



MARCH 2021

DEPARTMENT CHAIR QUARTERLY



WELCOME

BY DR. HOLLEY TANKERSLEY

Happy New Year, and welcome to the new APSA Department Chair Quarterly newsletter!



APSA's [Departmental Services Program \(DSP\)](#) works closely with the APSA Departmental Services Committee (DSC) to ensure that departments and administrators have the tools they need to build strong, sustainable, and successful academic programs and to recruit, develop, and retain faculty members. From collecting data and providing reports on the profession to hosting an annual luncheon and workshop for department chairs, the DSP and DSC are dedicated to enriching the work of departments and department chairs.

While APSA has always provided a variety of resources for department chairs, the revamped newsletter will allow us to provide more in-depth content while also highlighting professional resources, departmental services, and the achievements of departments and individuals whose innovative work is shaping the future of the discipline. In this inaugural issue, we remind you of some of the services that APSA provides, and we introduce you to a new initiative that is crucial to the continued growth of our discipline and the professional development of our graduate students. Given the rapid development and deployment of coronavirus vaccines, it appears that the early months of 2021 will constitute a turning point in the global pandemic that has upended our lives and higher education in general.

However, we know many – if not most – of you are still operating in altered academic environments. We look ahead to what curriculum and delivery might look like post-pandemic, but in the meantime, APSA continues to provide a [collection of links to articles, resources, and information pertinent to teaching and supporting students during coronavirus response](#).

IN THE ISSUE...

Welcome from Professor of Political Science, Holley Tankersley

Political Science's Teaching Resource Library: APSA Educate

After the Pandemic: Asking the Right Questions

The Careers Diversity Committee

Introducing Political Science Today, APSA's new magazine

APSA Resources on Systemic Racism and Social Justice

“

APSA's goal is to help you build departments that are vibrant, that provide support for the **professional growth and development** of all students and colleagues.

”

Finally, we welcome – in fact, we need – your help in identifying the kinds of content and resources that will best serve you and your departments. Need ideas for curricular innovation? Looking for tips on increasing enrollment in your major or minor programs, or even just your department's courses? Concerned about how best to evaluate faculty?

Wondering how to infuse your department with best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion? We will identify successful departments and initiatives and ask folks to share their wisdom and experiences with us so that we can share them with you. And if you have wisdom to share, please do not be shy about volunteering to contribute to this newsletter! We are especially excited to feature the breadth of our discipline, from community colleges to teaching intensive to research intensive institutions. To suggest a topic for a future issue, or to volunteer a blog post, simply email us at dsp@apsanet.org.

In her 2004 APSA Presidential Address, Theda Skocpol voiced the hope that APSA would remain “vital, inclusive, and united.” [1] While Dr. Skocpol's comments were geared toward recognizing the external role that our association can and should play in civic life and democratic participation, I believe they are instructive for our internal organizational structures. With this newsletter, APSA's goal is to help you build departments that are vibrant, that provide support for the professional growth and development of all students and colleagues, and that bring together the brilliant diversity of our discipline and our profession. We look forward to sharing these efforts with you in this and future issues.

[1] 2004. Skocpol, Theda. "APSA Presidential Address: Voice and Inequality: The Transformation of American Civic Democracy," *Perspectives on Politics* 2(1): 3-20.

Dr. Holley Tankersley is a Professor of Political Science and serves as Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Faculty Development at Coastal Carolina University. She is the former chair of the APSA Departmental Services Committee.



INTRODUCING APSA EDUCATE: POLITICAL SCIENCE'S TEACHING RESOURCE LIBRARY

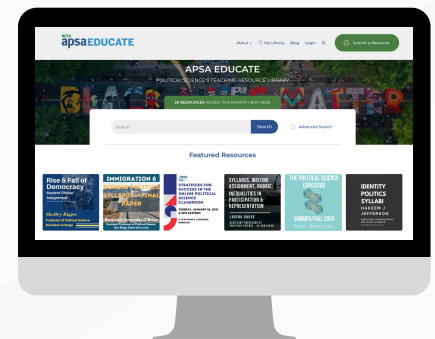
BY BENNETT GRUBBS

Political science teaching knowledge has traditionally circulated across fragmented and informal spaces. Syllabi are often shared within faculty members' immediate professional circles.

Graduate students exchange Google drives full of old syllabi when they are given their first instructor position. And a few of APSAs organized sections run micro-sites with syllabus banks. In short, our discipline's collective teaching knowledge is dispersed.

