*Summer/Fall 2018 Newsletter*

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**Message from Section President**

*Patrick McKinlay, Morningside College*

Dear Colleagues:

Greetings from the far side of finals, evaluations, and programmatic assessment. I hope this note finds everyone enjoying some rest and rejuvenation in these long summer days. Our 2018 APSA Annual Meeting is coming up soon (August 30- September 2). The section continues to thrive and evolve after having participated in an outstanding Teaching and Learning Conference in Baltimore, MD in February. We are especially excited for the annual meeting as it will feature our first Teaching and Learning Mini-Conference on Saturday, September 1.

The PSE Section Annual Business Meeting: Friday, September 1, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Room 105 in the Hynes Convention Center.

At the meeting, we will conduct regular section business (treasurer’s report, newsletter, etc.). We will also consider a motion to eliminate graduate student section fees. Finally, we will recognize the recipients of our 2018 Awards. We hope you will attend.

We extend a Special Thanks to our Award Committee Chairs and Members. It takes time to receive, review and deliberate on award submissions, especially when many nominations are worthy of recognition. We truly appreciate of your due diligence and dedicated service to our section.

The Craig L. Brians Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research and Mentorship

Chair: Michael Rogers (Arkansas Tech University)

Committee Members: Tressa Tabares (American River College) and Maureen C. Feeley (University of California, San Diego)

The Best APSA Conference Paper Award

Chair: Terry Gilmour (Midland College)

Committee Members: J. Cherie Strachan (Western Michigan University) and Erin Richards (Cascadia College)

The Lifetime Achievement Award

Chair: Sherri Wallace (University of Louisville)

Committee Members: Executive Committee

The Distinguished Service Award

Chair: Joseph Roberts (Roger Williams University)

Committee Members: Executive Committee

The APSA Annual Meeting and TLC at APSA

Please be sure to attend and support all of our panels, posters, and events. Your attendance matters in future allocations to the section. You can find the listings in the online program. Look for Division 10: Political Science Education. Of course, I also encourage everyone to participate in the first Teaching and Learning Conference at APSA, which will be held on Saturday, September 1. The Day will start with a keynote address from Nancy Thomas. It features workshops, a luncheon hosted by CQ Press, Teaching Café’s, and a series of panels using the track model we have used at previous TLCs. The day will conclude with a joint reception hosted by APSA, Political Science Education Section, and the Committee on the Status of Community College Faculty in the Profession. Please attend as much of the mini conference as you can and please be sure to join us for the reception from 5:30-7:00 PM in Room 311 at the Hynes Convention Center.

PSE Program Division Chair for APSA 2019

Mary McHugh was selected to serve as our division chair for the upcoming 2018 Annual Meeting. She will draft the Call for Papers that will appear on the APSA website shortly after the 2018 Annual Meeting. Thank you in advance, Mary for your service.

PSE Newsletter, the Political Science Educator

A Big Thanks goes to Bobbi Gentry, the newsletter editor, for her leadership and dedication to TPSE. We value her continued service in keeping the section informed, connected and inspired via the various submissions to TPSE.

Please continue to read and submit manuscripts for the Journal of Political Science Education. As it is now an APSA-wide journal, it receives broad exposure. Please be sure to read the recent edition.

I wish you a productive but relaxing summer, a successful conference, and I look forward to seeing you in Boston!

Sincerely,

Patrick McKinlay, President

***The Teacher-Scholar Column***

***Hosting A Civic Leadership Academy on Your Campus***

*Elizabeth A. Bennion, Indiana University South Bend,* [ebennion@iusb.edu](mailto:ebennion@iusb.edu)

One of the greatest joys of being a political science professor is that we have the scholarly expertise and teaching skills required to engage our students and broader community in learning experiences that foster civic knowledge, identity, and engagement. This issue’s Teacher-Scholar column highlights a program we designed on my campus to bring people together to gain key information and advice required for civic leadership. Many people have asked me how they can replicate this Academy on their own campuses. I offer this piece summarizing the topics covered in our Academy and providing a checklist of questions to answer before launching your Academy, as a useful resource. Readers who wish to learn more about IU South Bend’s Spring 2017 Civic Leadership Academy can access a video recording of each event at iusb.edu/adp.

