



The Western

Newsletter of the Western Political Science Association
Volume 5, Issue 1. Spring, 2013
<http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/>

Notes from the Editors

In this edition of *The Western* we are happy to welcome people to southern California as WPSA comes to Hollywood. We look forward to seeing all of you there. In addition, this issue's edition of the *Western Researcher* focuses on an issue that we all face. As there are growing demands for assessment and an increase in part-time faculty, a question arises about how to handle program assessment in such a situation. In addition, this article focuses on the issue from the perspective of the community colleges. These institutions are often the first introduction to political science for most students and with growing pressures to streamline the transfer process, the perspective of program assessment at the community colleges is important for people at all types of educational institutions.

As always, we value your feedback as this newsletter further develops. If you have any comments or questions about possible submissions, please contact us at voregan@fullerton.edu or sstambough@fullerton.edu. We also hope to see all of you at the 2013 WPSA Conference in Hollywood from March 28-30, 2013. Information about the conference is available at <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/>

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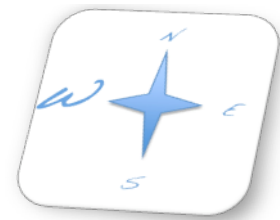
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Executive Director Notes

By WPSA Executive Director Richard Clucas

First Issue of *Politics, Groups, and Identities* Published

The first issue of *Politics, Groups, and Identities (PGI)*, the Western Political Science Association's new journal, was published in March. This is a very exciting event for the association. *PGI* constitutes the second official journal of the Association, joining *Political Research Quarterly*. It is also the first official journal launched by a major regional political science association in over fifty years. *PGI* offers a new platform for work that focuses on the politics of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, class and other dimensions of identity and structural disadvantage. The journal publishes research on any country or region of the world, including work that is global or international in scope as well as work that is national or local, or examines connections between these levels.

The first edition of the journal includes a history of how *PGI* came about and research articles focusing on such topics as the political inclusion of marginalized groups in Brazil, immigration votes in the 109th and 110th Congresses, and the dimensionality of Black Nationalism and African-American political participation. The Dialogue section includes a wide range of essays on political power and politics in a variety of settings. There is also a mini-symposium on identity politics and the 2012 American elections. The edition concludes with a review essay on EU identity.



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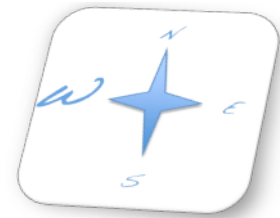
The editors of the journal, and all those involved in making the journal a reality, should be thanked for their hard work. Without their efforts, this would not have come about. The editors of the journal are Lisa García Bedolla, University of California-Berkeley; Rosalee Clawson, Purdue University; Ange-Marie Hancock, University of Southern California; Kerry Haynie, Duke University; James McCann, Purdue University; Eric Waltenburg, Purdue University; and Laurel Weldon, Purdue University.

Thanks also need to go to Taylor and Francis, which is publishing the journal, and to Purdue University for its much appreciated support. Others who deserve thanks are the members of the Long-Range Planning Committee, who developed the proposal for the journal, and the members of the search committee for the initial team of *PGI* editors. The Long-Range Planning Committee consisted of Shaun Bowler (chair), University of California, Riverside; Tim Kaufman-Osborn, Whitman College; Valerie Martinez-Ebers, University of North Texas; Ronald Schmidt, California State University Long Beach; and Kenneth Meier, Texas A&M University. The members of the Editor Search Committee were Michael Jones-Correa (chair), Cornell University; Andrea Simpson, University of Richmond; Matt Barreto, University of Washington; Amy Mazur, Washington State University; Manuel Avalos, University of North Carolina, Wilmington; and Richard Clucas, WPSA Executive Director.

For information on the journal, and how to submit articles, see its web site at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rpgi20>. We would encourage all of our members to ask their libraries to subscribe to the journal.

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PRQ Editor Nomination Deadline Approaches

The Western Political Science Association is currently conducting a search for a new editor or editors for the *Political Research Quarterly*. The term of the current editors, Cornell Clayton and Amy Mazur, will expire on June 30, 2014. The association is seeking nominations of qualified individuals who would edit the journal from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2018. This four-year term is renewable for a two-year optional extension. Nominations and self nominations are both welcome. For full consideration, nominations must be submitted by May 15, 2013, when the committee will begin its review.

