



The Western

Newsletter of the Western Political Science Association
Volume 6, Issue 1. Spring, 2014
<http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/>

Notes from the Editors

In this edition of *The Western* we are happy to welcome people to the great Northwest as WPSA prepares to enjoy Seattle. We look forward to seeing all of you there. In addition, this issue's edition of the *Western Educator* focuses on experiences and advice for teaching American Government in Texas. This article by Linda Veazey of Midwestern State University outlines some unique things about the expectations and preparation of American Government students in the Lone Star State and also the challenges of some growing trends across the country such as the 120 unit degrees and the push for accelerating the time to degree.

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 2014 WPSA Conference in Seattle. Information about the conference is available at <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/>

Stephen J. Stambough
Valerie R. O'Regan

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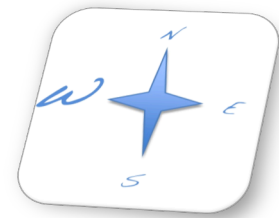
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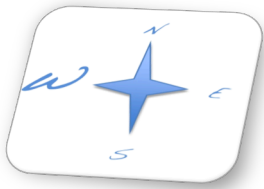
Executive Director Notes

By WPSA Executive Director Richard Clucas

A Change in Editors at PRQ

Amy Mazur and Cornell Clayton will be stepping aside as editors of *Political Research Quarterly* at the end of June after eight years of serving in that position. During their tenure, *PRQ's* reputation and influence within the discipline has grown substantially. Its ranking among Political Science journals has risen, its impact factor has grown, its submissions have soared, and it has solidified its position as one of the top publications in Political Science. Not only have Amy and Cornell done a superb job in editing *PRQ*, but they have played a strong leadership role in the Western Political Science Association, serving as ex officio members of the WPSA's Executive Council throughout their tenure. Amy and Cornell have been invaluable contributors to the Council's work and to the success of the Association itself. The Association deeply thanks them for their dedication, hard work, and achievements. The Association has been very fortunate to have their help.

The Western Political Science Association would like to announce the selection of new editors for the *Political Research Quarterly*. The new editors will be Jason Maloy and Jeanette Mendez of Oklahoma State University. They were recommended by a selection committee chaired by William Haltom, University of Puget Sound, and approved by the WPSA Executive Council at its August 2013 meeting in Chicago, Illinois. The Maloy and



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Mendez team was one of five outstanding applications that the committee reviewed before making its recommendation. Congratulations, Jason and Jeanette. All of us involved in the association look forward to working with you. The term of the new editors begins on July 1, 2014.

Social Media at the Annual Meeting and a Contest

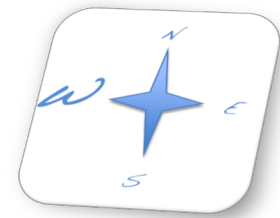
With our location in tech-savvy Seattle this year, the Association is trying to encourage conference participants to take advantage of a number of social media tools the Association has created to enhance the interactive, collaborative nature of the Association and the conference. These efforts have been led by the Association's Committee on Information Technology, chaired by José Marichal, California Lutheran University.

First, the Information Technology Committee has created a separate hashtag for the conference (#WPSA14). The committee is trying to encourage members, attendees, and other interested parties to use the hashtag throughout the conference. Having a common hashtag for the conference allows participants to concentrate information, observations, and announcements regarding the conference in one "virtual place." The conference planners are working to set up a means to display these tweets as a "visual cascade" near the registration area during the conference.

The Committee is especially trying to encourage section chairs, panel chairs, and participants to use the hashtag to promote their panels and to share papers/comments with the community. To facilitate this process, the Association included the hashtag on badges and will be distributing a list of twitter handles of participants at the conference

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registration desk (the handles will also be posted on line). Conference attendees are encouraged to write their twitter handles on their badges.

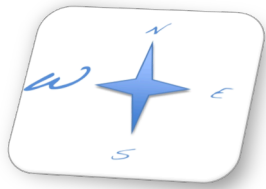
In addition to the #WPSA14 hashtag, participants are also encouraged to submit pictures taken at the conference to the hashtag #WPSA14PIC. This will allow those at the conference and outside of the conference the opportunity to get a visual feel for the annual conference.

