2017 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference and Track Summaries

2017 CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Julia Schwarz, *Coordinator, Academic and Professional Development Programs*

The 14th APSA Teaching and Learning Conference (TLC) was held February 10–12, 2017 in Long Beach, California. This year's program committee organized a dynamic program of sessions and workshops around the theme "The 21st Century Classroom: Creating an Engaging Environment for All Students," focusing on best practices and inventive methodologies for the political science classroom.

The program opened with a Keynote Address by Nancy Thomas of the Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University. Thomas is the principal investigator for the Institute for Democracy and Higher Education's National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) and conducts qualitative research on student political learning and engagement in democracy. Her keynote dealt with the role of education in a democracy and ways to promote political learning and civic engagement in the classroom and on campus.

At the opening of the Keynote Address, APSA President David Lake of the University of California at San Diego offered remarks and presented two prestigious awards: the 2017 CQ Press Award for Teaching Innovation and the Michael Brintnall Teaching & Learning Award. Four attendees, Jaira Harrington, Edward Kammerer Jr., Ray Mikell, and Kendralyn Webber were awarded the Michael Brintnall Teaching & Learning Award. The award supports faculty attendance at the APSA Teaching and Learning Conference, covering the costs of registration for the Teaching and Learning Conference, as well as a one-year complimentary APSA membership.

The CQ press Award for Teaching Innovation, sponsored by CQ Press, an imprint of Sage, recognizes a political scientist who has developed an effective new approach to teaching in political science. Brooke Thomas Allen of Macomb Community College was the recipient of this year's award, recognized for her project, "Gerrymandering as Art: A New Method for Teaching Redistricting."

At TLC, the papers are organized using a working group model designed to foster in-depth discussion and debate throughout the course of the conference. This year the main track themes were civic engagement, core curriculum and general education, the inclusive classroom, innovative subfield strategies, simulations and games the Socratic method, and the virtual and technologically enhanced classroom. Fifteen workshops also reflected current issues in the discipline, including addressing best practices in political science education and how all teachers can effectively train students to think analytically, write effectively, and evaluate, consume, and generate knowledge.

For over a decade, the Teaching and Learning Conference has brought together educators who use this event to generate ideas and develop techniques which stimulate conversation in the discipline about pedagogical research and innovations. This year continued that tradition. APSA thanks the program committee, and all those who participated, for supporting APSA's commitment to excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

2017 TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Sara Moats, Florida International University (Chair)
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TRACK SUMMARIES

Track summaries of the 2017 Teaching and Learning Conference are published in the following pages. These summaries include highlights and themes that emerged from the research presented in each track. The summary authors also issued recommendations for faculty, departments, and the discipline as a whole—providing suggestions for new strategies, resources, and approaches aimed at advancing political science education throughout the discipline and beyond. The seven tracks are listed here and the track summaries are featured below.

- Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines and Across the Campus
- Core Curriculum/General Education
- The Inclusive Classroom
- Innovative Subfield Strategies
- Simulations and Games
- The Socratic Method Today
- Virtual and Technologically Enhanced Classroom

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES AND ACROSS THE CAMPUS

Julia Marin Hellwege, *University of South Dakota*
Jeremy Bowling, *The College of Wooster*
Andrew Gonzalez, *University of Tennessee*

Participants of this year's civic engagement track agreed that the 2016 presidential election and its aftermath provide political scientists an invaluable opportunity to play a meaningful role in educating students of all disciplines to be civically engaged via nonpartisan and evidence-based methods. The papers presented this year offer high-quality models of incorporating practical politics into course curricula, extending political learning outside the classroom and into the community, and weaving civic engagement education throughout all disciplines and campus life. As civic education is a core objective of the American Political Science Association, track participants issue a call to action to recommit to this core pillar of the discipline and take concrete steps to work with a broad range of stakeholders to ensure our students are active and informed citizens.

Summary of Panels

The track largely explored the use of high-impact strategies for civic engagement learning that have lasting effects. McCartney et al., editors of the forthcoming *Teaching Civic Engagement Across the*

Disciplines, argued that informing students and inspiring a desire to participate in their communities is integral to the preservation of democratic values. Their book and accompanying website (accessible to all APSA members) offer a multitude of best practices for pedagogy, outreach, and assessment. Additionally, the text served as an important backdrop for the track.

Several presenters explored how crucial political events, such as the 2016 election, can be used as teaching moments for all students and that our reach must go beyond political science majors. Overall, papers examined civic education and engagement pedagogy in the classroom, outside the classroom, and through campus-wide programming, exploring the differential impact of civic education on students, political participation of students on and off campus, and civic relationships between students, campus, and the greater community.

As Abernathy and Forestal showed in assessing campus-wide initiatives and specific activities in introductory political science courses, our most direct impact comes in the classroom. Additionally, Lovell and Khatri showed that this impact is not restricted to our majors. Using an experimental design of simulations in multiple broad-reaching courses to examine student efficacy, they found improved civic education, with business/finance majors benefitting the most. Given their state's political science requirement for all students, they undertook a unique opportunity to reach a broad student population. Furthermore, Bernstein et al. presented results from a group assignment developing party-oriented state presidential campaigns, using engagement as an independent variable. Analyses of student essays found that students who scored high on engagement and teamwork were more likely to learn more from the course, highlighting an important insight in the relationship between civic education and engagement.

Course assignments which require out-of-classroom experiences were consistently shown to offer excellent opportunities for students to participate, develop skills, and create civic relationships. For example, Rank and Tylock, in seeking to bridge direct impact of political science majors and the broader campus community, developed a professional campaign course. In collaboration with student affairs, students had the opportunity to construct and manage a get-out-the-vote campaign on campus. Additionally, Jenkins and Wiley showed that internships expanded student coursework knowledge and allowed them to develop important practical skills. Others, such as Mueller and Blatt and Yoo et al., offered community-based instruction as experiential learning alternatives, which improved students' opinions about the greater community and offered additional institutional benefits, including higher student retention. In addition, Glazier and Bowman showed that engaging students with religious communities during their undergraduate years created positive community impressions and allowed them to tackle religious and social barriers, while also developing vital work skills.