Information about the search and the position, including the Call for Editors, is available at the WPSA website: <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/>. Potential applicants may also contact William Haltom, University of Puget Sound, who is serving as search committee chair. Haltom can be reached at haltom@ups.edu.

It is anticipated that the selection of the new editors will be made during the September 2013 American Political Science Association (APSA) meeting in Chicago, Illinois. Finalist interviews will be held early during the APSA meeting and a final decision will be made by the WPSA Executive Committee.

Council Moves to Improve Association's Presence on the Web

The cancellation of the American Political Science Association meeting in New Orleans in September meant that the WPSA Executive Council's fall meeting was also cancelled. In late September, however, the Council adopted several proposals through an electronic vote, including one creating a Committee on Information Technology. The



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committee was created to oversee the association's presence on the web and other technology-related concerns. The committee has been asked to find ways for how the association can better use the web to communicate its activities and to improve the dialogue among our members.

Among its other activities, the committee has created a Twitter account -- @theWPSA, a Facebook page, and a blog called The New West. The committee has also created an official hashtag for the 2013 WPSA annual meeting (#WPSA2013). Links to these sites are available from the WPSA's web page (www.wpsanet.org). Finally, the committee is formulating a virtual brown bag series that will link up WPSA authors in a live online video forum with interested parties. The first of these brown bags featured a conversation with Lisa García Bedolla and Melissa Michelson, authors of the new book *Mobilizing Inclusion: Transforming the Electorate through Get out the Vote Campaigns* (Yale University Press 2012). We would encourage you to follow or "like" the WPSA on Twitter and Facebook, and to participate in the brown bag series. We would also encourage association members to submit posts to The New West blog on upcoming books and articles, research of interest, commentary on current events, or other related material.

The chair of the WPSA Committee on Information Technology is Jose Marichal, California Lutheran University. Jose is the author of *Facebook Democracy*, which has just been published by Ashgate Press. The other members of the committee are: Meredith Conroy, California State University, San Bernadino; Jessica Feezell, University of New Mexico; Mario Guerrero, Cal Poly Pomona; and Caroline Heldman, Occidental College. The committee is unofficially referred to as the WPSA Social Media Taskforce. If you have

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questions about the committee, suggestions on internet activities, or would like to be considered for the brown bag series, contact Jose at: marichal@callutheran.edu.

Executive Council Changes Participation Rules

In addition to creating the Committee on Information Technology, the Executive Council voted in September to change the participation rules for the annual association meeting. Under existing association rules, members were limited to presenting one single-authored paper at the annual meeting. They were also allowed to participate in one other capacity, be it as a co-author, chair, discussant or roundtable participant. WPSA President Schwartz-Shea put forward the proposal to change the conference rules so that serving as a panel discussant or chair would not be counted toward the participation limit. The proposal was offered as a way to overcome the difficulty often confronted by program chairs in filling some discussant and chair positions. The council voted unanimously to adopt the new rule, which states: "Participants are allowed to present only one single-authored paper at the meeting. A second participation is allowed in the role of co-author or roundtable participant. Serving as a panel discussant or chair is encouraged and does not count as a second participation."

APSA President Mansbridge Talk

APSA President Jane Mansbridge will be giving a talk entitled, "Power and Persuasion: In Ideal and in Reality," at the annual meeting of the Western Political Science Association in Hollywood. The APSA presidential talk is one of the special events that take



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place at each year's meeting. All participants are welcome to attend. Mansbridge is the Adams Professor of Political Leadership and Democratic Values at the Harvard Kennedy School. Among other works, she is the author of *Beyond Adversary Democracy*, an empirical and normative study of face-to-face democracy, and the award-winning *Why We Lost the ERA*, a study of anti-deliberative dynamics in social movements based on organizing for an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Her current work includes studies of representation, democratic deliberation, everyday activism, and the public understanding of collective action problems. The talk is scheduled for noon on Friday, March 29, in the Mount Olympus Room.

New "Visual Politics" Display Presented at Annual Meeting

In the world of social science research methods, incorporating "the visual" is receiving renewed attention. Long a feature of anthropology and sociology (e.g., in the work of Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead, Tim Asch, and Edward Tufte), it is now coming into its own in other fields of study, including political science. There will be a new exhibit at this year's annual meeting dedicated solely to various materials connected to the world of "visual politics." The exhibit will be included as part of the Methods Café, which will be held on Friday, March 29, from 3:15 p.m. to 5 p.m., in Hollywood Ballroom C. Ilan Danjoux will be mounting some of the political cartoons that he studies; other scholars have been invited to display the paintings, photographs, maps, and other materials that they use as visual data in their analyses. All conference participants are welcome to the exhibit. For

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questions, contact Peri Schwartz-Shea (psshea@poli-sci.utah.edu) or Dvora Yanow (dvora.yanow@wur.nl).

