

Assessing both the immediate and longitudinal effects of different types and amounts of civic education presents a serious research challenge, but two papers met this issue head-on by analyzing how varying types of civic education can influence college students' voting activities and lifelong civic behavior (Diana M. Owen, "The Influence of Civic Education on Electoral Engagement and Voting"; Jennifer Bachner, "From Classroom to Voting Booth: The Effect of High School Civic Education on Turnout"). Both studies found that personalized, active curricular approaches to engaging students were critical to activating them and cultivating lasting, public-oriented habits. Students voted more often when either high school or college instruction included personal appeals. They took part in campaigns, used social media to follow campaigns, and attended community meetings, among other activities, when their experiences in political science or government courses conveyed the value of civic engagement. Thus, all of the studies presented by track participants support the general conclusion that active learning and an explicit focus on the value of engaged citizenship can produce measureable differences in levels of civic engagement.

Several members of the track recommended Bob Graham's model for teaching civic leadership skills. By requiring students to define a problem, research it, gauge public opinion, identify the decision-makers, build coalitions, use the media, meet with decision-makers, capitalize on victory, and learn from defeat, instructors are allowing students to practice and develop the skills they will need as citizens and civic leaders. Yet there is much we still do not know about the best ways to promote lifelong engagement.

Track participants suggested many ways that the APSA can facilitate the scholarship on civic education and engagement in political science, including:

1. Publish a monograph providing a literature review, model examples of scholarship across the discipline, and an assessment toolkit for teacher-scholars;
2. Create an apsanet.org-linked wiki providing a collective annotated bibliography and detailed summaries of past research, to which scholars could add their own work as it is completed;
3. Support a *Journal of Political Science Education*-published meta-analysis of what we know and what we need to know;
4. Provide links to other resources, including relevant professional associations, national surveys, rubrics, assessment plans, and syllabi; and
5. Support grants and/or conference space for working groups dedicated to multicampus, longitudinal civic engagement scholarship.

As Dewey once wrote, "Democracy needs to be reborn in each generation and education is its midwife." As educators, we have an opportunity to participate in that rebirth.

TRACK: CORE CURRICULUM AND GENERAL EDUCATION

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Issues addressed in the Core Curriculum and General Education track at this year's conference are more important than ever. With

the release of *Academically Adrift* (Arum and Roksa 2011), increasing budget shortfalls as a result of the economic recession, and calls for assessment and accountability, higher education and its usefulness have come under scrutiny. While this increasing scrutiny is a concern that others besides those in political science should address, our field's expertise within the political arena would suggest that we have insight into political decision-making and can act as experts that translate information from the classroom to the real world in a variety of ways.

Central to addressing this scrutiny is a need to consider what we teach and how our students learn. It is apparent that there is no agreement among political scientists about what constitutes the core of our discipline. While on one hand, this disagreement is an artifact of the methodological and topical pluralism that characterizes our discipline, on the other hand, this diversity could undermine the role of political science in the core of a college curriculum. The only agreement appears to be that students should take American government courses (Bobbi Gentry and Christopher Lawrence, "What's Core in the Undergraduate Political Science Curriculum?"), but even then, there is a lack of agreement over what should be taught in introductory American government courses (William J. Miller and Jill Miller, "So Many Freshmen! The Challenges and Goals of Introductory American Government Courses").

We are further challenged by the fact that many of our students do not take introductory courses with the intention of becoming political science majors. Students enroll in our general education classes to fulfill requirements, often vary in interest level, and face challenges besides academics that affect their classroom performance. Furthermore, no matter which institution or student body we face, we ask a lot from a single political science course. In our core courses, we balance the goals of teaching students the basics of our trade and teaching them important skills such as how to register to vote, how to analyze and criticize points, and how to apply content knowledge to the real world. Our track also found that we expect students to leave our classes with a wide variety of skills. One larger concern is that we ask students to do critical thinking in our courses without necessarily scaffolding in the steps to teach them to become critical thinkers (Nicholas Spina and Tara Parsons, "The Many Objectives of a Political Science Education: A Study of Introductory American Government Classes across Four Institutions").

We also increasingly find ourselves faced with teaching a classroom full of students at varying levels of academic preparedness (Emily Neal and Kimberly Turner, "Opportunities and Challenges in Teaching Research Methods in a General Education Course at a Community College"). Given this diversity, there are several key questions we must address, including: How do students learn? How can we better use assessment as a tool to learn the best methods to help students learn while not being evaluative? (Dana Dyson, William Laverty, and Derwin Munroe, "Gen Ed on our Minds: What Can Assessment of 'Introduction to American Government' Tell Us about General Education Outcomes?") Future inquiry not only should concern the development of best practices, but should also use these practices as recommendations—not fundamental truths—that can be applied to every classroom and every student to help students succeed.