Other presenters used external experiences, such as internships and community-based learning, as a part of their coursework. Again, using the electoral context, Mascagni required campaign volunteering as part of mandatory introductory courses. While she found that active student engagement successfully increased student political interest, she revealed some challenges with experiential learning, particularly in required courses. She urged educators to consider issues such as faculty support, promotion of nonpartisan democratic values, local political climate, and private demands on student time. Additionally, Hellwege and Neiman looked beyond the electoral context, offering students opportunities to work with other civic partners. Hellwege examined how allowing students more choice in

a civic engagement assignment improved efficacy in implementing community service projects, while acknowledging the challenges of external group projects. Neiman, in allowing students to develop project proposals for the mayor's office, offered students an opportunity for hands-on learning while reducing demands on local government resources, highlighting a mutually-beneficial relationship.

Many presenters recognized the importance of external partnerships with community leaders, building internal partnerships across campus, and utilizing unused campus resources. For example, Anderson, Coleman, and Mora evaluated the effects of their campus-wide election related initiative, arguing a need to foster further civic engagement in campuses with low-engagement cultures. Additionally, Forren highlighted challenges and opportunities for partnerships in a week-long initiative, creating multiple activities for students to participate across campus. Both presentations showed that open and highly visible events reduce student barriers to civic engagement. Taking a different approach, McTague and Cole showed that residential-based living-learning communities allow students to incorporate political affairs into their daily lives, garner further political knowledge, and participate in community projects, while avoiding negative feelings toward politics. Taken jointly then, educators should consider using external political activities as means to foster civic engagement, making use of campus-wide civic engagement and learning events, residential learning communities, and courses that highlight the political context in a real-life setting.

In sum, the track found several patterns and opportunities for fostering civic engagement and learning among students, exploring ways in which we can reach students to internalize civic responsibility and develop the skills and knowledge to be capable of civic engagement. In many ways, the authors collectively argued that the primary way we can motivate our students is to engage ourselves as instructors and include our students in the process.

Call to Action

As we move forward, our track issues a call to recommit to APSA's civic education objective by reaching out and building bridges to fellow political scientists, other disciplines, offices and organizations across our campuses, and partners in the broader community.

Within the discipline, we call for the Civic Education and Engagement Committee to be reinvigorated, for this committee to be charged with evaluating the discipline's efforts regarding civic education and engagement, and for their findings to be presented to the APSA Council. Our discipline's commitment to civic education must be inclusive of all institution types and all subfields of political science. We must continue to foster research on civic engagement and pedagogy, while holding it to high standards.

Scholars are urged to publish their research in journals such as the *Journal of Political Science Education* and to cite each other's research in an effort to build a scholarship of civic engagement education. We encourage scholars to publish studies of "best practices" of civic engagement pedagogy and, importantly, to make use of these ideas in their own classrooms. Community college track participants with high course loads invite scholars at research-intensive institutions to strike up collaborations for mutual benefit in conducting pedagogical research. The track encourages collaboration, including the continued use of the track format at the Teaching and Learning Conference and connecting with the Consortium for Inter-Campus SoTL Research. Ultimately, we conclude that civic engagement research and service must be recognized institutionally and professionally by the discipline, especially by tenure and promotion committees.

Campus-wide efforts, during election years, were found to improve student political participation and engagement; however, such efforts require broad support from across campus. As a discipline, we must reach out to faculty from other disciplines to create efforts that are more dynamic and ultimately more successful. In addition, we must involve staff from administration and student affairs who often hold valuable resources and experience in organizing campus-wide activities.

Many resources are needed to reach APSA's ambitious objective to prepare effective citizens. As an additional bridge, we must look beyond campus to find partners who have practical experience and resources to address student civic engagement and political participation. As a discipline, we are urged by practitioners to reach out and seek their assistance for mutual benefit. Several organizations provide external funding and other resources for high-impact practices, campus-wide events, and research funding.

CORE CURRICULUM/ GENERAL EDUCATION

Anthony Kammas, *University of Southern California*

Overview

This year's Core Curriculum/General Education track featured 11 papers spread over 5 panels, and at each panel there were approximately 12 discussants joined by a small but lively audience. The spirit of our meetings was collaborative and cooperative; with each panel, members of our track acquired the requisite familiarity and comfort to truly begin sharing (and learning from) each other's varied experiences. The track panelists and participants represented community colleges, small liberal arts teaching colleges, and research universities; the geographical diversity compounded the variance in experience, and threw light on pedagogical and institutional dilemmas that were either unknown to many or were vaguely grasped by all but a few. While we spent a good deal of time discussing the challenges and innovations particular to each of these themes, we also learned that there are overarching dilemmas common to all—even across the many different institutions represented. Three clear recurring themes emerged: (1) a debate over what constitutes a Core/GE course (with regard to politics), (2) student assessment, and (3) pedagogical goals.

Core/ General Education

From the outset of the first panel, it was clear to me that my preconceived notions regarding what constitutes "Core/GE" were going to be seriously challenged. What I had in mind was that a "core" class was a major requirement; in my department (political science), we have core classes that all political science majors have to take. Some of those core classes qualify to be (and are thus designated) "general education" classes. This designation is achieved by submitting a syllabus and extended course description for review; certain criteria must be met, and upon approval by the university, the status of "GE" is granted. The spirit of general education classes, as I understood it, was to effect a classical liberal arts educational experience. This was to ensure that students received an educational experience that went beyond their major field of study. Being at a large, R1 university, I ceased to see beyond this experience and simply took it as the norm. I could not have been more wrong.

What participants of this track learned was just how different a core/GE course can be, which depended on the institution in question, whether politics was offered as a major, and whether or not the course was a "US government" class or a "political science"

introductory class. At some community colleges, our colleagues explained, there were very few (if any) political science majors—especially at technology/science-oriented schools. In such instances, "core" and "general education" were nearly synonymous and interchangeable terms. Students who focused on other studies and had little or nothing to do with the social sciences often found such a requirement burdensome and uninteresting. For the instructors who taught the US government-type course, they were able to pitch the requirement as a civic necessity; others who taught a more formal political science course explained how they attempted to link it to the rationality found in the sciences, and to critical thinking in general. While our colleagues shared some of their winning strategies and pedagogical techniques, they too explained the great challenges accompanying teaching students that struggled to grasp the practicality of such requirements. All too often, students exhibited the attitude that their favored news outlet "taught" them all they needed (or cared) to know about politics. Compounding these issues, we also learned that quite often high school students attend these community college classes—sometimes in large numbers. Add to this the regional biases of party and religious affiliation, and we found that a strange brew of apathy, ideology, and volatility was not uncommon.