Events Added to Wednesday Workshops

The WPSA is proud to announce that there will be one new workshop and a new short course on the Wednesday (March 27) right before the annual meeting. In past years, there have been three Wednesday workshops: Environmental Political Theory, Feminist Theory, and Latino Politics. All three of these workshops will meet this year, but they will be joined by two other events, one is a workshop devoted to Asian Pacific Americans (APA) and politics, and the other is a short course on Field Research and Analytic Transparency.

The APA workshop will provide an opportunity for exploring new avenues of research in political science as well as other related disciplines on topics related to Asian Pacific Americans and politics. The workshop organizers have been encouraging proposals that focus on the experiences of APAs alone, or in comparison to other U.S. racial and ethnic groups, locally and beyond. For information, contact Pei-te Lien, University of Santa Barbara, at plien@polsci.ucsb.edu.

Colin Elman, Syracuse University, and Diana Kapiszewski, University of California Irvine, will teach the pre-conference short course entitled, "Field Research and Analytic Transparency: Collecting Data, Making Arguments, and Drawing Inferences in Qualitative Research." The first part of the course addresses a variety of techniques scholars use to collect qualitative data in the field, examining both the intellectual and logistical aspects of



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data collection. The second part of the course presents strategies scholars can employ to demonstrate that their data support descriptive and causal inferences. For more information, contact Colin Elman at celman@maxwell.syr.edu.

The time and location for all four workshops and the short course can be found in the program. Other groups that are interested in holding workshops or short courses in the future should consider holding them in conjunction with the WPSA. The WPSA offers a friendly and manageable environment for holding workshops and short courses on the Wednesday before the conference. For scheduling information, contact Elsa Favila, WPSA Associate Director, at favilaej@skymail.csus.edu.

First Time to a WPSA Conference?

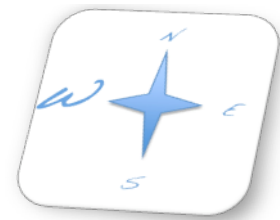
If you are a first time presenter with WPSA, we have posted a Question and Answer Guide to assist you in your presentation. The Guide provides information on everything from how to prepare for your presentation to what to wear. New attendees are strongly encouraged to take a look. You will find the Guide at <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/firstconf.pdf>.

PRQ Rates Highly in Google Scholar

Political Research Quarterly was recently rated in the top twenty political science journals by Google Scholar. The ranking is based on a metrics developed by Google Scholar to provide a means to assess the visibility and influence of recent articles in scholarly publications. The metrics is based on citations from all articles that were indexed in Google

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Scholar as of November 15, 2012. Details on how the metrics is calculated can be found on the Google Scholar web site. The ranking is another indication of the growing impact of *PRQ* in the discipline and the stellar work of the current editors, Cornell Clayton and Amy Mazur.

New Members Join Executive Council

Carrie Currier, Texas Christian University, will be joining the WPSA Executive Council in March as the new Recording Secretary. She is replacing Noelle Norton, University of San Diego. Four other new members will also be joining the council: Martin Johnson, University of California, Riverside; Tony Affigne, Providence College; Jessica Lavariega-Monforti, University of Texas, Pan American; and Chris Shortell, Portland State University. They are replacing Sean Kelly, California State University - Channel Island; Ted Lascher, California State University – Sacramento; Lisa Magaña, Arizona State University; and Melody Rose, Portland State University.



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Western Notes

WPSA 2014--SEATTLE THE GREAT NORTHWEST



The Association will be meeting at the Sheraton Seattle Hotel in Seattle, Washington, in 2014; Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2015; Manchester Hyatt in San Diego, California, in 2016; and the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, in 2017

Political Research Quarterly: OnlineFirst



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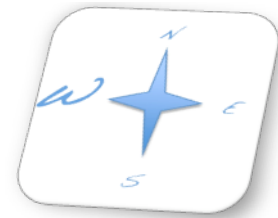
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 - Melinda Gann Hall and Chris Bonneau

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Meet the Council

Chris Parker, University of Washington

Chris Parker (Ph.D., University of Chicago, 2001) is an associate professor, and Stuart A. Scheingold Professor of Social Justice and Political Science in the Department of Political Science at the University of Washington. The bulk of his research takes a behavioral approach to historical events. More specifically, he brings survey data to bear on questions of historical import.