Based on community requests, student interests, and media headlines, we determined that we would highlight the following topics:

* March 22 Facts Matter: A Guide to Critical Thinking
* March 29 Real News vs. Fake News: Know the Difference!
* April 5 Contacting Elected Officials: Influencing Decision Makers
* April 12 The Legislative Process: Influencing Policy Debates
* April 19 Protest 101: Making Your Voice Heard
* April 26 Solving Community Problems: A Step-by-Step Guide

These topics were the subject of numerous questions and discussions at our past events, and in our courses, and fit nicely with Bob Graham’s model of civic leadership, a step-by-step approach I teach in my classes.

Next, we determined the agenda of each session, including specific topics to cover in each session. Once again, we drew upon the questions that people were asking us, Graham’s book Democracy: An Owner’s Manual, and our observations about the critical skills needed in today’s political world. Each session was designed as a moderated panel discussion, followed by audience Q&A.

Facts Matter: A Guide to Critical Thinking featured professors of psychology, philosophy, rhetoric, and communication studies and included:

* The difference between facts and opinions.
* The difference between claims and arguments.
* The importance of the scientific method.
* Common rhetorical devices designed to mislead.
* How to recognize and avoid logical fallacies.
* How to make ethical arguments.
* The problems of confirmation bias, tribalism, and the backfire effect.
* Key resources for fact checking political claims.
* How to talk to someone who disagrees with you.

Read News versus Fake News: Know the Difference featured a political columnist, multi-media journalist, editor, and PR expert (the last two of whom teach in our mass communications program). Topics covered in this session included:

* What is fake news? What isn’t fake news?
* The danger of fake news.
* The political deployment of the “fake news” label.
* The role of the media in U.S. politics.
* How to spot fake news sites and stories.
* How to verify facts before spreading fake news.
* How to call out fake news and keep your friends.
* The difference between news and satire.

Contacting Elected Officials: Influencing Decision Makers featured politicians with experience on the city council and county council, as mayor, and in the state legislature, as well as the district representative for our local congressperson. Topics included:

* How to identify your elected officials.
* How to identify decision makers.
* Strategies to make your voice heard.
* Dealing with social anxiety.
* Phone calls, letters, emails, and petitions.
* Lobbying and personal meetings.
* Creative ways to share your message.
* What to do when you can’t get through.

The Legislative Process: Influencing National, State, and Local Policy Debates featured a former state senator and current members of the county council and city council. We discussed:

* How a bill becomes a law – U.S. Congress.
* How a bill becomes a law – Indiana General Assembly.
* How and when you can influence legislation.
* How to track legislation.
* How to read a bill for yourself.
* How to access public meetings, hearings, and floor debates.
* How to stay up-to-date on bills that matter to you.
* How to participate in city and county policy debates.
* How to write your own laws!

Protest 101: Making Your Voice Heard featured a history professor, a women’s and gender studies professor who both taught about, and participated in, political protests, along with the activists representing local organizations that had recently hosted highly visible protests and rallies in our community. Topics of discussion included:

* When to organize a protest.
* How to organize a protest.
* How to attract participants.
* How to craft a message.
* How to gain media coverage.
* How to protest safely and legally.
* How to stay out of jail (if that is your objective).
* The principles of non-violence.
* How to make a difference if you cannot attend.

Solving Community Problems: A Step-by-Step Guide to Civic Leadership featured four local community organizers representing different types of organizations and approaches to civic leadership. Topics included:

* Defining the problem.
* Identifying the decision maker.
* Gauging public support.
* Persuading the decision maker.
* Building coalitions.
* Using the calendar.
* Engaging the media.
* Funding your initiative.
* The 3-3-3 advocacy method for real results.
* Preserving victory and learning from defeat.

This series attracted a large community audience and many favorable media stories. It also expanded our network and led to new partnerships and additional series and events the following semester. We ended the series with a networking reception. People who attended at least four events also received a Civic Leadership Academy Certificate. We were amazed by how many people attended every session because they wanted to earn that (non-credit, ADP-issued) certificate of participation! We snapped wonderful picture of people smiling from ear-to-ear as they proudly held their certificates.