Reports of similar experiences were shared by our colleagues teaching at four-year institutions/programs; whether at smaller colleges or larger universities, matters changed when core and general education was more regularly integrated into a political science/politics major. Nonetheless, some professors were still faced with teaching a "fundamentals" course to nonmajors. Once again, there was significant variance in what counted as such a course; while there are merits to both, it seemed that those who taught the US government-type course were concerned that students came away with a better understanding of how their government worked and how to be a citizen. The faculty who taught the introductory political science courses wished for their students to think more logically/analytically about political matters. Although these two concerns are not exactly the same, the discussion that arose over the course of the panels demonstrated how these orientations dovetailed into a deeper and abiding analysis of power. All those participating in the track seemed to agree on the importance of this, especially as an aspect of civic education.

Assessment

Agreement on these points is one thing, but assessing how these points are getting across to students is another matter. Furthermore, assessing whether or not students (citizens/political agents) do anything with this knowledge is even more difficult. One of our colleagues went further, asking: Should we even be concerned with what students do with this knowledge beyond the classroom? That last question hung in the air, and as one could imagine, answers were difficult to come by. Yet, when the papers and conversation turned to assessment in the classroom, our colleagues offered various quantitative and qualitative tests and techniques for measuring their pedagogical effectiveness. What was learned was that this interest was not merely an intellectual affair; academic institutions use these (mostly quantitative) measures to determine funding, curriculum planning, and hiring. What struck me while listening to these reports were the sometimes over-officious tendencies of administrators to use these numbers to alter programs—and even professors' syllabi and course structure—in their effort to effect a different set of outcomes. As one can imagine, this did not sit well with faculty regardless of rank and institution. However, beyond the immediate aspects of assessment,

many of our colleagues intimated a type of experience that is not easily captured by the numbers—the instance when a student, long since graduated, writes their professor a note explaining how something they learned in class made a difference years later in life. While the evidence may only be anecdotal, it seemed that such instances are exactly what a "fundamentals" course in politics is supposed to achieve. That which assessment cannot capture may be of primary political significance.

Pedagogical Goals

Based on our discussions, there seemed to be two sides to this—and because I abhor dualisms, I'll intervene and say it's really a singular matter. Some of our colleagues considered "pedagogical goals" to primarily be a matter of teaching practices; others leaned in the direction of "pedagogical goals" being a matter of what students were supposed to learn. Though these positions are not the same, they are clearly related. We had the benefit of hearing about many clever techniques and approaches, including various discursive styles, uses of technology, and creative assignments. We also mutually confirmed a shared desire that students learn about real political institutions as well as sharpen their abstract, critical reasoning. Despite the broad range of perspectives and methods discussed, there was no significant disagreement on the necessity of either side of this double-sided monad—yes, we all came at this differently, but we ended up in the same general vicinity. Of course we did; we are all passionate about politics, critical thought, and teaching.

Our students, however, are generally not; some may be, but even those passionate few are very likely to come with some heavy baggage. Precisely the kind of baggage that core/general education courses are supposed to unload, unpack, and to a certain extent wash clean—so students can have somewhat of a fresh start when looking out into the all-too-complex world of political phenomenon. We are charged with the task of unpacking their baggage, and then helping them repack a new set of analytical tools for their journey back into civic life. This unpacking and repacking is a profoundly difficult task; it consists of a double challenge: critiquing *how they are in the world* as well as *how the world is in them*. It was the process we underwent to make our way to this shared space. After meditating on our track, it seems to me that our pedagogical goals aim at outfitting our students to come find us in this shared space—a space where they can enunciate their own critical, independent thoughts about real political matters and debate such proclamations with similarly critical yet conscientious people ... and perhaps even come to some consensus. *E Pluribus Unum*. It turns out that our pedagogical goals, and the point of core/general education politics courses may be the maintenance of the Republic and the perpetuation of the public sphere.

THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Janni Aragon, *Victoria University*
Michael Huston, *California State University, Chico*
Lorinda Riley, *University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu*
Oindrila Roy, *Cottey College*
Carlos A. Suárez Carrasquillo, *University of Florida*

In a time mired with worries and concerns the Inclusive Classroom track provided a brief respite for weary instructors. Common themes arose from the track: awareness, empathy, tolerance, and support for our students' learning environments. Like-mindedness bound us together as we engaged in a positive discussion of how we can stretch our students to become critical thinkers and consumers of information. Acknowledging the importance of institutional support in meeting challenges head on resulted in several successful cases of inclusive classrooms. We also discussed the issue of the inclusive professoriate and the challenges faced due to institutional and financial concerns as well as the way these issues affect our colleagues in contingent positions. Despite many successes and overarching proposed solutions, challenges persist, and a vibrant discussion of future considerations highlighted the continuing need for dialogue on this issue.

Institutions of higher education come in a variety of sizes and have a multiplicity of foci, but all have the shared goal of instilling knowledge in the next generation. In an atypical example, the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu with its high enrollment of Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders, and Asian Americans, provided an example of what can be achieved with committed faculty and a supportive institution. Indigenous values drive much of the curriculum development, assessment, and creation of a holistic supportive student environment. Taking students out of the classroom to engage in place-based learning honors the unique political heritage of Native Hawaiians and reinforces the value of political science to their modern day lives. Ensuring that assessment incorporates indigenous ways of knowing such as observation and mimicry allow indigenous students to be assessed in a manner that is natural to them while stretching other students' abilities. These methods translate to the creation of a diverse and well-rounded student body that can meet the demands of an inclusive future. The University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu provided the track a good example of how we can make students' learning environment more inclusive and impactful for them. We saw how the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu experience could serve as a strong case study for supporting inclusion across the curriculum and understanding the importance of our diverse student population.

The Inclusive Classroom track had a significant number of contributions from academics of different ranks from different size institutions and diverse student populations. These conversations led to fruitful debates that illustrated many of the challenges that political science faculty still face in the quest of a more inclusive classroom.

