

## Notes from the Chair

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As most of you know, I was elected chair of the Undergraduate Education Section at the annual meeting at the APSA convention in August. Following John Ishiyama as Chair has added inherent pressure to the position. Under John's leadership not only has the section grown tremendously but has introduced the discipline's only peer-reviewed journal dedicated to teaching (*The Journal of Political Science Education*) and has been engaged in the development and success of the discipline's new annual convention (the Teaching and Learning Conference).

The last five years have been a watershed for the discipline. The hard work of the past leadership of the section (John Ishiyama, Grant Reeher, and Grant Halva Neubauer) and its members has contributed to the new values articulated by APSA. The discipline is more open in recognizing the role of teaching institutions, supporting improvements in graduate and undergraduate education, and fostering the pedagogical elements of our work in the academy. While it may have taken political science longer than others to reach this point, we can reflect on many of these recent changes with pride. However, as a section we must stay engaged if we want to help chart the future of the discipline. I encourage all of you to become involved in the leadership of your substantive sections; we can advance the importance of teaching not only through this section but within our work throughout the discipline. Please consider running for offices and serving as program officers for the various conferences offered throughout the year. When issues of pedagogy are seen as inherently important for everyone and as a valued research interest, the goals of this section will have been exceeded.

Over the next few years our section will need to continue thinking about how we can best position ourselves to be more influential as APSA continues to address issues of teaching and learning. Through this newsletter and the email announcements I will keep in touch with the section and solicit your input and advice. With the new peer-reviewed journal now in production, the section officers and I hope this newsletter can meet the need of the section to share ideas, answer questions, recommend new classroom approaches and evaluate failures of our experiments, investigate the findings of other disciplines and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, provide advice for new professors and graduate students, debate issues of relevance to the section, and test preliminary research ideas. By moving to an on-line format, we are no longer bound by the parameters of length and will be able to archive past issues on the website. Please send your ideas, essays, suggestions, and submissions to me at the above e-mail address—the call for articles is found later in this newsletter. The next deadline will be March 1 for the Spring edition.

This edition includes several new features that I hope to see continued in future issues (depending on your submissions,

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of course). Tina Mavrikos-Adamou has the inaugural essay in the column **Lessons Learned**—"Returning from the Teaching and Learning Conferences" in which she talks about the ways in which she has applied materials from these conferences into her classroom. The first installment in our new column **The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning** was written by Jeffrey L. Bernstein, who discusses how recent research on student learning can help us improve in the classroom. Finally, we have two brief essays in our **Improving Teaching** column. Andrew Oros writes on the use of current events as a formal classroom project and Nancy Wright discusses means of maximizing classroom participation.

I hope to see many of you at the upcoming Teaching and Learning Conference in Washington, D.C. in February (see details in the Section Announcements). Happy Holidays and I wish you a strong conclusion to your Fall term! **PSE**

## Optimizing Class Participation

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Class participation, while always a component of course grades, is not always assigned as useful a role as it can play. Granted, if it comprises only ten or fifteen percent of a student's grade, it can still be the deciding factor between a B+ and an A-. However, if it comprises up to twenty-five or thirty percent, it becomes a true cornerstone. Small classes or discussion sections of larger classes are most conducive to this high priority on class participation, but it merits this emphasis wherever possible. It encourages regular class attendance (for how can one participate when one is absent?) without having to resort to penalties. It can test students' familiarity with assigned material, especially if the instructor begins class with a question such as "What is the author's key argument?" When class participation is assigned a low percentage, replies to such a question tend to come consistently from a few eager students while the rest remain silent. Conversely, a higher emphasis is likely to encourage a broader spectrum of response.

The following suggestions may overcome students' reluctance to participate:

### ANNOUNCE FROM THE BEGINNING THAT QUESTIONS COUNT

Too often students are reluctant to speak in class when they are confused by what they have read. If it is understood from the beginning that raising questions counts as participation, students will be more inclined to express their confusion (and thereby often discover that their fellow students share the same confusion). Furthermore, students can be encouraged to express their frustration over what they believe but fear to state is unclear writing; for confusion is not always due to faulty comprehension.

### ASSIGN TO SMALL GROUPS THE TASK OF SUMMARIZING KEY CONCEPTS OF THE LITERATURE

A class can be divided into small groups, with the instruction that each member of the group must say something when his/her group is called to state key concepts. The instructor can then follow up by asking the student what those concepts mean to him or her. If the student hesitates, the instructor can then open the question to the rest of the group, or to the class as a whole. This approach places friendly pressure on everyone to participate without intimidating more reticent students.

### ASK THE STUDENTS TO CONTRIBUTE EXAMPLES FROM THEIR OWN OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Concepts such as power, authority, legitimacy and governance

can be difficult to grasp in discussions on political theory. They are, however, very familiar to all of us on a daily basis, though we may not realize their constant presence. If students can relate these concepts to their own lives, the concepts will be clearer. From that point of departure, the instructor can then discuss the differences in analysis at the individual level versus the level of the state or the international organization.

Ensuring active participation by every student is important, both for students' individual growth as scholars and professionals, and for the evolution of the class as a community. The above suggestions are but a few ways to enhance class participation quantitatively and qualitatively. When combined with the assignment of a higher percentage of the course grade, these suggestions can ensure class participation that is dynamic, substantive, and truly educational for the students and instructor alike. **PSE**

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## Using Student Presentations of Current News Media to Link Theory and Practice in the Classroom

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Many of us seek to integrate current news about course topics into our classes, but take the burden unto ourselves. Why not make students responsible for reporting on current news developments about subjects covered in class? Some students will find this more interesting and relevant than textbook reading—it can be a great “hook.” All students can benefit from learning better ways to find relevant articles using electronic databases and other news sources, to summarize texts concisely, to make linkages between theory and practice, and to present their findings orally in a polished manner. Here’s a common approach I use in several courses of different levels, sizes, and subject matter—the “article scrapbook.”

