2005 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference Track Summaries

Track One: Civic Education/ Engagement

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APSA expanded on the successful launch of its 2004 pilot Conference on Teaching and Learning in Political Science by hosting a much larger second meeting in Washington, D.C. on February 19–21, 2005. Through this special annual meeting of "working groups," APSA continues to promote greater understanding of cutting-edge approaches, techniques, and methodologies applicable in the political science classroom. This meeting provides a forum to develop models on teaching and learning as well as to discuss broad themes and values affecting political science education. For more information on the 2005 Conference including a full listing of the participants and their presentations, or for information on the upcoming 2006 Conference, visit www.apsanet.org/section_236.cfm or contact Linda Lopez (llopez@apsanet.org).

The civic engagement track participants represented research institutions, four-year liberal arts institutions, and secondary schools. Although our teaching experiences, pedagogical approaches, and subject matter specialties varied greatly, we embraced this diversity as an opportunity to share common concerns about teaching civic engagement.

Purpose of Civic Engagement

Initial discussions revealed a consensus that political science courses need to address civic education and advocate for civic engagement. We further agreed that the driving legitimacy of civic education should be to raise consciousness, foster interest, and encourage participation in the public sphere. Low voter turnout among young adults is an obvious source of concern, but more disconcerting are the core problems: lack of interest and trust; lack of anticipated relevance; and lack of knowledge about how to participate meaningfully. Having identified these problems, our discussions turned to considerations of our collective professional responsibility. Central to our discussions was the question: Are we, as educators, part of the problem or part of the solution? More specifically, do we reinforce cynicism with critical analyses or provide the energy and skills to create interest and opportunity? An overarching conclusion of the workshop was to call upon the profession to consciously shift from the former to the latter.

Our discussions also recognized a wide spectrum of participatory activities ranging from unscheduled public discourse to concerted mobilization, all of which carry legitimacy and include skills that can be addressed in political science courses. Expectedly, citizens experience different levels of active mobilization at different points in their lives. Highlighting diverse approaches to our students coincides with this fluidity of participation over a lifetime. Our discussion also emphasized the importance of cross-national and international perspectives, particularly in the post-9/11 world, for fostering interest, relevance, and knowledge among American undergraduates.

Teaching about Civic Engagement

Presentations covered different dimensions to teaching civic engagement, including case studies, skills practice, and peer-directed participation. Each offered unique opportunities and carried its own strengths. Teaching civic engagement in the classroom through case studies is an effective use of scarce classroom resources, the success of which is supported by the evidence presented by many of the participants in our discussion. Although case studies are often associated with courses in American politics, some of our participants demonstrated their untapped potential for teaching civic engagement in the context of comparative politics. In comparative politics classes, students can analyze quantitative and qualitative measures of political participation, explore the contrasting boundaries of legal and illegal participation, and understand types of political participation within the context of a country's social and economic institutions.

Beyond the comparison of countries, individual cases are a valuable tool to "place a human face" on the possibilities and inevitable challenges of participation. Whether through historical or fictional stories, the examples provide teaching opportunities to reveal important lessons about the political process. Unintended consequences of decisions and action, as well as the coping strategies employed when an individual does not "win" his or her preferences are essential components to encourage sustained civic engagement. The examples of individual cases ranged from the conservative to the liberal, from the transparent activist to the unassuming participant. Within our workgroup there was a strong recognition that our role as educators needed to be the promotion of civic engagement's value independent of any particular political or ideological agenda. We need to provide the examples for our students to see civic engagement as an invitation for diversity, and also as a responsibility to engage with diverse and often conflicting opinions.

Teaching through Civic Engagement

A second pedagogical perspective emphasizes the practice of those skills that are part of civic engagement. We have all heard the adage: "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." On the broadest scale, something similar can be said about the overarching purpose of civic education and our responsibility as political scientists to foster awareness of, knowledge about, and interest in the affairs of the public sphere. The civic engagement/education track reached a general consensus that the purpose of civic education was to expose students to the necessary skills needed to live as sound and responsible citizens.

Unprecedented attempts during the 2004 presidential campaign endeavored to interest young people in politics by registering them to vote—Rock the Vote, Rap the Vote, Vote or Die. Indeed, voter turnout amongst the youngest voters did rise. Yet, very little was offered in the way of true civic education. A central theme

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of our discussions was the civic value of understanding what "winning" or "losing" an election means in the context of democracy. Many young people who voted for the first time were inculcated with a sense of politics as *only* about winning or losing—call it the Vince Lombardi view of politics. With the election over, the spasms of civic responsibility have subsided. And herein lies the problem: give a young person a voter registration card, and s/he may vote today. Teach a young person the importance of civic participation on a much deeper level, and s/he may vote for life.

Though voting is of paramount importance, it is just one piece of the civic education puzzle. Civic education has to focus on more than voting. With this goal in mind, learning through civic engagement activities became an incredibly important vehicle in our group.

Civic engagement creates opportunities for expanding political consciousness by connecting the everyday experiences of the individuals and communities with whom students come in contact to the larger, structural problems of society. Students reach greater levels of understanding as they become aware of the larger problems that society faces over a long period of time. As educators of politics, our responsibility is to see that our students become politically literate: that is, they acquire objective knowledge about the political world that will allow them to comprehend, evaluate, and analyze the world around them. At the same time, as professors of politics, it is also our responsibility that our students consider and learn the values of good citizenship—and engage the political world in a meaningful way. The courses we discussed in our track were successful precisely because they promoted political literacy and civic education through civic engagement activities. Successful courses built around civic engagement activities couple thought and action to help students reflect on their experiences. The classroom thus becomes the venue for a discussion of the "structural" problems they witnessed firsthand. It provides a place for critical reflection about the causes of the problems they faced and the solutions that they may offer.

Civic Engagement: The State of the Discipline

Our panel agreed that the discipline must impact the development of citizenship. While political scientists cannot "own" civic engagement, we should lead it by being the academic catalyst for discussion and action. The most basic starting point is to raise our presence in the public discourse as a discipline. It is unclear if the public really knows what political scientists do. They hear from us in news sound bites upon occasion, particularly around election time. Our discipline must focus more on explaining what our work is and how it is relevant for all citizens, and we need to actively address politics in the classroom, before citizens reach voting age. Political science needs to become more involved in middle and high school teacher education. Thus far, we have abdicated this role to the disciplines of history and education. As a result, our perspectives on the importance of understanding the political process and basic learning goals are largely absent in primary and secondary education. Many teachers and school districts are scrambling for information and ways to incorporate current events into their curriculum, and we, as a discipline, have not responded effectively.

A general viewpoint in our panel is that part of this unresponsiveness stems from the lack of value placed on the research and time necessary to work on civic engagement projects. All of our presenters committed substantial time to conduct research outside of their primary interests in creating these projects, yet their work is not recognized as much beyond charity. Such programs are different from service because, unlike the usual committee posting, they require traditional academic research, explicitly incorporate teaching goals and learning outcomes, and educate those beyond the university's gates. It thus merits its own place in our discipline. If the profession does not reward the serious, scholarly commitment required to run these programs, whether through the category of Scholarship of Engagement or Scholarship of Application, then the call for increasing the discipline's role in enhancing the civic engagement of our citizens cannot be answered. Put simply, few will participate in these activities if they are not considered a truly valued and important part of the tenure and promotion criteria. And, if we do not value the work involved in civic engagement, how can we expect our students and communities to?

Track Two: Diversity

—Kendra Stewart,
Eastern Kentucky University
—Steven Andrew Light,
University of North Dakota
—Christine Pappas,
East Central University
—Kathryn R.L. Rand,
University of North Dakota

The Diversity of Diversity Instruction: The What, Why, and How of Teaching and Learning about Diversity

In the 2005 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference's Diversity Track, some 30 participants representing a wide range of colleges and universities came together to discuss issues related to teaching and learning about diversity. Diversity-focused pedagogy recognizes commonalities of individual and group experience defined by race, gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, and ability, but it touches much broader circles. One of the most important aspects of the track was the diversity of its participants—not usually one of the discipline's strong points. The wide range of backgrounds and experiences reflected by the track's participants highlighted the value of diversity to the profession, as well as the fact that political scientists carry different burdens at a wide range of institutions. Participants in this track found that our senses of what defines diversity, the importance of teaching about diversity, and what teaching techniques effectively illustrate diversity were, well, diverse.