For us, this Academy was a great success! The students who attended enjoyed it. They also enjoyed staffing the events, and even moderating the session on protests. The community members who attended stayed connected with us via our email list and Facebook and many attended the Civic Leadership Academy on Asset-Based Community Development the following fall, and our candidate debate series the following fall.

Before hosting your own Academy, you should consider the following questions:

* Why do you want to host a Civic Leadership Academy?
* Who is your audience?
* How will you find out what they want to learn?
* What are some topics you think you might cover?
* What speakers would do a good job covering those topics?
* What media outlets might cover your events?
* Who might be good co-sponsors for your Academy?
* Will you provide a certificate? Why or why not?
* Will you provide credit of some kind? Required, enrichment, CTE?

Also consider who will:

* Plan the series.
* Plan each session.
* Handle logistics (room, AV, programs, food, furniture, etc.).
* Invite the speakers.
* Write the press release(s).
* Talk to the media.
* Answer questions from the speakers? From the public?
* Promote the series on campus.
* Promote the series social media and community calendars.
* Moderate each event.

Finally, discuss how you will:

* Assess the effectiveness of the Academy.
* Keep in touch with people after the event.
* Learn from the experience.
* Capitalize on the new connections and knowledge gained.

This checklist of things to consider and list of suggested topics of discussion should prove useful when designing your own Civic Leadership Academy. I hope your series is as fruitful as ours was! Such academies can help us to fulfill the public purpose of higher education. As political scientists, one of our most important roles, if we choose to accept it, is to educate people for democracy. Hosting a Civic Leadership Academy is a wonderful way to teach beyond the campus. It allows us to meet a critical need in fostering the knowledge, skills, and motivation people need to make a meaningful difference in their communities.

***Community College Voices***

***Stay Tuned for Future Submissions***

If you are interested in writing for the Political Science Education Newsletter, please send submissions to Bobbi Gentry, bgentry@bridgewater.edu

***Featured Essays***

***Literature, Politics…and Leadership?: Designing a Political Theory Course on “Literature and Politics” to Include Principles of Democratic Leadership***

*Katherine M. Robiadek, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison,* [*robiadek@wisc.edu*](mailto:robiadek@wisc.edu)

*Overview of the UW-Madison Leadership Framework*

When thinking about leadership in a democracy, it is often in conjunction with elected officials or office holders. However, in general, citizens in a democracy are expected to act as leaders in different ways throughout their communities, regardless of office or title.

This insight is reflected in the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s (UW-Madison) Leadership Framework (leadership.wisc.edu). The Leadership Framework provides a shared vision and language for leadership stemming from a campus initiative to identify and coordinate leadership initiatives and opportunities. Drawing on the university’s tradition of “fearless sifting and winnowing” that is at the heart of learning, it was developed over time with input from faculty, staff, and students from across the university in light of leadership theory, research, and practice. The schema articulates ways of engaging in acts of leadership that result in positive changes to beliefs, values, and behaviors in individuals and communities. Visualized as a matrix, the Leadership Framework focuses on a set of three institutional values and seven leadership competencies that intersect to produce specific, identifiable/measurable, and meaningful outcomes (i.e., knowledge and skills). These values, competencies, and outcomes are all guided by a set of three main leadership principles. The first principle is that context matters, and each situation requires unique engagement. Secondly, an act of leadership is one that contributes to positive change. And, third, leadership is an action-oriented endeavor that is not based on position or level of authority.

This third principle of the Leadership Framework resonates most immediately with a democratic ideal of citizenship that prizes self-rule and political efficacy even outside formal offices and governing institutions. This is the democratic ideal that all citizens can and should be leaders.

So, when given the opportunity to design and deliver a political theory course on “literature and politics” for the UW-Madison Department of Political Science, it provided a chance to highlight the role of leadership in a democracy using the campus Leadership Framework. The question became how to effectively include leadership in course goals, activities, and assessments for significant learning. As detailed in what follows here, to answer this question I consulted widely on the topic with colleagues from across campus, and at other universities, before the semester started. Then, as the semester progressed, formative assessments about course activities were intentionally implemented throughout. After the semester, I then found ways to gather expert reviews in order to reflect on course design and delivery for updates to the next iteration.