I use student reports on current media topics to start most of my class meetings. Students need to be in class on time to participate, and to have their minds on the subject matter. Even in classes up to 35 students, this method can work—with a few students reporting each day a few times over the course of the semester. I keep a single-sheet log to keep track of who’s presented, and how they did:  $\checkmark$ ,  $\checkmark+$ ,  $\checkmark-$ , 0. Sometimes I ask for volunteers; sometimes I call on people. Sometimes I can hear from 6-8 people on related topics, sometimes fewer. But each week students should have an article prepared to discuss, whether or not they actually are called on. All of the articles are collected at the end of the semester, with an appropriate cover sheet.

I ask my students to address four points in the articles they collect (see Table 1), which requires them to think broadly about course themes each week, about what they have learned (and haven’t yet), and how to summarize texts succinctly.

Students need not be called on all at once—rather you can break up a lecture at points by asking to the class if anyone collected an article that week on a particular point. You might also come

back to a point raised earlier by a student when it comes up in a lecture. In upper-level courses I often tell students in advance that they will be “experts by default” on the subject of their articles—that if other students (or even the professor) have questions about the topic, they will be directed to the student who presented. Student presenters have an out in Point 4 of what they prepare: what didn’t they understand? Unless they bring this up initially, if another student asks them a question about the article that the student presenter can’t answer, the presenter is docked points. I find this a good way to judge whether students truly have learned such things as how a prime minister is selected after an election, how exchange rates can affect the balance of trade, or whether it is typically Republicans or Democrats who support gay marriage.

Interested in trying this “teaching tip” for yourself? Here are few points to be prepared for: First, students probably will have to be coaxed into being concise. I think this is a good skill to promote and that it’s worth the class-time and effort. Set a high standard early! Second, students may need some help finding appropriate articles. Again, I think it’s a good use of class time to ensure that students understand the materials available to them via popular library databases (such as Lexis-Nexis) and important web-sites for the subject of the course (including foreign media sources). You will have to decide for yourself if you want to insist on current articles (and how current), if you will require a newspaper article or will accept one from a magazine, wire service, TV program transcript, or website. Finally, some students will try to collect all their articles in the last week of the semester, despite the threat of being called on in class. I find that most students print out their articles from the web, which includes a time-stamp on the print out. Students can be warned that this time stamp should show weekly printouts. Still, this isn’t a perfect fix—if you sense a real problem, you could collect and return the articles each week, though this seems to me a lot of extra work.

Many of us try to encourage classroom participation in general—especially beyond the 3-4 active participants present in many classes. This approach provides one way to make sure that all students have something to contribute, which may lead to more contributions and questions in general as students build confidence in speaking up in class. This approach also provides one way to quantify that often amorphous category of “course participation.” And, at times, maybe even the professors will learn about a recent development we missed. What will be your article this week? **PSE**

Be prepared in class to address the following FOUR (4) points:

1. Very briefly, what is the article about? (no more than 3 sentences)
2. How does the article link to course themes?
3. What do you find of interest in the article? (why did you pick it?)
4. What don’t you understand about the article, if anything? (what would you like to discuss/clarify?)

\*\*If you are not prepared to address concisely these four points at each class, your course participation grade will suffer.

**Table 1: Composing an “Article Scrapbook” — Basic Directions to Students**

## Applying Good Research Technique to Questions on Student Learning

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If your graduate school experience was similar to mine, teaching and research were viewed as two very different aspects of the professional career, with an uneasy interaction between them. Time devoted to teaching was viewed as time not spent researching; in some cases, whispered warnings were circulated to take care not to be viewed as a “teacher” for fear that it might weaken one’s research credentials. Students informally “tracked” themselves into whether they intended to primarily teach or do research, and the pecking order of potential jobs often focused on whether the hiring institutions were “research” or “teaching” schools.

On the other side of the job market, of course, most of us realize that there is a strong connection between the research and teaching. While some academic research shows little correlation in the aggregate between teaching ratings and scholarly productivity (Marsh and Hattie 2002), most of us believe that good teaching can lead to good research, and vice versa. For many, forays into Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) work provide a nice way to combine these two aspects of our professional careers, using practices derived from the research world to investigate our teaching and our students’ learning. I suggest here that engaging in SOTL can help us use effective research practice not only to enhance teaching and learning in our classes, but also to vastly transform how the academy views, and values, the teaching enterprise.

Two of the most seminal SOTL works argue that we should bring the same rigor to teaching as we bring to scholarship. Ernest Boyer’s (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered* explicitly ties the term “scholarship” to the work we do as teachers; to Boyer, traditional research (the scholarship of discovery) was just one of four forms of scholarship an academic could practice (along with the scholarship of application, integration and teaching). The successor to Boyer’s volume, *Scholarship Assessed* by Charles Glassick, Mary Taylor Huber and Gene Maeroff (1997), suggested that work in the scholarship of teaching can be judged by the same rubric with which we judge all other forms of scholarship—does it display clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique?

Despite this line of work, our teaching practice all too often seems disconnected from the way we do our research. Echoing Glassick, Huber and Maeroff, I argue here that many good practices we use in traditional scholarship are abandoned when we enter the classroom—to the detriment of our students, our selves, and the academy. Aspects of good scholarly practice—seeking feedback, broad dissemination, and use of evidence to support claims—should also be aspects of our teaching practice.

Making it such, I believe, will improve the work we do and how the academy views it.

### 1. Good Researchers Seek Frequent Feedback on their Work

Read the acknowledgments section of any book, journal article, or other form of traditional scholarship. The conscientious author demonstrates in this section that he or she consulted with experts in the fields the work explores, gotten their input, and (hopefully) made the work better as a result. Researchers who do not share their work with others before seeking to publish their work lose an opportunity to improve through the wisdom of those around them.

And yet, to echo Lee Shulman’s (1993) classic “Putting an End to Pedagogical Solitude,” this is exactly what we do when we teach. We rarely talk with others about what we are doing. We rarely watch others teach or engage in systematic discussion about how their students are learning. These discussions are rarely a big part of a job interview. If, as Glassick, Huber and Maeroff suggest, the standards for evaluating scholarship are similar across Boyer’s typology, this lack of conversation is troubling.