Most of the presentations and discussions fell into at least one of three areas—the what, why, and how of teaching and learning about diversity. First, we recognized the importance of identifying what diversity is, and noted the diversity of "diversity." The track encompassed issues regarding traditional diversity of race, gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, and ability (Hall 2005), and appreciation for the fact that better government and policy usually means bringing more, not fewer, people and ideas to the table. The track's presentations also crossed into issues of diversity of learning styles and teaching techniques. Students, we recognized, may be more prone to learn when the information is presented to them in different and creative ways (McEwan 2005). We also noted that students from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds may learn in different ways. One paper discussed differences in the learning

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styles of male and female political science students (Pappas 2005). Teaching techniques utilized by track participants in their classrooms range from lectures to group exercises to the use of technology or even literature. Teaching also can occur outside the classroom in the form of mentoring (Cobane 2005). The idea of what diversity is, and where its value lies, is evolving, and this track covered many issues not traditionally associated with it.

Second, a number of our conversations revolved around answering the question why—that is, why teach diversity? We recognized that creating respect for diversity can be an effective teaching method as well as an important teaching outcome. If diversity is respected in the classroom, all students will have a better and more effective learning experience. That positive classroom experience may help meet the broader institutional goal of attracting and retaining a diverse student body. Some of the common themes in support of teaching diversity included developing tolerance (Holland 2005); teaching central political science concepts such as citizenship, participation, rights and liberties, social justice, and power relationships; understanding democratic values; creating empathy; addressing changing demographics; globalization; connecting with students; improving learning environments (Chadwick 2005); raising self-esteem; increasing student retention; raising awareness among homogenous populations; and creating a sense of community. Most political science programs state as a goal that students should learn how power is used in the United States and abroad. Approaching diversity issues as a means of deconstructing power relationships directly helps us meet our teaching objectives.

We also discussed the connections between university environs and the "real world." Students' experiences with diversity in the classroom, both in terms of exposure to difference and to new ideas, build the tolerance and critical thinking skills necessary for students to become flexible and productive workers, citizens, and leaders—a diversity rationale recently recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court (Light and Rand 2005). Within the discipline, literature on citizenship and fostering civic engagement also recognizes the importance of respect for diversity as an important building block.

Finally, the majority of our focus addressed the question of how: first, how should we teach diversity, and second, how can we make it both valuable and valued? We concluded that a diverse range of teaching techniques would best encourage students to understand topics related to diverse populations (McEwan 2005). Participants discussed and presented non-traditional instructional tools, such as novels and other texts (Pappas 2005; Leaman 2005), hip-hop music videos (Boryczka 2005), documentaries and role-play exercises (Light and Rand 2005), and peer instruction (Bixby and Ortiz 2005; Chadwick 2005). We discussed the need for more models in this area, and examined various ways of connecting critical perspectives to mainstream theories and discourse in political science. We also evaluated available approaches to achieving our goals. For example, should marginalized topics—which some students might perceive as controversial or offensive and which may provoke defensive or even hostile reactions—be addressed head-on or through the back door? Holland (2005) and Pappas (2005) found that a direct approach had a deleterious effect on creating respect for diversity as compared to more subtle approaches. We also explored opportunities to integrate diversity throughout the curriculum, thus avoiding the "after-thought" or "add-and-stir" approach. We searched for ways in which we could create diversity topics that would be valued by both students and department and university administrators. Many of these teaching devices hinge on altering the dynamics of power in the classroom, which may be uncomfortable to many professors used to a more traditional approach. We explored the idea that a "stand and deliver" mode of teaching is not likely to be as sensitive to diversity issues as is using groupwork, class discussions, and other creative methods to actively involve students in the learning process.

We repeatedly recognized that those who make the most efforts to reach beyond the traditional political science curriculum face the greatest challenges, and if students do not understand and value the teaching of new and different viewpoints and experiences, this may be reflected in lower student evaluation scores (Holland 2005). Departmental chairs or tenure and promotion committees may not understand or value the risks taken by a professor in the classroom. At the same time, even if diversity is valued by an institution, there may be an implicit assumption that certain topics "naturally" will be covered by those who "know it best." Faculty who obviously seem to be members of minority groups not only are expected to teach about their diverse population (even if that is not within their training), but they also face an additional burden of counseling, advising, and mentoring students who seek their guidance. Appointment to university-wide committees on the basis of race, gender, or other "differences" is also likely as university administrations seek more diverse representation. We recognized, therefore, that those who teach diversity should search to find allies among their peers in order to relieve some of the burden that is often carried by "diverse" faculty.

As a group we recognized that the concept of diversity itself is constantly changing, and perhaps the most important job of a teacher is to examine her own assumptions. A good teacher knows that students are not monolithic—that they come to the classroom with different abilities, talents, and experiences. The best teachers reach the most students, helping them realize their individual potential, which often means using multiple teaching styles within one classroom environment. It isn't always easy to do so, but we must always keep in mind that there is no such thing as the perfect course or the perfect pedagogical method, and therefore we should be open to new ideas and methods of getting our message across to our students. Indeed, this is one way of modeling the value of different ideas and perspectives for our students.

Political science by no means is the only academic field examining and discussing issues related to teaching and learning about diversity. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we seek guidance from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence's Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy to answer the question of "how" to teach diversity (http://www.crede.org/). These standards, which were developed with best practices in mind, are:

1) Teachers and Students Working Together—Use instructional group activities in which students and teacher work together to create a product or idea.

2) Developing Language and Literacy Skills across all Curricula—Apply literacy strategies and develop language competence in all subject areas.

3) Connecting Lessons to Students' Lives—Contextualize teaching and curriculum in students' existing experiences in home, community, and school.

4) Engaging Students with Challenging Lessons—Maintain challenging standards for student performance; design activities to advance understanding to more complex levels.

5) Emphasizing Dialogue over Lectures—Instruct through teacher-student dialogue, especially academic, goal-directed, small-group conversations (known as instructional conversations),

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rather than lecture.

Political scientists are not monolithic, either as scholars or as teachers. Our discussions reflected that reality. One of our participants made the point that a lot of what we were doing could be described as what political scientist Ruth Lane calls "exploring the wider shores of politics."

Future Steps

The group suggested the following concrete steps to assist professors in the area of teaching diversity:

1) Set up an email list of all track members to encourage track participants to continue communications and share ideas;

2) Compile a body of theoretical frameworks grounded in political science from which courses or topics of diversity could be addressed—perhaps create an edited volume of this work;

3) Request that APSA develop a handbook of diversity resources, such as syllabi, texts, assignments, etc.;

4) Compile a bibliography of resources on teaching diversity, including resources from fields related to political science;

5) Submit articles on diversity-focused education to the new *Journal of Political Science Education* in order to promote more discourse and study in this area.

At the end of our three days together we had developed a sense that there was a community out there for those of us who sometimes felt isolated or marginalized for our attempts to address the various aspects of diversity. We all left with renewed energy for teaching and learning about diversity, along with some concrete teaching methods and assignments, a better understanding of the diversity of diversity, an appreciation for hip-hop music, and more questions than answers.

References

(The references in this section come from the papers presented in the Diversity Track at the 2005 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference. All of these papers are accessible through the APSA web site.)

Bixby, Barbara, and Naomi Ortiz. 2005. "Disability Studies: Student-Professor Co-Teaching."

Boryczka, Jocelyn. 2005. 'Hip-Hop: A Tool for 'Decentering the Center' in Political Science Classrooms."

Chadwick, Richard. 2005. "Active Learning, Critical Thinking, and Personal Responsibility in a Multicultural, Self-Organizing Course on International Relations."

Cobane, Craig. 2005. "Mentoring: The Forgotten Component of an Undergraduate Education."

Hall, William. 2005. "The Gay Rights Revolution in the Larger Civil Rights Revolution Context."

Holland, Lauren. 2005. "Teaching the Democratic Virtue of Tolerance: Constructing an Enriching Classroom Environment."

Leaman, David. 2005. "Diversifying the Study of Politics: Non-Traditional Texts as Supplements and Challengers in Political Science Courses."

Light, Steven Andrew, and Kathryn R.L. Rand. 2005. "'Secrets of the SAT': A Multifaceted Approach to Teaching Race and Affirmative Action."

McEwan, Jennifer. 2005. "Using the Senses to Make Sense of Political Science: A Study in Student Learning Diversity."

Pappas, Christine. 2005. "'You Hafta Push': Using Sapphire's Novel to Teach Introduction to American Government."