Some of the challenges that were presented in this track dealt with what happens when administrators stop supporting successful programs, such as international exchange, that allow students to venture out of their comfort zone, namely programs that emphasize the virtues of international education and the transformative power that it can have in our students. Other challenges are also present when it comes to teaching community organizing in the classroom and taking these lessons outside of campus. Colleagues and administrators at times are not receptive to these efforts since they are seen as "radicalizing" students and straying from some notion of neutral and politically disengaged pedagogy. The conversations that were held in the track were supportive of both the transformative power of international education and community organizing as a learning experience.

As part of the quest of greater inclusivity the Inclusive Classroom track addressed the challenges that were posed to us by the probing question of "Why don't women rule the world?" Educators have a pivotal role in promoting the political ambition of women that want to serve in public office. The classroom and the mentoring process can also provide the space necessary where the ambition of women to run for office can be fostered, despite of the daunting structural

challenges outside of the classroom. We acknowledge that the political climate can influence our classroom in varied ways.

Content warning is another challenge that was discussed as part of our track and concrete strategies were discussed in order to facilitate a more inclusive classroom. The notion of content warning is a fairly recent challenge that academics have to consider when fostering the most inclusive classroom possible. Addressing content warning is present when decisions are made on how to lead a discussion, how to lecture, or how to shape a syllabus. Our track considered effective ways of integrating content warning by protecting those most vulnerable to a number of topics and addressing very challenging political topics as well as means to pushing our students' learning.

Institutional context does matter, and predominantly white institutions are not only the norm but very frequently their student body has had little experience interacting with those who have different identities or backgrounds. Our track had great conversations on this subject matter, especially how by decolonizing the syllabus and offering assignments where students had to place themselves in the experience of the other we can hopefully lead to greater understanding and solidarity from our students.

Textbooks can feature a hegemonic narrative that is highly racialized and unfortunately political science is not an exception. An examination of problematic presentations in textbooks serves as an opportunity both to point out what are precisely those hegemonic narratives are and to deconstruct these practices for our students to see. Students can be made cognizant of this narrative of exclusivity, and take concerted efforts to understand how these dominating narratives can impact our teaching and political science. Likewise, we discussed how assignments and experiential opportunities benefit our students. From Michael Houston we heard about how the town hall meeting engaged first-year students in California State Chico's survey American government class.

Finally our track considered the challenges that black and brown faculty face in political science. These range from hiring practices, to the need to do more service to compensate for lack of diversity in departments or campuses, and to the dynamic with students. Other challenges that black and brown faculty members have to face include not only having to prove their talent and acumen to some white students, but also to reach some students of color that expect black and brown faculty to be "woke" in order to engage in productive pedagogy. Fortunately we learned of institutions and faculty members that have taken concerted efforts to create welcoming learning environments for indigenous students, offering us hope that it is possible to achieve a more inclusive classroom.

The Inclusive Classroom track featured poignant presentations that tackled many of the challenges that educators face today in the field of political science. The conversations that followed served as a great sharing of ideas and reaffirmation of concrete examples on how to improve our teaching, impacting our students in a positive light, and the field of political science.

The Inclusive Classroom track had a number of papers describing successful strategies for promoting inclusiveness both in and beyond the classroom setting. Jenkins, Ortbals, Poloni-Staudinger, and Strachan shared some feminism-inspired pedagogic strategies that they found useful in political science courses—including those on women and politics—to prepare young women for positions of leadership. Jenkins et al. began by asking why we see so few women in positions of leadership. Their answers to this question were grounded in the theory of nascent political ambition and the relationally embedded model of political ambition. Although the

first approach views gender-gap in political leadership as a function of ambition deficit among women, Carroll and Sanbonmatsu argue that ambition is not a necessary condition for running for office, but may develop as a result of the process of running for office. Therefore, recruitment of women through encouragement by political parties and groups as well as a supportive infrastructure is key to bridging the gender gap in representation.

Jenkins et al. suggested a range of classroom techniques to cultivate "political interest, efficacy, and ambition" among college-aged women, and to enable them to interpret political developments from a feminist standpoint. Specific writing exercises discussed in their presentation included having students compose a persuasive letter to a woman they thought should run for office with a list of concrete steps for achieving that goal. They also discussed techniques for fostering internal motivation among female students through consciousness-raising groups and guest speakers who would serve as powerful role models. Jenkins et al. highlighted the importance of involving on-campus civic organizations in classroom discussions to enhance political awareness, and to help students realize the real-world implications of policy decisions. To address issues such as inequality of resources for women running political campaigns and situational impediments such as a disproportionate burden of household chores shared by female partners, they suggested using innovative assignments such as interviewing a female politician about her fundraising experience and planning a conversation with family members regarding the sharing of domestic responsibilities.

Fenner addressed another critical aspect of inclusiveness by outlining an effective method for making material accessible to students with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Fenner reconceptualized the contentious teaching practice of using content warnings as a type of accommodation for students with disability. She argued for the effectiveness of trigger warnings as tools for facilitating access to difficult material instead of a means for discouraging access to challenging content, or a method for making inflated demands for creating unrealistic "safe spaces."

Fenner delineated four concrete steps for designing effective content warnings. The first step involved instituting direct communication with students at the beginning of the semester to initiate a conversation regarding what they need. While having this conversation, it is critical to help students think about their needs in terms of PTSD to establish that content warning is a form of accommodation for a disability. This can be easily done with index cards where students could list their triggers along with other relevant information such as name, major, preferred pronoun, and learning styles. The second step involved sending content warnings via e-mail to students who have asked for the accommodation before using traumatizing material in class. This gives the student a range of options from skipping the material altogether to accessing it only in the presence of a counsellor or a supportive friend. Third, Fenner argued that thinking about difficult content from the perspective of trigger warnings is a useful exercise because it helps instructors come up with strong pedagogical justifications for including such material in the course. The fourth step involved establishing a conversation with students seeking accommodation before potentially triggering classroom discussions. This conversation can be used to discuss alternative forms of assignments for the student that s/he can submit instead of being a direct participant in the discussion.