It may be troubling, but it is also understandable. Engaging in these sorts of discussions might be taken as acknowledgement of a “problem;” as Randy Bass (1999) suggests, nobody wants to have a problem in their teaching. Bass correctly notes that “problems” drive productive discussions about research; the scholarship of discovery typically begins with an investigation of some serious problem in the discipline. Sadly, by minimizing “problems” in our conversations about teaching and student learning, we shut this area off from serious intellectual inquiry, to the detriment of the academy.

### 2. Good Research is Broadly Disseminated

The notion of scholarship implies an obligation on the part of the scholar to share his or her work with the broader community. The most remarkable piece of research that sits in a desk drawer, never to be seen by others, cannot advance knowledge nor educate future scholars. It is no wonder that tenure and promotion committees require not only that scholarship be good, but also that it be disseminated to the appropriate audience. This is how research remains alive for others.

Good teaching practice, however, usually lives and dies in the classroom. Few faculty members actively document their students’ learning in any meaningful way (for two superb exceptions, see Randy Bass’ Visual Knowledge Project at <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/vkp> and examples of Dan Bernstein’s work on course portfolios at <http://www.ku.edu/~cte/gallery/index.html>). Anyone looking at these sites can get a good sense

of what people have done, the processes they have used to build their teaching, and how the reader can implement similar ideas in his or her classroom. But these are the exceptions; good examples of work in the classroom are being lost because of our failure to capture it, through teaching portfolios and other means, the way we would capture critical data in scholarly inquiry.

### 3. Evidence, Evidence, Evidence

Good scholarship is characterized by appropriate use of data to defend the arguments we make. These data can take many forms—laboratory trials, statistical results, close textual analysis, etc.—but at its heart, the research process requires that we be able to support the arguments we make. A scholar who claimed something was so because “it seems that way” would likely publish little. Good scholarship involves appropriate rigor in evaluating the claims we make.

When it comes to teaching, however, some of the very best scholars enter the classroom and lose much of their rigor. In many cases, we fly by the seat of our pants in making and testing pedagogical innovations. This usually does not lead us astray; good teachers have good teaching instincts. Evidence-based arguments, however, allow for more confidence in what we do. Evidence can be varied—my own work, for example, uses surveys, teaching journals, and content analysis of student essays. When completed, I will have been able to test hypotheses about teaching practice and student learning against data so I will know, more convincingly than before, what works and what does not in building the civic competency of students. Following good research practice will have enhanced my work in the classroom.

I'll conclude by echoing Shulman's idea (1993) that traditional work in the scholarship of discovery is valued because it is visible. We can read traditional research articles, discuss them, learn from them, and reward those who write them. Our ability to assess research enables us to determine whether we find the work compelling. Teaching is less valued in the academy because it is less visible. We don't talk about it as much, we don't share our practice with each other, and we don't hold scholarly work on teaching to evidence-based standards of rigor. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning can help enhance the nature of professionalism in the teaching world (Shulman 2000); incorporating the basic principles outlined in this piece can lead directly to teaching being appreciated more by others. When we move in this direction, we can help reclaim the rightful place teaching deserves at the center of the academy's mission. **PSE**

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## Notables

- A new book from an Undergraduate Education section member, Grant Reeher (Syracuse University) will be published by New York University Press in January 2006 — *First Person Political: Legislative Life and the Meaning of Public Service*. In *First Person Political*, Grant Reeher combats the public's alienation from and distrust of politicians by putting a personal face on everyday political life. Through moving personal interviews, Reeher allows legislators to tell their own stories about how and why they came to politics, the experience of serving in their state legislature, their decisions to stay or leave, and the many trials they face in the name of public service. Reeher contends that these politicians do have the public good in mind and often suffer great personal losses for their chance to represent the people and fight for what they think is right. His research also shows that those who choose to run for office often come from a background of deep community involvement. Reeher argues against public cynicism about our elected officials, and his profiles stir not only our praise and respect for these legislators, but

also a greater belief in the democratic process itself. The excerpts from his interviews provide a rarely afforded intimate look at these politicians. What emerges from these stories is a humane and believable portrait of public servants acting on behalf of the public good, a portrait that should provide some comfort, perhaps even inspiration, for citizens concerned about the state of American democracy.

- Vincent K. Pollard of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa is the editor of the “Hawai'i Politics WWW Virtual Library,” an official module of the Pacific Studies WWW Virtual Library. July 2005 - present. <<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/Hawaii.html>> This resource will help students, teachers, journalists, advocates, social scientists, foundations and social service agencies. Themes include the following: History, law, society; Economy; Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement; Hawai'i, 1959-2005; Challenges to one-party rule; Hawai'i & the Electoral College; Voting; and Other activism, advocacy.

## Returning From the Teaching & Learning Conferences

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Can you think of an occasion when so many strong-willed and opinionated political scientists have come together to exchange ideas and all have emerged at the end happy and smiling? Of all the conferences that I have attended in the past two years the two that stand out for their contribution to both my teaching and professional development have been the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> *Teaching and Learning Conferences* in Political Science, sponsored by APSA. At both occasions I was a presenter, and found the experiences so worthwhile I thought that I might share them with others. What follows is a brief description of what I learned from the first two *Teaching and Learning Conferences*, and more importantly, what I have applied and adopted in my classroom since.

While listening to my colleagues at the inaugural 1<sup>st</sup> *Teaching and Learning Conference* in the track entitled “Diversity and Global Perspectives,” I was constantly evaluating what I might take away from the workshop and incorporate into my own classroom given the opportunity. I listened as I heard about teleconferencing techniques, simulations, and other practical methods as well as various uses of technology for teaching purposes. When arriving back home from the conference, I was thereafter inspired to look at the simulation disk that accompanied a textbook I was using in one of my classes, and I did utilize some of the exercises from that disk the following semester in that course. Likewise, I looked into scheduling a class in a computerized classroom the next semester, where I utilized computer technology to present information that otherwise I would have presented in a traditional classroom setting. I found that the students thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and that a majority of them expressed their delight about being in another venue, other than the regular classroom.