His first book, [*Fighting for Democracy: Black Veterans and the Struggle Against White Supremacy in the Postwar South*](#) (Princeton University Press, 2009), winner of APSA's *Ralph J. Bunche Award*, takes a fresh approach to the civil rights movement by gauging the extent to which black veterans contributed to social change. A second book, [*Change They Can't Believe In: The Tea Party and Reactionary Politics in America*](#) (Princeton University Press, in press), explores the beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of the Tea Party. A third book examines the ideological and sociological origins of what has come to be known as the urban crisis of the 1960s. In short, it examines the micro-foundations of the disturbances that swept America in the late 1960s. A Robert Wood Johnson Scholar (2005-07), he has published in the [*Journal of Politics*](#), [*International Security*](#), [*Political Research Quarterly*](#) and the [*Du Bois Review*](#). Parker is the principal investigator of the [*Multi-State Survey on Race and Politics*](#), and the Director of the [*Center for Survey Research at the University of Washington*](#).



Mary Caputi, CSU Long Beach

My research interests are in the areas of feminist and critical theories, psychoanalysis, postcolonial scholarship, and American and cultural studies. In both my writing and teaching, I take an interdisciplinary approach, since such an approach best captures the richness and relevance of theoretical insight to the larger cultural context. I recently published [*A Kinder, Gentler America: Melancholia and the Mythical 1950s*](#) (University of Minnesota Press, 2005), which employs a theory of melancholia to examine the neoconservative idealization of the 1950s within contemporary American political culture.

My first book, *Voluptuous Yearnings: A Feminist Theory of the Obscene* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1994), offers a reading of the category of the obscene using the lens of feminist and critical theories. My most recent article, "The Parergonal Politics of Barack Obama," offers a Derridean interpretation of Obama's approach to negotiating with America's "enemies." It will appear in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*. I am currently at work on two book projects: one, a co-edited project that assesses the contributions of Derridean philosophy to the current crisis in the liberal arts, and two, a book-length manuscript that uses critical theory to critique certain strains of third wave feminism.



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Western Researcher

Balancing Optimal Assessment with Part-Time Faculty Participation:

A Discipline's Dilemma

Jennifer Danley-Scott, Texas Woman's University

Deborah Tompsett-Makin, Norco College

This is an Author's Original Manuscript of an article submitted for consideration in the Community College Journal of Research and Practice, copyright Taylor & Francis; Community College Journal of Research and Practice is available online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/10668926.2012.715265>.

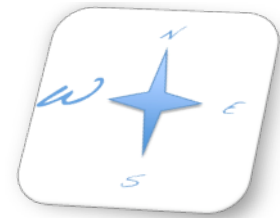
Abstract

Part-time faculty need to be brought into the student learning outcomes assessment loop not only to help accreditation, but because they, like full-time faculty, can benefit from assessment. When part-time faculty are not participating in assessment, a sizable percentage of course sections are being less effectively taught than they could be. In an attempt to increase part-time faculty in discipline-level assessment at Norco College, we experimented with several assessments that required varied levels of effort by part-time faculty. This piece discusses our experience. We found that mentoring and communication were better predictors of part-time faculty participation than stipends, adaptable assessment prompts, or administrative pressure.

Introduction

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The study of assessment and teaching effectiveness is littered with side comments on the lack of part-time faculty participation in departmental work, governance, and classroom training. But rarely does anyone stop and study this growing problem's effect on student learning outcomes assessment. Part-time faculty are not involved enough in assessment even though they teach a large percentage of university and college courses. For over 20 years, community college faculty have implemented student learning outcomes assessments (Chun, 2002), with the ultimate goal of using assessment findings to create better course designs, activities, and teaching methods, which increases student success (Jaschik, 2007). At the same time, college administrations have greatly increased their reliance on non-tenure-track faculty. A 2010 study by the American Federation of Teachers stated that 47% of faculty at universities and colleges were adjunct, and many students have a high number of courses with adjunct faculty members every term.

