makeup and culture of a department should determine the appropriate approach. A "mission-based" model, integrating assessment into the program right from the start based on established learning objectives and a curriculum designed to meet them, might be best for smaller departments with a large number of untenured faculty and a greater focus on teaching, because they are potentially more receptive to such a comprehensive approach. In contrast, a grassroots "question-based" model that relies on a non-threatening, incremental approach—beginning with classroom assessment and branching out from there—might be better received in larger departments with a greater research focus, in which resistance to assessment might be higher. Vicki Golich emphasized the need to align program assessment across other levels of institutional assessment at the university.

Two presentations illustrated individual department assessment plans. Each used portfolios as an alternative to exit interviews and standardized tests. Alexandra Cole and Jennifer De Maio noted that portfolios can set appropriate criteria for the successful completion of a degree as well as allow for measuring students' progress throughout the program. Surprisingly, faculty in the department did not perceive portfolios as excessive amounts of work. Shala Mills and Bryan Bennett advocated the use of writing portfolios to assess students' writing skills throughout the program. The focus on writing has had unexpected benefits for students and faculty at their university. The department now has clearer goals and expectations for their program and for student work. Students better understand these expectations and the connections between courses. By having students manage their own portfolios, students have been encouraged to think about their career goals.

### *Learning about Our Students*

Beginning to take assessment seriously has encouraged political scientists to assess programs and to consider how students learn and what they know. For example, Anika Leithner raised the question of whether students' individual learning styles correlate with certain "testing styles," arguing that the way students learn impacts how well they do on certain exam formats; thus questioning the reliability of some of our assessment techniques. Kevin Jeffries asked what our students know by using standardized exams offered to high school students. Introductory courses, he argued, must ensure that students can participate in the deliberation necessary for effective citizenship and that assessment instruments ought to focus on the knowledge that allows for such citizenship. At the very least we could benefit from an expansion of the conversation on assessment to the high school and community college level, rather than making assumptions about students' prior knowledge.

Other presentations focused on classroom assessment as an excellent starting point for implementing higher education assessment, because faculty members are used to it and less likely to resist new techniques, especially if it improves student performance. Ruth Ediger focused on the usefulness of extra-textbook materials, suggesting that such materials—if used properly by the instructor—do indeed benefit student learning, thus encouraging us to think beyond the traditional lecture/textbook approach to teaching. Phillip Pollock, Bruce Wilson, and Kerstin Hamman illustrated that online courses can be as effective as traditional courses in meeting certain learning objectives, and even better in some cases. In addition, the built-in assessment tools in many online systems allow for the efficient collection of large amounts of data, thus benefiting departmental assessment in the long run. Christine Nemacheck illustrated the benefits of an integrated internship program as an extension of traditional student learning. By combining traditional classroom instruction, the internship experience, and independent student research, the potential for learning with such a program is tremendous.

### *Resources Are Increasing for Assessment in the Discipline.*

Perhaps the most important lesson was that assessment is a long-term effort that requires a department culture of faculty engagement. Since external assessment requirements are certain to continue, more resources need to be developed to assist departments and individual faculty members in these efforts. The discipline is just beginning to catch up in this regard. The papers presented at this conference, both in the Program Assessment track and other tracks, serve as excellent resources. *The Journal of Political Science Education* publishes research that will be of use. Finally, Michele Deardorff, Kerstin Hamann, and John Ishiyama have recently edited *The APSA Guide to Assessment in Political Science*.

## Track Two: Graduate Education and Professional Development

—**W. T. Casey,**
*University of Texas at Dallas*
—**Sharon Jones,**
*Columbia College*
—**Elizabeth Lowham,**
*California Polytechnic State University*
—**Cameron G. Thies,**
*University of Iowa*

How well do we prepare our graduate students for the diverse careers they pursue in teaching, research, and outside of academia? This is the second time Graduate Education has been a track in the TLC, and this year we have also incorporated topics related to professional development.[1] Despite the diversity of our presentations, we arrived at a unifying theme for our track: we must prepare graduate students for the multiple arenas they will enter into after graduation. We discussed at length how most of our graduate students seek something other than the traditional, research-oriented model of graduate education that we experienced. They seek a graduate experience that is civically engaged, prepares them for teaching in addition to research, and is perhaps more connected to disciplines outside of political science. Either we provide graduate students a framework of knowledge consistent with these demands or they will be left to develop these skills through trial and error alone. In support of this goal, we urge systemic change to our professional institutions that will value and reward a more holistic approach to graduate education and professional development. Elements of such change can be found in the variety of presentations contained in our track.