APSA Educate, political science's teaching resource library, provides a centralized space for teaching knowledge. This new virtual platform allows faculty and graduate students to easily share, find, and use high-quality political science pedagogical resources across a range of topics covered by our discipline. The site allows you to search for, upload, and download materials for free.

Since its launch on April 1st, 2020, Educate has published just under 200 original teaching resources and 92 blog posts about political science education. In our library you can find syllabi, active learning assignments, asynchronous teaching strategies, statistical methods data sets and prompts, OER textbooks, strategies to teach undergraduates writing and much more. Given the COVID-19 global pandemic's effects on higher education, many of Educate's resources focus on the online classroom.



One standout is the [Innovative Approaches to Online Learning Resource Collection](#). Last summer, Rebecca Glazier (Professor of Political Science, University of Arkansas, Little Rock) and Veronica Reyna (Professor and Associate Chair, Department of Government, Houston Community College), led ten faculty with experience in online teaching and learning across a multi-week virtual workshop. Together these educators designed and published 21 teaching resources.

Items within this teaching collection include Danielle Hanley's (Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University), "[Peer Review Activity](#)," and her companion blog, "[Building Community in the Online Classroom](#)." Together, Hanley's resources provide clear steps for faculty to create the positive atmosphere required for active learning-activities to run smoothly in the virtual classroom. Beyond Professor Hanley's contributions, this collection also features strategies to build faculty-student connections in online classrooms through virtual simulations, open education resources, and other best practices.

Over the next year, Educate plans to expand our teaching repository and offer more live teaching and learning events such as our most recent webinar, "Teaching the 1/6 Insurrection & Impeachment." While we will accomplish this through collaboration with diverse partners, our library needs your help.

Submit a Resource: Contribute your own teaching materials, encourage your department faculty and graduate students to share their teaching resources and let us know how Educate can better serve you and your faculty.



Existing & Forthcoming Educate Partnerships

Journal of Political Science Education: Educate will host the ancillary resources to JPSE articles.

Political Science Educator: Educate will publish the bi-annual newsletter of the Political Science Organized Section. See feature articles from the newsletter's previous twenty five years, including this classic discussion from APSA President-Elect, John Ishiyama (Professor of Political Science, University of North Texas) on [using problem-based learning in his intro to comparative politics courses](#).

PS: Political Science & Politics: Educate features ancillary resources to related pedagogical articles and feature teaching materials to related teaching symposia.

RAISE the Vote: Find the APSA Public Scholarship Campaign featuring 100+ blogs covering civic engagement practices from all angles.

APSA Organized Sections: Using the Human Rights Organized Section as a model, Educate plans to build additional syllabi banks and teaching resource collection with our member run research sections.

Teaching & Learning and the Centennial Center: Educate will highlight APSA's teaching & learning resources and publish materials from its virtual workshops, teaching symposia, grant awardees, and webinars.

apsaEDUCATE
educate.apsanet.org

HOW CAN EDUCATE HELP DEPARTMENT CHAIRS?

Your department faculty & graduate students can find **high quality teaching resources** on APSA Educate.

Let Educate showcase your department's teaching excellence. Educate conducts interviews, highlights resources and publishes blogs celebrating political science teaching accomplishments

Share your faculty contributions through educate@apsanet.org.

We hope that Educate becomes your regular spot to showcase and research your own teaching excellence, and serve as a historical archive of discipline teaching knowledge. See you in our digital collections!

Author: Bennett Grubbs, Editor, APSA Educate, American Political Science Association. Questions about APSA Educate can be directed to educate@apsanet.org or visit educate.apsanet.org for more information.

THE APSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Greetings from APSA,



The new Department Chair Quarterly newsletter is a very exciting and important development; it will offer a great opportunity to highlight timely information and practices of direct relevance to political science department chairs. I also want to express my appreciation to **Tanya Schwarz** and **Alycia Chau** at APSA for their excellent leadership in bringing this newsletter to fruition. The newsletter will profile innovative practices and policies by department chairs that have proven to be successful in addressing important concerns including diversity and inclusion, job placement, curricula development, and faculty and student mentoring.

My remarks will be a regular feature of the newsletter and for my inaugural column, I would like to call attention to the **APSA Presidential Task Force on Systemic Inequality in the Discipline**. Appointed by immediate-past APSA President Paula McClain in 2020, the goals for the task force are to examine the systemic inequalities that marginalized scholars within our community experience and to propose recommendations for ameliorating them, particularly for APSA and for departments of political science across the country. One key goal is to develop a set of best practices that would bring about change in those inequalities and move the discipline in a more open and accepting direction. The Task Force hopes to have an interim report completed by spring 2021.