To encourage the use of these social media tools, the WPSA is offering one free registration (valued at \$240) to a randomly selected tweet hashtagged with #WPSA14 or #WPSA14PIC during the conference.

Executive Council addresses Awards, Gifts, and Endowments

The Western Political Science Association has benefited greatly over the years from the generous contributions from outside organizations who have donated funds to help underwrite the costs of the annual conference. This year, for example, the Political Science Department at the University of Washington, and the opinion research organization, Latino Decisions, have provided valuable contributions for the Seattle meeting. However, beyond these generous donations to the conference, the Association has not set up any mechanisms for receiving donations and gifts, creating endowments, and establishing Named Awards.

This is about to change. At its meeting in Seattle in April, the WPSA Executive Council will be considering policies so that it is in a better position to handle all of these tasks. The Association's leadership hopes that these policies will provide additional funds



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for special projects, to honor important members of the Association, and to strengthen the Association's long-term financial health. For the many members who care deeply about the WPSA, the new policies will allow them to help expand the Association's activities and to secure its future. More details will be announced after the Council takes action.

Special Events at the Annual Meeting in Seattle

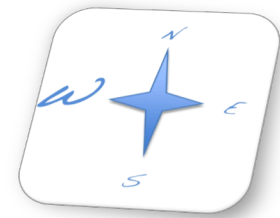
There are a number of special events taking place at the annual meeting in Seattle in April. On the scholarly side, one of the most innovative aspects of the meeting is the existence of two conferences within the conference, one dedicated to Care Ethics and the other to Abolitionism, Decoloniality, and Political Theory. As it planned this year's meeting, the Association leadership offered groups of scholars the opportunity to hold a conference within the conference as a way to provide a more meaningful and stimulating environment for sharing research. One problem that often arises at professional meetings is that the papers on an individual panel can often be unrelated, a discussant's understanding of a specific topic can be weak, and turnout for the panel can be poor. Ideally, the benefit of a conference within a conference is that it will bring together more closely related papers, offer better feedback, and have greater turnout. The Association will continue to provide for conferences within the conference when we meet in Las Vegas next year. If you are part of a research community that is interested in holding such a conference, please contact Louis DeSipio at ldesipio@uci.edu or Richard Clucas at hprc@pdx.edu.

Along with these conferences within the conference, there will be workshops on Wednesday, April 16, on Asian Pacific Americans and Politics, Environmental Political

Join us in Seattle for the 2014 WPSA Conference April 17-19. 5

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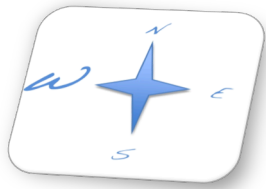
Theory, Feminist Theory, and Latino Politics. There is also a preconference session scheduled that day on Interpretive Methods and Methodologies. On Friday, April 18, APSA President John Aldrich will be giving a talk at noon on “The Civil Rights Movement and the Path to Freedom -- and to Polarized Politics.”

On the more social, or shall we say networking side, the highlight of the conference will be a three-hour boat cruise and reception on Friday evening, April 18. *PRQ*, Washington State University, and WPSA are sponsoring the cruise/reception to honor the outgoing editors of *PRQ* and to thank them for their service. The reception will also give us a chance to welcome our new editors, Jason Maloy and Jeanette Mendez. To find out more about the cruise and to make a reservation to join us, check the association’s website at <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/cruise.php>.

There will also be the regular receptions on Thursday, April 17, for *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, Graduate Students, Women and Politics, and Minority Scholars. On Friday evening before the cruise, the main WPSA reception will be held in the Cirrus Room of the Sheraton, which has a gorgeous view of Seattle and the Sound. As this reception winds down, it will be time to catch the chartered bus to the docks! Details of these events can be found in the program.

Council Introduces Graduated Fees

The WPSA Executive Council approved a graduated fee structure for its membership when it met in Chicago in August 2013. The Council approved the change out of a desire to



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implement a fairer fee structure. The Association has long had just one fee for everyone, with the exception of reduced rates for students and retired members. The problem with the single fee is that members who make less than \$40,000 a year pay the same rate as those who make more than \$140,000 a year. The new fee structure means that those who make more will pay a little bit more. In approving the structure, the Council also wanted to make sure that the fees at all levels remain lower than the fees for the American Political Science Association and for other regional political science associations.