### *Graduate Education*

What do we teach our students about teaching? The papers in our track that investigated educator training in graduate programs demonstrated that we need to consider the processes and types of experiences that produce good teachers. In a comparison of universities within the European Union, Eszter Simon and Gabiela Pleschova find that graduate students experience vastly different teacher training programs, from no available training to practical courses in course and classroom management. They conclude that "teaching is an integral and important part" of an academic career, but attaining the level of teaching effectiveness needed for higher education is



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sorely lacking in Europe. Alexandra Cole and John Ishiyama explore the differences in the production of quality teachers in the U.S. through an analysis of teaching awards announced in *PS: Political Science and Politics*. As they note, most of the methods used to rate U.S. political science departments have emphasized research productivity, instead of the production of good teachers. While the data is somewhat limited, they find that there are several departments that rank highly in both scholarship and teaching. Yet there are a number of departments that consistently produce good teachers, even though they are not highly ranked research institutions. These papers reveal that we still have more to learn about what kinds of training programs and experiences produce graduate students who are well prepared for teaching.

How do we prepare our students for the changing face of academia? An increasing focus on programs that cross disciplinary divides and connect to broader questions of norms and civic engagement reveals that our graduate students must meet an increasingly diverse set of interests in their professional lives. Elizabeth Lowham and Annalisa Schilla discuss the growing number of graduate programs that connect political science to other disciplines, and warn that participants need to seriously consider how these programs connect to disciplinary studies as well as the internal dynamics of such programs. James Stoner focuses on changes within the discipline itself. While some take the recurring appearance of normative questions about ourselves and the discipline as problematic, there is a legitimate perspective that sees this recurrence as formative and a worthy focus of consideration as we develop graduate students. Stephen Sussman and Kirsten Kim Loutzenheiser explore the praxis of political science, focusing on how we, as faculty, can help our students connect class material to their lives outside of the classroom through the use of self-developed case studies. These papers reveal that graduate students seek an educational experience more connected to other disciplines and the world of practice.

### *Professional Development*

How we grow as professionals is just as important as what we teach. A wide array of studies about the relationship between student learning and faculty development are available, but it appears that faculty at most institutions fail to avail themselves of this information for their own professional development and that of their graduate students' as well. The working group discussed a variety of techniques that could help foster professional development.

Sharon Jones argued that teaching portfolios, even for the tenured faculty member, can provide a way of integrating teaching and research while at the same time opening a path for self-reflection and growth. The process of creating a portfolio can reveal precisely how vigorous teaching and diligent scholarship are inseparable. Self-reflection and constructive criticism were also themes in Dianne Long's discussion of writing a graduate thesis. Long presented practical ideas for implementing peer critiques of graduate thesis chapters using the online resources of Blackboard. This pedagogical approach provides opportunities for peers to both give and receive critiques of research writing. Sussman and Loutzenheiser's research on the use of case studies within public administration programs shows that not only do the undergraduate and graduate students learn a useful research technique, but that they then possess the ability to demonstrate knowledge to their peers both in and out of academia. Similarly, Diane Schmidt and Lauri Evans's discussion of the use of PowerPoint addresses not only better classroom methods, but allows graduate students to effectively communicate their ideas whether they enter the academy or any other workplace environment. Further, the techniques they described offer the possibility of integrating disparate learners into a conversation that may have been previously closed to them.

One of the broader concerns in our track was how to inculcate a sense of civic engagement among both faculty and graduate students. While all of the presentations touched upon some aspect of civic duty, several addressed the issue more directly. Stoner points out some of the problems associated with the scientific, "value-free" political scientist who as an expert is seemingly objective and dispassionate in her exploration of the political realm. That such experts also seem to fail to engage in practicing democracy suggests to our audiences that it may not be as important as we profess in the classroom. Thus the Michael Cain and Zach Messitte work is of quite some value; for it details the desire to engage the political science profession in civic activity directly through volunteering to serve as poll workers. Not only does this demonstrate that we practice what we preach, but it enhances our professional development as active participants in the civic experience. The tenure and promotion process should value these types of experiences as important service responsibilities that aid in the development of individual faculty members as well as serve to promote the democratic process in the wider society. These types of activities along with the others mentioned in this track summary should be pursued to promote a more holistic approach to graduate education and professional development.

## Note

1. The order of author names is alphabetical, reflecting the collaborative nature of this track summary. The authors would like to thank all of the members of the track, especially Alexandra Cole for her helpful guidance in preparing this summary.

## Track Three: Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Inequality

—**Marcus D. Allen,**
*Wheaton College*
—**Kea Gordon,**
*University of California*
—**Lanethea Mathews-Gardner,**
*Muhlenberg College*

The participants in the Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Inequality track represented a great deal of diversity themselves and included faculty and students from a rich variety of research institutions, private liberal arts colleges, and community colleges. While participants engaged issues and strategies in each of the three substantive areas—diversity, inclusiveness, and inequality in education (DIIE)—the bulk of our conversations focused on diversity and inequality. Topics included curriculum and course content issues, negotiating institutional support for DIIE, challenges of student recruitment and retention, and negotiating power relationships and identities among different kinds of student populations both within and outside of the classroom. This summary reviews four sets of questions that the group addressed and that point to critical areas rich for future research and reflection. In brief these are: (1) How can we simultaneously promote learning about difference and learning about ourselves? (2) How can faculty develop a range of strategic pedagogies and classroom environments in order to avoid some of the challenges inherent in teaching about DIIE? (3) How can we move beyond narrow understandings of diversity that limit the concept solely to a category of identity, neglecting the ways in which



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