*Thinking about Democratic Leadership in an Undergraduate Political Theory Course*

Getting the ball rolling on backward design for the course entailed reaching-out to the APSA organized section on Politics, Literature, and Film prior to the semester for sample syllabi. This was followed by meeting with colleagues from various campus units for advice both on best practices for specific elements of the course as well as on how to describe them effectively in the syllabus. Feedback gained from these consultations included: how to design writing activities to maximize reflection (Writing Center); how to facilitate discussion to ensure the greatest level of meaningful student participation (The Discussion Project in the School of Education & The Center for Ethics and Education); how to weigh considerations on the use of collaborative online platforms to meet learning goals (Information Technology); and how to effectively teach individual skills in observation (Chazen Museum of Art and, beyond campus, the Gregory Allicar Museum of Art at Colorado State University). All of this feedback was useful in the design of the course, as were resources from—as well as repeated consultations with—the UW-Madison Center for Leadership and Involvement (CfLI), which is one of the primary campus units supporting the Leadership Framework and related Leadership Certificate program for students (https://cfli.wisc.edu/leadership-certificate/).

These discussions led to including intentional examination of leadership—especially principles of democratic leadership—during the course in more than one way. Namely, the formulation of some of the course goals as well as various writing, discussion, and assessment activities as directly informed by the Leadership Framework.

For example, at times students were asked to write responses to prompts about leadership as part of their weekly writing logs on the course literature. Further, at several points in the semester, they were also asked to discuss the leadership of various characters from the literary works they were reading as compared to the Leadership Framework. On one occasion, while reading Machiavelli’s advice manual for early modern political rulers—*The Prince*—, students were prompted to explain the main point of each chapter in their writing logs. In class, after a lecture on the historical and rhetorical context of the text, students were then asked to compare their written log responses distilling Machiavelli’s political leadership principles to each other as well as to the Leadership Framework. In the minute-reflections turned in as formative assessment at the end of that meeting, many students found the activity to be highly engaging. One student specified they found it interesting “that we used a relevant example today in class that made us think critically about *The Prince* and made us apply the reading to real life.”

In another vein, an example of intentionally including leadership in assessment for the course pertains to the final essay exam. One of the questions was formulated to allow students to reflect on their own aspirations as democratic leaders. Students were provided the Leadership Framework matrix to use when answering the following question in the form of a character sketch: If a political theorist today were to write a novel including you as a character in the role of a democratically elected U.S. senator, how would your character map on to the UW-Madison Leadership Framework? Apart from making for fun reading as I graded, several students let me know they actually enjoyed reflecting on their own values while thinking creatively about their responses.

The leadership theme even extended to making regular class announcements about other leadership development opportunities on campus, such as a leadership open house to meet more student leaders while learning about various relevant programs. At one point, these class announcements took the form of a guest presentation from Center for Leadership and Involvement staff on the Leadership Certificate program. This made sense given that following CfLI’s review of its design, the course was determined eligible to fulfill the coursework requirement toward Certificate completion. Nearly half the enrolled students in the course declared interest in completing the other requirements for the Certificate going forward and, as of today, a handful of students have begun the program.

Hopefully, I will be able to instruct this course again at UW-Madison. The next step to prepare for such an eventuality is to reflect on possible updates to the syllabus, to the course activities, and to various forms of assessment in light of student evaluations of the course and peer evaluations of teaching from graduate student as well as faculty observers. This also includes debriefing about the experience as instructor with experts from UW-Madison and beyond (e.g., most recently with staff at Valparaiso’s Center for Civic Reflection), especially those who have infused their own courses with intentional learning about principles of democratic leadership. To that end, it would great to hear from other scholars who have had such an experience or any suggestions and resources for going forward.