One of the most practical techniques that I heard a colleague mention to get the attention of students in class is to stop for a few moments after explaining an important political concept, and ask the students to write down in three sentences what they have understood that concept to mean. This gets those students dozing off to wake up, and allows those who are following to consolidate what they have learned. I have since used this technique several times, adding to it by calling on students randomly to read out the three sentences they wrote.

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> APSA Conference on *Teaching and Learning* in 2005 as a presenter in Track 4: Global Perspectives/International Models, I likewise had my ear attuned to what I might take away for

my own use in the classroom. As a result, I have since adopted the use of videos and DVDs to visually “show” students realities about the places and subjects they are reading about, and have furthered my use of technology to reserve the computer classroom several times throughout the semester for visual presentations via the computer. Just last week I used a PowerPoint presentation to show my class the vastness and diversity of the Russian Federation, and the visual effect had a decisive impact on their understanding the vastness and multicultural character of the country being studied. I have likewise adopted other active learning techniques in the classroom that my colleagues enthusiastically discussed at the conference, such as the use of question and answer sessions towards the close of class time. On several occasions I have stopped lecturing and gotten the students to either comment on something that was presented, allowing them to express their own opinion about an issue or topic, or have asked them to give a contemporary example of an idea or concept.

Additionally, I took one of my classes to the library last semester for a presentation by the librarian about resources found there and how students can access these particular resources to write their papers and assignments. They were able to search some of the databases at the close of the session and investigate relevant sources for their papers. As a way to “share” my experiences with other members of my department at my home institution, I was given the opportunity by the chair of the department to speak to the other faculty members at a departmental meeting where I discussed my experiences and impression of attending the *Teaching and Learning* conferences. Many members of the department were eager to hear of my positive interaction with colleagues and about some of the “tricks” for keeping students tuned into class.

Often we are overwhelmed by the pressure to publish and be prolific scholars, and within this whirlwind we often overlook that what we do that effects the most number of young people is teach. Personally, I have taken this responsibility to be an important one, especially as the political world increasingly becomes complex and multifaceted and its future members will need knowledge and wisdom to navigate their way through it all. In the end, as a result of presenting and truly participating in a workshop format at both APSA Conferences on *Teaching and Learning*, I am both a better educator and a more thoughtful political scientist. What more could you ask? **PSE**

## **The Road to the White House: Design and Implement a Course About U.S. Presidential Campaigns That Includes a New Hampshire Primary Campaign Internship<sup>1</sup>**

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*“...being involved at the ground level and gaining exposure and practice of the central activities that make up a grassroots campaign has been an incredible experience that has taught me valuable lessons that could never be learned in a classroom” (Jolene Bussiere, Internship Paper).*

*“It was good to get practical experience in the world of politics. I have read books and watched programs, but it is not the same as experiencing it first hand” (Chad Thereau, Journal).*

For the Spring 2004 semester I developed an upper level course entitled *The Road to the White House*, to study the history and politics of presidential campaigns that included an intensive 10-day internship in New Hampshire. In addition to reading assignments, research and seminar papers, exams and seminar participation, students had the opportunity to learn first-hand about presidential campaigns and the presidential nominating process by working on one of the campaigns in New Hampshire, in the days leading up to the first-in-the-nation primary. Many described the course as a “life changing experience.” In the words of one student who participated in *The Road to the White House*: “The New Hampshire experience has been one of the most exciting and memorable experiences of my life. In just ten days everybody was immersed in real politics. Not from reading a book or sitting through a lecture, but from actually experiencing what happens in presidential campaigns.”

### **Resources & Logistics**

Five months before the class would depart for New Hampshire, I made all hotel and transportation arrangements. Although there are many more hotels in Manchester than when I first began working on presidential primaries there, early booking is a must for the project to be successful. Due to the nature of the course, I wanted to select the students who would participate. I created an application package that consisted of a Road to the White House Intern Application, Road to the White House Contact, Medical Questionnaire, Liability Waiver, and the USF Overseas Study Programs Participant Contract. I conducted an in-person interview with each of the students interested in taking the course. Work on presidential campaigns in New Hampshire requires long, hard days. I was looking for students who were bright, mature, responsible, enthusiastic, and who would be able to handle themselves while far away from home and under the stress of the final days leading up to the primary.

I met regularly with the students in the weeks leading up to the course, especially during the winter break, to answer last minute questions about logistics and their internship placements. Many of the students were nervous, as for some this was their first time traveling out-of-state, for others it was the first time they were assigned to lodge with roommates, and for others it would be their first encounter with a snowy winter climate.

Students paid additional course fees to cover the costs of lodging and transportation (\$525 per student) and the students booked their own airfare. In addition, we received two grants: one from the Vice President’s Fund for Enhancement and another from the College of Arts and Sciences. This additional funding allowed us to provide “extras,” such as long sleeve t-shirts (with our course logo) and hats and mittens (in our school colors) to keep us warm while in the harsh New England winter temperatures, as well as to provide some meals and snacks. In addition to making our time in New Hampshire more comfortable, these funds allowed us to enhance the academic experience by publishing a book and producing a DVD documentary about our New Hampshire experience.

### **Subject Matter**

The course was designed to introduce students to the history and politics of presidential campaigns. Topics covered in the seminar included the history of the presidential nominating process, the role of the New Hampshire primary, the electoral college, voting behavior, partisan realignment, the McGovern-Fraser Commission, the role of the media in presidential elections, polling, campaign finance, the 2000 presidential election and the Florida recount, suggestions for electoral reform, and predicting presidential elections. In addition to the weekly reading assignments,<sup>2</sup> seminar papers and seminar participation, students also were required to submit a major research paper about a (different) historical presidential campaign. Students presented their research papers to the class (and also distributed a handout that included a synopsis of their findings as well as suggestions for further reading) so that all of us would learn more about past presidential campaigns. In addition to learning more about a specific presidential campaign, this assignment not only enhanced students research, writing, and oral presentation skills, but also it allowed them to put their New Hampshire experience in historical context.