Track Three: Experiential Learning

—Lynda Barrow,
Coe College
—Daniel Hofrenning,
St. Olaf College
—Jocelyn Parkhurst,
Soka University of America

High Risk, Even Higher Payoff: The Returns on Experiential Learning

Teachers usually turn to experiential education when they are dissatisfied with the so-called traditional classroom. At its worst, conventional teaching dissects the political world into an array of component parts. Sometimes students read the latest scholarship, but the treatment of politics is often either blandly descriptive or too abstract. This type of teaching can rob politics of its pulsing energy, which, ironically, attracted many political scientists into the field. While most political scientists find politics exciting, the norms of the discipline can enervate the importance and drama of politics. Student calls for more "current events" are a frequent response to these academic experiences.

Instead, experiential education requires students to experience politics in more immediate ways—and to interpret that experience. Such education is undeniably risky. Andrew Seligsohn, one track participant, likened experiential education to the risks of growth stocks in one's retirement portfolio. There is a potential for tremendous gains in learning—and tremendous losses as well. The traditional classroom is then analogous to a more conservative annuity. If done well, a teaching method that relies on lecture and discussion can bring respectable and steady returns. Indeed, the distinction between experiential and traditional education can be overstated; traditional teaching clearly has an experiential component. When we lecture and lead discussions well, we always refer to the experience of politics. We integrate stories and other data that illumine political experiences for our students. Nobody at the workshop felt that experiential education should replace traditional teaching. But we all were stimulated by the creative spirit of a pedagogy that involves experiential education. We all felt that political science education is enhanced when it is hands-on.

Leaving the Classroom: Involving the Community in Education

One age-old experiential learning tool involves leaving the classroom to explore the "real world" of politics. In some cases, this may involve internships or direct activism. Richard Robyn et al.1 explored the benefits of semester-long internship programs that place students directly in the political world. Jeffrey Sosland and Diane Lowenthal observed that internships often positively affect subsequent college learning even in other fields. Increased educational efficacy is a description for such an outcome. However, as Michael Goldstein relayed, some internship programs fail to oversee the student and a negative outcome occurs. Laurel Elder, Andrew Seligsohn, and Daniel Hofrenning explored the use of direct participation in the New Hampshire presidential primary during a four-week course in a January term. A pre-/post-survey revealed that the intensive experience of the New Hampshire primary sparked an increased interest in politics and even thoughts of a political career. According to the data, students did not become less cynical, but they did become more interested and engaged in politics. All of the experiments showed that direct involvement in politics often results in a greater understanding of the process, a developed sense of civic duty, and even better academic performance in other classes.

Students also learn when they enter the political process directly. Mark

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O'Gorman and Patricia Siplon both related how they incorporated activism into the "classroom." O'Gorman encouraged his environmental policy class to find an on-campus policy to address. Students learned that facing vested interests and negotiating well are essential to successful outcomes. Siplon took activism in education a step further and traveled with students to East Africa for two weeks to battle the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region. Citing an understudied outcome of experiential education, Siplon reports that students continue their learning beyond the final exam in subsequent courses and future political activity. Requiring direct action provokes both more political engagement and a deeper understanding of the complexities of politics.

Simulating Reality in the Classroom

While some teachers take their students off-campus to experience politics directly, others attempt to replicate political reality within the classroom by using simulations or games. Nancy Biggio, Bruce Wallin, and Marni Ezra seek to explain the process of policy making and the influence of external effects: Biggio had students assume roles in the foreign policy process; Wallin introduced students to the complexities of deficit politics and congressional policy making; and Ezra simulated the exchange between the White House press secretary (and staff) and the press. As a twist on the simulation idea, Victoria Williams asked her students to develop individual identities of different people living in the Cold War period. The students collected data and wrote essays reflecting the varying experiences of the Cold War. These types of simulations require students to assume the roles of political actors. They must work to reduce the deficit, face the media, improve foreign policy, or examine the Cold War within a semblance of real-world constraints. The simulated experience becomes the data with which one interprets and explains political events and processes. Yet, as Zachary Cook relates, the "real stakes" of loss may be difficult to incorporate into simulations. To simulate Arrow's paradox of unstable majorities with real consequences, Cook had his students write their final exam by choosing among three types of questions: multiple choice, short-answer, and essays. As Arrow predicted, students had varying orders of preferences among the three options. The challenge for students was to find a majority preference. While this and all simulations may appear artificial, they often teach the complexities and dynamism of politics more effectively than do our more conventional lectures.

Innovative Learning Processes in the Classroom

Less uniquely experiential in the way we commonly understand the term, some presenters told of efforts to reconfigure the classroom in manners that transformed the teaching and learning experience. Barbara Allen explored ways to incorporate students into the research process. During the 2004 campaign, she had students lead focus groups to discern popular reaction to campaign commercials and media coverage. Rosemary Shinko utilized small group discussions as a means for students to gain an understanding of course material. She worked to make students the protagonists in the learning process, not the object-receivers of information. Paul Dosh presented a "Montessori"-type of education system developed for university students. Dosh attended Montessori schools as an elementary student and suggested that this same student-centered and active-learning system could be developed for college students. Not only would students gain an active learning opportunity, but they also would experience the process of developing the course and the resulting outcome. Finally, Brian King told of a project in which faculty members became students in their colleagues' courses. Becoming a student provided insight to both professors and other students who were literally their colleagues.

Outcomes of Experiential Learning

Experiential learning enhances education; the challenge is to demonstrate this. We see positive outcomes in students' willingness to take ownership of their own education and to learn from each other. We sense it in their heightened intellectual curiosity and emotional connection to the course material. We hear it in the buzz that spills out of the classroom and through their increased interest in politics. But how do we assess it? Yes, in-class simulations and out-of-class experiences may be engaging and fun, but what is the value-added to individuals, the discipline, or the community? Some projects produced evaluative data by surveying students before and after their participation. Other appraisals involved more conventional grading. Our group, however, came to no clear consensus as to the merits of grading student participation per se; however, many of us leaned toward evaluating students on their ability to analyze and articulate what they got out of the experience. Assessment and evaluation included more "conventional" assessment tools—such as exam questions or integrative papers that bring together scholarly debates in the literature, theory, and practice—supplemented by reflective journals, self-assessment, and/or assessment of other students engaged in a group activity. This turns the focus away from students' experiences and more toward their critical thinking abilities. This, in turn, enables us to evaluate our experiments in experiential education—at least in part.

In sum, the presentations suggest that experiential learning can lead to 1) increased academic performance in other classes, 2) increased political engagement including consideration of politics as a vocation, and 3) a deeper understanding of politics and political science. To make a stronger case, there is a real need for studies that analyze both the short- and long-term impact of experiential learning. The purpose of gatherings such as APSA's Teaching and Learning Conference is to spark creative ideas for developing and appraising experiential learning. Future conferences and the publication and further dissemination of our work are necessary to develop the field of experiential education in political science. Through this communal endeavor we can advance our teaching and scholarship as we contribute to the civic life of our students, our nation, and our world.

Note

1. All presentations discussed here are based on papers presented in our track. For a full listing of all of the papers presented at the 2005 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference, and for more information on this and future conferences, see www.apsanet.org/content_11986.cfm.

Track Four: Global Perspectives/ International Methods

—Mark Sachleben,
Miami University
—Michael Brittingham,
University of Louisville
—Kathleen Young,
University of Maryland, College Park

The track on Global Perspectives/ International Models brought together faculty working in a variety of settings, including high schools, two- and four-year colleges, and research universities in the United States as well as overseas. But this diverse group was firmly rooted in the

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shared experiences of similar problems and goals and a commitment to undergraduate education. The track provided an opportunity for instructors of political science to exchange information, develop a series of recommendations, and lay the groundwork for a network of scholar-teachers.

One of the major problems discussed was the issue of relevance; making the connection between the classroom and the "real world" is an ongoing problem, one that was addressed by a number of instructors. Stefaan Fiers' paper on European citizenship reminded us of the continuing importance of political education. Specifically, Fiers asks what role education might play in the development of participatory citizens, even in the face of declining participation amongst young people who are favorably disposed to the project of European integration. Patrick Howell's paper similarly reminds us how politics impacts almost every aspect of the public world; Howell's particular problem focused on how to engage students who are most likely non-political science majors with international relations theory and its relevance in their area of expertise and interest. The importance of a broad education on international politics and global diversity is all the more striking given that Howell teaches at the United States Military Academy. His technique is to develop a network of information via web sites, in conjuncture with his colleagues, to help demonstrate how the interpretation of different international relations perspectives might be useful even if one were, for example, a nuclear engineer. While acknowledging the need and importance of disciplines, Scott Erb finds that his and his students' knowledge was enhanced through the use of interdisciplinary courses. Erb demonstrates that undergraduates more easily make cross-discipline, and cross-national, connections when he combines his teaching skills with those of professors from disciplines such as art, music, and early childhood education. Cirila Toplak also discusses the relevance of political science methods; noting the importance of communication to the discipline, Toplak employs the developing fields of facilitation and the hermeneutical cycle—the suggestion that the actual meaning of a text is contained in the intention of the author rather than in the text itself—to better develop students' critical thinking skills.