WPSA Heads to Caesars Palace for 2015 Meetings

The 2015 meeting of the Western Political Science Association will be held at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, from April 2 to 4. Louis DeSipio, University of California, Irvine, is serving as Program Chair for this meeting. Mark Lutz and Tiffany Howard, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, are serving as the Local Arrangements Chairs.

Proposals for the 2015 meeting are encouraged. The deadline for submission of paper proposals/program participation forms is September 15, 2014. The theme for the 2015 meeting is: "The Politics of People in Motion." Details about the conference, its theme, the Call for Papers, and proposal instructions appear on the WPSA website:

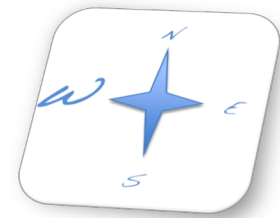
www.wpsanet.org.

Western Notes

WPSA 2014--SEATTLE

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THE GREAT NORTHWEST

We hope everyone has a productive conference and enjoys all that Seattle has to offer at the 2014 WPSA. Please make plans to join us at the future meetings at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2015; the Manchester Hyatt in San Diego, California, in 2016; and the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, in 2017 before returning to San Antonio, Texas at the Hyatt Regency in 2018.

Political Research Quarterly: OnlineFirst



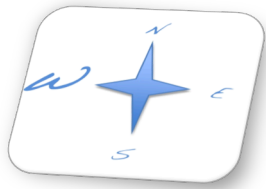
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 - Peter C. Hanson
- *Race, Party, and the Consequences of Restricting Early Voting in Florida in the 2012 General Election*
 - Michael C Herron and Daniel A Smith



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Meet the Council

Jeanne Morefield, Whitman College

Jeanne Morefield is an Associate Professor of Politics and Chair of the Politics Department at Whitman College. Her scholarship works at the intersection of political theory, history, and international relations and examines a variety of topics including the relationship between the contemporary and historical rhetorics of imperialism, the implication of subaltern studies for political theory, and the conflict between democracy and sovereignty. Her publications include *Empires Without Imperialism: Anglo American Decline and the Politic of Deflection* (Oxford: 2014) and *Covenants Without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire* (Princeton: 2005) as well as numerous articles and chapters in edited volumes. She has served on the Governing Council of the Association for Political Theory and Executive Committee of the Western Political Science Association.



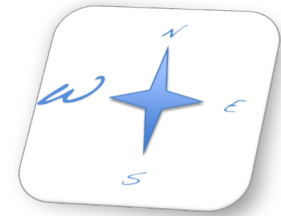
Mark Bevir, UC Berkeley



Mark Bevir is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley. He is also a Professor in the Graduate School of Governance, United Nations University - MERIT, Maastricht, Netherlands, and a Distinguished Research Professor in the College of Arts and Humanities, Swansea University, UK. Mark was educated at the University of Exeter and the University of Oxford, where he was awarded a D.Phil. Before moving to Berkeley, he worked at the University of Madras, India, and the University of Newcastle, UK. He has had visiting positions in Australia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the UK, and US. Mark is author or co-author of several books including *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (1999), *Interpreting British Governance* (2003), *New Labour: A Critique* (2005), *Key Concepts in Governance* (2009), *The State as Cultural Practice* (2010), *The Making of British Socialism* (2011), *Governance: A Very Short Introduction* (2012), and *A Theory of Governance* (2013). He is also the editor of two reference works – *The Encyclopedia of Governance* (2007) and *The Encyclopedia of Political Theory* (2010) – and the editor or co-editor of *Critiques of Capital in Modern Britain and America* (2002), *Markets in Historical Contexts: Ideas and Politics in the Modern World* (2004), *Modern Political Science: Anglo-American Exchanges since 1880* (2007), *Public Governance* (2007), *Histories of Postmodernism* (2007), *Governance, Consumers, and Citizens: Agency and Resistance in Contemporary Politics* (2007), *Interpretive Political Science* (2010), *The Sage Handbook of Governance* (2011), *Modern Pluralism: Anglo-American Debates since 1880*

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(2012), and *Interpreting Global Security* (2014). In addition, he has published over 150 academic articles.

