Recent Council Actions

During a lively and interesting meeting on August 28, 2002, the APSA Council approved several significant initiatives focused on civic engagement and the public presence of political science. In addition, Council helped generate substantial changes to the Association's Mentoring and Minority Fellowship Programs by supporting and conditionally approving the reports and proposals of the ad hoc committees.

The Council approved the nominations proposed by Robert Putnam for a previously sanctioned committee on Civic Education and Engagement. The nominees were: **Stephen Macedo** (chair), Harvard Center for Ethics and the Professions; **Yvette Alex-Assensoh**, Indiana University; **Jeffrey Berry**, Tufts University; **David Campbell**, University of Notre Dame; **Pamela Conover**, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; **E.J. Dionne**, The Brookings Institution; **Luis Ricardo Fraga**, Stanford University; **William Galston**, University of Maryland, College Park; **Margaret Levi**, University of Washington; **Meira Levinson**, McCormack Middle School; **Richard Niemi**, University of Rochester; **Wendy Rahn**, University of Minnesota; **Keith Reeves**, Swarthmore College; **Rob Riech**, Stanford University; and **Katherine Cramer Walsh**, University of Wisconsin, Madison. This committee is charged with the task of researching and collaborating with various entities on a topic involving civic engagement in America.

After considerable discussion, the Council also approved President Putnam's proposal for a pilot initiative to advance the public presence of political science. Under this initiative, two new Task Forces will be formed to bring political science research to bear on important areas of public concern each APSA president-elect will name a task force to focus on a significant public issue. Each task force will create a work plan for approval by the Council. After two years, the public presence concept will be evaluated. The first task force will be named by President Theda Skocpol and address the issue of inequality in the U.S. and Presdident-Elect Susanne Rudolph will name a second Task Force on a topicshe proposes. After two years, the Council will evaluate the success of this pilot program and decide whether to continue to sponsor future task forces.

The Council supported an ad hoc committee's proposal for a mentoring program, noting the importance of this type of program in the profession. The task force on mentoring will report back after three years after implementing and evaulating an array of mentoring initiatives open to a variety of constituencies in the discipline. President Theda Skocpol will propose members of the task force for Coucil approval.

The Council approved the report of the task force on the Minority Fellowship Program to modify the program to assure all budgeted funds are awarded and change the focus to stress retention of scholars in graduate programs. The Council also supported in principle a budget increase and asked the task force to report back in April on the most effective use of the increased funds.

The Council also approved the nominations by then President-elect Theda Skocpol for standing and award committees. For a list of nominees, please visit the APSA web site.

Additional discussion items of the Executive Council Meeting included issues of Governance, the Centennial Center, reports of the *APSR* and *Perspectives on Politics* journal editors, and the Graduate Curriculum Task Force. A complete version of the Fall 2002 Executive Council Meeting minutes can be found on the APSA web site.

New Officers and Council Elected

Theda Skocpol, Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology, and director of the Center for American Political Studies at Harvard University, became the Association's 99th President on August 31 at the annual Business Meeting of the Association. Outgoing APSA President Robert Putnam of Harvard University presented Skocpol with the Association gavel. Joining Skocpol in guiding the Association are six new officers and eight council members.



Theda Skocpol (left) accepts the APSA gavel from outgoing president Robert D. Putnam during the annual business meeting.

Skocpol earned her B.A. in 1969 as the Top Honors College Student at Michigan State University and went on to received her Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1975. She taught at Harard until moving in 1981 to tenured posts in both sociology and political science at the University of Chicago. Five years later, Skocpol returned to Harvard.

At Harvard, she teaches and does research on the politics of national public policymaking and on civil society in relationship to democratic government and politics. She is currently directing the Civic Engagement Project at Harvard University, a set of investigations of the development and transformation of voluntary associations in the United States from 1790 to the present.

Over the past two and a half decades, Skocpol has authored or coauthored eight scholarly books;

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