In addition to the steps outlined above, Fenner argued that it is absolutely important to acknowledge what trigger warnings *can and cannot* accomplish. To this end, she concluded by suggesting,

"Content warnings cannot make hostile campus environments more tolerant, stop sexual assault, or add more diverse voices to syllabi (however much we might want to do those things). They can, however, make important material more accessible to one particular subgroup of students—with a minimum of disruption or inconvenience to their peers."

REFERENCES

Carroll, Susan J., and Kira Sanbonmatsu. 2013. *More Women Can Run: Gender and Pathways to the State Legislatures.* New York: Oxford University Press.

INNOVATIVE SUBFIELD STRATEGIES

Everett Albert Vieira III, *Temple University*
Erin Victoria Kay Rowland, *University of Tennessee, Knoxville*
Bobbi Gentry, *Bridgewater College*
Daniel Mallinson, *Stockton University*

Introduction

Subfields within the discipline of political science have their own unique approaches to understanding the political world, much less teaching it. However, during the 2017 Teaching and Learning Conference, teacher scholars from across the discipline and across the world came together to teach each other unique and creative ways to engage students. Our learning falls into four major themes.

Bridging Theory and Practice

The need to bring the world into the classroom was a common theme across the track. As pressure increases to demonstrate not only student learning outcomes, but also employment outcomes, teachers are thinking differently about how to incorporate "real world" learning in the classroom and assess the impact of their approaches. Several papers addressed the need to not only deliver political science theory to students, but also skills necessary for success in the workplace. Approaches ranged from policy writing to professionalization courses to the incorporation of simulations in the classroom. Each approach seeks to build a bridge between political science theory and practice.

These discussions further highlight the progress that remains in implementing the Wahlke (1991) report's recommendations for political science curriculum. Two of the report's recommendations (#8 and #10) include building skills (e.g., public speaking) and gaining experience in "real life" through internships, capitol seminars, political participation, and study abroad. These recommendations speak directly to the need to bridge theory and practice. Many of the papers in this track demonstrated efforts at helping students make practical connections of the theory that they are learning in the classroom to problem-solving and employment skills in the "real world."

Advancing practical training coupled with a firm theoretical grounding in political science is also a fruitful avenue for collaboration among the subfields. It is easy to feel isolated in a subfield silo within political science, but we have much to share in our pedagogical approaches. In addition, identifying how components of our teaching toolbox can be applied to other subfields is useful when we are called to teach courses outside of our immediate expertise (e.g., Poloni-Staudinger and Wolf 2016). Thus, breaking out of our subfield silos is important for improving our own teaching and helping our students identify how political science has "real world" application.

Conversations across Subfields

A number of presenters revealed insights from the application of one subfield to another, as well as different disciplines, and provided helpful tools in the subfields to facilitate more effective teaching.

Hoon presented his findings on contemplative versus reflective learning in the classroom by demonstrating his approach in the session. By utilizing a yoga chime and having participants reflect on the process of listening, he showed how tools from disciplines outside of political science can effectively be used in the classroom.

The Allen, Ertle, and Morris study highlighted an innovative first-year experience program, the "U-Course," at California State University, Chico. The small learning communities of about 12 students within a roughly 100-student classroom included embedded peer mentors, civic and public engagement as in a town hall atmosphere, and team-teaching. The blended course experience brought together American government instructors with faculty from the English and religion departments, thereby creating a conversation across disciplines.

Poloni-Staudinger used a textbook to teach American politics from a comparative perspective. Her study found that not only did it help break down ethnocentric student perspectives, but teaching American politics in a comparative way also benefited both US and international students and faculty by increasing learning and interest among students, and increasing interest among faculty. Students were better able to break out of their American-centric thinking to consider countries in comparison.

Graduate Student Development

The topic of graduate student training beyond primary subfield and subject matter expertise was also discussed in our track. While we all received training in our respective graduate programs, the consensus was that this training focused on our particular research projects and interests. The reality for most of us, however, is that after graduate school we tend to secure positions where our research focus is not part of the dominant strand or core of teaching responsibilities at our new institution.

Being willing and able to teach outside of our respective comfort zones is not only desired, but also often required, in order to be successful teacher scholars, such as every faculty member teaching Texas government in the department regardless of specialization. This ability to understand the different subfields and opportunities for teaching students from diverse backgrounds, aptitudes, and capabilities is something that comes from experience. But this ability can, and we argue *should*, be addressed in graduate programs.

Engaging Citizens and Democracy

Civic and public engagement was also a reoccurring theme, in its own right, in the Innovative Subfield Strategies track. As DiMola and Ruffin suggested, students participating in community engaged learning utilize applied knowledge to build critical thinking and reasoning skills. Through networking, communication, and team-building, students enhance their career readiness. Such a focus also helps universities, both in the United States and abroad, to elevate their profile in their communities and reinforce any civic missions, especially through the building of community partnerships.

To align with their university's service mission, Lowe and DiMola helped redesign the Justice Studies program to incorporate a capstone course on leadership and social change, and DiMola and Ruffin included student collaboration with community partners in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, as part of their courses.

DiMola and Ruffin theorized that profound learning most often occurs when experience is supported by guidance. Thus, student teams worked with community partners to craft service projects, such as professional development workshops for women and minorities.

Biswas conducted surveys with potential employers in Washington state and found better teamwork strategies and oral and written skills were in high need. Thus, he also crafted opportunities for his students to work with local nonprofits. To teach students about the importance of austerity in public budgeting, Mallinson utilized the California Budget Challenge and a national budget simulation. Students became "budgeters" and made mock decisions on how to allocate limited funding to various departments and programs. Furthermore, in the Thessaloniki metropolitan area of Greece, Chadjipadelis and Tolika's students worked as consulting and support staff to political personnel at public institutions. Through an active learning and participant observation approach, students were able to examine the flow of political decision-making firsthand.

Finally, Kohen and Solo discussed how to go "beyond the campus" by reaching out globally. Through their work with an educational nonprofit that teaches people how to be heroes, they designed lesson plans on the subject of "Human Rights" for K–12 teachers. They found that K–12 teachers were hungry for engaging lesson plans as they quickly began averaging between 2,000 and 3,000 hits per day on their website. The success of these various programs helps reinforce the idea that civic and public engagement of students is a growing trend among instructors and educational institutions and helps better prepare graduates for employment.