In an increasingly globalized world, the interaction of people from different backgrounds (be it ethnic, religious, or social) becomes ever-more relevant to the discipline. The track found that regardless of our teaching backgrounds, when it came to engaging students, pointing out differences, and making connections we each found what Denise DeGarmo refers to as "resistant populations." DeGarmo employs a number of methods to engage students who have never traveled outside of their home state, much less to a foreign country, in international relations, global issues, and comparative politics classes. DeGarmo's use of simulations helps break down barriers to understanding and provides a shared experience through which both students and instructors can explore issues. Mark Sachleben also explores the value of non-traditional approaches for teaching about challenging issues, such as human rights abuses and genocide, and advocates the use of multiple teaching methods, ranging from lecture to novels to films and simulations. Danny Damron and Cindy Otis' brought their real-world experiences in leading internships at the Scottish parliament to a broader discussion of the importance of preparing and mentoring students for living and working abroad. In addition to the challenges of living abroad, including finding housing and transportation, Damron and Otis found that students were often unprepared to engage in an environment in which self-initiative was required. Damron, as mentor, has worked to maximize student learning from the experience by enhancing student cognizance of the link between the theoretical work of the classroom and the practical work of the internship. Tina Mavrikos-Adamou identifies the differences and similarities in teaching both in Thessaloniki, Greece, and Long Island, New York. Mavrikos-Adamou argues that while there are many differences between American students and students from Southern Europe, both groups suffer from misconceptions about the world and about others. Further, she highlights that while differences in political culture within a classroom can be an obstacle to effective teaching, recognizing such diversity within students' immediate community better enables them to appreciate and understand the global community.

A number of papers discuss how to make international issues relevant and accessible to difficult or resistant populations, and highlight the range of resources faculty can use to achieve these goals. David Mislan noted that the use of Model UN (and other retreat simulation conferences) has long been popular with students, even those who may not be particularly interested in international relations. Mislan proposes that we capitalize on the popularity of these extra-curricular programs and transform them into "co-curricular programs" by incorporating the experiences of students into the classroom. Glenn Hastedt has used The 9/11 Commission Report to help students think more critically about politics. Because the report is both an examination of processes and recommendations, negotiated and incomplete, it demonstrates to students the nuances of American foreign policy and the relationship between American politics and the international community. David Weiden has developed a simulation that explores an underappreciated realm: comparative judicial models. Weiden's simulation compares the inquisitorial model of trials, as is common in Europe but little known among American students, with the adversarial model of the United States. Michael Brittingham also developed a simulation to help students understand the politics of the Chinese politburo. Brittingham's semester-long simulation encourages students to develop writing, research, and critical thinking skills in conjuncture with exploring the intricacies and complexities of the politburo. Because of students' unfamiliarity with the subject, Lisa Fischler adopts non-traditional methods to teach the politics of China. Fischler uses role-playing and non-lecture techniques to point out links between Chinese students and her own; she reminds her students from central Pennsylvania that their counterparts in China are, in many ways, similar to them because their primary obligations are within the home. Maurice East and Charles Hermann used resources available to their universities to create a televised link between George Washington University and Texas A&M University. East and Hermann created a foreign policy seminar that examined the foreign policy challenges of the George H. W. Bush administration, and the technology proved invaluable in engaging students directly with leading members of the Bush foreign policy team.

The papers described above generated extensive discussion among workshop participants and resulted in a number of "lessons learned," which can be organized into three basic categories—goals, methods, and community. In terms of goals, track participants began to recognize collectively what we had all known individually. Whether the specific subject we teach is U.S. foreign policy, Chinese politics, or international relations in general, our goal is to get students to recognize that there is a world beyond the boundaries of their own, often narrow, experiences. This challenge is the driving force behind our diverse approaches. Yet this task is easier said than done. All political science instructors encounter resistance and disinterest from students who believe that such issues are irrelevant to their lives or that they already have all the answers they

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need. Unfortunately, there are practical limits to our ability to overcome that resistance and disinterest—students who are determined not to learn will never learn. However, we increase our chances of success through creativity in the classroom and increased cognizance of the different backgrounds, experiences, and needs of our students. Despite the difficulty, the goal of international awareness is critical if students are to function in an increasingly complex, globalized world.

To evaluate whether we are succeeding in this goal, we must be more self-aware of the methods we use. This involves two things—assessment and "integrative learning." In terms of assessment, we must be more self-critical: all of our creative classroom exercises, simulations, film analysis, etc. may not work as well as we think they do. While we all may have an intuition for what works in the classroom, we must develop more concrete tools of assessment to better tailor our methods to our goals. Such tools could be as simple as brief student surveys at the beginning and end of the term. These may also help us better understand the backgrounds of our students and develop new techniques for reaching them.

Just as important as assessment is "integrative learning"—i.e., integrating the classroom learning of comparative/international politics with subjects or skills outside of the immediate classroom experience. This can be done through the development of interdisciplinary courses that bring together different academic departments (e.g., political science and music), study abroad programs, and international internships. However, such approaches may reach only a relatively small group of students. Simpler methods may improve the experiences of all students—e.g., developing closer relations with librarians to aid in student research activities, or with other academic departments help identify potential research topics for non-majors. Improving our instruction methods through such integrative exercises, combined with more rigorous assessment, will help ensure that we succeed in our goal of broadening our students' perspectives.

Finally, the further development of a teaching community would greatly support the goals and methods discussed above. One of the most striking aspects of the Global Perspectives/International Models track was the enormous diversity in approaches. Indeed, most (if not all) of the participants would probably agree that the most valuable aspect of the conference was the opportunity to network and share ideas with others with similar concerns, but with such different ways of addressing them. The conference provided an opportunity to learn what others do, borrow from them, and develop new techniques. In order to continue this exchange between conferences, we must develop a community of teachers that can help broaden our own, sometimes narrow, perspectives on teaching. After all, if we expect our students to be more open to the world around them, we must lead by example.

Track Five: Research Methods and Techniques

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From February 19–21, 2005, several hundred political scientists met at the second annual APSA Conference on Teaching and Learning in Bethesda, Maryland. To facilitate an atmosphere of intensive interaction and mutual learning, the conference was conducted in the "European format" where topic-specific Tracks worked as a deliberative community over three days rather than the format of American conferences—paper, paper, paper, comment, question, then on to a different session. Track Five's task was to exchange ideas about teaching methodology with the goal of formulating proposals that could be disseminated to the discipline. Interestingly, the topic was taken up by contributors in Track Five from two angles: first, "teaching methods" as a pedagogical issue and second, teaching research methodology.

Our recommendations come from the deliberation of a very diverse group. Graduate students, junior, and senior faculty were active members. Track Five's members represented the broadest array of institutions, ranging from foreign universities to Research I institutions in the United States to teaching universities throughout the nation; public, private, residential, and commuter schools had representatives, and one participant was from a Historically Black College University (HBCU). The following summary is divided into three sections to accurately represent the material covered. The first section will discuss Pedagogy in Political Science (Teaching Methods). The next will focus on teaching Research Methods in Political Science. The Conclusion presents a summary of the track's recommendations to the discipline.

Pedagogy in Political Science

The conference presented a unique opportunity to learn about innovations in teaching pedagogy. The common theme throughout the participants' presentations was the importance of bringing the course content to life by challenging students to think in innovative and creative ways about political science. One participant created maps using GIS to illustrate demographic shifts important to understanding the changing political landscape. Lloyd S. Etheredge's "The Case of the Unreturned Cafeteria Trays" was a case study that helped students think through the policymaking process and the problem of unintended consequences.