Let me know if you have any questions about the Task Force or other APSA programs and policies. Thank you very much for your continuing leadership and service to the discipline and the association. My email is smithsr@apsanet.org.

Sincerely,
Steven Rathgeb Smith

APSA DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIPS



Join over 400 departments!

The **Departmental Services Program (DSP)** provides a forum for political science departments large and small to address common issues, and plan and develop publications and services for chairs, faculty, and students. The program, overseen by the Departmental Services Committee, supports political science teaching, scholarship, and service, and provides resources for department chairs.

STUDENT SPONSORED MEMBERSHIPS



Masters and Ph.D. students enrolled in a program with an active departmental membership are eligible for a discount on membership each year.

EJOBS POSTINGS



Gain free access to the eJobs platform, the most comprehensive database of jobs related to political science, and post jobs at no additional charge.

EXTERNAL REVIEW PROGRAM



As a resource for APSA departmental members seeking external review, the Departmental Services Program maintains a list of faculty who have volunteered to serve as reviewers.

DEPARTMENT PORTAL



The new portal features a range of digital resources to support faculty and their leaders, serving as a centralized space for department members to access all of the benefits available to them.

WEBINARS



Members are invited to participate in periodic webinars on a range of topics relevant to department chairs.

RESOURCE GUIDE



A new resource guide with 30+ pages of links to articles and information for chairs of political science departments.

INTERESTED?

The yearly dues for APSA Departmental Memberships vary based on department type and number of faculty. APSA Departmental Memberships run yearly from July 1st to June 30th of the following year, and memberships cannot be prorated.

Contact membership@apsanet.org to get started!

Introducing: Political Science Today

APSA is excited to announce the launch of *Political Science Today*, the association's new member magazine. *Political Science Today* will feature news about the discipline, association updates, and member spotlights previously published in *PS: Political Science & Politics*. All members will receive the February issue of the magazine in print.



- **Gratis copies are included in your departmental membership.** Individual members can opt-in to receive a personal copy by updating their journal [delivery preferences here](#).
- Digital editions of *Political Science Today* will be available at www.apsanet.org/today.
- Read the February issue of *Political Science Today* online [here](#).

Department Program Spotlight

Is your department engaged in inclusive and innovative graduate student recruitment efforts? If so, APSA wants to hear about it and spotlight your program! The Diversity and Inclusion Program Spotlight features examples of recruitment and retention programs and initiatives that political scientists and departments are engaged in to increase and advance diversity and inclusion throughout the profession. Such efforts could include but are not limited to campus visits for students from underrepresented backgrounds, bridge programs, summer research training programs and matching bonuses for incoming graduate students. [Tell APSA about your department's program!](#)

APSA Mentoring Program: Open Enrollment for Mentors

The [APSA Mentoring Program](#) seeks volunteers for new mentors for Spring 2021 to provide professional advice to political science undergraduates, graduate students, and junior faculty in the profession. We are especially seeking mentors for women, scholars of color, and LGBT individuals. Additionally, we are looking for mentors who research security studies, political philosophy, political behavior, and immigration to meet the needs of current mentees in the program.

APSA members interested in mentoring should log into the APSA website and update their [mentoring profile](#). Please email mentoring@apsanet.org with any questions about the program.

APSA Resources on Systemic Racism and Social Justice

Political scientists have long examined the linkages between race, power, governance, social justice, and oppression. APSA has compiled a collection of resources and scholarly work from political scientists to highlight to a range of scholarly expertise that addresses these topics, identify a diverse array of resources that can be used to assist students and faculty in the classroom, and acknowledge that these themes are essential to the study of political science. Review and share the resources [here](#). We also encourage you to [submit a relevant resource for consideration here](#).

APSA's 117th Annual Meeting & Exhibition

Please remember to submit a request for affiliated event space (business meetings and receptions) by [April 14, 2021](#). This can be done [here](#).

Utilize the benefits of your APSA Departmental Membership

- Post current job opportunities and view Candidate CV's in the [eJobs platform](#). Updated daily with new listings and CV's, eJobs is the most comprehensive database of jobs related to political science.
- Sponsor your Graduate Student's APSA membership through the [department-sponsored membership program](#). Masters and Ph.D. students enrolled in a program with an active departmental membership are eligible for a discount on membership each year.

Upload Your Work to APSA PrePrints

[APSA Preprints](#) is a free, prepublication platform dedicated to early research outputs in political science. The site is already home to 350 pieces of live content with a combined 150,000 abstract views and 75,000 downloads. APSA Preprints has quickly become an invaluable resource for political scientists eager to share their early research with peers—including those writing about the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).