Conclusion

We recommend three major goals moving forward with innovation in the subfields:

1. Faculty should articulate the theory to practice bridge in their classes.
2. Conversations across subfields and disciplines should be encouraged in pedagogy practice and research.
3. Graduate student development should include teaching across the discipline, and graduate programs should better prepare their students with the pedagogical techniques of core courses and ways to teach their specialization.
4. The discipline should continue to foster discussions across the subfields about innovation in teaching, skill development, and engagement, both civic and political.

In our development of understanding across subfields, we found strategies that work include the connection to reality and informing students as to the benefit of this particular pedagogy addresses. One responsibility that faculty members need to do across subfields is to highlight how learning can be applied across contexts to address real or simulated problems, to genuinely listen to what others have to say, and to make others understand the relevance of people's interaction with government and society not only matters but make a difference.

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SIMULATIONS AND GAMES

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Active learning through simulations and games is an important method of reaching students in different ways to promote conceptual knowledge and critical thinking. At the 2017 Teaching and Learning Conference, three overarching themes emerged in the Simulations and Games track: confronting the opportunity costs, improving the construction of games/simulations, and adding rigor to the scholarship of teaching and learning. In many respects, the second and third themes answer the questions raised by the first.

Opportunity Costs

Track participants introduced activities that ranged in duration from Victor Asal's five-minute "Dating Game" to Michael Cornfield's "Political Summit" role-play, which required multiple class sessions, to Samantha Howe's reactionary role-play about managing a zombie crisis that spanned an entire semester. Naturally, these activities, especially those that are longer in nature, force instructors to think about whether they can or should devote limited class time to games/simulations. What else can you do in class? Making the decision to use a simulation requires the instructor to decide what might be left out. Obviously, shorter simulations reduce the impact but may provide fewer benefits in other areas. Depth of learning is also a concern. Does the simulation or game provide the same or greater depth of learning than some other method?

In deliberating the opportunity costs, the track found it useful to navigate ways in which games/simulations could be designed better and ways in which we can measure whether or not games/simulations are having the intended effect on student learning.

Improving the Construction of Games/Simulations

The track settled on three concrete methods for improving the construction of games/simulations. Activities should include *motivation* incentives. Michelle Allendoerfer's presentation on student engagement highlighted the ways in which students will be more motivated if they already feel like might have some of the background knowledge. Lukas Berg and John Chambers' election prediction markets activity gave students an especially personal motivation. By working with real (even if nominal) money, students had "skin in the game" and were stimulated to do work and research outside of the classroom.

In promoting motivation, the track encouraged the *gamification* of active learning. Multiple papers stressed the advantage gained by adding game-like elements to classroom activities. Rule-based games make for informed play. Competition not only spurs student-based learning, but also fosters classroom rapport. Justin Ervin showed that a task as routine as filling out a worksheet can be transformed into a community-building activity by injecting a little competition. Nevertheless, Edward Kammerers' foray into moot court programs offered an important warning: winning should not take precedence over learning. That is, we must be mindful of students who see games as an end in and of themselves and not as a vehicle for promoting learning.

Much of the discussion of the track centered on improving the *execution* of game/simulation teaching techniques. Erin Baumann and John FitzGibbon offered important findings about the effectiveness of different debrief methods. Offering a broad view of

game/simulation debrief methods, they proposed that in-person debriefs help students learn best. Other participants offered new platforms by which political science instructors could build games/simulations. Elisabeth Gerber introduced Policymaker, an online portal that consolidates role-playing information and allows participants to communicate with each other. Nicholas Vaccaro recommended a turn to digital games/simulations and discussed the possible pitfalls involved with such activities.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Participants who have attended multiple TLC conferences noted the increased use of SoTL language to discuss the testing and effectiveness of games/simulations. Participants introduced various ways of *testing* whether their activities had their intended effects. For instance, Petra Hendrickson issued multiple surveys to document the marginal gains in comprehension over time. Berg and Chambers used multiple regression to test whether or not prediction markets had an effect on student learning. Kammers developed a pilot study before conducting a mass survey. Howe compared her zombie course students' knowledge to those of students in American and comparative politics courses. To be fair, there were instances in which the simulation seemed to have little effect. Nevertheless, this discovery is important. It shows that a role-play either needs improvement or needs to be abandoned if it does not stimulate the deeper learning that we are striving for. Much like substantive political science research, sometimes settling on the null hypothesis is an important conclusion.

Other common social science techniques consistently appeared in the 2017 track. John Parrish and Devra Schwartz highlight the possibilities of *collaboration* with those outside the classroom. In conducting a university campus crisis management role-play, Parrish and Schwartz required students to interview their real-life counterparts. Allendoerf noted the importance of *iteration* and that reliability does not come easily or quickly. Indeed, Ervin had used his worksheet game over 30 times. Cornfield has had to adjust to the various partisan make-up of any given group of students. Finally, participants discussed future paths of research. Baumann and Fitz Gibbon suggested that game/simulation users look into the combination and sequencing of debrief methods. Vaccaro recommended that instructors expand game/simulation design to digital platforms. Asal called upon the subfield to think about low-cost games that create vivid representations of political phenomena.

One of the most important conclusions of the track is the need to legitimize SoTL for academics. APSA and others must work to demonstrate the value of rigorous educational science by including it equally with other research in the hiring and tenure decisions in the discipline. TLC attendees all understand the firm research value of SoTL to improving student outcomes but this is not necessarily as widespread across the discipline. Related to this is the need for meaningful administrative support for new and innovative pedagogies throughout the academy not just in smaller teaching focused institutions.

The workgroup discussed new theories and avenues of future research—all under the guise of adding to, and improving on, the ways in which we teach and methods whereby we analyze our teaching. In the end, participants agreed that active learning through simulations and games has a special place in the scholarship of teaching and learning, yet much of our understanding of the value of simulations is intuitive. We "see" results because we see students more engaged or more confident or more talkative. However, we are increasingly trying to measure substantive knowledge or the increase in skills that our students get through active learning. Additionally, the range of activities is growing larger and more diverse. No longer he sole realm of international relations, new games adding to the rich quiver of role playing simulations in American government, public administration, political theory, and crisis management among others. SoTL in active learning is an ever growing field of inquiry and we must expand our valuation of it to better serve our students.