***Learn by doing: A bill passage simulation for Intro to American Politics students***

*Renée Van Vechten, Professor of Political Science, University of Redlands,* [renee\_vanvechten@redlands.edu](mailto:renee_vanvechten@redlands.edu)

Why lecture when your students can practice to learn? Realizing that lecturing alone is the least effective method for teaching “how a bill becomes a law,” I regularly incorporate a three-day bill passage simulation in my Introduction to American Politics class so that students learn more about a policy of interest, remember the steps in the lawmaking process, and get a taste of power—as wielded by the House majority party. We usually limit the process to the House alone but the Senate process can be added if time permits. Along the way, action is interspersed with short lectures or explanations about the process and key terms (outlined in lecture slides).

**Preparation Stage**

**Choose a bill**. We begin at least one class period ahead of the scheduled simulation by generating a list of possible bills. What does the class want to legislate? It’s best to ask students first to think about what kind of law they would enact if they had the power to do so, and tell them you’ll soliciting ideas for a bill that the entire class will consider. The guidelines are simple: (a) it needs to be short, which excludes complex health care reform and farm bills for example, as ideally the proposal should fit onto one page; (b) it should be an issue that will make it through the process, i.e. has the support of the majority party (we’ve fudged this in the past, given their strong preferences).

I’ve found that written suggestions yield more variety than verbal suggestions. If you’d like your students to get to know the website where current bill files are available and past bills are archived (<https://www.congress.gov/>) you could assign the task of finding an actual bill for consideration. In a smaller class, you can collect and quickly organize their suggestions and have students vote on them. With a larger class, you may need to organize their suggestions and return with a list of possibilities for a vote. If few ideas are flowing, you might prompt them with a short list. Many issues can help promote clearer understanding of federalism and the power Congress exerts over state affairs through grants and unfunded mandates (see the short list of bills my students have considered over the years).

**Assign Parties.** That same day, divide your class into Democrats and Republicans, giving a proportional advantage to the current majority party in the House. We follow current party divisions. Explain what a caucus is and allow them to regroup into their respective party caucuses. Set aside about 20 minutes for them to get to know each other, quickly discuss how their party would like to approach the bill and consider volunteers for leadership positions.

**Prep the Bill.** Take at least a day or two to organize your resources. Before the next class you’ll need to redraft the (real) bill they’ve selected or create one quickly. I use a template that contains the usual legal jargon and, using actual bill language either in whole or in part, I formulate a one-page document. Use your best judgment about what to include, such as definitions, subsections, and so on. Vague terms, suspect wording, and dollar amounts can be amended later. Later in class I distribute hard copies with the bill passage process outlined on the reverse, and key discussion questions listed as well—items on which they should reflect throughout the exercise.

Usually I email the bill to students and post it to the course webpage immediately (within a day) so that they can start preparing a position statement, an assignment that’s included in the syllabus. Students may assume the identity of a Congress person or a lobbyist who must make the case either for or against the bill in a committee hearing. The statement must be plausible and evidence-based. All are invited to address the committee in a soon-to-be-held “formal” hearing (a good place for a few extra points to incentivize participation, if that’s part of your approach; otherwise, they may be randomly called).

***Day 1***

**Introduce the bill passage process.** By this point in the semester we have already generally discussed the concept of representation, reelection strategies, and how the House is organized. Before the simulation commences, with the help of lecture slides I introduce the bill passage process specifically, starting with the typical sources of bills, the importance of staff, historical rates of bill passage, and so forth.

**Second caucus meeting.** Next, they break for their second caucus meeting, during which they will select their speaker, majority leaders, and the committee chairs (one for the standing committee and another for Rules). You may opt to choose certain students for those these roles, including those of committee members, as students don’t usually succeed in spontaneously choosing an inclusive set of participants. In caucus, which should last about 15 to 20 minutes, they should also discuss their legislative strategy. Are they happy with the way the bill is written? What changes do they want to engineer? Who should suggest amendments? What are their collective goals?