In teaching political philosophy, one participant discussed his use of "Hypotheticals" as thought experiments to assist students in learning the nuance of argumentation and the importance of knowing one's own foundational beliefs. The benefit of having students work through these complex thought experiments was that they were faced with the implications and real impact of their personal orientations and intuitions. Through use of this pedagogical tool, students gained important skills to become not only more thoughtful political scientists but citizens attuned to the importance of foresight when making critical decisions about governance and policy.

The Track also learned of one participant's use of Political Ethnographies to expose students to the contributions made by populations overlooked in standard political science courses, most specifically, those of Mexican Americans. Students were involved in creating this ethnographic database, taping the interviews, posing questions, and learning to read interviewees' non-verbal cues to press for follow-up questions or elaboration of a point. Having this opportunity to participate in creating an important database not only introduces students to qualitative methodologies but gives them a skill that will clearly help them in their future professional life.

A common complaint made about students entering college is that they are woefully unprepared. Students' poor writing, reading, speaking, study habits, and note taking abilities leave many instructors teaching introductory courses frustrated. The challenge of skill-building was the subject of several presentations. One participant discussed their use of Endnote to teach students how to document and evaluate their sources. Interestingly, this participant found that students would retain and build their reference database over the course of their education. When discussing this behavior with advanced

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students, the instructor found that students began to see themselves as budding young scholars—an identity we would certainly like to establish early on.

One presentation outlined a six-step program that guides students toward creating high quality research using a literacy-based approach. Basically, this effort cues students in to the importance of thinking about keywords and keyword chains to explore research topics and to evaluate resources. Through this process, students create a web of keywords and concepts which provides a very broad range of data and approaches to their topic.

The broad range of institutions represented produced a visible and salient variability in pedagogical approaches. Each pedagogical innovation enriched the learning environment by engaging students across multiple formats while improving their skill-levels and knowledge. While engaging, many in the Track expressed concern about the monetary and class-time costs involved with some of these projects, either due to technology costs or the time involved in applied research. Fundamentally, it comes down to the question of whether the benefits outweigh the costs of each significant investment in time and/or money. This can only be decided by the faculty member and perhaps the department or college.

The presentations on teaching pedagogy in political science generated a lively discussion about the efficacy of innovative as opposed to standard teaching methods. This led to the issue of assessment and how to measure the relative merits of approaches to ensure critical transfers of information and skills. Fundamentally, we were asking to what degree do new technologies, new ways of teaching, or a revision of best practices improve and expand our students' learning? A deeper question emerges: given measurement tools currently available, is it possible to accurately track and evaluate these critical transfers?

Teaching Political Science Methods

At the undergraduate level, it is nearly a universal truth that students avoid taking research methods if possible and if not, put it off until the very last moment. Curiously, very few of the faculty in this Track specialized in research methods as graduate students and came to teaching methods for a variety of other reasons. Therefore, participants in this Track were highly cognizant of the challenges faculty face when dealing with students who fear taking this topic almost more than any other: many of us were those students! Pedagogical innovation in teaching research methods was especially appreciated. Although demystifying the abstract concepts inherent in research methods is one mechanism to lower the fear factor, the depth and breadth of the topic must be retained, which means that faculty must find ways to help students cope with complexity.

All Track participants recognized the importance of devising hands-on, applied work in the dual effort to make research methods a course less feared by students while adding body to a necessarily abstract topic. One participant's students undertook faculty-guided survey research by conducting a public opinion poll. Students selected their topic, wrote questions, selected their population, conducted telephone interviews, compiled data, entered the data into SPSS, and analyzed the outcomes.

Contributing to this approach was another presentation on ICPSR and the SIMI initiative at the University of Michigan. The SIMI initiative archives 54 instructional modules and data sets for classroom use. Having students work with data as they test hypotheses and observe the complexities of interpreting data outcomes clearly adds both to the content and significant interest of the topic.

Two issues arose specific to these pedagogical innovations. First, is the issue of money. Surveys require call lists, phone banks require equipment, space, and lines, software and data all require an investment of resources. With ever-tightening budgets, hands-on research requires not only strategic innovation, but innovative funding approaches from committed departments and faculty.

The second issue is the tension between skill-building (as enhancing analytical skills) and course content (discipline-related information); a class minute can be used only once and providing students with skill building opportunities takes time away from the topic. There was no consensus and this is not a conversation that can be taken up by only one small committee in a very large field. However, political scientists must discuss what we want our undergraduate students to take away from the discipline and take with them into the world.

The next topic dominated much of the conversation beyond paper presentations: the timing and scope of methods training in the curriculum. In comparing course offerings and requirements for undergraduate majors, we found that only some schools required Research Methods. We also discovered that the research methods sequence varied from one to as many as four courses of mixed composition. The courses themselves focused on both qualitative and quantitative approaches, but it would not be entirely unrepresentative to say that quantitative methods claimed the majority of the course content.

In spite of the variety of approaches to teaching methods, we agreed that the research methods sequence or course, by and large, came too late in the student's undergraduate experience and appeared as an isolate from other courses. As we know, discipline content is the result of research; students should become more aware of this fact. Therefore, the Track participants agreed that methods should be **required early** as a way to acquaint students with the discipline and that a discussion of course content should not shy away from how that content was obtained. In other words, substance and method should be combined across the curriculum.

A model for this approach, a pairing of Research Methods with Comparative Politics, was presented. Examples and the end-of semester research project required in the Methods course reflected the content in the Comparative Politics course, and the content of the Comparative Politics course never strayed too far from discussions of critical concepts in the field and how those concepts shaped research design, analysis, and testing. Through joint exams and projects, students experienced the complexities and difficulties of research and information generation.

This conversation led to the general conclusion that we, as educators, can help students understand how inextricably bound knowledge is to research methodology. Rather than fear that conversation, we are bound to provide students with the skills to become critical consumers of other's analyses and to provide them with a skill set to create their own base of knowledge, that is, to become life-long learners.

Conclusions

At the end of the three-day session, the group formulated what it saw as the most important goal to be achieved by the discipline: *Enhancing scientific literacy and knowledge of multiple modes of inquiry, which include problem identification and problem solving, analytic thinking, critical analysis, and being able to construct a logical argument from premises to conclusion.* To achieve this goal we present four recommendations:

- First, there should be greater engagement with existing resources and experts in teaching pedagogy through accessing built knowledge in other disciplines, determining what works, and disseminating best practices to others

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in and outside the discipline.

• Second, subjects in the discipline (especially methods) should be made relevant and "real" to students through the use of hands-on exercises and applied research embedded in substantive classes.

• Third, methods classes should be required and introduced early in the program as a means of acquainting students with the discipline.

• Fourth, methods should be taught across the discipline.

Track Six: Service Learning

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Service Learning as Practice and Pedagogy

Service learning is most often touted as a vehicle for creating and reinforcing civic-minded citizens and generating democratic responsibility among our students while serving and empowering communities. Equally as important, service learning is pedagogy. Service learning track participants discussed ways to develop the best practices and pedagogies, focusing on both the outcomes we hope to achieve through a variety of applications of service learning, and on the necessary components—or ingredients—that comprise service learning as a method of instruction. Papers covered a broad range of inter-related themes including service learning at large research universities, research-as-service projects, the impact of service learning on student health, the challenges inherent in assessing active forms of learning, and engaging youth with political humor. Participants were equally as diverse and included faculty and administrators from large universities, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, and public high schools.

Highlights and Major Themes

Professors, administrators, students, and community agencies are drawn to service learning, in part, because it has seemingly transformative potential—for the lives of our students, for the quality of classroom instruction, for the livelihood of the communities in which we live and work. Service learning is frequently connected to changing, or at least rethinking, political attitudes and behavior and political efficacy. Although track participants brought to the conference varying degrees of confidence in service learning as a method for reshaping democratic citizenship, most agreed that service learning can catalyze academic and self-development and promote broader notions of social responsibility by fostering links between communities and college/university campuses. Yet, service learning enterprises vary dramatically. What factors mediate the transformative potential of service learning? Our discussion highlighted a number of themes.

On the most basic level, the potential of service learning is mediated by a series of practical obstacles that college and university institutions must negotiate. These include logistical obstacles, such as time, transportation, and staffing constraints; curricular obstacles, such as supervision, grading, and syllabus concerns; and student-centered obstacles, including free-rider problems and resistance to value conflicts encountered in service learning assignments. Institutional support for service learning necessarily varies—a full-time permanent staff, for example, is not a realistic option on many campuses. Nonetheless, there may be creative ways to use existing resources (for example, work study students or VISTA volunteers) to help overcome practical obstacles, particularly those related to time, coordination, and staffing needs. Perhaps most importantly, service learning needs to be institutionally recognized as an important model of pedagogy. Colleges and universities themselves play a role in shaping the civic and political possibilities of service learning by structuring access to institutional resources and rewards.