THE SOCRATIC METHOD TODAY

Erika K. Masaki, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

The Socratic Method, attributed to arguably the first political scientist of all time, remains a topic of pedagogic discussion even thousands of years after Socrates first uttered his first question. Even though the term "Socratic Method" is often tossed around by political theorists, law schools, and many others in education, there seems to be much debate about what the Socratic Method actually is. Would Socrates walk into a modern classroom and scorn with disapproval? Would he barely recognize the method as the one he adopted? One of the most important topics of discussion in the Socratic Method Today track was attempting to define the Socratic Method to begin with. What does it require? Beyond posing questions that seem to aim at humiliating the interlocutor into admitting he knows nothing, what does it mean for Socrates to engage in the Socratic Method and what does it mean for teachers to employ it?

The first session presented the Socratic Method through the eyes of Socrates. Using various Platonic dialogues, the group discussed Socrates' use of humiliation, questioning, and imagery in interacting with his interlocutors. Marlene K. Sokolon's paper examined how Socrates employed stories, something that we should seek to enhance if we want to replicate the Socratic Method as teachers. Ann Ward's paper focused on the roles of recollection and ideas in the *Apology* and *Meno*. Finally, Vannessa Jansche's paper argued that the Socratic Method requires realigning the erotic soul toward philosophy.

Examining the Socratic Method as it was used by Socrates himself, a theme began to develop that was present throughout our entire track: To say that there is just one Socratic Method seems to be a disservice to Socrates himself as he often adapted his methods to best reach those with whom he was conversing. An additional question that emerged during the first session was how we as teachers can and should direct our students' Eros toward their learning in the classroom. At the same time, we also began to ask questions about the appropriateness of the Socratic Method as a broad teaching tool and we asked if different types of students require educators to employ different types of the Socratic Method.

Turning to a more modern application of the Socratic Method, the second session focused on ways to use the Socratic Method in teaching and learning. In this section of our track, Steven McGuire compared Kant and Plato's understandings of anamnesis and their role in education. David W. Livingstone argued that the Socratic Method is sometimes incorrectly equated to Dewey's discovery of learning. He further argued that a clarification of the differences is necessary to better understand the potential advantages and disadvantages in adopting Dewey's pedagogy in the classroom. Finally, Jordon Barkalow investigated how to use the Socratic Method as an alternative to student-centered learning. All three of these papers addressed growing concerns about the focus on a twenty-first century

learning skill-set, one that prioritizes job skills over skills gained through a liberal education, such as critical thinking.

This section of the track allowed all of the participants to explore their own experiences in adopting the Socratic Method in the classroom. In the modern classroom, the push for twenty-first century learning and the development of skills should not be the exclusive focus of education. Rather, by using the Socratic Method, educators can reach students at a deeper level to help them develop skills beyond the technical level. In other words, even with the pressures to instrumentalize education, the Socratic Method can be employed to produce both good employees and good people.

The next section of the track focused on the Socratic Method within different cultural contexts. Andrew Bibby demonstrated that the Socratic Method was adopted at the time of the American founding and subtly transformed into a mode of individual critical thinking and self-expression. Rebecca LeMoine explored whether the Socratic Method is culturally imperialistic, particularly in the multicultural classroom. William Sokoloff argued that the Socratic Method is limited at best, and at its worst, is a bad pedagogical practice because of its adversarial, hierarchical, and authoritarian nature.

One of the key points brought out in this section was that the Socratic Method is not for everyone. Indeed, in many cases, the Socratic Method, as it is understood by many people, may make students feel intimidated or unwilling to participate. If using the Socratic Method does not benefit students, they may end up feeling resentment toward philosophy in general. At the same time, a culturally diverse classroom may be the ideal setting for the Socratic Method because of the different perspectives it can bring to the students. Consequently, we looked toward a new Socratic Method, one that takes the best of Socrates' approach (critical thinking and self-learning) while minimizing the potential disadvantages (humiliation and ambiguity).

In the final session, the track focused on the challenges of the Socratic Method. Paul Corey discussed the many obstacles teachers confront in the classroom that make the Socratic Method difficult, if not impossible, to implement. Sean Steel argued that the Socratic Method as a technique is indistinguishable from that of the sophists and that the real difference lies in the motivations of the teacher. Finally, Ramona Grey explored the set of standards that can be discovered in the Socratic Method, such as justice-seeking, knowledge-seeking, and critical inquiry.

This final session reinforced both the benefits and concerns of using the Socratic Method today. Although utilizing the Socratic Method can be risky, as educators we should still be willing to take risks to reach our students. Philosophy is a way of life, and so it is important to understand that the best way to study Socratic philosophy is to understand that there is no single way to study Socratic philosophy.

The Socratic Method track tackled many difficult topics, not only in employing the Socratic Method in the classroom, but in teaching political philosophy and in teaching more broadly. Beyond recognizing that there are many different adaptations and definitions of the Socratic Method (perhaps even for Socrates himself), the discussion brought out many important questions about how to best use the Socratic Method, or whether it should even be used at all. Another common theme was the concern for the decay of a liberal education. How do teachers encourage students to see the value of things beyond their immediate utility?

Is the Socratic Method (either as Socrates used it, or as educators have adapted it) a useful pedagogic tool worth holding on to?

Perhaps that question will continue to cross the minds of those who study Socrates. One point, however, on which there was much agreement, is in the devotion we have as educators to find the best method for reaching our students, particularly when teaching complex and abstract ideas found in political philosophy. Not only do we want to give our students the best experience with these great works (whether it's through the Socratic Method or otherwise), but we also want to find a way to make these timeless works accessible and real.

THE VIRTUAL AND TECHNOLOGICALLY ENHANCED CLASSROOM

Ray Mikell, *Jackson State University*
Sara Moats, *Florida International University*

The Virtual and Technologically Enhanced Classroom track at the 2017 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference produced vibrant discussion and scholarly debates on the importance and effective use of technology in today's classroom. As education becomes more and more digitally enhanced, the conversation focused on finding the appropriate balance between technology and instruction at all levels of education and all learning platforms.

