POLI 7000:  
Professional Development Seminar  

Fall 2013  

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Introduction

The purpose of this course is to provide a broad overview to the political science profession and issues relating to professional success in the discipline. We will explore two major topics. First, we will focus considerable attention on the criteria for evaluation used in political science. What are the leading political science departments? Who are the leading scholars? What are the most important journals and scholarly presses? How do we know it when we see it? Second, we will discuss some of the practical issues relating to how one can succeed in the political science profession. How does one write a dissertation or thesis? How does one go about presenting a paper at a professional conference? How does one submit a paper to a scholarly journal? How does one publish a book? How does one go about obtaining employment as a political scientist?

Course Requirements and Evaluation

This class is offered on a pass-fail basis. Class participation and preparedness are major components of evaluation in graduate seminars. Each student will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of informed participation and contribution to seminar discussion. Specifically, each student is expected to have read and reflected upon all assigned readings before class, and should be prepared to discuss the reading assignments during the seminar meeting.

Class attendance is required.

Readings

There are no required books for the seminar. However, in most weeks students will be given a small set of readings to be read for the seminar. Assigned readings are found in the accompanying course outline. Required readings are denoted with an asterisk (*). Other readings may be read based on your own interests and inclinations. Readings will be made available to students electronically (as .pdf files) on the course Moodle page.
Schedule

Please note that the following schedule is tentative. It may be necessary to shuffle some of these topics during the semester to accommodate the schedules of guest speakers. I will keep you informed of schedule changes.

August
30  No class meeting (APSA)

September
6  Teaching political science (Guest lecturer: Cecil Eubanks)
13  Political scientists: Who are we?
20  Evaluating quality and stature of political science departments
27  Evaluating quality and stature of political science departments (continued)

October
4  Evaluating political scientists: Who are the leading scholars?
11  Evaluating scholarly media (journals and book publishers)
18  Evaluating scholarly media (journals and book publishers) (continued)
25  Employment issues: Trends and prospects

November
1  Presenting papers at professional conferences
8  No class meeting (Fall Holiday)
15  Submitting papers to scholarly journals
22  A career in political science
29  No class meeting (Thanksgiving)

December
6  Writing a dissertation or thesis

Membership in the APSA

The American Political Science Association (APSA) is the national professional organization representing political scientists in the United States. Political scientists who are active in the profession are expected to be members of the APSA. For students, membership dues are quite reasonable ($45). Members receive the American Political Science Review, the official scholarly journal of the APSA, as well as PS: Political Science and Politics, a journal that discusses people, events, and activities in the profession, and Perspectives on Politics, another APSA journal. Although membership in the APSA is not a requirement of this course, students are encouraged to become members of the organization representing their profession.

You can join the APSA at the following web site:

http://www.apsanet.org/content_1457.cfm
About the Instructor

James C. Garand (Ph.D., University of Kentucky, 1984) is the Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Political Science and the R. Downs Poindexter Professor of Political Science at Louisiana State University.

Professor Garand has teaching and research interests in the fields of legislative politics, electoral politics, public opinion, public policy, state politics, racial and ethnic politics, domestic political economy, and research methodology and statistics. His research on a wide range of topics in American politics has been published in numerous journals, including the American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics, British Journal of Political Science, Political Research Quarterly, Western Political Quarterly, Comparative Political Studies, Legislative Studies Quarterly, PS: Political Science and Politics, American Politics Research, American Politics Quarterly, Public Choice, Social Science Quarterly, and Electoral Studies, among others. His coedited book, Before the Vote: Forecasting American National Elections, was published by Sage Publications in 2000. His current research agenda includes numerous projects relating to the study of American politics.

