resources*. In the paper, they used data housed at the University of Texas at Dallas’s Education Research to identify the effect of college quality on the distribution of earnings using unconditional quantile treatment effect methods. Although the mean earnings estimates are similar to previous work in this area, the authors found evidence of evidence of substantial heterogeneity in the returns to college quality. They show that there is a large premium associated with graduating from either of the state’s flagship institutions relative to graduating from a non-flagship, four-year school in Texas. For community college graduates, the returns relative to non-flagship four-year graduates were negative across most of the distribution of earnings, but the returns approached zero and became positive in the upper portion of the distribution of earnings. Their data also allowed the authors to estimate effects separately by race and ethnicity. It was found that historically under-represented minorities experienced the highest returns in the upper tails of the earnings distribution, particularly among UT-Austin and community college graduates. While the paper focused on graduates, the authors’ estimates were robust to examining college attendees, other changes in the estimating sample, and to changes in the estimation strategy. Overall these estimates provided the first direct evidence of the extent of heterogeneity in the effect of college quality on subsequent earnings, and the authors’ estimates pointed to the need to consider such heterogeneity in human capital models that incorporate college quality. The authors argue that their findings have important implications for the risk associated with college investment that prior studies focusing on average effects have not been able to examine. In addition, the Dr. Andrews and his co-authors showed some of the first estimates in the literature on returns to college quality by race, and they explored the role of college major in driving some of the cross-college differences the found.
Institute for Urban Policy Research

Timothy Bray, Clinical Assistant Professor of Criminology
The Institute for Urban Policy Research (IUPR) is working with Capital One to develop a body of knowledge about their Place Based Initiatives (PBI) approach to community investment. Under the PBI model, the bank brings its substantial financial investment, along with its business and community development assets, to help residents realize their neighborhood vision. IUPR staff have visited initiatives in Houston, Texas and New Orleans, Louisiana, and facilitated meetings with bank staff and focus groups from the community. The work will inform the bank’s strategy, as well as collective understanding of community investment strategies.