



# ERIC VOEGELIN INSTITUTE

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2019

## ***From the Director:***

A paradox of the modern university is its increasing emphasis on detailed course curricula and its simultaneous message that the classroom is obsolete. Students are directed to and monitored in tracks and pathways by a staff of advisors—increasingly not themselves faculty members—while teachers are encouraged to “flip” their classrooms (replace lectures with time for students to read in class or work on projects together) or to teach their classes altogether online. While it helps sometimes to shake up routines, I worry that these trends put at risk the sustained discourse modeled by a good lecture or the probing conversation of a well-led seminar.

Thanks to a generous award from the Apgar Foundation, the Voegelin Institute will partner next year with the Ogden Honors College at LSU to help re-launch its course sequence in classical European civilization through a series of workshops and seminars for faculty teaching in the sequence, integrated with visiting lectures and common reading. I am confident Eric Voegelin would agree that true education entails the formation of minds through encounters with the most serious texts in a great tradition, and with faculty who love what they teach.



### **James Stoner**

Hermann  
Moyses, Jr.,  
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## **“Realism and Idealism” is Theme of Third Annual Spring Conference**

Plato and Machiavelli were the central figures in this spring’s Voegelin Institute Conference on “Realism and Idealism.” Designed like its predecessors around the key texts studied by the PPE Reading Group—this year, Plato’s *Republic* and Machiavelli’s *Prince*—the conference began with a keynote address by Catherine Zuckert, Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor of Political Science, emerita, at Notre Dame, author of *Plato’s Philosophers* and *Machiavelli’s Politics*. Her lecture, titled “Two Realisms?”, made the case that Plato was every bit as realistic in his analysis of politics as Machiavelli, if more discreet.

Presentations by the following day focused on Thomas More’s *Utopia* and the work of F.A. Hayek, also included in the group’s reading, as well as Plato and Machiavelli. Speaking were Maura Cowan, a PhD candidate in Philosophy at Tulane, on Plato; Joseph Hebert, Political Science Professor at St. Ambrose Univ., on More; Jason Maloy, Kaliste Saloom Endowed Chair of Political Science at the Univ. of Louisiana, Lafayette, on Machiavelli; and Nicholas Capaldi, Legendre-Soulé Distinguished Chair in Business Ethics at Loyola Univ. in New Orleans, on Hayek. As in previous years, a lively conversation ensued among faculty, grad students, and undergraduates. And we held our traditional crawfish boil, too!





### Columbia University Shakespeare Expert James Shapiro lectures on “Shakespeare in America,” teaches seminars

Author of about a half-dozen books on Shakespeare and editor of the Library of America edition, *Shakespeare in America: An Anthology*, James Shapiro, Larry Miller Professor of English at Columbia University, spoke to a capacity crowd at the Ogden Honors College on February, 14, describing Shakespeare’s influence in America and especially Abraham Lincoln’s love for the playwright. Shapiro was introduced by Ogden Honors Dean Jonathan Earle, who as an undergraduate had studied with him in the Columbia Core.

In addition to his lecture, Shapiro taught a class on “The Merchant of Venice” in Professor LeRoy Percy’s course and led a Faculty Seminar on “Macbeth,” sharing with us his wide experience with theatrical productions of Shakespeare in New York and even with use of the plays in corporate training.

### New Graduate Reading Group established, other seminars thrive

Working with four graduate students from disciplines as diverse as English, Biology, Theatre, and Anthropology, the Voegelin Institute began an interdisciplinary graduate student reading group (VGRG) on a new model. Students meet once a month in the Institute over pizza and discuss chapters from a book under the guidance of an LSU faculty member of their selection. The fall series took the theme “Women Social Theorists” and included sessions on Hannah Arendt, Ayn Rand, and Gayatri Spivak; in the spring series on “Nature and Humanity” three faculty discussed their own books touching on the theme.

Also continuing in 2019-20 was the interdisciplinary Humanities Faculty Seminar which heard presentations on “Poetry and Art” by Raymond Stock (Arabic), Kevin Cope (English), Darius Spieth (Art), and Gundela Hachmann (German).

Meanwhile, graduate students in Political Science met weekly to discuss new issues of scholarly journals soon after they appeared in print, keeping up a rigorous pace, punctuated by an occasional visitor, such as Argentine Law Professor Santiago Legarre, who discussed, “What is Natural Law?”

### Mark your calendar:

Friday, September 27— James Forman, Jr., of Yale Law School will lecture on his award-winning book, *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (FSG, 2017)



### Lectures on Economics, Law, GW

- Mary Hirschfeld of Villanova, unique recipient of PhD’s in Economics from Harvard and Theology from Notre Dame, lectured on her award-winning book, *Aquinas and the Market*, in April. She is pictured above with students in Dr. Stoner’s Honors course on “Aristotle and Aquinas on Nature and Justice.”
- Adam MacLeod, Professor of Law at Faulkner University, lectured at the Law Center on “The Jury in the Age of Public Rights” in January. Comments followed by law professors Paul A. Baier and Raff Donelson. MacLeod also spoke to graduate students on natural law.
- Clifford Orwin, Professor of Political Science, Classics, and Jewish Studies at the Univ. of Toronto, spoke to students on “George Washington and the Jews: Why on Earth They Mattered to Him.”

### Voegelin Scholar Paul Caringella visits Voegelin Institute

Eric Voegelin’s research assistant in retirement at Stanford, his literary executor, and member of the editorial committee for the *Collected Works*, Paul Caringella (pictured below), spent a week in residence at the Institute in April, sharing his reflections on Voegelin and, with Ambassador Martin Palous (skyped in from Brussels), holding “A Conversation on Eric Voegelin’s Last Words: On God.”