[Login with your APSA ID](#) to upload your own working paper, presentation, or poster.

APSA ANNOUNCES THE FORMATION OF THE CAREERS DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Careers Diversity Committee will advise APSA on support for political scientists who seek careers in government, industry, nonprofits, and academia by planning events and programs designed to advance career diversity and recruit APSA members from across these careers.

Members of the committee include:



David Lazer (chair)
Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Computer Sciences, Northeastern University and Visiting Scholar, Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Harvard University



Sarah Binder
Professor of Political Science, George Washington University and Senior Fellow, Brookings



Ben Campbell
Data Scientist, CoverMyMeds



John Haskell
Director of the John W. Kluge Center, Library of Congress



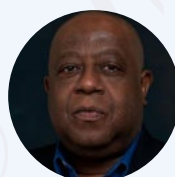
Andrew Holbrook
Senior Vice President, Analytics Manager, Wells Fargo



Natalie Jackson
Director of Research, Public Religion Research Institute



Juhem Navarro-Rivera
Political Research Director and Managing Partner, Socioanalitica Research



Lee Walker
Associate Professor, University of North Texas

The primary objective of this committee is to identify ways that APSA can help build career opportunities for doctoral students and faculty outside of the academy. Building these opportunities serves multiple purposes.

First, **providing more opportunities to political scientists** will allow them to build lives—in or outside of the academy—best aligned with their personal objectives.

Second, the ideas and methods of the discipline have substantial and underutilized relevance to the world. Governance, justice, power, and ethics are issues that are pervasive across all institutions. **Creating capacity within institutions** to constructively engage those issues is an important way that the discipline can create value. Methods, from ethnography, to survey research, to emerging computational methods to analyze complex data, have the potential to produce valuable insights for government, nonprofits, and for-profits.

Third, it **addresses the limited supply of university positions**: The field is currently training far more doctoral students than it can accommodate within the academy.

An additional, and complementary, objective of the committee is to evaluate how to make APSA more inclusive of political scientists who have built careers outside of the academy, but who are still using and building on disciplinary concepts and methods. APSA should serve the discipline writ large, and not just within the academy. By building a more inclusive discipline, in terms of career paths, APSA will both build opportunities for our members and bridges of intellectual exchange between the academy and government, nonprofits, and for-profits, that will facilitate knowledge creation and constructive application of that knowledge.

AFTER THE PANDEMIC: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

BY DR. HOLLEY TANKERSLEY

Based on survey responses and chat comments during endless Zoom town hall meetings – not to mention the furrowed brows and dejected looks on faces – my faculty and staff colleagues on campus are exhausted. My colleagues know me to be naturally chipper and optimistic, but this pandemic has challenged all of us who serve in academic administrative roles, even those who are predisposed to see the silver lining in a storm. I know it feels like the end may never come, but there will be a post-pandemic era, though it is becoming clear that the imperatives of academic administration have changed and will continue to do so because of the pandemic and the ways our respective institutions have chosen to respond to it.

Since I began writing this post, we have also witnessed a violent insurrection, an attack on democracy that distilled the worst elements of our society. Our disciplinary colleagues are right to feel frustration, and they may be anxious about re-entering classrooms during an era of disinformation and political violence. Those administrators who can muster enough energy to think beyond immediate concerns will help their students, faculty, and staff to heal more quickly and their departments to be more resilient. As a firm believer in the concept that good leaders don't impose answers, but rather help their colleagues to identify and work through the right questions, I've been collecting a list of questions that I believe department chairs and deans should consider as we look towards the post-pandemic, post-1/6 period.

Are you
tired?
I'm tired.

ON CURRICULUM

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT COURSE DELIVERY?

At my home institution, some courses were enhanced by delivery in an alternative modality, while others were harder to translate across mediums. A number of faculty members are pondering whether to continue delivering specific courses in hybrid or synchronous digital learning format, given both the success of a new format and the needs of students, especially adult learners and non-traditional and graduate students. These changes may cause other ripples – from how to create a course schedule that is equitable for both faculty and students to how departmental culture or community is affected.

ARE WE TEACHING THE RIGHT CONTENT?