Given these facts, we should examine our efforts to bring adjunct faculty into the assessment process. The process must start, however, with consideration for three issues that disproportionately affects part-time faculty: compensation, training, and awareness. Adamowicz (2007) succinctly notes that part-time faculty are often too busy trying to “cobble” an existence to fully integrate into a campus. Contingent faculty are often hired on semester or yearly contracts that pay only for instruction time. Unlike full-time faculty, they are not compensated for training, committee work, office hours, or service to the college (Boldt, 2012; McGrew and Untener, 2010; Glaskin-Clay, 2007). Part-time faculty seldom attend departmental and campus meetings because they are excluded, have



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teaching commitments at other colleges, or live at distances too far to attend (Sandford et al, 2011; Rifkin, 1998). They rarely have office space, so they have fewer opportunities to develop relationships with their full-time colleagues. Perhaps as a result, they are less aware of emerging requirements regarding student learning outcomes and assessment (Meixner et al, 2010). They do, however, want to be involved with their colleges. Huffman (2000) found that 25% of part-time faculty desired increased mentoring and participation at their colleges.

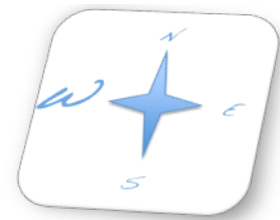
Study

Between 2007 and 2009, a full-time faculty member (Tompsett-Makin) and a part-time faculty member (Danley-Scott) in the political science discipline at Norco College integrated classes with a series of SLO assessments at the section level to comply with Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) mandates. The initial goal was to create an assessment enabling direct comparison of all sections of Introduction to American Politics.

Over the period of the study, Norco College's political science discipline operated with one tenured faculty member teaching 5 sections and 4 to 6 part-time faculty members teaching 12 to 14 sections. The ratio of full- to part-time faculty was comparable to that of other disciplines on the campus, so the problem of part-time faculty participation was a campus-wide issue that needed addressing. As design was discussed, the goal of the study quickly became two-pronged. First, assessments needed to accurately gauge student learning based on the measurable student learning outcomes on the course outline of

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record. The assessment needed to give information that would guide future teaching techniques. Second, assessment devices needed to consider the concerns of the many part-time faculty in the discipline.

At Norco College, part-time faculty contracts paid lecture time plus 3 hours of preparation. If assessments required unpaid work, we determined the likelihood of part-time participation would decrease. Academic freedom was also an issue. Classes varied slightly in content due to the specialties of the individual faculty members. While the course outline of record listed the basic concepts that each section would inevitably cover, additional content was included based on a faculty member's research and interests. Assessments would need to focus on core concepts or be modifiable by faculty. The last concern was that part-time faculty were largely unaware of student learning outcomes and assessment. Most taught at several campuses, did not attend college meetings, and did not use campus email accounts to read announcements.

We hypothesized: If part-time faculty were given more information and direct assistance on assessing learning outcomes, as well as financial incentives, they would participate in higher numbers.

We began our experiment in Fall 2007 with a direct embedded post-test of concepts from the course outline of record. All discipline faculty were emailed with an explanation of the study. Each member was asked to review a list of core concepts and contribute a few multiple-choice questions for a test. Three of the five part-time faculty members contributed questions and a ten question post-test was created. All faculty again received



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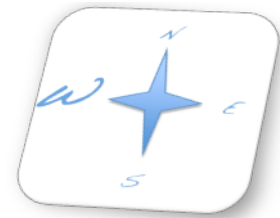
prepared packets, and the anonymous Scantrons were to be collected and returned to Tompsett-Makin for processing. Again, three part-time faculty members participated. The post-test results were interesting, but provided little pedagogical information. The mean correct score across the 183 returned post-tests was 6.14 out of a possible 10. The scores were lower than expected, but we had no indication of why. Had students learned a little? Not as much as expected? Were faculty missing a few core concepts listed on the course outline of record? The low level of part-time faculty participation (only 50%) was also a surprise, as very little time had been required for the assessment. One of the concerns voiced by an adjunct was the possibility of results being tied to future appointments. If students did not do well on the test, would blame be placed on the faculty member for not teaching the material? We determined that pooling Scantrons should reassure faculty that student scores would not be used as a de facto evaluation of the faculty member's effectiveness.

In the Spring, we planned a first-day-of-class pre-test and an end-of-term post-test using the same 10 questions; would students improve between the start of term and the post-test on the last day of lecture? To further entice part-time faculty participation in this assessment, we offered a \$50 stipend. Part-time faculty were assured that the results would be pooled so that results would not reflect on individual faculty. Collection and return of packets were conducted as before, with instructors spending no personal time on the assessment.