### **Access**

As a result of my work at the White House, on several presidential campaigns (in the national headquarters and as state director in states across the country) as well as my extensive political experience in New Hampshire, I had personal relationships with those in leadership positions on the various presidential cam-

paigns in New Hampshire. This access provided assurance that our students would have quality internship placements, and, when there were bumps along the road, that we would be able to smooth things out quickly. However, connections are not needed in order to organize an exciting New Hampshire program, and I am hopeful that the material in this article will be helpful in developing a program best-suited to the needs of your students. Campaigns are always eager for the assistance of interns, and staff will work with professors who bring their students to New Hampshire. My only caveat, having directed statewide field operations in New Hampshire, is that you must ensure that the students will be at their placements for a long enough time period to make their training worthwhile.

### The New Hampshire Internship

I arranged all of the internship placements for the students, but I gave them the opportunity to select the presidential candidate they would work for in New Hampshire. However, I required that they research all of the candidates' platforms and campaigns prior to making their final decision. Our first seminar was devoted to learning more about all of the presidential candidates. Each student wrote a paper about one of the candidates (these were pre-assigned prior to the start of the semester, so that all ten candidates would be covered in class on the first day). In addition to the student paper presentations, we watched television advertisements and videos/DVDs from the campaigns, and we analyzed an assortment of campaign literature.

Even though the internship would be integrated into the curriculum as a vehicle for students to learn first-hand about presidential campaigns, I thought that it was important for the students to feel invested in their respective campaigns. While I wanted students to retain a certain amount of academic objectivity and an ability to step back and evaluate what they were doing and learning, I believed that by ensuring that they were having a positive experience we would provide the best learning environment. After the students began to work on their respective campaigns, the transformation from participant-observer to "partisan" was evident. One of the students described in her journal:

The excitement of yesterday settled down and now we have to concentrate on work. There is so much to be done, and so many people to reach. We haven't left the hotel yet, but I am up and ready to go. There is a strange feeling of attachment to my campaign. At this point, it is much more than just a learning experience. I realize how much is at stake, how important our work is, and how much others rely on me being in the office now. There is a sense of purpose and also a sense of responsibility (Dinara Newman, Journal).

Although the students were allowed to select their own internship placement, we ended up with a distribution of our students among all seven of the campaigns in New Hampshire: Bush/Cheney, Clark, Dean, Edwards, Kerry, Kucinich, and Lieberman. There were 21 students working on seven campaigns in three

cities in New Hampshire. This diversity of internship experiences enriched our seminar discussions. During our 10 days in New Hampshire, we met as a seminar in the mornings, and then the students spent the remainder of their day at their respective internship placements. As the instructor, I had to balance providing the students with additional educational opportunities while allowing the students the ability to make the most of their internships by becoming integral parts of their campaigns.

### Internship Responsibilities

Our students engaged in traditional voter contact activities while in New Hampshire—door-to-door canvassing, phonebanking, mailings, visibility, candidate events, and Get-Out-the-Vote (GOTV)—but these activities take on new meaning in the days leading up to the New Hampshire primary. Given the size of New Hampshire—both in terms of geography and the manageable number of targeted voters—the intensity of grassroots organizing in New Hampshire is unparalleled. It was a pleasure reviewing the students' journals, reading through their accounts of the events and activities they participated in while in New Hampshire. Below are excerpts describing what they learned while engaging in these voter contact activities:

#### Phonebanking:

(Persuasion calls): Phonebanking was definitely an important aspect to campaigning, but I felt like a phone salesman and in a sense I guess I was. I was trying to sell Governor Howard Dean to the undecided voters of New Hampshire (Joe Smolen, Internship Paper).

(Crowdbuilding calls): As we approached the high school [the site of the Kerry Town Hall meeting] we had to go over an overpass that went over the Everett Turnpike. Cars were backed up ... miles trying to get to the event. It was a memorable sight. The most amazing part is that this event was scheduled just days before. In those days, the people at the office were able to gather almost 2,000 people that were interested in seeing John Kerry speak. It was gratifying to know that the work we were doing was paying off (Chad Thereau, Journal).

#### Canvassing:

For this I had to really study and know Wes Clark inside and out along with the faults of other candidates. I was not able to carry all my notes with me when I went door-to-door, so I had to be an expert. I found a lot of people are nicer when you're face-to-face with them, and they are usually willing to accept the bag of goodies you hand them when you are talking about your candidate. This year, I think most of the campaigns gave out DVDs. Ours was called *American Son*, and every time I would watch it I would always tear up. My goal was to get these DVDs to as many as people as possible so they could see how I feel about Wesley Clark. I did not just go to houses though; we all would walk the streets of downtown as well.... We visited coffee shops, malls, and grocery stores handing out as much information on Wes as

we could (Brittany Fenske, Internship Paper).

#### Correspondence :

I spent the better part of the day going through all the e-mails and doing my best to give a good response to each one. The thing was as soon as you sent them out, more e-mails are coming back in, so you are never done with them. At times, going through the e-mails I felt like Sisyphus, pushing the rock up the hill, realizing that no matter how many of them I respond to, there are going to be more coming in directly after them. The e-mails and phone calls will never stop; it brings the term multi-tasking to a whole new level (Michael Gagliardo, Internship Paper).

I spent the rest of the day stuffing envelopes. I can't believe how many packets we are sending out. We must have stuck one on the door of every voter in New Hampshire. I have a million paper cuts to show for this (Amy Kiser, Journal).

#### Visibility:

If you have read at all about the 'sign wars' during the primaries anything that was written was an injustice and being there is the only way to appreciate the phenomenon. There were thousands of people representing their various candidates. All grouped together chanting different slogans. One group trying to be louder than the next (Joe Smolen, Internship Paper).

Now I am paired up with a fellow Kerry volunteer and sent to the last presidential debate at St. Anselm College. We walked probably ten miles uphill through slush to the debate. We were in covert mode. There are thousands of us when we meet up with the firefighters. The firefighters bring their drummer and full dress bagpipe players. Operation Braveheart. Kerry troops rally far from the sight of enemy supporters. Plan of attack. Kerry arrives. We march to the beat of drums against the powerful bagpipes. We triumphantly proceed over the hill. I am a few rows behind the firefighters and energized in the presence of a great leader. Freezing for a reason for Kerry (Liz Austin, Journal).