APSA has raised parallel questions in the past, including task forces and reports centered on questions of the public purpose and value of our discipline. In his address reflecting on his APSA presidency, Ted Lowi asked himself – and us – if political science had lost its passion to speak truth to power in favor of reshaping itself to mirror the state [1]. If the last year has taught us anything, it's that leadership, policy capacity, and truth matter. Surely we cannot ignore those lessons as we teach federalism, populist movements, international cooperation, regulatory policy, bureaucracy and public management, political rhetoric, political violence, economic and social inequality and its myriad impacts, etc. And if we are not teaching those things, now may be a good time to start.

ON STUDENTS

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES?

Which students were best able to weather these changes, and which may need our help to catch up? Ask partners within the institution, especially the registrar and the office of institutional research, about what information they can provide you, from shifts in course registration (e.g., comparing Fall 2019 to Fall 2020) to average course GPAs to failure and withdrawal rates.

[1] 1992. "The State in Political Science: How We Become What We Study." *American Political Science Review* 86(1): 1-7.

ON STUDENTS



HOW WILL OUR UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENTS CHANGE AND IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT?

Higher ed was already facing an enrollment crisis, and the pandemic is almost assured to bring us closer to the cliff. However, innovation in course delivery (see above) may create more access for populations of students we haven't reached before, and pursuing new and interesting questions rooted in the pandemic and the state may stoke interest in what we study. Can we build on those changes to keep our enrollments healthy?

WILL STUDENTS STILL CHOOSE GRADUATE SCHOOL, AND IF THEY DO, WILL THERE BE JOBS FOR THEM AT THE END OF THE PROGRAM?

Between individual economic hardships and potential state budget cuts that will impact public institutions, our departments may face reluctant students and fewer resources to recruit and support them. On a related note, if higher ed enters a period of retrenchment, fewer jobs may be available to our graduate students, and placement in applied political science will become more important. How can we support students who choose to forgo the professoriate and think more broadly about careers in political science?

CAN WE HELP STUDENTS REBUILD THEIR ABILITY TO FOCUS AND LEARN?

Many of our students have endured hardship that has certainly impacted their ability to engage in their studies and retain information. We may consider changes in pedagogy to help these students get back on track. Beth McMurtrie wrote a great explainer on trauma-informed teaching over at the [Chronicle's Teaching blog](#) this summer that is helpful in sorting through this particular question.

ON DEPARTMENTS



HOW HAS THE DEPARTMENT LANDSCAPE BEEN CHANGED BY EARLY RETIREMENTS, HIRING FREEZES, OR REDUCTIONS-IN-FORCE?

Hopefully your institution avoided these measures, but if it didn't, and your faculty were affected, you may be facing gaps in expertise or a painfully empty office that a beloved faculty colleague once occupied. How can you mitigate those losses to buoy your departmental culture and operations?

ARE INSTITUTIONAL BUDGET CUTS COMING?

If so, how will you manage them while still supporting your major faculty and student initiatives? While much of this is out of the chair's control, you might consider getting ahead of the game by preparing an analysis of your department's performance and financial needs. Many, if not all, deans and provosts are receptive to arguments about student credit hour production, contributions to general ed, and/or the value of faculty grants and/or research output. Collecting your data now will allow you to be the first at the table when the competition for resources begins.

WILL DEPARTMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL DONORS STILL COME THROUGH?

If you rely on an alumni advisory board for department-level fundraising, be honest with its members about the institution's financial challenges. If you haven't already discussed the nationwide enrollment challenges and their financial impacts with your donors, give them a tutorial. Your institutional philanthropy officers are likely devising their own strategies; give them a call to remind them of your needs and ask how you can help. Development will require all hands on deck for the foreseeable future, so your efforts will likely be appreciated.

What questions have I left out? How has the pandemic changed your thinking about what we do and how we do it? Share your thoughts with us at dsp@apsanet.org. We'll explore the most pressing questions in future editions of this newsletter, and hopefully use your collective experience and wisdom to help develop some answers.

Explore APSA's new Department Portal

The Department Portal features a range of digital resources to support faculty and their leaders, serving as a centralized space for department members to access all of the benefits available to them.

Available resources support:

Making your department more diverse, equitable, and inclusive



Undergraduate and graduate student recruitment



Faculty hiring



Materials to support improvements in teaching and civic education



External review



Tips and strategies for department leaders



Contact membership@apsanet.org to gain access to the Department Portal today!

If you have any questions about APSA programming and departmental member benefits, please let us know. If you need to notify APSA of any changes to current department officers, please do so [here](#).

Contact the APSA Departmental Services Program at dsp@apsanet.org.



American Political Science Association

1527 New Hampshire Ave NW
Washington, DC
20036-1206

Phone: (202) 483-2512

Fax: (202) 483-2657

