

The Political Science Research and Teaching List

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The Political Science Research and Teaching list (PSRT-L) is a moderated electronic discussion list on the Bitnet computer network (part of the internet). It deals with issues of interest to professional political scientists, both researchers and teachers. After three years in operation PSRT-L has grown to about 750 participants in 28 countries.

Submissions from all sub-fields of political science as well as related disciplines are encouraged. A subscriber to the list can submit questions or comments merely by sending an electronic mail note to PSRT-L AT MIZZOU1.MISSOURI.EDU. These notes are collected into digests which are then periodically re-posted to all subscribers. There are no costs associated with being a subscriber to PSRT-L once one has access to the network.

PSRT-L is not intended to serve as a public forum for debate over current issues in politics as other lists fill that niche. Rather it is intended to provide an opportunity for political scientists to ask for advice, to present their ideas and ongoing research for discussion, to consider the directions in which the discipline is advancing, and to encourage the dissemination of new concepts in research and teaching. In addition, the list editors regularly post announcements of job openings, other more specialized discussion lists, and upcoming conferences. A series of archival files are available to the subscriber of PSRT-L.

PSRT-L also publishes and archives *The Law and Politics Book Review*, edited by Herbert Jacob. Although the *Review* is a regular feature of the discussion list, PSRT-L

tries to be as general as possible in its coverage of political science. An increasing number of specialized political science lists are springing up and PSRT-L does not try to duplicate their efforts.

You are invited to subscribe to PSRT-L by sending an electronic mail request to LISTSERV AT MIZZOU1.MISSOURI.EDU, including your name. The body of the note should read:

SUBSCRIBE PSRT-L your name

You are also invited to submit comments and questions to the list by sending a note to PSRT-L AT MIZZOU1.MISSOURI.EDU. If you have difficulty getting subscribed feel free to send a note to Bill Ball at the following address: POLPSRT AT MIZZOU1.MISSOURI.EDU.

Political Science and U.S. Policy Toward China*

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Recently, the strain between political science research and public policy practice has drawn increasing attention among political scientists. Most of the discussions on this topic have focused on three issues. First, the gap¹ is becoming wider between political scientists on the one hand and public policy analysts (Sabatier 1992) and policy practitioners (Herspring 1992) on the other. Second, political science research has been divorced from public policy studies and the practice of politics (Moe 1991; Sundquist 1991; Kammarck 1990). Third, political scientists have a small role to play in making public policy (Sundquist 1991; Maxwell 1992).

Using the results of a survey we

recently conducted among political scientists specializing in Chinese politics at American universities, this article examines one segment of political scientists—professors teaching Chinese politics—with regard to tensions between political science research and public policy practice, and looks for solutions to narrow the gap between the two.

The strain between political science and public policy is a broad issue. Our paper only focuses on tensions between political scientists specializing in international relations and comparative politics and career bureaucrats in the area of foreign policy. Discrepancies have long existed between career bureaucrats who practice foreign affairs and

political scientists who study the conceptual and theoretical aspects of international affairs.² The former tend to view abstract conceptualization as “academic nonsense” that has little policy relevance, while the latter downplay the knowledge that practitioners gain from their daily execution of foreign policy because it contributes little to theory building (Herspring 1992, 554). To maintain their commitment to scientific research and their image as value-free researchers, the dominant view within the discipline of political science is that political scientists should not get involved in politics nor use their expertise to influence political behavior.

Now, many people are becoming