#### Conclusion

Upon our return from New Hampshire, I edited a book about the class, and Julie Petrick, one of the students who majored in photojournalism, produced a documentary DVD about the New Hampshire experience. Our work on these projects provided an opportunity to synthesize and analyze what we had learned during that exciting 10-day journey.

While in New Hampshire, students were required to keep a campaign journal—to record their thoughts, descriptions of the work they were doing, and reflections on what they were learning from the experiences. Students also posted entries in their "blogs"—an online weblog of their experiences, so that folks back home in Florida—and around the country—could keep track of their activities and progress. Upon our return, students were required to write a paper about their internship

experience, as assignment that required them to step back from the day-to-day recordings in their journals and to reflect on what they learned during the internship. These student writings provided the basis for the book, which also included memorabilia (campaign literature, fliers, walklists, etc.), a photo album, and newspaper articles about the class. I scheduled an additional class meeting (a luncheon) to distribute copies of the books and DVDs to the class, to watch the documentary together, and to reminisce about the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity we experienced in New Hampshire.

Perhaps one of the most fulfilling outcomes of this course was that it sparked an interest in the students to get involved in politics post-New Hampshire. The course inspired future participation in campaigns (one of the students ran for convention delegate, several became interns for local campaigns, one became the county chair for John Edwards' campaign, another became the Regional Director of Youth for Bush/Cheney re-election campaign, several secured staff positions on campaigns during the general election in 2004, and a few of the students are actively involved in the 2006 gubernatorial race already underway here in Florida), activism on campus (several students got together to organize a Young Democrats group), and further research (one student plans to pursue an Independent Study with me to continue his research on President Truman and to travel to the Truman Presidential Library in Independence; another is now pursuing graduate studies in survey research and plans to pursue a career conducting polling research for political campaigns).

I brought students to New Hampshire primarily because I wanted them to learn more about presidential campaigns and the presidential nominating process. That the students have been inspired by the process and have recognized that they can make a difference in their community by becoming involved in politics has made this course even more rewarding for me as an instructor. **PSE**

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>An earlier version of this paper, entitled "The Road to the White House: Teaching and Learning about U.S. Presidential Campaigns through Civic Participation," was presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois in September 2004. A copy of this paper, with its more detailed description of the implementation of this project, is available from the author.

<sup>2</sup> Required texts included the following: Michael L. Goldstein. *Guide to the 2004 Presidential Election*. Congressional Quarterly Press, 2003; John S. Jackson III and William Crotty. *The Politics of Presidential Selection, 2nd Ed.* Pearson Longman, 2001; Randall J. Jones, Jr. *Who Will Be in the White House?: Predicting Presidential Elections*. Longman, 2002; Niall Palmer. *The New Hampshire Primary and the American Electoral Process*. Westview Press, 2000 [1997]; and Dante J. Scala. *Stormy Weather: The New Hampshire Primary and Presidential Politics*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Copies of the syllabus can be obtained by contacting the author.

## The Philosophy of Phenomenology and the Study of Politics

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All students should care about how their government operates. They should also be righteously concerned about how our political representatives, at all levels, make policy and key decisions that affect us all. Unfortunately, when it comes to politics, many students are somewhat shortsighted and blithely unconcerned about the political issues that affect their lives. Or so it seems. The fact that many students ignore the complexities and peculiarities of politics and the absolute truths (in the discipline) is particularly troubling. Is this because many American citizens are disconnected from the political world? Or is it because many just don't care, viewing politics as irrelevant to their lives?

Perhaps many students, generally speaking, feel overwhelmed when they contemplate or think about politics, often asking: What are the benefits of focusing on such dreary and profane things? Many ask: What are the practical applications? But politics should be everyone's milieu, as we are affected by it (*who gets what, when and how*) in many ways every day. To be sure, understanding and studying politics is a sophisticated way of analyzing governments, policies and institutional procedures in a bureaucracy. It is not simply a matter or means of guessing or deciding whether a politician is competent enough to run for office, for example, or just the act of voting; but these things are also important. In so many words, the serious study of politics allows us to analyze political data, identify contentious, hot-topic issues, and make informed decisions about certain courses of action taken by governmental officials, which is always proper and necessary.

Nonetheless, some critics and cynics believe politics is a very boring, complex business, as well as hard to grasp, or even comprehend. But the study of politics is not something esoteric or mystical, as it can be entertaining, stimulating, empowering, enlightening and even uplifting for *anyone* when the truth is involved. Politics, of course, is not an exact science, but it can provide new ways for the uninitiated to see and understand the philosophical and theoretical aspects of our most crucial and important social and political lives. As many of us very well know, politics can be an ugly, sometimes dirty business, possibly because of political corruption, outright deceit, demagoguery, self-serving politicians, and other assorted social difficulties in our nation. However, the apt study of politics allows Americans and students to involve themselves in real-world political situations (if they so desire).

Ostensibly, for example, Americans are told that it is impossible to change our current political system, and that it is a waste of time. But is this just an excuse for not participating? Moreover, the mistake many Americans often make is accepting that they can't do anything about their sometimes repressive government, especially when it adversely affects their well-being and individual lives. But nothing can be further from the truth. Students have to face the facts in terms of politics, as it will definitely

affect their political socialization, beliefs, attitudes and values. Furthermore, the study of politics is about seeing things clearly or in a different political light, while embracing the truth and the philosophy of phenomenology,<sup>1</sup> which lays bare the ugly facts of an issue. In this sense, politics is about almost everything. Furthermore, it is necessary for all students to know something about their political culture and the larger political world.

In this way, students can learn if government truly is necessary, or if politicians can make a difference, or if they can make politics more agreeable. Many are quick to point out also that it is almost impossible for the average American citizen to influence government in a political Democracy, especially when a strong, national executive administration calls the shots. But if the people (in a true Democracy) are responsible for that specific government, they should be the ultimate political power and authority, and willing to call the shots themselves. Politically astute individuals (or "the people") can move contrary annoyances or mountains, so to speak, if they are so inclined to do so.