**Bill introduction.** The simulation begins with the bill’s introduction. A student from the majority party who claims authorship of the bill puts it “across the desk” (i.e. puts it in the hopper; i.e. hands it to the clerk—the professor—for processing). The bill is assigned a number and given a summary reading, and the Speaker is asked to refer it to the appropriate committee. At this point, as a class we visit the <https://www.house.gov/committees> list and identify the proper referral. With more time it’s appropriate to explore the phenomenon of multiple referrals and the role of subcommittees; we also discuss the Speaker’s role and majority party’s control over the process. Our classes are 80 minutes long; depending on the depth of discussion, sometimes we are able to appoint committee members and convene the first hearing without delay. The chair (or the professor) compiles a list of witnesses who will appear at the hearing. This concludes the first day.

***Day 2***

**Hearing in standing committee.** Students should arrive the second day with a hard copy of their prepared statements for or against the bill. The committee hearing takes on an air of legitimacy when the committee members convene at the front of the classroom and face the audience (witnesses should always be seated). With prompting from the clerk (professor), the chair gavels the meeting to order and calls witnesses to testify for or against the bill, beginning with the bill’s author. Remarks are generally limited to three minutes, and committee members are expected to ask follow-up questions. As committee members become more comfortable in their roles, the questioning tends to become more targeted. If necessary, as committee clerk I may pass a note suggesting a question or a direction in which to take the discussion. A hearing can last as long as there are witnesses and questions that need answering.

In some semesters I have arranged for a final witness or two to appear as “experts”—either a willing colleague, residence life staff members, or others who can bring a sense of realism to the simulation. Although the information they offer can be invaluable, their testimony can easily intimidate students, so it’s important to hold their contributions until last.

**Mark-up session in committee and vote.** During the mark-up session that follows the hearing, the entire audience is welcome to suggest how to amend the bill. If mark-ups are limited to the committee members only, disinterest among the class sets in quickly. Changes to the bill are tracked on a large screen, and the committee hearing will conclude once acceptable changes are made or the time is up. Here students start to understand the meaning of the phrase, “the devil is in the details,” as passages are rewritten or new language is introduced, thereby changing the purposes or consequences of the bill. After the votes are taken—and the final bill should be acceptable to the majority so that it can get to the House floor—the bill is “reported out” (this step is merely explained) and it moves to the House Rules Committee, which either convenes immediately or on the third day of the simulation.

***Day 3***

**Third party caucus and** **Rules Committee meeting.** The class is introduced to types of rules (basic rather than complex) and recent patterns, and a visit to the Rules Committee website reveals what a package of rules looks like. Although almost all rules are “closed” today with the intention to shut out the minority party, we deliberately allow one or two amendments from the minority party (for the sake of argument), as well as any from the majority. They break for one more caucus meeting and strategize about possible amendments. Sometimes the majority party will have some fun by proposing a change simply to hype up the minority party, or vice versa, but overall the students suggest thoughtful changes because they’re invested in the outcome by this point. The Rules Committee quickly assembles a resolution to consider the bill immediately, designating the number of amendments that will be allowed, time for debate over amendments, and the time for general debate. (A pro forma vote on the resolution can be taken later.)

**Floor session.** We review yet again the steps we’ve traversed (repetition is essential) and proceed to floor session via Committee of the Whole. Departing slightly from normal procedures, we first dispense with amendments by debating them one by one (votes on amendments are usually held until after the Committee of the Whole dissolves), and then move to general debate. At this point every student in the class must rise to make at least a one-sentence statement explaining his or her position and urge a “yes” or “no” vote. Very large classes may preclude full participation, but a statement can take as little as 15 seconds per person, and this is the time for students to inhabit their roles and make an impassioned appeal to their peers (within time limits).

Following the last statement, the Speaker assumes the gavel, takes a vote, and the simulation concludes. Except when a poison pill has been creatively attached at the last minute, a bill usually passes with applause.

**Wrap-up.** Immediately after the simulation I explain how the bill moves through the Senate. Later, I allow plenty of time for the important questions students raise about lawmaking generally (usually I ask them to write them down). In turn I ask them to consider how the majority controls the process, the extent of minority party power in both chambers, where bipartisanship and compromise can be found, the importance and roles of different leaders, points at which bills can be killed, and the factors influencing Congress members’ decisions. I also show a short video (one and a half minutes, shown twice) about what Schoolhouse Rock missed in depicting how a bill becomes a law (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QH0Hl31vdF4>), which generates further clarification and discussion.

