

cognitive Questions” explored how using metacognitive activity wrappers can improve student learning outcomes from civic engagement. In their paper, “Building Community to Promote Civic Engagement in an American Government Classroom,” Scott Spitzer (California State University, Fullerton) and Lori Weber (California State University, Chico) invited public policy makers into classroom town hall meetings where students had the opportunity to participate and pose questions. Students in the class with the town hall meetings demonstrated a higher increase in feelings of political efficacy and a sense of collaborativeness compared to a class without the meetings. In “Bring a Chair: Getting Methods Students Out of the Classroom and into the Field,” Douglas Cantor (Loyola Marymount University) took students out of the classroom to help organize exit polling for a course in quantitative methods in political science. In all these papers, teachers of political science and civic engagement related courses agreed that putting students to work turning theory into practice worked to increase student involvement in their own learning outcomes.

The panelists in “Out of Your Chair and Into the Streets: Active Approaches to Civic Engagement” explored themes of inclusivity in civic education and service learning. Kathleen Cole’s (Metropolitan State University) paper “That’s our house! Let’s take it over!: Antiracist Pedagogy in Advocacy Courses,” shared insights from her advocacy state government course. She guides students throughout her course to identify, track, research, and engage with a policy proposal being actively considered by the Minnesota State legislature. Her paper reflected on the different ways an anti-racist, reflective instructor approach built an inclusive space in her open-enrollment, diverse, urban college campus environment. This approach allowed her students to work through challenging problems that can arise when asking students to attempt to affect legislation shaping their community - problems such as helping students recognize themselves as knowledge experts, grappling with emotional and political toll of winning only partial, incomplete victories, and developing their own self confidence to enter the state government and present to elected officials. Andrew Hewitt Smith’s (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley) “Service Learning at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSIs),” advanced our understanding of how political science educators can best structure service-learning programs within their introductory courses. Noting our current literature studying service learning course and programs has been limited to predominantly white



Above: (Left to right) Michelle Deardorff, Alison Rios McCartney, J. Cherie Strachan, Carlos Huerta, and Renée Van Vechten at the APSA Annual Meeting.

institutions, he used his Introduction to American Government course at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to examine how applicable the existing service-learning pedagogy is to HSIs and suggests ways in which pedagogy can be improved to mesh with the unique nature of HSIs.

The question of how to move beyond the “banking model” of learning, where students passively take in information rather than pushing the boundaries of what they thought they knew was at the heart of this year’s session. At the center of these track sessions, as exemplified in the discussion that followed Nandini Deo (Lehigh University) Julie George (CUNY, Queens College) Meg Guliford (University of Pennsylvania) and Mary Anne Mendoza’s (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona) paper “Teaching Comparative Politics: A Guide to Making Choices,” was a consensus that there was no one method or pedagogy to accomplish student learning in political science but rather that there were a plurality of methods and pedagogies open to teachers and students of political science and civic engagement alike.

CONCLUSION

Despite the challenges of a hybrid mini-conference, attendees at the 2021 TLC at APSA valued the opportunity to come together both virtually and in-person to share in conversations focused on teaching and pedagogy. The 2021 TLC at APSA was the fourth mini-conference and it continues to be a space for political science educators to engage in meaningful connections with each other.

We would like to express thanks to the TLC at APSA Program Committee for their hard work and dedication: Tavishi Bhasin (co-chair), Patrick McKinlay (co-chair), Kenneth Betsalel, Julio F. Carrión, Chiedo Nwankwor, T.M. Sell, and Renée Van Vechten. ■

BOOKS BY OUR MEMBERS

Qualitative Comparative Analysis: An Introduction to Research Design and Application

Patrick A. Mello
Georgetown University Press

A Tale of Two Parties: Living Amongst Democrats and Republicans Since 1952

Kenneth Janda
Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

Writing As A Performing Art: On Taking it to the House

Thomas E. Cronin
Abuzz Press