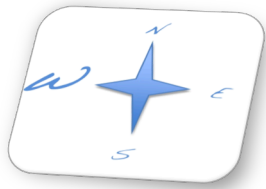
Western Educator

Teaching American Government in the Lone Star State

**Linda Veazey
Midwestern State University**

Before I moved to Wichita Falls, Texas, I really did not know Texas that well at all. I especially did not know North Texas or the Panhandle, but I was determined to learn. I moved to Wichita Falls, Texas to join the Department of Political Science at Midwestern State University. Located near Sheppard Air Force Base and nearly equidistant between Dallas and Oklahoma City, Wichita Falls is a community of approximately 100,000 people and MSU is a public liberal arts university of approximately 6000 students, including approximately 5,100 enrolled in forty-five undergraduate programs.¹ It is one of thirty-six public colleges in Texas and its student body is drawn primarily from the state. Here, as part of my course load, I began teaching American government and Texas government, both of which are required for all students at public universities in Texas. For all that I expected to teach my students about government, I learned as much about the Texas secondary education and the college core curriculum. I wasn't

¹ "MSU Facts," Midwestern State University, accessed February 10, 2014.
<http://www.mwsu.edu/about-mwsu/quickfacts/index>



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just teaching national and state government -- I was teaching American government in rural Texas.

In Texas, American government is a required course for high school students and is taught senior year. It is required for high school graduation, but it is not a course for which the state has a formal, statewide exam. Students in Texas are tested by the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) test in multiple grades and subject areas, but social studies is not an often tested area of learning. Students are tested in social studies for the first time in eighth grade, unlike reading and math exams which begin in grade three.² These factors in the high school education of Texas students are important to understanding their performance at the college level.

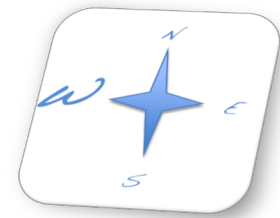
At the college level, the state of Texas requires all students enrolled in public colleges to take two semesters of American and Texas government. For two-year colleges, this means they are required to teach one semester of American national government and one semester of Texas government. At the four-year colleges, there is not the same state-mandated distinction and universities have developed a variety of approaches. At Midwestern State University, we integrate topics of both the federal government and the state government into a two-course sequence. It is the second course in that sequence, focusing on federal and state institutions of government, on which I have focused teaching.

Teaching American government in Texas comes with its own unique set of challenges. Although there is a nearby Air Force base and students are often familiar with the Department of

² "STAAR Assessed Curriculum," Texas Education Agency. Last modified December 20, 2013. <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/ac/>

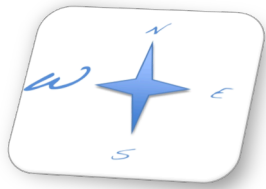
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Defense, the federal government feels far removed to them. Statewide rhetoric about secession has prompted some students to ask if Texas will secede from the union, some with concern and others with delight. In state government, texts typically group Texas with the Southern states. Given Texas's history, especially in the Civil War, this makes sense nationally. However, my students do not see themselves as Southern. On the edge of the panhandle and in a town founded in the oil booms well after the Civil War, they do not feel a connection to the South. They have learned little of the Civil War in their history classes in high school. In fact, students are consistently surprised that Texas was part of the Confederacy. More focus has been placed on Texas history and the Alamo. They identify as Texans before Americans and it is little wonder given that they have grown up with a daily pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag after the pledge to the US flag in school. Their core identity as Texans is crucial to understanding what they know and don't know about American government. They all know US presidents from Texas. They all know Texas is a large, populous state. However, how Texas fits into the broader story of American politics is more difficult.

Students have known only one governor. Rick Perry has been the governor of Texas since 2000. There are no term limits on Texas governors. Considering that first-year students were most likely born in 1994, they have only known two different governors in their lifetimes. Both have been Republicans and both national figures. For nearly half of their lives, the president was former Texas governor George W. Bush. In 2012, current Governor Rick Perry ran for the presidency. Having governors become national political figures can seem to be the norm and give students the impression that the governor is a powerful position. Ironically, the Texas governor is among the least powerful state executives in the nation.



