

DRAFT

Coalition Building Across Institutional Type to Foster Diversity
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I have been a faculty member and administrator at a private liberal arts college for almost thirty years. During that time, I have been in a faculty position that has been half time in gender studies and half time in the government department. I was, in significant ways, not chosen by the government department, but an additional member of the department assigned there because though I was hired by the gender studies program. At that time, we did not have tenure lines in programs. My teaching in government has most frequently been courses cross-listed with gender studies. These are the only courses taught regularly that have gender as a central component. My mid-probationary and tenure reviews were negotiations between gender studies, government, and me, with the Government Department objecting early on that I was not doing political science, and that in order for them to support me for tenure, I needed to. We worked it out, and perhaps more importantly, we worked it out in ways that institutionalized program participation in all mid-probationary and tenure reviews in meaningful ways. My scholarship has been in political science, but since it is about LGBT politics and issues, it has remained at the margins of the field, and that has been fine for my career, not the least because institutionally we care that people are engaged scholars in their field -- we do not care if this engagement is at the center or at the margin.

I think that I have benefited from the arrangement that I have described in ways that are instructive for me as I think about Diversity issues broadly, but it also helps me to understand the limits of being both part of and not part of a department or institution. I think that my experience with APSA has been very similar: I have been a member of the organization for a long time, but I also feel like a member who is not fully a member. My connection to the organization has been focused on the LGBT Political Science Caucus, and now the Sexuality and Politics Section, as well as the Women's Caucus and New Political Science. I think that reflects **both** the work that I do and the institution with which I am affiliated. These are, of course, connected in that my freedom to do scholarship that interests me has been, in part, the result of being at an institution that is both somewhat traditional, and very committed to interdisciplinary teaching and learning, something that has been true since I was hired initially in 1988. The Government department is fairly typical for a liberal arts college: we maintain a curriculum focused on the four subfields, but we long ago abandoned focusing on quantitative methods. The department has long supported people working in interdisciplinary programs.

I want to use my experience, and also the insights that I have gained from being a senior administrator, to suggest some ways that we might build coalitions that can help to make the center of the discipline less clear. In doing this, I will draw from work that has made substantial progress by discussing the ways by which the discipline is masculinist (see Anonymous), as well as the ways that it needs to change for the 21st Century. My primary focus will be on why I believe it is important for those of us not at R-1 institutions (or those who are, but recognize and value that many of us are not) and concerned about diversity to work together to try to have a greater voice within the profession. At the same time, I want to note a number of areas where I believe APSA should be supporting research so that we might better understand the professional paths that are taken. I see this as coalition work in that those of us in a variety of kinds of institutions will need to work together to change the focus of the organization. And, I think we need the perspectives of those not in political science departments, either part time or full time. I am less concerned than Valerie Sinclair-Chapman about "losing (minority) faculty to presumably more

hospitable fields where these scholars to engage in political science scholarship” (2015, 457) and more concerned that the mainstream profession, and organizations like APSA, be welcoming to them and to their scholarship.

I find the report *Political Science in the 21st Century* both very insightful, and somewhat frustrating. I believe that the fact that every member of the task force, with the sole exception of the federal liaison from NSF, was from a research-1 institution to say much about APSA. In fact, I think one would find this pattern with every major committee that the organization forms¹. The fact that the first line after the introduction reads, “Within political science, and academia in general, research productivity is the Holy Grail,” and that the authors continue by discussing how important impact factor is for tenure and promotion, suggests that the institution in which I work, and much of the work that I do, has little meaning within the field or within academia. I point this out not because I do not agree with the conclusions that are then drawn: these emphases within research institutions do have an impact on the research that people do because what is valued clearly has an impact on career success. I have little doubt that there is “overspecialization and insufficient engagement with with contemporary issues.” And, I think the report recognizes the limits of a discipline that focuses on research more than teaching and the dissemination of research in noting, “It is also the case that the primary venue through which research findings affect the largest number of students and citizens is the teaching of political science” (10). Later, they explicitly tie this reality to the research agenda and ask what I believe are key questions: “Are most of the research questions that the profession address relevant to these students? How should the profession address the disjuncture between teaching undergraduates and the requirements and rewards for research productivity in the profession?” (18).