Service learning is a resource-intensive pedagogy, particularly at the level of an individual class, yet its benefits are cumulative. The degree to which service learning is integrated across the curriculum is important in ensuring that service learning is part of a coherent undergraduate education rather than an isolated experience. This raises a number of practical concerns including coordination of graduation requirements, course sequencing, the wide availability of service learning courses, and transcript notation. Indeed, when service learning is integrated across the curriculum it is more likely to comprise an important part of faculty-student relations, aiding in the recruitment, retention, and overall well-being of our students. Many schools have begun experimenting with strategies to help foster this kind of integration—for example, service learning scholarships and leadership certificates and awards.

Similarly, the transformative potential of service learning may be mediated by the degree to which it is valued by, accessible to, and meaningful for community partners. In their presentation about community-based learning at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Virginia Sapiro and Mary Rouse identified what may very well be the bottom line of successful service learning endeavors: partnerships. Service learning is by definition a series of partnerships between the college/university and community or governmental organizations; it is important to make sure that all partners can, and do, enjoy benefits at a reasonable cost. To be sure, service learning does impose a cost on community agencies—they train, supervise, and, in some cases, evaluate students. Institutional support from colleges/universities and the ability for community agencies to communicate their own needs are both critical in balancing this cost with valued gained. Conversely, the partnerships that define service learning should recognize that colleges and universities have much to gain from community agencies. Colleges and universities exist in, not apart from, communities. Several track participants suggested that community agencies ought to be full partners in designing and specifying the intended pedagogical purposes of service learning projects; others suggested that community partners can participate in student evaluation and assessment of learning outcomes. By the same token, partnership is a two-way street and community partners need to commit to a relationship that does not exploit students but rather recognizes that students' service also is part of their educational goals.

Of all the factors that mediate the outcomes of service learning—and also perhaps the degree to which service learning is institutionally supported—none seems as problematic as assessment. Empirical evidence on the short-term impact of service learning remains mixed. Indeed, it is possible that service learning does not have a meaningful impact on students' political attitudes and behavior, leading to some interesting tensions within our discipline. Several track participants expressed concern that, in addition to mixed evidence, without careful design the practice of service learning may have an inherent political bias, discouraging the kinds of collective mobilization that are required for genuine political change. In the end, service learning may be, as one participant put it, "a leap of faith." It is important

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to recognize the limitations of short-term assessment; most quantitative assessments, for example, lack adequate control required in experimental design. Nonetheless, assessment questions are important to the extent that they are connected to the distribution of scarce resources. The need for longitudinal studies in the area of assessment is clear.

The complexities of assessment are linked to important questions about best practices: Should faculty apply to the appropriate college/university curriculum committee or academic council for a service learning course designation? What criteria should be considered for a service learning designation? Should partisan activities be considered service learning activities? What is the model of education that we seek to advance through service learning? What are the intended learning outcomes and goals of service learning? When there is a conflict between the pedagogical goals and the reality of service learning, how is that conflict managed? At a minimum, assessment prerogatives should encourage careful reflection about intended learning outcomes and the methods and techniques we employ to measure them. A separate issue related to assessment comes in how peers and administrators assess the performance of instructors engaged in service learning projects for the purpose of tenure and promotion. Not only is service learning an especially labor intensive form of teaching, depending on its design, it can blur the boundaries between teaching, research, and community service.

Lessons Learned

If there was one claim that received universal support among track participants, it was the notion that service learning cannot work without adequate institutional support, a devoted infrastructure, and the commitment of ongoing resources to long-term goals. In brief, service learning has to be taken seriously by colleges/universities and community organizations. It needs to be well-funded and well-supported. This suggests not only the need to recognize service learning as an important model of pedagogy at the institutional level, but also to ensure that faculty who undertake service learning enterprises are not unduly burdened in light of ongoing professional obligations including teaching, research, and service. On some campuses, adequately recognizing and rewarding faculty who undertake service learning may require shifting campus culture and rethinking tenure and reward structures.

The need, as articulated by Track Six participants, for strong institutional support for service learning was followed by a second, collectively accepted belief in the need for high-quality service learning courses. High-quality service learning endeavors demand other commitments in addition to adequate institutional support: dedicated time obligations on the part of faculty, staff, community partners, and students; long-range planning needs; and deliberate reflection about desired learning outcomes in relation to service learning pedagogies in the discipline of political science. The best service learning enterprises are explicitly linked to the political science curriculum; this is, in part, what sets service learning apart from other forms of service.

Frank conversation about the intended outcomes of service learning is important for a realistic appraisal of its possibilities—and limits. It is easy to over-romanticize engaged forms of learning, particularly those that occur in the context of a single course. This was a third lesson learned. For example, it may be unrealistic to expect a single 15- or 16-week service learning project to alter students' major values. At best, service learning may shift particular behaviors and attitudes, or change some of the factors that mediate those values. Nor is any service learning project without some degree of unpredictability. It is important to be realistic about what we can expect students to learn, and what we can expect to communicate through a single, or even several, service learning endeavors.

Thus, the final lesson discussed in the service learning track was the need to make explicit the assumptions surrounding our practice of service learning. These include assumptions about our students, often and perhaps unfairly generalized around common socioeconomic experiences; assumptions about our discipline and its relation to particular methods of research; assumptions about our communities and their needs and assets; assumptions about the impact of experience on self-development; and assumptions about the potential for service learning to lead to particular learning outcomes.

Lingering Questions and Suggestions for the Future

Several additional themes were raised that require further conservation. These are offered here briefly, not in the way of conclusion, but rather as potential topics of discussion for next year's conference.

All participants involved in service learning enterprises—college/university staff, community agencies, students, faculty—need access to meaningful training and education about the pedagogy and practice of service learning. Some institutions, such as the Morgridge Center for Public Service at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Loyola University Chicago's Magis Service-Learning Initiative, have developed model training resources. Many other institutions, unfortunately, offer little in the way of service learning training. Track participants expressed a clear interest in developing and sharing access to training resources and possibly workshops, through venues such as APSA's web page on service learning (www.apsanet.org/section_246.cfm) and the new *Journal of Political Science Education.* We also discussed developing innovative, low-cost methods for sharing experiences, such as faculty-to-faculty and student-to-student mentoring relationships. The terrain is ripe for writing and publishing research on service learning.

Service learning is perhaps inherently interdisciplinary, yet its application is frequently limited to the social sciences and, within the discipline of political science, to subfields within American politics. This is a second theme for future discussion. Multi-disciplinary service learning seems especially promising; the need to develop globally and internationally-oriented service learning is necessary. Likewise, while many track participants have experienced working with community agencies, as a group, we have less experience building collaborative relationships with students as agents in the design, implementation, and practice of service learning.

Looking forward to the 2006 APSA Conference on Teaching and Learning, Track Six participants suggest adding poster sessions to the European-style workshop format that was the heart of this year's conference. Poster sessions would be especially useful for showcasing practical applications of engaged forms of learning and would give conference attendees the ability to view a variety of service learning projects in diverse settings, while freeing up more workshop time for conversation and in-depth discussion of theoretical concerns.

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Track Seven: Student Assessment/ Learning Outcomes

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At the first APSA Teaching and Learning Conference (TLC) in 2004, 11 professors and graduate students gathered to discuss and evaluate the role of assessment in political science. Excited by the impact of assessment in their classrooms and departments, the working group concluded their session with a declaration of the positive role assessment could have in the discipline and an articulated concern that APSA needs to "play a greater role in assessment." At the 2005 conference, 32 faculty and graduate students again gathered to discuss "Student Assessment and Learning Outcomes." Six of us bridged both years' experiences. While the 2005 participants were less unified, the discussion and debates that emerged built upon the discoveries of year one and attempted to expand the conversation from among the converted to the wider discipline.

Summary of Sessions

The presentations to the working group examined assessment on three levels: evaluating specific classroom techniques, appraising skills and experiences, and assessing departments and the discipline. Assessment at the micro level—specific classroom techniques—is in some ways the easiest. However, because we often adopt traditional methods in teaching, we may be uneasy about—or may not even consider—asking whether those traditional methods are the best way to help students learn. Only after finding himself soundly bored with his own PowerPoint slides did one presenter decide to switch from lecture to discussion in large classes. Both student satisfaction and performance increased. Using a traditional textbook is habit for many professors; one of our presenters broke out of the habit and tested whether other types of readings, such as original sources, improved student comprehension. The results were inconclusive, but the presenter plans to continue the experiment to track outcomes over time. A presentation on the use of debates highlighted the utility of rubrics in assessing student progress. Showing students a detailed grading rubric, with clearly defined expectations for each component of the assignment, can be a powerful tool in spurring student performance. Assessment not only helps us improve our classes, but can increase student learning in the process.