Whereas this simulation hews to the traditional bill passage process, “unorthodox” lawmaking paths could be introduced, and when I’ve had more time, on the night before the floor debates I have inundated my students’ inboxes with letters from “lobbyists” from both sides representing critical interests.

Evidence for the efficacy of this activity can be found in responses to midterm and final exam questions that require students to explain the major steps through which a bill passes to become a law. Almost invariably, the students who miss the exercise or any part of it are liable to confuse or omit large parts of the process from their responses—despite assigned reading that covers it. This foray into policy research also can motivate students to deepen their policy knowledge through upper division courses and internships, and it has helped inspire recruits for my Congress course. I’m certain that a more rigorous assessment tool would demonstrate wider benefits of this active learning exercise, and after almost fifteen years of bill passage simulations, I still highly recommend it.

**Sample of Bills Suggested and Considered by Students in Introduction to American Politics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Topic** | ***A bill to:*** |
| **FAFSA** | Enable use of the previous year’s tax returns to complete the FAFSA form |
| **Drinking Age** | Lower the drinking age to age 18 |
| **Birth Control** | Ensure timely access to affordable birth control for women |
| **Gun Control** | Prevent perpetrators of domestic violence from owning firearms |
| **Taxation** | Tax foods high in sugar and saturated fat |
| **Teacher Pay** | Increase federal funding for K-12 teachers |
| **K-12 Ed** | Provide K-12 children with increased access to physical education |
| **K-12 Ed** | Conduct a study on the causes of deaths related to high school football and formulate recommendations to prevent such deaths, and to promote State requirements for the treatment of concussions caused by participation in sports |
| **Higher Ed** | Require financial literacy and economic education counseling for student borrowers |
| **Higher Ed** | Promote higher education through more federal grant funds |
| **Environment** | Raise CAFE standards for trucks |
| **Drugs** | Legalize marijuana |

***TLC at APSA Launches in Boston***

*Alison Rios Millett McCartney, Professor of Political Science, Towson University,* [*amccartney@towson.edu*](mailto:amccartney@towson.edu)

And

*Renée Van Vechten, Professor of Political Science, University of Redlands,* [renee\_vanvechten@redlands.edu](mailto:renee_vanvechten@redlands.edu)

Part of APSA’s mission is to widen opportunities for professional development and increase access to teaching and learning resources for all political scientists, especially those who work at institutions where teaching constitutes a substantial portion of their professional responsibilities, such as those at regional comprehensive universities, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges. This idea propelled the creation of the annual Teaching and Learning Conference (TLC) in 2004. However, due to a number of factors, including APSA members’ limited travel budgets, the concentration of APSA resources in one conference that is typically attended by under 300 people (and the need to better disperse resources), and the hope of making the annual meeting more productive for all members, APSA has facilitated and funded the incorporation of a day-long “Teaching and Learning” conference-within-a-conference during the annual meeting in Boston. The inaugural TLC at APSA will take place on September 1, 2018, with the theme, “Political Science in Contentious Times.” This full-day event seeks to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning, equip faculty with new techniques and resources for teaching, and enhance the role of teaching in the discipline of political science. The intent is for the TLC at APSA mini-conference to complement the biennial standalone conference in coming years.

To differentiate the conference-within-a-conference from regular panels and short courses that populate the annual conference program, the TLC at APSA includes distinguishing elements: teaching cafés, workshops, and themed tracks that facilitate deeper engagement with pedagogy-related scholarship and dedicated conference space, meals, and receptions to unify the activities and encourage networking among attendees. The conference committee sent out a call for participation which was separate from the regular conference, vetted proposals, and selected those that we felt captured the needs of the profession, fit the TLC format, and addressed significant issues in political science pedagogy. We hope that all participants will engage in events throughout the day, although they—you!—may also drop in for events as (your) schedule allows.