But I would argue that this disjuncture noted here does not exist for many faculty, and that the questions should be revised: How can the profession recognize and support the scholarly lives of those not at Research-1 institutions? Would doing this have an impact on the focus on research in the field, most importantly, would it make a focus on identity and on qualitative methods more accepted? Would this be helpful for patching holes in the leaky pipeline? And, how can faculty across institutions support one another so that teaching, scholarship, and public dissemination of research findings is better integrated? Given data indicating that roughly the same percentage of advertisements for jobs in political science are for liberal arts colleges and other kinds of non-R-1 institutions, as are for R-1 departments, the focus on preparing people to be in R-1 positions is a bit short-sighted. I want to make a case for why I think these questions might be fruitful for increasing diversity, both of thought and representation, but I also want to point out places where I am making assumptions and where I have been unable to find research to either support or disprove those assumptions. Such assumptions might set an interesting research agenda for the APSA to support.

Both the “Political Science in the 21st Century” report and the APSA report “Interdisciplinarity” provide interesting ways of thinking about how the focus of the discipline might shift if undergraduate education is seen as more central to the work of political scientists. The latter report looks at the various approaches that can be taken to interdisciplinarity within political science, noting three primary possibilities: area studies, social justice and political movements, and methodology. As the authors note, area studies programs arose with the recognition that US power in the world required an understanding of other areas of the world that could only come through bringing the humanities and social sciences together. These programs were able to garner significant government support, thus making them able to gain a foothold at major research institutions (26). A second form of interdisciplinarity is identified as much more connected to undergraduate education: “More than other intellectual focal points of

¹ It would be useful for the APSA to track this.

interdisciplinary research, political movements and social justice categories seem to be located in, or at least unusually accessible to, undergraduate programs. Perhaps because they are designed to serve undergraduates, these kinds of interdisciplinary programs seem to be more likely to be organized as departments within the arts and sciences, as opposed to professional schools, research centers, or research-teaching hybrids (27). I would add that at liberal arts colleges, such programs (and they are sometimes programs and sometimes departments) are common. At St. Lawrence, approximately 40 % of our faculty work both within a department and with an interdisciplinary program, with the figure being higher for those in the social sciences and humanities. In the government department, of 11 tenured or tenure track positions, 5 (including 4 of the 6 women in the department) are connected to interdisciplinary programs, with 4 working with area studies and 2 connected to programs that are more social justice programs. Yet even area studies in liberal arts colleges have a significant connection to social justice and identity. In that sense, our hiring and tenure decisions fall, in significant ways, on people being able to see from multiple perspectives and teach across areas. This is not unique to St. Lawrence. As the Consortium for Faculty Diversity website states, “Because our campuses and departments are small, faculty members are encouraged to undertake inter-departmental and interdisciplinary curricular projects, including the design and teaching of interdisciplinary courses, first-year seminars or courses for non-majors. Use of innovative pedagogy that supports student learning, such as collaborative group work or inquiry learning, may also be expected” (<http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/provost/cfd/liberal-experience.dot>).

If liberal arts colleges are more likely to encourage a different perspective, one where teaching is central and where, given the interests of undergraduate students, faculty have an incentive to do their teaching and research in areas, such as those focused on social justice and where working across disciplines is central, it seems entirely possible that: 1) these positions are more attractive to women and people of color whose research interests might better align²; 2) since these institutions have less focus on research productivity and impact factor, faculty working in these areas are more likely to be tenured and promoted; 3) there may be fewer leaks in the pipeline in these institutions, both because a single department may be less important for tenure and promotion and for professional identity and because coalition building across campus may be easier; 4) because teaching tends to be evaluated in the more holistic way suggested as beneficial for furthering diversity suggested by Alexander-Floyd (2014), the most central category of evaluation leads to greater satisfaction and success.