Professor Garand received the 2006 LSU Distinguished Research Master Award in recognition of outstanding faculty accomplishments in research and scholarship. In 2009 he was recognized as an LSU "Rainmaker," an award given by the LSU Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) for national and international recognition "for innovative research and creative scholarship." He served as President of the Southern Political Science Association in 2004, and he is also former president of the State Politics Section of the American Political Science Association. He served as Vice-President and Program Chair in 2001 for the Southern Political Science Association. Professor Garand is former editor of the American Politics Quarterly, one of the leading subfield journals in American politics. He currently serves on the editorial boards of the American Politics Research, Journal of Political Marketing, and Ralph Bunche Journal of Public Affairs, and he is a former member of the editorial boards of the American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics, State Politics and Policy, and Legislative Studies Quarterly. He also serves as a member of the International Advisory Board of the Online Portal for Social Science Education in Methodology (OPOSSEM).

Professor Garand has received numerous faculty awards. In 1997 Professor Garand received the LSU Alumni Association Distinguished Faculty Award in recognition of sustained excellence in teaching, research, and service. In 2012 he received the Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award recognizing excellence in teaching in the LSU Honors College. In 2001 he received the LSU Foundation Distinguished Faculty Award in recognition of his excellence in graduate teaching, and he is the 1990 recipient of the university-wide Student Government Association Teaching Excellence Award for undergraduate teaching. He is also a recipient of the Alpha Lambda Delta Freshman Honor Society certificate of recognition for superior instruction of freshman students during the Fall 2000 semester.
Course Outline

A. Teaching political science (Guest lecture: Cecil Eubanks) (September 6)

   No assigned reading

B. Introductory Meeting (September 13)


   * Hesli, Fink, and Duffy, “Mentoring in a Positive Graduate Student Experience: Survey Results from the Midwest Region, Part I,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (July 2003: 457-60).

   * Hesli, Fink, and Duffy, “Mentoring in a Positive Graduate Student Experience: Survey Results from the Midwest Region, Part II,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (October 2003: 801-04).

C. Political Scientists: Who Are We? (September 13)

   * American Political Science Association, *Appendices: Tables of Membership and Governance Data.*


C. Political Scientists: Who Are We? (September 13) (continued)


D. Evaluating Quality and Stature of Political Science Departments I (September 20)

Robey, "Political Science Departments: Reputations vs. Productivity." PS: Political Science and Politics (Spring 1979: 202-09).


Welch and Hibbing, "What Do the New Ratings of Political Science Departments Measure?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* (Summer 1983: 532-40).

D. Evaluating Quality and Stature of Political Science Departments I (September 20) (continued)


E. Evaluating Quality and Stature of Political Science Departments II (September 27)


E. Evaluating Quality and Stature of Political Science Departments II (September 27) (continued)


F. Evaluating Political Scientists: Who are the Leading Scholars in Political Science (October 4)

Robey, "Reputations vs. Citations: Who are the Top Scholars in Political Science?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* (Spring 1982: 199-200).


G. Evaluating Scholarly Media in Political Science I (October 11)


Christenson and Sigelman, "Accrediting Knowledge: Journal Stature and Citation Impact in Social Science," *Social Science Quarterly* (1985: 964-75).


G. Evaluating Scholarly Media in Political Science I (October 11) (continued)


H. Evaluating Scholarly Media in Political Science II (October 18)


* Goodson, Dillman, and Hira, "Ranking the Presses: Political Scientists Evaluations of Publisher Quality," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (June 1999: 257-62).


Evans and Moulder, "Reflecting on a Decade of Women's Publications in Four Top Political Science Journals," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (October 2011: 793-98).
I. Employment Issues: Trends and Prospects (October 25)


Hanley, “A Primer on Applying to the Liberal Arts College,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (October 2008: 809-12).


J. Presenting papers at professional conferences (November 1)

K. Submitting papers to scholarly journals (November 15)


L. A career in political science (November 22)


L. A career in political science (November 22) (continued)


* Grofman, "Determinants of Political Science Faculty Salaries at the University of California," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (October 2009: 719-27).

M. Writing a dissertation or thesis (December 6)


* Benesh, "The Key to a Successful Prospectus: Consult an Advisor, Early and Often," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (December 2001: 853-54).