The day begins with a **breakfast** highlighted by keynote speaker Nancy Thomas of the Institute of Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University, Jonathan Tisch College of Civic Life, also a conference sponsor. Following breakfast, we will have **five workshops** on a variety of hot topics in teaching and political science, including a roundtable on teaching political discussion in the Trump era, how to play games in teaching international relations, peer instruction in large courses, teaching students to design games, and exploring conflict through three lenses: interest groups and democratic engagement, a project-based learning approach to teaching Middle Eastern politics, and American vs. Russian perceptions of LGBT rights. The **luncheon**, sponsored by CQ Press, begins with brief remarks by Christine Barbour and Gerald Wright of Indiana University, followed by significant time for networking. After lunch, four **Teaching Cafés** provide an opportunity to discuss issues that resonate across sub-fields, such as developing quality training programs for teaching assistants, improving information literacy among political science undergraduates, bringing virtual reality into the classroom, and innovations in teaching research methods.

The rest of the afternoon is devoted to the traditional **TLC track system**, whereby participants choose a track and stay with it for presentations and discussions in both track sessions, and includes a networking **coffee break**. The three tracks – civic engagement, simulations and games, and technology and innovative pedagogy -- were chosen because they are the most popular at the traditional TLC.

* **Track 1**, dedicated to exploring **Civic Engagement**, includes **papers** on topics such as online teaching tools to promote civic engagement skills, structural elements of the university and faculty training that enhance civic engagement education, means to promote youth voter turnout, and tools for productive deliberation.
* **Track 2, Simulations and Games,** explores key elements of a productive learning experience in simulations, navigating differing ideologies in games, and mobilizing voters, exploring Socrates, and deepening understanding of asylum policy through simulations.
* **Track 3, Technology and Innovative Classroom Pedagogy**, delves into issues such as educating bilingual learners, productive small-group presentations, cultural imagery, and a variety of online technologies that facilitate political science education. TLC at APSA wraps up with a **joint reception** with the Political Science Education Section and the APSA Committee on the Status of Community Colleges in the Profession. Collectively, we hope that this combined format will provide a highly interactive forum for scholars to share innovative tools for political science education and research on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Over 350 people have already pre-registered for the inaugural TLC at APSA. If you have not already signed up, be sure to indicate your intention to attend by clicking the box on the regular conference registration form. Participation in TLC in APSA is included in the regular conference fee. If the regular TLC is held biennially (the next is scheduled for 2020), the conference program committee hopes that this format can continue at the annual conference to sustain and promote closer attention to quality SoTL (scholarship of teaching and learning) in the discipline, the recognition that quality teaching is highly important to our success as a discipline, and the momentum in networking amongst those engaged in political science education.

The association’s financial contribution represents a tangible demonstration of APSA’s commitment to one of its core objectives: “promoting high quality teaching and education about politics and government.” The conference was created and will be led by the program committee, which includes co-chairs Alison Rios Millett McCartney (Towson University) and Renée Van Vechten (University of Redlands and APSA Council member) and committee members Victor Asal (SUNY Albany), Simulations and Games Track Moderator, Elizabeth A. Bennion (Indiana University South Bend), Civic Engagement Education Track Moderator, Tressa Tabares (American River College) Technology and Innovative Pedagogy in the Classroom Track Moderator, and Nancy Thomas, Institute of Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University, Jonathan Tisch College of Civic Life.

We hope you’ll be at the inaugural TLC at APSA!

For further information, go to the TLC at APSA website: https://connect.apsanet.org/apsa2018/tlc-at-apsa/

***Announcements***

Archived issues of *The Political Science Educator* can be found here: <http://community.apsanet.org/TeachingCivicEngagement/additionalteachingresources/new-item>

Please send any article submissions or announcements for future newsletters to Bobbi Gentry at [bgentry@bridgewater.edu](mailto:bgentry@bridgewater.edu). Submission deadlines are **June 15** for the **Summer/Fall newsletter**,and **December 15** for the **Winter/Spring newsletter**. Contributions may be as brief as 200 – 500 hundred words, but should not exceed approximately 1000 words, and should use APSA citation style.  Please include "**PS Educator submission**" in the subject line of your email. Thank you!

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