

Justin Bullock: Welcome everyone. I'm Justin Bullock.

Gregory Gause: I'm Gregory Gause.

Justin Bullock: We're here from Bush School Uncorked, and today we're going to be working with our production assistant, Faith [Dingas 00:00:19], who you won't see, but you will hear her voice over there. She thought it would be a great idea if we did a little, I guess not meet and greet because you've met us by voice and by video a couple times-

Gregory Gause: To some extent.

Justin Bullock: ... but to give you a little bit of more background on us and a few questions that she has that maybe will make us more relatable or easy to get along with as co-hosts.

Gregory Gause: I can't imagine that you're not completely relatable, but okay, in my case, yeah, we probably need to make me a little more relatable.

Justin Bullock: We'll see what we can do.

Gregory Gause: Okay, there we go.

Justin Bullock: Faith, please.

Gregory Gause: Fire away, Faith.

Faith: All right, so we already know your names, so I guess what are your areas of research and what do you teach?

Justin Bullock: Excellent. Shall I go first?

Gregory Gause: Yeah, sure.

Justin Bullock: Because you don't really ... I mean you're busy being a big administrator.

Gregory Gause: Oh yeah, that's true.

Justin Bullock: Your list is really long.

Gregory Gause: My list is not that long.

Justin Bullock: So my background is public administration, and I've looked at a variety of issues from decision making errors to motivation. Recently, I've been doing work over the past couple of years on science and technology and its impact on governance, with a particular focus on some of the advances in artificial

intelligence, and what that means for how we do the work of government, how we actually accomplish things. From a teaching standpoint, for a long time, I got to teach all of our first years at the Bush School in our Foundations of Public Service and Administration course, but I'm no longer doing that. This year I'm teaching a consulting capstone with the city of Bryan, Texas. I'm doing a course on emerging technologies, which fits right in with my research, and teaching a little bit of statistics to our online students.

Gregory Gause: Great. My research area is the Middle East, and I've always taught a number of Middle East courses since coming to the Bush School. I came as an administrator, as department head, so I don't do as much teaching as Justin or other colleagues do, but I teach a course called the international politics of the Middle East. I teach a course that's a little bit beyond that called the Middle East state system, where we try to apply some theoretical understandings. The first course is basically narrative, contemporary history and the international politics of the region. The second course, the Middle East state system, is an attempt to create a little bit of order, some theoretical approaches to understanding all these politics. My background is in international relations. For almost 30 years, I taught the introduction to international relations course for undergraduates, first at Columbia University and then at the University of Vermont. I was at Columbia for eight years. I was at the University of Vermont for 19 years before coming here in 2014.

Justin Bullock: 2014. We came in at the same time.

Gregory Gause: We came the same year, 2014.

Justin Bullock: You had been teaching that undergrad course as long as I've been here [crosstalk 00:03:05].

Gregory Gause: As long as you've been on this earth. So my own research interest is mostly centered in the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf area. I've written three books, one on Saudi-Yemeni relations, one called Oil Monarchies, which is about the politics of the monarchical oil producing States, as the title says, like Saudi Arabia and then the smaller Gulf states. Finally, I wrote a book called the International Relations of the Persian Gulf. I write about the politics of Saudi Arabia a lot. I write about American policy in the region. I write about oil in politics, and I write about the overall regional politics like the Saudi, Iranian, Turkish, Israeli rivalry that's going on in the region now and how the civil wars in the Arab world feed into that rivalry. So that's my research interest.

Justin Bullock: These are all things I knew little to nothing about until becoming acquainted with Greg.

Gregory Gause: There we go.

Justin Bullock: Now, I'm at a semi expert.

Gregory Gause: There we go, that's right.

Justin Bullock: What else, Faith?

Faith: Next question, what exactly is Downtown Uncorked?

Justin Bullock: Ooh.

Gregory Gause: Well that was our brainchild as we were sitting at a wine bar called Downtown Uncorked in historic downtown Bryan, which is the town just North of College Station, Texas. So lovely little County C, railroad center, cotton town. We said we should ... it'd be fun to just take these conversations that we have and broadcast them larger and see if people might be interested. The folks at Downtown Uncorked were very gracious and said, "Sure, we'll host you," so Bush School Uncorked came out of that. Tell them what the goal was that [crosstalk 00:04:52].

Justin Bullock: Yeah, so one of the things that we'd been hoping to do is have a conversation style where it's not just long lectures from us professors, but also-

Gregory Gause: Although I do tend to lecture occasionally.

Justin Bullock: Just just a little bit, but so it's not as long lecture form. It's more of a dialogue. It's more of a conversation, but we don't spill over into what a lot of mass media does where we're yelling at one another, we're pulling cheap tricks. We really try to take experts that we know are associated with the Bush School or outside of the Bush School. Find someone who actually knows a lot about a topic and talk about it with them and ask some probing questions. We're hoping that it's a way for us to take our knowledge and the things we're doing here at the university and making it broadly and freely available to anyone who wants to have a snapshot of what's going on in the world.