At the same time, it is clear that many colleges or universities that focus on undergraduate student development make demands of faculty that limit the scholarly productivity. To the extent that women and faculty of color might be more likely to succeed in these institutions, many might prefer being able to carry out a more developed research agenda. Thus, to the extent that my assertions are accurate, they may or may not be positive. I believe the APSA needs to support the research that would allow us to know if my assertions are correct. Assuming that they are, though, I think we need to think creatively about how to build an organization that focuses on all of its members. To that end, I want to share the following thoughts:

1. Opportunities to publish in the field are dominated by journals that focus on research by people with resources who are at R-1 institutions 90% of the time (see Bruening and Sanders) with particular foci. The argument that identity needs to be taken more seriously within the field should be translated into

²And, as Alexander-Floyd argues, scholarship that is outside standard norms in terms of subject or methodology puts women of color in a more precarious position since it will receive additional scrutiny. At R-1 institutions where research is the most important element of a portfolio, this likely has a greater impact (2014).

possibilities for publishing. In a landscape where the costs of publishing have declined, while the costs of journals has escalated sharply, it would be useful to organize such possibilities. As an administrator who is all too aware of the impact of soaring library acquisitions, budgets, the question of how we reframe publishing into an affordable model is an important one. As the APSA moves forward with publishing a new on-line journal (see Smith 2015), the question of how it might encourage and support work from those not at R-1 institutions should be asked. This, though, most likely requires better understanding the research interests and agendas of these scholars. It might also require that the APSA collaborate with other professional organizations to develop cross-disciplinary journals that focus on identity and social justice issues. As I noted earlier, I am not terribly concerned that political scientists leave the field to work in centers, but I think that it would be better if the work done in these locations was more specifically tied to the larger discipline. It also might be useful to publish articles that take sophisticated research findings and make them accessible to undergraduates. Or, perhaps that could be a separate journal. My fear, though, is that unless master's institutions, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges, are represented well on the editorial board, the goal of making the new journal better represent institutional diversity will quickly fall to the way-side in the interests of "quality."

2. The APSA, as well as the caucuses within the organization, might work to foster cross-institutional research teams. One way of doing this would be to reserve panel space for panels that include representation from different kinds of institutions. One of the more difficult challenges that many faculty at liberal arts colleges face early on is figuring out how to teach well and remain an engaged scholar. Given the limits on travel funding at many institutions, being able to present on a panel may be critical for forming a post-graduate school network. It would also be nice to support such collaborations with fellowship money or to develop a program where faculty might swap places for a year or two.
3. The training that graduate students receive tends to position them to succeed in traditional ways within the discipline. Though mentoring and collaboration have been discussed for a number of years within APSA, the assumptions underlying the mentoring program, from the application materials, seem to reinforce the basics fields critiqued in the 21st Century Political Science paper, not recognize that many political scientists may be working in interdisciplinary, nor recognize that one might want mentoring to understand career options within academia. Just as many career services sponsor shadowing programs, perhaps we need to stop assuming that the mere fact that someone is receiving a PhD means that they understand the range of institutions within academic, the difference in who they serve, the differences in what a position requires. Graduate students need to be encouraged to explore different types of institutions, and encouraged to ask questions about how they will encourage the development of young faculty and what they define as success. An organization like the Consortium for Faculty Diversity needs to be widely known within the field, and graduate students who would bring diversity to institutions and whose work is more likely to fit with the institutional structures of liberal arts colleges should be encouraged to apply. Fellows can build connections to one another, as well as to mentors within institutions.
4. If the APSA is concerned with public dissemination of research, as a number of recent essays suggest, one method might be, as Boudreau argues, to encourage the profession to give more credit to junior scholars at R-1 institutions who provide discussions of their research for the general public. Alternatively, we might recognize that scholars who focus on undergraduate teaching do this regularly. It may be that doing research and discussing that research are separable, and that fostering collaborations between people with different skills and emphases could be beneficial to those at different kinds of institutions, as well as the profession and the public.
5. The focus on assessment at all institutions requires that departments define and assess learning goals. A task force composed of faculty from all types of institutions charged with developing new models for the major, learning goals that would fit with those models, and assessment tools for the learning goals would provide a significant benefit to many departments. Such a task force, were it to take seriously the need for a greater focus on social justice and methodological diversity, would need to be diverse in all ways.

Such a task force might also ask how political science can contribute to interdisciplinary social justice programs and define learning goals and assessment tools that these programs can use.

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