

Mentoring Across Boundaries

To match its priority of hiring dynamic scholars who transcend the traditional sub-fields of their discipline, the Political Science Department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst created a Mellon Mutual Mentoring program that is both flexible and far-reaching. Using a group mentoring model, the department encourages new faculty to choose and build relationships with a distinguished senior faculty member in their department as well as a highly accomplished academic elsewhere in the nation. The result is a mentoring program that helps scholars both settle into their new institution and succeed in their larger academic field.

Assistant Professor Tatishe Nteta

Like his colleagues, Tatishe Nteta has taken full advantage of his department's mentoring efforts. Not long after his arrival at UMass Amherst, Nteta chose Professor Jennifer Hochschild of Harvard University as an external mentor. The noted scholar has since visited the campus and given a talk, "The Shifting Politics of Multiracialism: Public Preferences vs. Institutional Consolidation," which was a tremendous success. Next up, the two will sit down and discuss where Nteta wants to be in his career, and how he plans to get there.



"She cares about what's going on . . . I definitely want to cultivate this relationship."

Dr. Tatishe Nteta

As part of the program, new faculty members invite their external mentors to UMass Amherst to give a public talk and discuss career strategies over dinner. So far, junior faculty members have hosted successful visits by prominent scholars from Harvard University, the University of California Berkeley, and the University of Chicago. They also receive funding to attend a conference in their field. These two activities not only support mentoring, but also raise the profile of the entire department.

Political Science Mentor Map

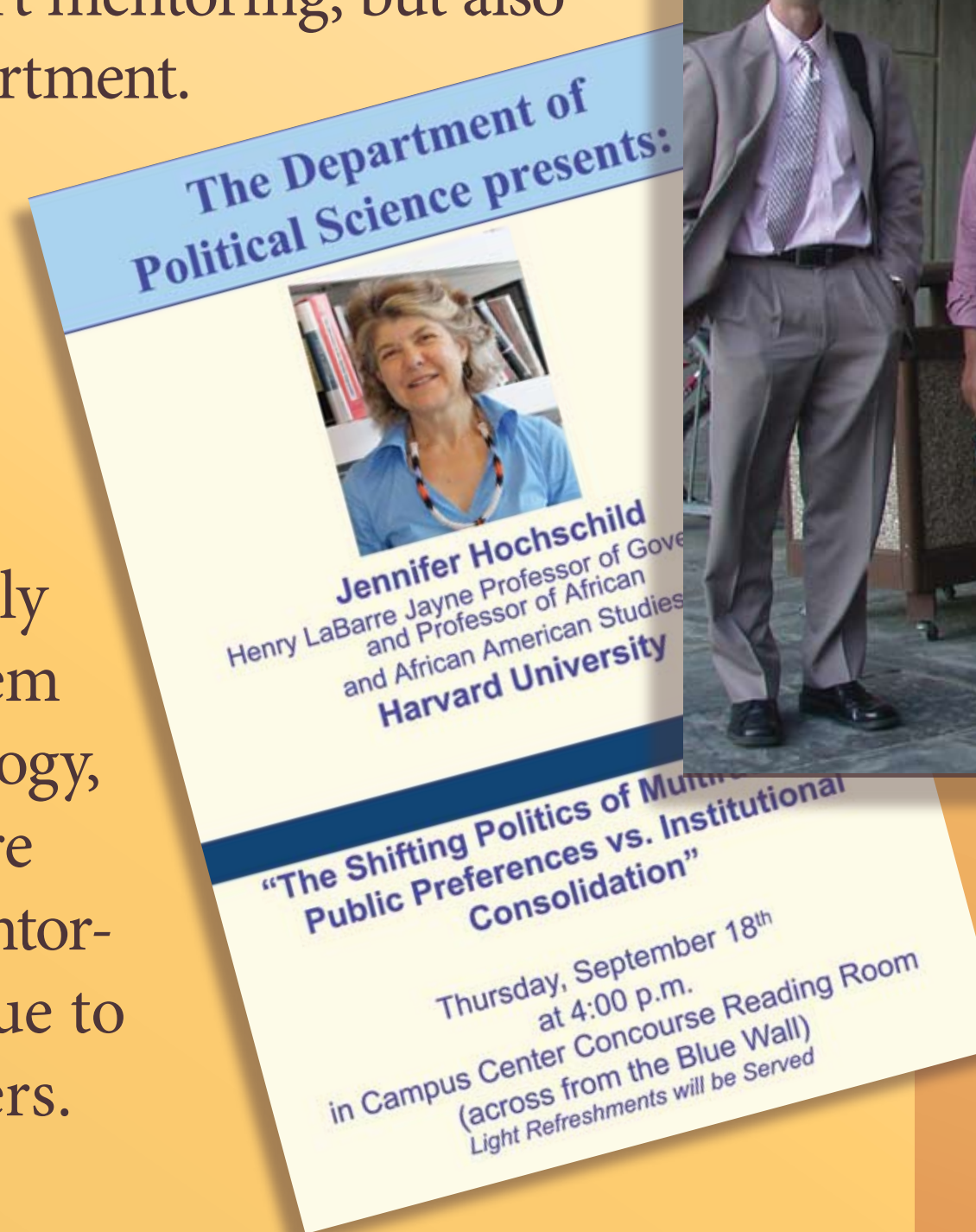


"We give them a reason to go out and make a connection with these scholars and it puts new faculty in a different sphere." **Dr. John Hird, Chair**
UMass Amherst
Political Science Department

"I'm talking to people whose work I'm really excited by."

Associate Professor Jillian Schwedler

At home, new faculty members meet regularly with their local senior mentors, who advise them on departmental and university resources, pedagogy, and research. Most importantly, new faculty are taking the lead in creating their own Mutual Mentoring networks—an experience that will continue to benefit them throughout their academic careers.



Office of Faculty Development
University of Massachusetts Amherst
www.umass.edu/ofd/