The results of the new assessment provided more information, but also brought more questions. The evidence of student improvement was visible, with the mean score on

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459 pre-tests at 3.87 and the mean score on 199 post-tests at 6.46. Unfortunately, we could not determine whether the improvement was due to student drops, teaching to the test, or students putting little effort into an ungraded pre-test. Questions were missed in fairly equal percentages, so the results did not shed light on areas that needed further coverage in courses. More perplexing, part-time faculty participation *declined*. Only two part-time faculty participated in the pre-test and only one completed both the pre- and post-test. Two adjunct faculty ignored emails and the test packets entirely. In the end, half of our sections were not assessed.

We decided to change the assessment device to a direct embedded written assessment, which would better show whether students were succeeding in learning core concepts and demonstrating an ability to analyze. Student writing also allows the reader to better distinguish failure of effort from failure of knowledge, placing more emphasis on the student than the instructor. The goals for the new assessment instrument were: 1) Give part-time faculty a greater say in design, which might stimulate interest and participation; 2) Create an assignment prompt that would test the students' mastery of the outcomes while still allowing academic freedom; and 3) Design a discipline-level rubric to rate how strongly outcomes were mastered.

This proved a complicated task. We looked over the course outline of record to map the course to find concepts and theories that emerged throughout the course and would easily lead to activities, assignments, and testing. For example, all American Politics sections cover the founding, Congress, the Presidency, elections, and gerrymandering.



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These topics exemplify the concept of representation, which was broad enough to allow for diversity of written assignments, class activities, and exam material.

The next step was creating guidelines for assignments. We wanted faculty to tailor the prompt to individual course material while allowing for discipline-level comparison. Danley-Scott contacted all faculty in the summer of 2008 and asked them to create an assignment that met the following guidelines: Assign one or two news articles, assign government data to be retrieved via the Internet, and require students to assess democracy using the data, readings, and their experiences. Part-time faculty were encouraged to make the assignment standard in their class, as grades would give students an incentive to do quality work. A \$50 stipend was again offered to participating faculty.

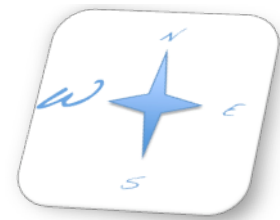
To ensure that papers could be compared at a discipline level, a rubric was designed to rank how well students met the objective *Demonstrate critical thinking ability including the analysis and evaluation of data, the understanding of alternative explanations and the forming of conclusions from the data presented*. Faculty were asked to copy and submit five randomly-selected papers from each class for scoring.¹ Names and section numbers were to be obscured to reduce grading bias. They would be asked to make photocopies in the faculty workroom and leave copies in Danley-Scott's mailbox.

At the end of the term, we scored the papers using an outcomes-based rubric that ranged from 1 (weak achievement) to 4 (strong achievement).

¹ While we asked instructors to randomly select papers, it is possible, given the high scores, that some papers were chosen for their quality. We did not oversee this part of the process, and future assessments would need to address this selection bias potential.

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The assessment proved valuable to increasing understanding of student learning. As seen in Table 1, nearly 88% of students met or exceeded the passing score of 3 on the assessment and only 12.5% of papers showed weak achievement. Papers that did not meet the benchmark were reviewed closely for clues to where students could use additional instruction or practice. The assessments allowed us to give discipline-wide teaching suggestions, such as having students attempt to analyze data during class activities, with in-class writing reflecting on the findings.

While the assessment improved faculty understanding of student learning, it did not increase part-time faculty participation. Only two part-time faculty members participated in assessment and only 8 sections out of 14 were assessed. One unexpected problem was that two contingent faculty members had not planned to assign formal writing assignments. The stipend of \$50 was probably not enough to induce these faculty members to add a writing assignment, which would have increased their grading burden. This may have led to the second issue, which was that one part-time faculty member refused to answer emails and communication with the faculty leading assessment.

The final study was completed in Fall of 2009. As the results of the previous written assignment had proven useful, a direct graded assignment was used again as the assessment device. Faculty were again asked to create an embedded written assignment, with readings, data collection, and an analysis of checks and balances. A stipend was not offered this term.



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The results of the Fall assessments were encouraging and the assignments again gave us useful information for future course development. As seen in Table 2, nearly 83% scored a 3 or higher. Only 17.5% of students scored weakly. The assignments again helped us pinpoint where students had difficulties, while also showing where students were successfully grasping concepts.