Our next set of presenters asked a broader question: How can we assess student success in skill development and experiential learning? Critical thinking heads the list of desired skills and one presenter posited that a core set of critical thinking skills could be nurtured even in students in introductory political science classes. Research skills are also important, but how does one foster interest and expertise in this area? Another presenter detailed her university's program to mentor student researchers, concluding that both the program and its assessment need additional investigation. Looking beyond the discipline, one presenter asked to what extent could we measure the success of freshman cohorts. Because his university's program was composed of self-selected students, any assessment needed to account for likely skewing of results. But his experience raised a broader point for the group: What type of methodological precision do we expect in assessing our techniques and programs? Certainly it is better to perform some assessment, even if it is very basic, rather than put off assessment altogether because of inadequate data.

Our final set of presenters addressed the question of departmental and discipline-wide assessment. Without a doubt, departmental assessment generated the most concern, in part because it is frequently imposed by university or external administrators. The view from our participants, however, was that departmental assessment could be tremendously positive. For instance, one department adopted an assessment model from another school. They found that the exercise not only allowed them to define what would be assessed in their program, but it also strengthened the departmental focus and created strong bonds among political science faculty. Another presenter, coming from a department with a long history of successful assessment, outlined how a particular pedagogical tool—capstone courses—improved student learning while achieving programmatic goals.

Core Findings

From these presentations emerged hours of discussion and debate. By the last session, we were able to recognize some key points of agreement in the group. Our first conclusion was the realization that identifying objectives is a critical aspect of assessment, and an underappreciated one. The process of assessment involves recognizing the goals for the program first, and then identifying how to evaluate whether the goals are being accomplished. Assessment is not a value-neutral process. Setting goals requires prioritization; assessment involves choosing what to evaluate. At its essence, the process of assessment is political. Participants in the workshop agreed that faculty goals for education are often at odds with student goals. Critical thinking is valued by most academics, while the perception of the "millennial student" (and their parents) is that they are focused on skills development and occupational outcomes. Participants also recognized that the goals of faculty are likely to vary from a standardizing body that might impose, externally, curricular goals and benchmarks.

With this in mind, we found it important that departments take ownership of the assessment process. In order to do this, we need to establish community: identify our shared interests and collaborate with colleagues and students to determine our goals for curriculum, critical thinking, practical skills development, and ethical awareness. Successful examples presented at the workshop involve embedding assessment into a department plan that its constituents agree to. This includes synthesizing seemingly disconnected objectives between students and faculty. It also means overcoming divides between faculty that employ different teaching (or research) techniques. New active learning techniques may require new assessment strategies; at a minimum, faculty must agree that assessment should address both critical thinking skills and curriculum goals.

Assessment is not necessarily easy, but there are rewards for accomplishing it. Repeatedly, we heard of programs that gathered and used data as leverage for new faculty hires, for improving the quality of student learning, for increasing the quality and quantity of majors, and for developing more cohesive and cooperative programs. At the same time, incentives were found to increase the quality and extent of assessment. It is important to note that good assessment includes a feedback loop: once data is gathered, it must be processed, which leads to the revision of goals and the implementation of new strategies for accomplishing and evaluating those goals. The fear of many faculty is that assessment is a "new" ongoing task that does not lead to a reprioritization of

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responsibilities but rather to an increased workload. If the departmental or institutional culture is not cooperative, assessment may be used to advance agendas or to undermine alternative views and approaches. In addition, the emergence of multiple accrediting and governing bodies may result in competing plans, reports, and expectations. In such a scenario, faculty may be required to engage in "busy work" that goes nowhere and is read by no one.

We are optimistic that if assessment is done well, taking advantage of the quantitative and qualitative analytical tools that political science faculty possess, the quality of teaching will become increasingly measurable. This, in turn, has the potential to transform the field of political science so that teaching becomes a more important criterion for assessing faculty performance. It also serves as a warning that we should be careful to set goals that are obtainable and demonstrable.

Core Questions

By the end of the weekend, the working group articulated three interrelated questions to present to the membership of APSA and to the discipline.

- What are the positive and negative effects of assessment on our profession and discipline? We heard reports from faculty members who found that assessment increased their control of their curriculum, leading to increased departmental resources. Others reported that assessment at their institutions produced more work for faculty with little or no payoff in increased institutional support or improved teaching.

- How do we as teachers of politics conceive of classroom and program assessment, and how are the two processes connected? Departments that achieved positive results through assessment, as reported to our group, had clear understanding of the purposes of their classroom assessment devices, and could then use classroom assessment data as part of their program assessment.

- How can we use the current assessment debate to reconsider the priorities of the discipline and the role of the APSA? Many participants noted that the absence of disciplinary standards, best practices, or model curriculum made it difficult for departments to leverage university resources, especially with competition from departments with accreditation standards. Our national organization can both support collaboration among political scientists on assessment issues and provide a forum for possible development of a disciplinary conception of the goals and purposes of our teaching. This question also suggests an update of the Wahlke Report on the recommended elements of a strong undergraduate political science curriculum.

Core Suggestions

It seems that overall, both the public and the discipline have expressed renewed interest in and concern for education. Internationally, university teaching and learning centers are established, future college teachers obtain graduate certificates on teaching, and nationally normed surveys investigate to what extent undergraduate students are engaged in their learning experience. These initiatives are important in refocusing on education, but without assessment, there is no way of investigating to what extent we actually improve our students' education. What can political scientists do, then, to facilitate and take control of assessment of teaching techniques, student learning, skills, and programs? Concurring with the conclusion of the 2004 TLC, we emphasize that it is advantageous for the discipline itself rather than external actors to manage its assessment standards and procedures. We thus suggest a series of concrete steps to help political science professors and departments in their assessment efforts.

First, we propose to share information about assessment and learn from the experience of others. To that end, we are offering a pre-conference short course on developing a departmental assessment plan at the 2005 APSA Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. This will be a hands-on workshop for those beginning the assessment process for their programs; faculty members who have developed successful assessment plans in their departments will be there to guide the participants through the initial steps. This workshop also feeds into the larger plan of developing a network of faculty experienced in assessment, which can function as consultants for departments still in the nascent stages of developing assessment plans. Second, information sharing will also occur through an assessment page housed on the APSA web site. Faculty and departments will be encouraged to post their existing mission statements or assessment practices and measurements for others to view as examples, thus providing a toolbox of resources to assess knowledge, skills, and values.

In order to conduct effective assessment, faculty and departments first need to establish the goals of teaching in the discipline. In other words, what are the learning outcomes that make the discipline distinctive and unique? Defining the goals and objectives of political science education goes beyond defining the essentials of necessary discipline-specific knowledge. It also includes skills—like critical thinking—that are either taught specifically in political science or have a unique interpretation that differs from the way students might acquire the same skill in a different discipline. In order to make a convincing statement for the value of political science education, the particular contribution of our field to undergraduate education has to be made explicit. Assessment can then be conducted against the objectives the discipline has articulated and the department has embraced.

If critical thinking is a generally accepted objective of political science education, then we must develop useful tools to measure it. While smaller programs sometimes use senior projects or capstone courses to assess the level of critical thinking skills that students have acquired, departments with a large number of undergraduates often do not have this option. We thus suggest that one goal for next year's conference is to look more closely at ways in which critical thinking skills can be usefully assessed in a variety of academic contexts. We also realize that as little work as we have completed in undergraduate education assessment, less research and assessment has been done on graduate education in political science.

However, as an organization, APSA can do more than help define goals and objectives in teaching. One of the ways in which APSA—based on faculty input and collaboration—can help facilitate assessment is through the development of a nationally normed comprehensive exam that departments could use for a small fee. This would help departments track student progress rather than just measuring the end result, which would facilitate assessment of programs and curricula. Even greater work is needed in the area of graduate education, where even less work on assessment has been completed in the discipline.