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The Texas constitution produced a weak governorship in response to Reconstruction.

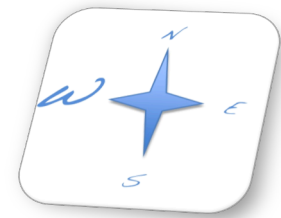
More power is granted to the state legislature, yet students are unfamiliar with the role of the legislature or how it differs from the US Congress. Texas has a part-time legislature, meeting only in odd-numbered years. For one of the most populous states in the country, it may seem strange to have a legislature that does not meet yearly. Yet, for Texas students, it fits with a conception of small government with which they have been raised. The power of Congress, meeting every year and with higher salaries is what may seem strange.

The courses in American and Texas government are a key aspect of teaching for a political science department in Texas, especially an institution of this size with a department of six faculty members. For the students in the master's program, teaching these courses may be part of their assistantship and some have gone on to positions in community colleges teaching these courses. Yet, it is also the core requirement of two semesters of national and state government courses that often poses the greatest challenge to explaining Political Science as a comprehensive discipline that goes beyond state and national politics. With American national government required of high school seniors in Texas and the two course requirement in college, it is easy for most students to get the impression that Political Science as a discipline is equivalent to American national government.

Further complicating the ability of political science departments to offer general education courses other than American and Texas government is the emphasis on college core completion for high school students in Texas. Texas has created a course level known as dual enrollment for high school students. It allows high school students to receive college credit in classes in the statewide, core curriculum of Texas colleges while simultaneously earning high

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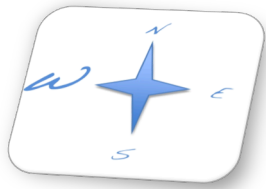


school credit for the same course. For example, a high school student taking American national government would receive both high school and college credit as long as the course was taught in conjunction with a four-year or community college, either on the high school or college campus.³ This is distinct from the nationally-recognized Advanced Placement test, which is offered in Texas as well. College-bound high school students, especially those planning to enroll in Texas colleges, are attracted to these courses because they promise a cheaper and more efficient way to take college courses in advance of college. For high school students, this option is attractive and inexpensive. For college faculty hoping to expose students to new disciplines, it means seeing fewer first-year college students in our introductory courses and seeing students in some upper-division courses who have had sometimes vastly different preparations in core curriculum.

Getting students to explore the major is also difficult because of the 120-hour rule. In addition to encouraging dual enrollment for high school students, Texas is emphasizing quicker college completion with the 120-hour rule. By Texas state law, a bachelor's degree from a public college in Texas cannot require beyond a maximum of 120 credit hours, unless a "compelling academic reason" has required extra hours.⁴ The hope is that this will create streamlined degrees and assist in college completion rates. However, this is in contrast with the 120 credit hour

³Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. "Dual Credit: Frequently Asked Questions," Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website, accessed February 10, 2014.
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=E9397432-F85E-83E1-471DFAB9F59301B8>

⁴ Texas Education Code § 61.0515.



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minimum rule from the accreditation body.⁵ The balance between these competing maximum and minimum requirements has to be factored into designing all bachelor's degree programs. A corollary to the cap on degree plans at 120 credit hours is the Texas statute aimed at stopping students from taking unnecessary courses. Students who accrue a total number of credit hours beyond the degree maximum, 120 hours, by thirty credit hours can be charged additional tuition per credit hour.⁶ Students with double majors or minors, students who have transferred, and students who have changed majors one or more times during their undergraduate years can be affected by this rule, without careful planning.

For disciplines like political science without analogous high school courses in the broader discipline, this means it is more difficult for students to take political science courses as electives and then change their majors. Combined, the emphasis on students taking a maximum of 120 credit hours leading to an undergraduate degree may streamline the path to degree completion, but there is a cost. Students making strategic choices are discouraged from exploring additional interests for fear of taking too many credits and it becomes more challenging to share with students the breadth of political science, especially when their primary experience with it comes from the core courses in government.