What keeps students engaged and interested over time in the classroom with an increasingly online universe? The answer, according to panelists for the first segment of technology track, is still quality instruction. It must, however, adapt to the digital world at a time when younger people have come of age in a more connected world.

Interestingly, two of the three panelists for this segment suggested that technological changes will require being more concerned about student engagement with civic affairs before their college-age years. More specifically, they addressed what they asserted was a need for better instruction in government and politics in American high schools and middle schools as well as colleges.

Diana Owen of Georgetown University suggested that what she terms the digital transformation of American society requires a fundamental change in high school and middle school classrooms. The need is especially urgent for students from households with lower socioeconomic status who are more likely to attend schools with fewer resources. The reason: Today's civic world is being shaped by more information, of wildly varying quality, which citizens must be able to evaluate. It is also being shaped by the ease with which people with digital resources can create and engage with politically oriented content, and organize communities.

Owen was followed by Jo-Anne Hart of Lesley University, who presented information on a civic affairs learning initiative, Growing Voters (growingvoters.org), aimed at increasing the engagement of college and high school and middle school students. The website provides instructors with free classroom activities, just the sort of digital activities discussed by Owen, and lesson plans on voting and elections.

By contrast, Morris Bidjerano of the online Walden University focused on the engagement of college students, more specifically those at Walden. Its instructional model, he suggested, was designed to promote a "community of inquiry" that past research showed could be created through digital instruction. Learner engagement, however, has been seen as more important in more recent research. The presenter suggested that his institution's experience suggests that instructional design can go a long way toward creating such engagement, and student retention and success, but that challenges remain, especially as regards the effectiveness of discussion boards.

The Innovative Teaching Tools session focused on creative methods to increase student engagement in the classroom and promote critical thinking skills. Each paper offered valuable insight on how the inclusion of new technologies in today's classroom could improve the student learning experience.

Ray Mikell of Jackson State University presented an intriguing study on the use of corrective feedback on initial quizzes to improve student comprehension of the material as well as retention of important concepts over time. Over the course of several semesters, Mikell investigated the impact feedback had on student comprehension and found scenario-style questions seemed to slightly increase student learning. Students in the experimental group were more likely to write longer essays with more detailed analysis than the control group. The experiment was also expanded to include the use of immediate feedback on multiple choice and short answer questions. The author found immediate feedback had little impact on the student's ability to correctly answer similar questions later in the semester, although students in the control group did compose slightly longer essays. Future research will focus on including essay questions in the initial quizzes.

Colin M. Brown and George Soroka from Harvard University presented information on a very innovative tool GovWrites. The program was developed to teach students the fundamentals of critical thinking and writing in the social science discipline. Students learn how to develop an argument and express ideas through a series of online modules, each designed to guide students through the writing process. As students work through the various exercises, they receive tips and writing samples for further clarification. Additionally, students are able to e-mail their results to their professor. Future research will test the effectiveness of GovWrites on teaching social science writing skills.

The presenters in the Improving Classroom Participation session focused using more high-tech and popular means of Internet communication. They used these not just to stay relevant. Instead, they aimed to use the technology for critical thinking and active learning ends.

It was Anthony J. Chergosky's consideration of video messaging through the mobile device application Instagram that was surely the most novel use of digital communications on the panel. In lieu of sending him only written responses to questions about course readings, he encouraged students to send him video responses to a private Instagram account.

As for why he would do this, Chregosky, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, suggested that he presumed that most students were already using the mobile service. Indeed, a survey of the class confirmed this. Meanwhile, he noted that the app had a messaging tool that allows for easy message recording. In the end, most students still chose to send written responses via e-mail. Even so, others' use of Instagram showed that it encouraged more careful responses and critical thinking. Even so, he urged instructors to proceed with caution when thinking about similar strategies, due to student comfort with written responses, or shyness about video.

By contrast, John McMahon of Beloit University incorporated the use of podcasts into his classes. These echo an older form of broadcasting, the radio show, only in a democratized fashion for use on the Internet. Nevertheless, he noted, the ever-increasing, podcast-listening demographic skews toward the young and well-educated. Consequently, a podcast strategy seemed likely to catch students' attention. He allowed students to participate in every stage, and the fine details, of podcast production. The result was that it allowed students to see how politics and public policy narratives are created, in an active and cooperative way. They were no longer merely consumers of political media, but producers.

Finally, Aidan Kestigian of Carnegie Mellon University found that using blogs in political theory courses had many advantages over traditional writing exercises. First, the use of blogs allowed students a low-stakes opportunity to practice writing skills for more formal essays. The key to a successful blogging program, she asserted, is structure. Students must be encouraged to write frequently, and know what to write about. There must also be strong ground rules for group assignments. Likewise, the assignments must be integrated with classes. She added that students should also feel comfortable in using the blog technology, or taught how to use it.

The presentation by Sheikh Tijan Drammeh, Sr., of the University of West Georgia, for final segment, Virtual Discourse, was moved from the concluding hours to Saturday. All the same, his presentation, which ended in a rousing call for a more thoughtful balancing of good instruction and the incorporation of digital technology in the classroom, hit on all of the track's themes, and in many ways seemed to summarize the 2017 edition of the technology track.

He noted that educators and governments worldwide, even ones from developing countries, have reacted to the advent of digital learning by rapidly accepting the use of high technology in the classroom, as well as online learning. It could be argued, he asserted, that education is now in a "post-technology and innovation in teaching and learning era," given widespread agreement on the benefits of technology. Nonetheless, critics remain. Some, he suggested, want to drift into nostalgia for an era in which inspirational instructors loomed larger, in traditional classrooms. Other scholars, however, urge more caution. These, Drammeh suggested, have a point.

As many on the panels also suggested, technology and digital learning can enhance student engagement of a sort that is more urgently needed in civic affairs than ever before. He echoed thoughts of other presenters, all the same, in suggesting that good instruction is still vital, and that it cannot ultimately be replaced by technology. The key, he asserted, is finding a "just right" balance.

If the 2017 track was any indication, the search for the continuing relevance of the human touch, and a discussion of the limits as well as the importance of technology in modern political science instruction, should provide a wellspring of research and scholarly discussion for years to come. ■