
International

APSA AFRICA WORKSHOPS

From July 1 to 12, 2013, approximately 30 scholars from across Africa and the United States will gather at the Institute for Governance and Development in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, for this year's Africa Workshop, titled "Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective." Now going into its sixth annual iteration, the APSA Africa Workshop program is an academic conference series funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support political science research and teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa. It also forms a major component of APSA's efforts to support research networks linking US scholars with their colleagues overseas and engage political science communities outside the United States. Previous workshops have been held in Gaborone, Botswana (2012); Nairobi, Kenya (2011); Dares Salaam, Tanzania (2010); Accra, Ghana (2009); and Dakar, Senegal (2008).

2014 Call for Proposals

In the fall of 2013, APSA International Programs office will distribute a call for proposals from US- and Africa-based faculty interested in serving as leaders of the 2014 workshop. Interested political scientists should form a leadership team comprised of two US-based and two Africa-based scholars, and submit a proposal identifying a workshop team, location, and African institutional partner. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions and a copy of the 2013 Call for Proposals can be found online at the APSA Africa Workshop website: www.apsanet.org/africaworkshops. Questions should be directed to Andrew Stinson at africaworkshops@apsanet.org.

ALUMNI NETWORKING GRANTS

APSA announces a new grants program specifically for APSA Africa Workshops alumni. These Alumni Networking Grants will support the professional development of Africa Workshop alumni, facilitate networking potential, and encourage collaboration among scholars and academic institutions across Africa. Made possible by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the \$30,000 annual program will include

three types of grants: professional development grants, workshop grants, and publication grants. Applications will be reviewed by the Africa project steering committee at regular intervals throughout the year. Additional information on the Alumni Networking Grants program is online at the APSA Africa Workshop website: www.apsanet.org/africaworkshops. Questions should be directed to Andrew Stinson at africaworkshops@apsanet.org.

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE ARAB UPRISINGS: LESSONS AND CHALLENGES

In autumn 2012 APSA launched a new workshop program for emerging scholars in the Arab Middle Eastern and North African countries (MENA). Funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, this two-year program aims to bring together 20 to 25 regionally based scholars for training in research methods, professional development, and fostering cross-national networking opportunities each year. APSA is partnering with the American University in Cairo (AUC) to host the first workshop in September 2013.

As part of the preparation for the first workshop, in April 2013, APSA collaborated with Cairo University, Lebanese American University (LAU), and the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman, Jordan on a series of roundtables and panel discussions on the lessons and relationship between political science and current political developments in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and the region. More than 125 people participated in one of the three sessions, including undergraduates, graduate students, teaching assistants, and professors of political science, economics, law, and philosophy.

In Cairo, the panel on "The Relevance of Political Science to Democratization in the Arab World" was chaired by Mustapha K. Al Sayyid, with presentations by Al Sayyid, Mazen Hassan (both Cairo University), Bahgat Korany, and Nadine Sika (both AUC). In Beirut, Bassel F. Salloukh moderated the panel on "Political Science and the Arab Spring: Lessons and Challenges,"

with presentations from Betsy Super and Ahmed Morsy (both APSA staff), Michael Coppedge (Notre Dame), and Imad Salamey (LAU). In Amman, the American Center of Oriental Research hosted a roundtable discussion with political scientists, visiting scholars and students on "The Role of Political Science and Political Scientists in the Past, Present & Future of the MENA."

Three common themes emerged from these discussions. First, what to call the events of the "Arab Spring" was a common point of concern. Are they revolutions or uprisings or even a "spring" at all? Second, the extent to which political scientists, among others, largely failed to predict the Arab Spring was an opening point from many speakers. Yet as many panelists noted, prediction is not the only, or even the most important, activity that political scientists as scholars undertake: understanding and explanation are equal, if not more important scholarly activities. Thus many participants noted the welcome development of a renewed conversation between area specialists and political scientists more generally on how to understand developments in the MENA region, on the one hand, and also how understanding regional dynamics could contribute to broader theories of democratization, states in transition, and processes of revolutions or varieties of democracy in more global terms. Might the political histories and cases of Latin American politics provide insight into the causes of the recent events in the region? On the other hand, the perspective that each country is unique and the need to articulate, for instance, an Islamic or Egyptian concept of democracy was also articulated as a potential important focus for political scientists. Finally, the need to extend research beyond formal institutions and also examine informal institutions and social movements was clearly articulated, most notably during audience discussion at the Cairo University panel.

For more information on the APSA MENA Workshops, or to learn more about participating, please contact Ahmed Morsy at amorsy@apsanet.org. More information is at www.apsanet.org/menaworkshops. ■