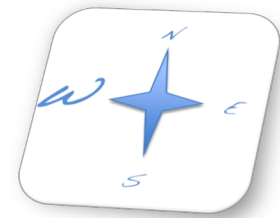
Teaching political science, and American government in particular, in Texas has been as much of a learning experience for me as it has the students. I have learned to incorporate Texas examples into the course, but I have also seen the value of comparing Texas to other large,

⁵ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 2011, 5th edition, p12. <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf>

⁶ Texas Education Code § 54.014.

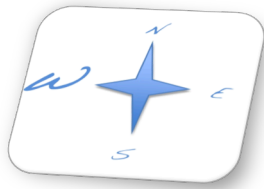
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populous states, like California where I attended graduate school or to smaller southern states, like Alabama, where I was raised. Discussing national and state politics with examples from other states is important, especially when a majority of my students have experienced life primarily in one state. I also appreciate having the time in a core government course to explain the institutions of the federal and state government. Before teaching Texas government, it would not have occurred to me that this is crucial information for students. If they have had a high school course on American government, they certainly have not had a course regarding state politics. Even learning that Texas has a part-time legislature that meets every other year is news to students, even those from Texas.

American government and Texas government are the main ways Texas college students encounter political science. For political scientists, it is good to have the opportunity to be part of the core curriculum and share information from our discipline with students. However, it can be an equal challenge to show the broad meaning of political science in this format. Still, the benefits of being part of the core curriculum outweigh the disadvantages. In teaching American and Texas government, I have the opportunity to share information about the importance of understanding government with students with majors such as biology, business, education, English, or nursing, to name a few. Sometimes, it has meant new majors and minors in the political science program, but more often, I know that, thanks to this requirement, every student in the university will learn more about state and federal government than he or she would have otherwise.



Western Announcements

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICAL THEORY WORKSHOP

Wednesday, April 16, 2014, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Location: Seattle Sheraton Hotel, Room Metropolitan A

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 with environmental political practice. Both established and younger scholars, including graduate students, are encouraged to attend. A schedule for the workshop can be found on the organization's website. For more information, please contact Emily Howard (Emily.Howard@nau.edu), Steven Vanderheiden (Steven.Vanderheiden@colorado.edu), or Justin Williams (justwill@umich.edu).

FEMINIST THEORY WORKSHOP

Wednesday, April 16, 2014 - 1:30 to 5:45 PM

Location: Seattle Sheraton Hotel, Room Ravenna

The workshop will include a discussion of *Feminism and Power: The Need for Critical Theory*, by Mary Caputi, California State University, Long Beach and *The Multicultural Feminist Roots of Intersectionality*, by Ange-Marie Hancock, University of Southern California.

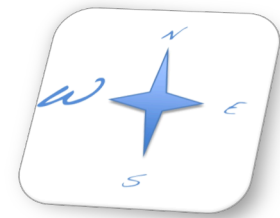
INTERPRETIVE METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

Wednesday, April 16 from 3:30-6:30

Seattle Sheraton Hotel, Room Issaquah

For this second annual pre-conference session on interpretive methods and methodologies at the Western Political Science Association annual meeting, we aim to investigate the relationship between meaning and comparison in greater detail. Questions we propose for the session attendees to consider include: What models exist for how one might go about constructing an interpretive research project grounded in multiple empirical contexts? In what ways are the analyses constructed through different interpretive methods, authors, or manuscript formats best compared with one another? How might contextually grounded empirical and theoretical insights travel from one "case" to another? What perspectives exist on whether or how we might discuss and utilize each other's empirical findings?

Those interested in attending this pre-conference session should contact the co-organizers, Amy Cabrera Rasmussen (amy.rasmussen@csulb.edu) and Betsy Super (bsuper@apsanet.org) in order to RSVP and to receive the list of suggested readings.



LATINA/O POLITICS WORKSHOP
Wednesday, April 16 from 1-6 pm
Seattle Sheraton Hotel, Room Metropolitan B

The Latina/w Politics Workshop will include breakout sessions about topics including Retrospective/Prospective Look at Latino Caucus and Latino Politics -Discussion of history, strategy, and current state of affairs, Career Perspectives at all Stages, and Advice on Publishing Books and Blogs. It will also include a social for all attendees including a book signing by recent authors. For a detailed scheduled, please see visit <http://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/meet/workshops.php#latino>.

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 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.