That same term, we set up an experimental design with seven courses to directly test whether in-class activities increased achievement. Students in four online courses completed the assignment without participating in a group activity, while three classes participated in a group activity. The group activities differed in content, but required students to practice analyzing data and writing findings. The activities were held prior to the embedded written assignments. One group of sections discussed the confirmation process for Timothy Geithner's appointment as Secretary of the Treasury and the other discussed presidential vetoes and veto overrides.

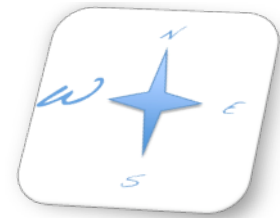
<Insert Table 3>

As seen in Table 3, students participating in the activity were more likely to end up scoring strong. While an intervening effect from the course format is likely, we believe that practicing analysis would still explain much of the increase in achievement.

Initially, five of six part-time faculty members participated, but only three completed the assessment. One dropped out after s/he was not offered classes for the following term, a second failed to follow the instructions on creating an appropriate prompt, and one new adjunct ignored emails all semester and did not participate. (It is interesting to note that during the study, there was a lot of turnover in the adjunct pool.)

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One important and unexpected change occurred this term: Awareness of assessment increased. The college administration announced that all sections should be assessed, including those taught by part-time faculty. A campus accreditation visit was scheduled that Fall and the campus self-study had stated that assessment would occur in all sections. Several emails were sent to the campus discussion boards and forwarded to adjuncts by part-time union representatives. Some discussion speculated that future class assignments might be affected by a lack of participation, which was another likely factor in the initial increased participation.

Implications

During the study, designing a successful instrument proved far easier than attaining part-time participation. We did, however, arrive at some observations about part-time participation in discipline assessment.

First, communication and personal relationships are strong indicators of involvement in the design and implementation of assessment. Beyond Danley-Scott, only one other adjunct faculty member routinely participated; both participating adjuncts had regular communication and mentoring relationships with Tompsett-Makin. Part-time faculty who did not have a similar relationship with full-time faculty were more likely to ignore emails and not participate in assessment.



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Second, stipends did not induce participation. For comparison purposes, our stipends of \$50 amounted to almost 1% of the part-time faculty member's pay per course. Even when little to no work was required, some contingent faculty did not participate.

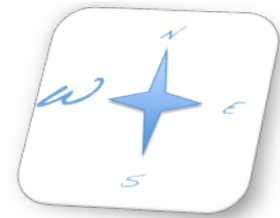
Third, assessment design needs to balance gathering information on teaching effectiveness with workload concerns. Part-time faculty are less likely to have many (or any) graded writing because most are not specifically paid to grade. For this reason, direct embedded assignments may have been too ambitious for discipline-level assessment.

Fourth, and finally, the administration's requirement of section assessment prompted only some part-time faculty to action. New contingent faculty, possibly less concerned about job security, generally did not participate. Also, once a part-time faculty member discovered s/he was not returning the following semester, the member stopped participating. Veteran instructors who expected to return the next term did, however, respond to the administration directive. In short, linking assessment to reappointment was only marginally more effective than a stipend.

Overall, institutions and disciplines may want to tackle the assessment dilemma by considering a few changes. To implement a state-mandated process, college institutions and disciplines must recommit to providing funding toward faculty development in the area of assessment. This training should be made available in the evenings, online, or in means accessible to part-time faculty (Sandford et al, 2011). Instituting assessment training as a part of standard paid training would ensure all faculty spend time learning

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about and designing assessments. Part-time faculty must be included in this training, as it will help them see the value of assessment to both their teaching and CV development.

Simplicity of assessment projects may also facilitate greater cooperation. As much as possible, the project must respect the time constraints of part-time faculty while providing for accurate assessment of student learning. This may require disciplines to complete assessment on behalf of the part-time faculty member.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, faculty mentoring is essential to encouraging participation. Full-time faculty need to develop closer ties with part-time faculty and contribute to their professional development. This process may increase cooperation and build two-way communication that encourages involvement in assessment design and implementation.

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Table 1: Fall 2008 embedded written assessment scores.

Rubric Scores	Percentage Receiving Score
1 - Weak	0 (0%)
2 - Moderately Weak	5 (12.5%)
3 - Moderately Strong	9 (22.5%)
4 - Strong	26 (65%)
Total (N)	40

Table 2: Fall 2009 embedded written assessment scores.

Rubric Scores	Percentage Receiving Score
1 - Weak	1 (2.5%)
2 - Moderately Weak	6 (15%)
3 - Moderately Strong	15 (37.5%)
4 - Strong	18 (45%)
Total (N)	40

Table 3: Fall 2009 embedded written assessment experimental design scores.