Nevertheless, many students remain ignorant about the various political issues that we are faced with today. Why? We may never really know. But one of the greatest challenges in understanding politics is getting students to think critically about the many political issues, instead of being misguided or distracted and fed incorrect information by some politicians or political ideologues. By incorporating the philosophy of phenomenology, students are able to question narrow-minded, parochial ideas, to discredit political falsehoods and to empower themselves with the truth, as well as learn something more than the repetitive nonsense by demagogues of one ideological persuasion. The idea is to always question or challenge your basic assumptions and prejudices about others and American political life. Additionally, when professors teach students about politics, they must affirm the importance of them raising complex and difficult questions. Shouldn't students, for instance, also know about the fallacies of unethical political behavior and the lies some politicians tell us to advance their own political agendas?

It is within this particular framework, and with these truths, that we grow and learn about serious political matters that affect our world. It should be added that Americans can never truly divorce themselves from politics, nor can we put aside our ideologues, no matter how hard we might try. In a Democracy, we must also be cognizant that individualism and the right to think for ourselves are most important, too. This should explain another significant distinction between knowing and comprehending the philosophical context of American politics. By seriously applying the philosophy of phenomenology, we may be able to penetrate the political or proverbial stone-wall, or many conflicting and confusing methods and illusions of studying the discipline. The philosophy of phenomenology is essentially a way to pontificate on the formal structure of our awareness and existence.

Such knowledge is also truly significant because the study of politics is fragmented, with various audiences and different ways of addressing the issues, or responding to political questions. The philosophy of phenomenology, therefore, encourages us to think critically, to reflect on the issues and the unintended consequences of our actions and political decisions.

In many ways, the philosophy of phenomenology is the beginning or preface to our political consciousness, or conscious political lives, or awareness of the political issues. And like a painting by Picasso, to use the analogy, phenomenology allows us to address politics in abstract and unique ways, rather than abiding to some formal political process or approach. The absolute truth, as mentioned earlier, is also critical in using the philosophy of phenomenology, because it helps us realize that political lies, for example, should never be excused or tolerated in politics, if possible, or used instead of real facts, no matter how difficult it is to accept the absolute truth. In other words, political lies, or omissions, or stretching the truth in politics is utterly incompatible with the philosophy of phenomenology, because it ultimately clouds or distorts our political awareness.

What then should be the student's role in studying, exploring or understanding the many aspects of politics, or the political system and its many parts in our society today? Being sufficiently interested certainly is appropriate. Perhaps having a discernible point of view is the second step in knowing and comprehending politics. This is very rare, however. As a matter of fact, compelling one to take a certain position on a controversial issue should be next to impossible in the realm of politics. For example, are we actually talking about politics in this essay, or is it really about political knowledge?

In a very fundamental way, the philosophy of phenomenology tries to amplify, clarify and integrate methodologies, abject truths, and to a lesser degree, the political lessons or rules of thumb in politics, as many of us perceive them, which is even more difficult. It is also an intricate way to not only address the policy decisions made by politicians or representatives, but the philosophy also presents the opportunity for us to criticize our political leaders in a logical fashion as well. The efficacy of being more aware of the issues is also of primary importance when it comes to politics and the study of political science. Therefore, the philosophy of phenomenology is far more intriguing and meaningful because it allows students to improvise certain alternatives, like a jazz tune, without ignoring or disguising the political reality—and truth.

It is a very rare thing to do—that is, to embrace the philosophy of phenomenology, but not impossible. For some further speculations on this matter, it must be admitted that phenomenology is evidently hard for many to sometimes take seriously. Thus, it is increasingly obvious and regrettable that such a philosophy will not be used as much in the future. It certainly does not have to be this way. The heart of the problem in studying politics or

political science is the fact that it is dynamic and forever evolving or changing. Toward this end, we must ask if phenomenology is the answer or if it can be effective in problem-solving activities, in terms of politics.

Realistically, of course, professors of politics and political science must always stress the importance of studying current and historical issues, as it is all relative and useful. If students don't see the necessity of studying politics, or are not totally engaged or interested, professors *only* have themselves to blame. In recent years, which is important to our discussion, the vast majority of works in politics has been more of an intense and extensive historical nature, and not necessarily of a critical one, which is essential in studying and applying phenomenology to the discipline of politics or political science. The philosophy of phenomenology then is truly phenomenal and remarkable because it can be adaptable to any approach or theory of politics, as well as used in both the pluralist and majoritarian models of democratic politics.

Therefore, colleges and universities should focus on how students (and all Americans) can analyze and make sound judgments about policy or political issues, constitutional issues, state and local and national matters, and international affairs. Because of the importance of politics, social and ethical considerations should also be addressed at the same time when applying phenomenology, and with the same gusto. What, then, does it mean, concretely, to study politics? If not completely ignored, the study of politics or political science, using the philosophy of phenomenology, can be comprehensive in the sense that it will engender students to know more about serious things, and our expanding world. Political issues, of course, are not new to most of us because humans or students have been dealing with or considering such matters since the Greeks, and when the study of politics became a full-fledged, academic discipline.

To me what is essential in the study of politics is maintaining intelligent, authentic dialogue between divergent groups, reading the canon of great works, excellent writing and research, and follow-through on political promises by leaders with some kind of patronage. In the future, the study of politics or political science—in terms of interest—should be a passionate calling and a life-long mission while incorporating the depths of the philosophy of phenomenology. The study of politics should also be about debate and compromise, regardless of how Americans view their politics, or participate in the political process. Students should finally resent such inferences to the contrary that they hate and are turned-off by political confrontation and the perceived dirtiness and ambiguity of politics. **PSE**

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Husserl introduced the concept of phenomenology in his book *Ideas: A General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1913; trans. 1931).

## McGraw-Hill Award for Scholarship and Teaching on Civic Engagement in Political Science

McGraw Hill has agreed to sponsor a new award honoring faculty work on the teaching and research on Civic Engagement and Undergraduate Education has agreed to administer it. I have asked several members of the section to form this new committee to develop the award criteria and selection process for this annual award.

