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### Sheri Breen Travels to Delegation of an International Agriculture Treaty

University Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Sheri Breen Travels to Delegation of an International Agriculture Treaty](#)

*Sheri Breen, associate professor of political science, recently attended the Sixth Governing Body Session of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.*

MORRIS, Minnesota (December 3, 2015)—Sheri Breen, associate professor of political science at the University of Minnesota, Morris, recently attended the Sixth Governing Body Session of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. This treaty is handled by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a subdivision organization that works under the United Nations. Breen attended the event in order to gain firsthand insight on international politics of agriculture, which will augment her own research on campus.

The delegating body met in Rome, Italy, to discuss international issues regarding the treaty. This treaty sets policies on how seeds and plants are traded, what genetic research is shared, and how agricultural-product property rights are treated. During the session, representatives from 136 countries negotiated and debated finances as well as specific policies. Many of these policies are familiar to Breen, who has studied these issues in the past.

“Right now these representatives are discussing big questions,” says Breen. “What are the rights of farmers in regards to the the genetic material? Who has access to these seeds, these [property] rights, etc.?”

Since witnessing the delegating session, Breen has cited an increased appreciation of the governing process, including the significance and importance of the treaty, the role of the press as observers, and the struggle to compose a resolution that all participating countries would approve.

“It was completely fascinating” says Breen. “It's one thing to read about these issues and another to see these arguments in action.”

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