Justin Bullock: We talk about everything from international affairs, where Greg often takes the lead on, to domestic issues, which I am often the lead interviewer on. We want to put it at a level where we're not making it so simple that it's not useful, but also not using all of our academicky words all the time.

Gregory Gause: No jargon.

Justin Bullock: No jargon, so that it's something that's accessible and interesting for a general population. So that's been our goal, is to take what we do here at the Bush School and share it broadly and hopefully in a somewhat entertaining way. We really liked investing in the local community, historic downtown Bryan is a neighboring community. We do some work with them with the university. We had gathered at this wine bar since we first arrived in 2014 as a local establishment to talk about these things. So we just started formalizing it-

Gregory Gause: Exactly.

Justin Bullock: ... and doing it once or twice a month, and sharing that with you would be a lot of fun.

Gregory Gause: It'd be fun, and then I think the reason, the most important reason we do it is it's fun. We do want to feature the research of our colleagues, but we also have a lot of fun doing what we do. While we don't yell at each other, we occasionally disagree about things, and that can spark interesting discussions.

Justin Bullock: We're even had some disagreements last night at our last recording-

Gregory Gause: Yeah, exactly.

Justin Bullock: ... that We rehashed over dinner afterwards.

Gregory Gause: Indeed.

Justin Bullock: Faith, what else?

Faith: All right, last question. Why should people listen? What's the incentive for your audience?

Justin Bullock: Hmm, that's a good question.

Gregory Gause: Well, there's a thousand ways to waste your time.

Justin Bullock: So a waste of your time.

Gregory Gause: So you might as well waste it with us. No, I think that we have a different slant on things that are in the headlines and sometimes not in the headlines. Our first broadcast, first podcast of this school year was about the way the Texas education system gets funded, which is really important if you live in Texas, and it's actually important. It's an important issue across the United States. I think that how Texas does it as compared to ... I talked a little bit about how it was done in Vermont when I lived there, the contrast. These are things that maybe aren't on the front page, but occasionally they are. Like when you have to vote for your school budget or when the Texas legislature is in session, as it rarely is, but when it's in session. So I think it's a relatively painless way to get another slant on important issues that if they're not in the news today, they're in the news relatively often.

Justin Bullock: Yeah, and I think the thing that we do that makes it worth watching or listening to is we take legitimate world-class experts, specialists on these topics. Like that particular week, we had professor Laurie Taylor and professor Deborah Kerr, who has also had some practice, some work with the State of Texas.

- Gregory Gause: With the state government.
- Justin Bullock: ... and doing evaluations. So we talked with these experts, but then we talk about it in a way where you don't also have to be an expert in the topic to follow along.
- Gregory Gause: Right.
- Justin Bullock: So Greg and I ask probing questions, Oh, could you explain that acronym or, Oh, is it ... recapping the argument. So without having to read academic article or read an entire book, you get a more than a surface level treatment of a lot of these things. So I think if you want to be informed and learn about these things without having to be in a PhD or graduate program to understand what we're talking about, I think that's a good reason to follow along.
- Gregory Gause: I think another reason is if you're interested in the school, if you're a prospective student, this would be a good way to to see what the faculty are like. Most of our guests, not all of them, are Bush School faculty, and you can see the range of interests that our faculty have and how they convey their research.
- Justin Bullock: Yeah, I agree. Faith is that all of them? Do we have any other questions?
- Faith: I think that's it.
- Gregory Gause: All right.
- Justin Bullock: All right, so our next recording is October 8th.
- Gregory Gause: October 8th, on grand strategy.
- Justin Bullock: Yes, and on grand strategy. We're going to have two Bush School faculty joining us then as well, John Schuessler and Kimberly Fields.
- Gregory Gause: That's right, both who are associated with our new Albritton Center for Grand Strategy.
- Justin Bullock: Mm-hmm (affirmative), on grand strategy. We'll be doing a live recording again at a Downtown Uncorked at 6:00 PM on that Tuesday. So if you have time, come out and join us, and we promise to take your questions if you have them.
- Gregory Gause: Yes, we will have questions. We will take questions.
- Justin Bullock: Unlike last night where we got [crosstalk 00:10:04].
- Gregory Gause: Unlike last night where we just got a little carried away.

This transcript was exported on Oct 04, 2019 - view latest version [here](#).

Justin Bullock: Well, thank you so much. I hope you enjoy getting to know a little bit about us.
Thank you Faith for organizing-

Gregory Gause: Thanks, Faith.

Justin Bullock: ... and hope to see you in person sometime soon.

Gregory Gause: We'll see you October 8th at Downtown Uncorked.