

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Timothy Lewis

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR | SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

How did you learn about APSA? When did you become a member of APSA, and what prompted you to join?

I first became privy to the existence of APSA as an organization while pursuing my undergraduate degree in Political Science at Tuskegee University, though it was introduced more as an abstract oversight organization rather than a professional organization that brings together political scientists and scholars. I first joined APSA around 2014-2015, during my doctoral studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

How have APSA membership and services been valuable to you at different stages of your career?

In 2011-2012, APSA had an easily accessible online resource listing all the universities that offer doctorate degrees in Political Science and which programs were endorsed by APSA. This helped me identify the graduate program at UMSL.

Can you tell us about your professional background and your research?

I currently serve as an associate professor of political science at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where I am the first Black American to earn tenure in the Department of Political Science since its inception circa 1965. As the departmental scholar of identity politics, I revitalized courses on political identity, including *African American Politics* and *Women & Politics in America*, and I developed original courses, such as *Gay & Lesbian Politics* and the *Politics of Africa*. As a professor, I employ inclusive teaching approaches, including the elimination of traditional comprehensive exams and opting for in-class simulations, application exercises, reflections, and even sociopolitical games as assessments of student

learning. My equity-forward teaching was recognized in 2023 with the Ed Roberts Faculty Defender of Equity Award.

In concert with my teaching, my research also looks at Black Americans, women, and LGBTQI persons to see the significant variables in understanding each group's political behavior. My research does more than investigate the identities using widely accepted methodologies. My research is theoretically robust. As a result, my research has been published in the *National Political Science Review*, the *Journal of Homosexuality*, and *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. I have accepted/forthcoming research in the *Journal of Negro Education* and *Social Sciences*, and I am also a contributing author to *Being Black in the Ivory: Truth-telling about Racism in Higher Education*.

I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Arts in History from the historic Tuskegee University. I received a Master of Science in International Relations from Troy University and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Is there anything else you'd like people to know about you or the work that you do?

I am a social justice activist in the traditions of W.E.B. Du Bois & James Baldwin and a certified facilitator in diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. My philosophy is that diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice (DIESJ) are not areas of work; rather, they are value-based approaches to all work. I use my understanding of these principles to remedy the disadvantageous policies and norms in society, and specifically in academia. My expertise has been requested in and out of academia, and I have received recognition and honors for doing so. Most notably, I was recognized by the Missouri House of Representatives for my advocacy and championing of equity in education with State Resolution No. 254 in my honor on February 17, 2021. ■



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