Rubric Scores	Group 1 (No Activity) Percentage Receiving Score	Group 2 (Group Activity) Percentage Receiving Score
1 - Weak	0 (0%)	1 (.5%)
2 - Moderately Weak	4 (28.5%)	2 (10%)
3 - Moderately Strong	6 (43%)	4 (20%)
4 - Strong	4 (28.5%)	13 (65%)
Total (N)	14	20

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Western Announcements

University of San Diego

Rank: Teaching Post-Doc

Subfields: American Government and Politics, Public Policy, Research Methods (emphasis in environmental politics and policy preferred)

The Department of Political Science and International Relations invites applications for a one-year, non-tenure track, post-doctoral teaching position in American Politics beginning in Fall 2013. We seek a scholar who can teach American politics and research methods courses. We would be delighted to find a candidate who could also teach specialized courses in environmental policy or justice. A Ph.D. in Political Science or ABD near completion is required. The teaching load is 5 courses during the academic year.

Applications should submit (preferably by email to (jmwilliams@sandiego.edu) a cover letter, CV, three letters of recommendation, a statement of teaching philosophy and representative teaching evaluations or materials demonstrating teaching effectiveness. The contact for this search is:

Dr. Mike Williams, Chair
University of San Diego
Department of Political Science and International Relations
5998 Alcala Park
San Diego, CA 92110
jmwilliams@sandiego.edu

The University of San Diego is a private, independent Catholic institution that embraces diversity and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICAL THEORY WORKSHOP

Wednesday, March 27, 2013, 9:00am-5:00pm

Location: Hollywood Ballroom A&B, Loews Hotel in Hollywood, California

The workshop enables scholars working on an array of topics at the intersection of environmental studies and political theory to come together to discuss ongoing and potential research opportunities as well as teaching strategies, publishing, and connections



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with environmental political practice. Both established and younger scholars, including graduate students, are encouraged to attend. For more information, please contact Peter F. Cannavò, Hamilton College, at pcannavo@hamilton.edu.

FEMINIST THEORY WORKSHOP

Wednesday, March 27, 2013, 10:45am - 6:00pm

Location: Hollywood Ballroom C, Loews Hotel in Hollywood, California

This workshop includes a book discussion and a works in progress discussion. The book discussion will be of Kennan Ferguson's, *All in the Family: On Community and Incommensurability* (Duke, 2012), with Anna Marie Smith as the discussant. The works in progress discussion addresses the research of Liza Taylor entitled "*Rebuilding Feminism's House: Reasserting Political Commitment after Deconstruction*." Judith Grant will act as discussant. For further information, please see the WPSA website.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS AND POLITICS

Wednesday, March 27, 2013 - 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Loews Hotel, Doheny Room

In 2012, there was considerable mainstream media interest in the Asian Pacific American electorate, elected officials, and the APA community more generally. This workshop on APA politics provides a great opportunity to explore new avenues of research, in political science as well as other related disciplines. We welcome proposals that focus on the experiences of APAs alone, or in comparison to other U.S. racial and ethnic groups, locally and beyond.

For further information, contact Pei-te Lien, University of Santa Barbara, plien@polsci.ucsb.edu

Submission Instructions

At *The Western* we encourage submissions for articles in any of our four areas: *Western Educator*, *Western Researcher*, *Western Politics*, and *Western Reviews*.

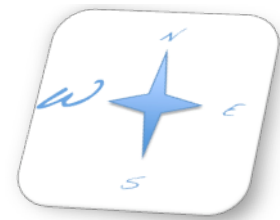
Western Educator

For the *Western Educator* we welcome submissions about controversies and innovations in political science education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These can be articles that describe unique classroom simulations, the incorporation of innovative technology

Join us in Hollywood for the 2013 WPSA Conference March 28-30. 27

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into the classroom, and a wide variety of other topics. We especially welcome submissions with a focus on topics unique to the western region. Articles should be no more than 10 pages.

Western Researcher

For the *Western Researcher* we welcome submissions that present innovative research techniques, data sources, and reviews of current trends. We especially welcome those with a focus on the western region. Articles should be no more than 10 pages.

Western Politics

For the *Western Politics* section we welcome individual papers and organized symposia about topical issues of political events in the western United States, Canada, and Mexico. Individual papers should be no longer than 10 pages. If you are interested about proposing and editing a symposium, please contact the editors.

Western Reviews

Please contact the editors if you are interested in reviewing books.