Further complicating the matter is the challenge of a new type of student who expects different outcomes than those to which we, as teachers, may be accustomed. The ongoing debate between

the “sage on the stage” lecture style versus the “guide on the side” active learning style continues to be challenged by Millennials (Miller and Miller), as well as by students who come to us with varying levels of preparedness. How far do we go to get our students involved and interested without becoming the Magic School Bus for college? We may need to begin to think more about actively involving our students in classes (John Todsén, “Inclusion and Satisfaction: Involving Students in Class Design”), incorporating strategies such as technology and websites (Joseph Jozwiak, “Can Websites Help Students to Succeed in General Education Political Science Courses?”), and using personalized and reflective writing assignments (Shamira Gelbman, “Bringing Writing Back In (to Large General Education Classes): Evidence from a Writing-Intensive Introductory American Politics Course”) to help students take ownership of material that can be used in a multitude of class sizes. We may also want to think about active learning and student-centered class structures (Arthur Auerbach, “Teaching Diversity: Utilizing a Multifaceted Approach to Engage Students”) to help our students develop strategies for thinking critically about controversial material.

Recommendations

Our track came to several conclusions; unfortunately, none are easy to undertake or quick to be cultivated. However, the reality is that if we do not undertake these challenges, they will most likely be imposed on us. Several states have already begun to dictate aspects of college curriculum, and, in light of *Academically Adrift* and similar reports, the likelihood is that state government intervention in higher education is likely to increase. Thus, we recommend:

- Figuring out what is core to the discipline of political science. This need not be prescriptive (for now), but may be descriptive. Methodological and topic pluralism is a defining characteristic of political science, but we need to have some agreement about what we expect majors and nonmajors to learn. We also need a better understanding of the kinds of institutions from which each of us within the discipline come—community college versus four-year school, large versus small, public versus private—to identify and address the challenges and opportunities that come with each environment, not just in terms of student needs, but also in terms of how we can best serve our students based on student backgrounds, class sizes, and resources available in difficult economic times.
- Identifying the objectives of our courses and creating those courses in a manner to scaffold students toward success. This goal will require a lot of reflective work on the part of the professoriate to think about what we really want students to know both in terms of knowledge and skills and to be more intentional in structuring our courses to achieve these goals.
- Encourage graduate programs to actively think about training their students to be teachers in addition to being political scientists. Given the increasing call for accountability and the diversity of students that we all face, it is critical that we arm our graduate students with pedagogy to facilitate both teaching and learning. Our next generation of political science professors will feel the brunt of increasing scrutiny; we must prepare them for it.

Conclusion

Much of the work within the Core Curriculum and General Education track remains descriptive and not prescriptive. However, the relevance of political science will continue to be evaluated by what we produce in terms of assessment, successful students, and, more importantly, successful graduates. Questions about the core curriculum need to be addressed in both departmental course coherence and specific course expectations, as well as from a general education perspective and by assessing how we teach students to think. We will be affected by *Academically Adrift* and need to be proactive about addressing these challenges within the public and political arenas. For better or for worse, the challenge will be to sell our product—a product on which a specific value cannot be placed.

REFERENCE

Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roksa. 2011. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

TRACK: DIVERSITY, INCLUSIVENESS, AND EQUALITY

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The eighth annual meeting of the Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Equality (DIE) track at the 2011 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference focused on issues of difference, diversity, and equality as they relate to political science classrooms, departments, and institutions. This year, DIE included 22 participants and seven research papers on a broad range of issues. Subject matter included the incorporation of diversity topics into political science curriculum, the impact of campus demographics and diversity, and challenges faced by faculty in teaching diversity in politics.

Based on their experiences in the classroom and the relevant literature in the field, DIE participants from the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia added an international perspective to a rich and lively discussion. Three main themes emerged from presentations, discussions, and related workshops: (1) tensions within the professoriate, (2) responsibilities of political scientists concerning issues of diversity and inclusiveness, and (3) participants' commitments to future efforts. These themes include key issues such as altruism, accountability, and assurance. This report summarizes these themes and discusses the next steps for the track.

I. Tensions within the Professoriate

Little scholarly research has been conducted to examine how professors address tensions arising from facing two conflicting needs when teaching traditionally underrepresented students. We want these students to play by the rules, complete their education, and be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Many times, we want them to critically analyze and recognize the need to deconstruct (or at least restructure) the unfair political system that has historically placed undue burdens on their marginalized groups in regard to achieving social mobility.

Junior faculty members face a similar dilemma concerning their professional careers when they address DIE issues in their classrooms and institutions. They fear that promoting diversity will