The Civic Engagement group cannot administer the award because APSA has mandated a moratorium on new awards except for those sponsored by an organized section. Because the Civic Engagement group is not an organized section and we are, APSA recommended to McGraw-Hill that they work with us. Several members of the committee are members of both the Civic Engagement group and the Undergraduate Education section.

Quentin Kidd of Christopher Newport University graciously agreed to serve as chair of this committee. The committee consists of the following members:

Rick Battistoni, Providence College  
 Bruce Caswell, Rowan University  
 Brigid Harrison, Montclair State University  
 Chip Hauss, "Search for Common Ground" Senior Associate  
 Alison Millett McCartney, Towson University  
 Elizabeth G. Williams, Santa Fe Community College

Representing the publisher: Monica Eckman, McGraw Hill

We will publicly announce this new award at the 2006 TLC conference, but wanted to share with the section's membership the description of the new award.

The McGraw-Hill Award for Scholarship and Teaching on Civic Engagement in Political Science recognizes political scientists who advance civic engagement through the study of engagement and participation. The award seeks to honor a wide range of unique and new approaches to the scholarship and teaching of civic engagement, but in particular scholars who raise political awareness, involvement, and participation of undergraduate students. Nominations can be made by anyone, although self-nominations will not be accepted. Award winners will be chosen by a committee appointed by the Chair of the Undergraduate Education section of the American Political Science Association on behalf of McGraw-Hill. The award carries a small cash stipend and the winner will be announced at the annual Awards Reception at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. **PSE**

## 3rd APSA Teaching and Learning Conference in Political Science Registration Information

The American Political Science Association invites you to participate in the 3rd Annual Teaching and Learning Conference from February 18-20 in Washington, DC. Based on the working group model, this conference will provide a forum to develop models on teaching and learning as well as to discuss broad themes and values affecting political science education. As a working group participant, you will be able to select one of the following themes:

- Assessment/Learning Outcomes
- Community-Based Learning
- Diversity and Inequality
- Internationalizing the Curriculum
- Simulations and Role Play
- Teaching Research Methods
- Teaching With Technology

General registration begins on November 15th. We encourage you to register early, as spaces are limited. For more information, visit the Teaching and Learning Conference webpage at <[www.apsanet.org/section\\_236.cfm](http://www.apsanet.org/section_236.cfm)> or contact Emily Newman at [enewman@apsanet.org](mailto:enewman@apsanet.org). **PSE**

**Nancy E. Wright** (“Optimizing Class Participation,” page 2) is an adjunct faculty member at Long Island University’s Brooklyn campus, where she has taught a variety of courses in international and comparative politics, including graduate and upper-level undergraduate seminars. She also designed and taught a seminar entitled “Transformational Leadership in America’s Formative Century” which examined the lives of Aaron Burr, Frederick Douglass, Belva Lockwood, and Queen Liliuokalani. In addition to Long Island University, she has taught extensively within the City University of New York system and at Manhattan College.

**Andrew L. Oros** (“Using Student Presentations...,” page 3) is Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Studies at Washington College in Chestertown, MD. He teaches courses on topics in international and comparative politics, East Asia, and American foreign policy, and is the author of several articles and book chapters on Japanese foreign policy, foreign intelligence studies, and the role of culture and identity in political analysis. His first book, *The Politics of Antimilitarism: State Identity in Japan’s Evolving Security Practices*, is forthcoming.

**Jeffrey L. Bernstein** (“Applying Good Research Technique...,” page 4) is Associate Professor of Political Science at Eastern Michigan University and a member of the APSA Undergraduate Education Section Board. His research interests include political learning and civic education as well as the scholarship of teaching and learning in political science. During the 2005-06 academic year, he is a Carnegie Scholar in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. He wishes to acknowledge Matt Kaplan, Deborah Metzlish, and Rebecca Nowacek for their comments on an earlier draft of his contribution.

After receiving her education in the United States, **Tina Mavrikos-Adamou** (“Returning from the Teaching & Learning Conferences,” page 6) began her teaching career in Southeastern Europe and taught courses within the fields of political science and sociology for more than twelve years in Greece. In January of 2004, she returned to New York with her family and has continued her teaching career as an adjunct at both Hofstra University and Adelphi University. Her main area of research interest is in comparing the process of democratization and its consolidation in southeastern Europe and the Balkan region.

**Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan** (“The Road to the White House...,” page 7) is Assistant Professor of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. Her latest book, *Congressional Participation as Amicus Curiae before the U.S. Supreme Court, explores an under-studied — yet significant — aspect of modern Congress-Court relations. In addition to her scholarly activities, McLauchlan worked at the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the White House. A veteran of several presidential campaigns, she has managed statewide operations across the U.S., from Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon.*

**Ernest N. Bracey** (“The Philosophy of Phenomenology...,” page 10) is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. He was formerly Professor of Political Science at the Community College of Southern Nevada, and former Chair of Political Science and History at Hampton University. He is author of *Prophetic Insights, On Racism, Places in Political Time, and Daniel “Chappie” James: The First African-American Four-Star General.*

## CALL FOR ARTICLES

This issue of *The Political Science Educator* is the first step in our transition to an expanded, electronically distributed format. As such, we will be able to publish more materials and more extensive articles than in the past. With the section’s addition of the *Journal of Political Science Education*, we are refining the scope of our newsletter. To that end, we plan to include the following features:

- Debates between members on pertinent topics
- “Lessons Learned”— a continuing column on how the teaching of participants in the Teaching and Learning Conferences has evolved as a result of the TLC (approximately 500-1000 words)
- Feature articles that are “think pieces” about teaching and the discipline, discussions of teaching experiences and approaches, or preliminary research under development (@ 1000 words)
- “Teaching tips” and suggestions—including approaches and experiments that have been less successful
- “The New Professor” — essays designed to help graduate students and new faculty who are navigating the job market and early years of careers at undergraduate institutions
- “Research and Resources: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning”— a column including literature reviews on specific topics, research notes, examination of new research threads
- “Technology and the Professor” — a column examining current options available for the classroom and classroom management, including useful resources available on the web

We will continue the “Notables” and “Announcements” sections unchanged.

If you are interested in submitting an article, essay, or announcement (or a suggestion for other items to be included in the newsletter), please contact:

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