Lastly, there is a need for a future conference on assessment that will include all types of different institutions and facilitate and encourage discussion on assessment across the discipline. This could lead to the development of a discipline-based agenda or plan to guide assessment in political science education in all institutions at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

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Track Eight: Technology

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Technology and Political Science Education

Recognizing the central role that technology now plays in political science education, organizers dedicated Track Eight of the 2005 Teaching and Learning Conference to an in-depth exploration of how technology impacts pedagogy and learning. During the three-day workshop, 30 track participants from throughout the discipline shared a wide range of experiences and ideas about how instructional technologies might help improve student learning and engagement. Track discussions ranged widely, covering the use of technology in diverse settings ranging from small seminars and discussion groups to large introductory lectures and distance learning courses. Along the way, presenters highlighted a number of normative concerns raised by technology use in teaching as well as a range of practical challenges often faced by faculty using technology in the field.

Summary of Presentations

The core of the track's work consisted of 14 presentations by political scientists representing a broad cross-section of the discipline. While varying widely in specific content, these presentations generally fell within five technology-related topical areas. One group explored technology use within the traditional classroom, either as a means of facilitating student interactions within large classes or as a way to expand the scope of conventional classroom exercises. Stephen Shellman of the College of William & Mary, for instance, explained how he incorporates web-based videos and electronic databases into an international relations simulation to enhance active learning and encourage independent research. Robert Webking, University of Texas at El Paso, described how he uses hand-held audience participation devices to foster critical thinking and student-faculty interaction in large political philosophy classes. Adrian Petrescu, University of Texas at Brownsville, emphasized in his talk the utility of video clips, textbook companion web sites, and online quizzes in sparking interest and enthusiasm among non-majors enrolled in political science survey courses. John Riley of Kutztown University, in turn, presented data evaluating the effectiveness of PowerPoint as a tool for stimulating and maintaining student interest in classroom presentations.

Others focused on technology as a tool of class organization and management. For instance, Deborah Ward of Seton Hall University described how her institution's extensive technology infrastructure has enabled her to implement more student-centered teaching approaches in the classroom. By structuring courses to include Blackboard and other resources as integral components, Ward reported, instructors can produce both high levels of student interaction and extensive documentary records useful in standardizing teaching practices. Track moderator Robert Trudeau also shared his experiences in managing Providence College's Course Management Software, ANGEL. Though he briefly recounted experiences using online Discussion Forums, the key point is that Course Management Software provides a simple, technology-based infrastructure that supports many innovative teaching techniques as well as vastly improved communications among students and between students and faculty.

A third group of presentations highlighted technology use as a means of enhancing civic engagement and student interest in politics. Eli Lesser, University of Pennsylvania, described two Annenberg-sponsored projects—Student Voices and Justice Learning—which aim to promote political discussion and active civil engagement by providing online audio archives, primary source materials, historical timelines, and pre-packaged curricula for use by social science faculty at both the high school and collegiate levels. In turn, Alexander Theodoridis of the University of Virginia discussed a project aimed at getting students "hooked on politics" in another way—by presenting a realistic simulation of a U.S. Senate campaign in the form of a highly interactive video game.

A fourth group examined technology as a tool for generating new knowledge or for bridging the gap between the classroom and the world. Jocelyn Evans, University of West Florida, described her use of Internet video and audio capabilities to infuse American government courses with original first-person campaign accounts, timely interviews with high-ranking party officials, and other forms of information generally not available in textbooks. William Stover of Santa Clara University, meanwhile, discussed a class-linked project that engaged Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders in the Middle East in a threaded online discussion over a two-week period in early 2004. Only by virtue of the Internet, Stover emphasized, were his students able to witness a frank exchange of views as it developed among participants located thousands of miles from campus. What's more, he reported, some students experienced a measurable change in their political and ethical views as a result of the exercise.

Similarly, in a project that could well have been categorized in the fifth group, to follow below, Colette Mazzucelli reported on her use of Internet-based, trans-Atlantic telephone technology to create real-time dialogue between students at Arcadia University and others in Europe. As with all the presentations in this Track, the project used technology to advance deeper learning goals. In this case, Mazzucelli and her colleagues sought to improve the quality of civic dialogue, as part of a Peace and Conflict Studies program, using technology to enhance dialogue between students from the United States and their counterparts in Kosovo, Munich, and Paris.

Finally, a fifth group of presenters examined technology as the basis for distance learning/Web-based instruction. Rosa Gomez Dierks, Northern Arizona University, emphasized that online instructors must provide clear guideposts regarding learning objectives, assignments, and assessment criteria in order to ensure active learning and student engagement. Donald Calista of Marist College, after reviewing several unique challenges faced by online instructors, contended that distance learning, at least in political science, is best understood as a discrete form of teaching rather than a mere variant of traditional methods. Stephen Sussman, Troy University, then provided an overview of findings from the emerging academic literature on distance learning and discussed the utility of Blackboard, Troy's Course Management Software, in facilitating student engagement in an online course.

Lessons Learned/Conclusions Reached

The individual presentations featured in the track offered a wealth of knowledge and practical tips about the use of particular instructional technologies and methods in the political science classroom. What's more, track discussions yielded at least five broader conclusions as well. First, participants agreed that the appropriate focus of attention in this field is on the pedagogical utility of technology rather than on the "bells and whistles" of instructional technology itself. To be sure, the adoption of new tools for use in the

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classroom will at times raise questions of technical know-how; still, political scientists should never allow their eyes to veer from the primary goal—using whatever works best to promote deep and active student learning. Thus in some circumstances, instructors might find that the best classroom approach is to make extensive use of Internet resources, video links, and other "high-tech" modes of presentation. Yet in other circumstances, professors may conclude that nothing works quite as well as the traditional set of texts accompanied by a series of mediated classroom discussions.

Second, a consensus emerged that greater attention must be paid to the evaluation and assessment of technology-aided forms of instruction. After all, do students of political science actually learn more from a lecture accompanied by PowerPoint slides than from one illustrated by occasional scratchings in chalk? Does the use of video clips really foster deeper learning about politics? Is frequent use of the Internet for political research inadvertently eroding students' ability to distinguish fact from opinion? Do online discussions really encourage a broader cross-section of students to share thoughts and ideas? Well-grounded answers to such questions, of course, would be immensely useful for political scientists as they make choices about the teaching methods and instructional aids that they use. Yet to date, the empirical work in this area is still woefully thin.

Third, track participants noted the need for greater support—within political science itself and within the academy more generally—for risk-taking and technological innovation in teaching. After all, the incorporation of technology into classroom instruction often entails considerable costs for faculty; for one, it may require some degree of "feeling your way" in a course—which may be rewarded initially only with lower teaching evaluations or criticism from skeptical colleagues. Moreover, technology-based instruction often consumes enormous amounts of faculty time—especially in its early stages of development. In light of these considerations, it is little wonder that some faculty members—especially untenured ones—may be unwilling to try new instructional techniques in their classes. Student learning inevitably suffers from this timidity; yet with more support for innovation from leaders within the discipline, perhaps more faculty would be encouraged to take greater advantage of the technological resources already at their disposal.

Fourth, some track participants urged greater attention to questions of economic inequality and barriers to access that are raised by the increasing use of technology in teaching. As several presenters noted, web-mediated instruction and usage of online materials may, in some circumstances, significantly reduce some of the costs traditionally associated with higher education. Yet the integration of technology into instruction inevitably entails significant costs as well. The simple fact is that while many political science professors teach at fully "wired" (or even "wireless") institutions, others struggle to secure the infrastructure and support necessary to implement technology-laden teaching plans. What's more, students today vary widely in their ability to purchase laptops, audience participation "clickers," and other high-tech tools of the trade. In the end, of course, there may be little that political science can do as a discipline to address these kinds of concerns. Yet at the very least, professors who are considering the adoption of expensive forms of technology should keep considerations of affordability and access in mind.

Finally, track participants agreed widely on the importance of continuing the dialogue begun at the conference and of elevating the profile of such discussions of teaching within the discipline. Among other things, participants noted the potential benefits of developing some form of archiving mechanism so that knowledge about technology in teaching can be accumulated and disseminated more broadly within the field. Several also pointed to the need for replication of studies and for the continued development of standards and best practices. Above all, participants expressed great enthusiasm about the format used at the conference, which brought together faculty and other interested parties representing a broad array of institutions, levels of classroom experience, subfield specialties, and teaching philosophies to swap ideas and share concerns. Organizing the proceedings around "tracks," most agreed, was an essential component of the 2005 Conference's success. Participants expressed strong support for continuing under the track model at future conferences as well.

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