

## State Politics and Policy

An Organized Section of the

[American Political Science  
Association](#)

**State Politics Home**

**Annual State Politics Conferences**

***State Politics and Policy Quarterly***

**State Politics Data Archive**

**Section News**

Page Maintained by

[Jonathan Winburn](#)

[Department of Political Science,  
University of Mississippi](#)

## State Politics and Policy Section Newsletter August, 2007

Prepared by Thomas M. Carsey

Florida State University

[tcarsey@fsu.edu](mailto:tcarsey@fsu.edu)

### From the Section President

As we approach the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, the scientific study of state politics and policy is thriving. Collectively we are developing sophisticated theories of institutions, behavior, and public policies while creating and refining methodological approaches for fully taking into account the contextual basis of politics. The work of state politics and policy scholars consistently is appearing in the discipline's most respected journals, including the "top three" (American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, and Journal of Politics). In fact, in these three journals, twenty-four articles typical of this Section's specializations have been published since January 2006. Of course, there are many other important outlets for the Section's work, including our own excellent State Politics & Policy Quarterly. However, the ability of state politics scholarship to appear in the general journals speaks to the broad interests represented in this work and its importance to a wide variety of specialties within the discipline.

Further, after experiencing the first change in editorship since its inception, State Politics and Policy Quarterly continues to thrive. Dick Winters, David Lowery, and Ronald Weber are continuing the high standards set by Chris Mooney while making the transition in editorships seamless.

The Section also has just co-hosted another very successful annual conference. Organized by David Leal and Andrew Karch at University of Texas at Austin, the meeting was truly superb, including a strong program of quality papers and discussion, not to mention outstanding opportunities for informal conversation. David and Andy deserve congratulations and appreciation for organizing this terrific event. Michael Hagan, Joseph McLaughlin, and Dana Barron currently are organizing next year's meeting at Temple University in Philadelphia. By all means, please plan to participate.

The Section also is doing well with respect to membership, although our numbers have declined somewhat. Last year at about this time, the Section ranked 17th in size of thirty-four organized sections in the APSA. Currently we rank 22nd of thirty-five. On September 12, 2006, the Section had 562 members (387 regular members and 175 students); on March 15, 2007, the Section had 540 members (390 regular members and 150 students); and on July 30, 2007, we had 476 members (370 regular members and 106 students). Much of this decline has been among the student members, perhaps because we clarified on the APSA webpage that student membership does not include a subscription to SPPQ. In any event, if the decline continues it will be worthwhile for the Section to examine this issue more systematically to identify any problems in need of correction.

The most serious issue facing the Section, however, is our position within the APSA at the Annual Meeting. In my judgment, the Section's ability to obtain panels at the Annual Meeting is at a crisis point. After receiving an allocation of four panels for quite some time, the Section received only three this year. This seems highly

idiosyncratic given the size of the Section and the attendance at our panels and appears to reflect the unusual set of principles characterizing the APSA's allocation formula.

The following data are instructive. According to the eNewsletter for Organized Section Officers on July 21, 2006, the State Politics and Policy Section ranked 20th in size among the thirty-four organized sections. At that time, we had 548 members. Similarly, as I just discussed in the previous paragraph, we had 562 members just after the 2006 Annual Meeting. However, for the 2007 APSA Annual Meeting, we received an allocation of only three panels, in striking contrast to several other smaller sections receiving much larger allocations. For example, Political Psychology had 405 members and tied for 26th with Conflict Processes in rank, yet they received 12 panels (as I surmised from the APSA Preliminary Program, taking into account co-sponsorship). Similarly, Conflict Processes had 405 members but received 18 panels. Even if our student membership were excluded (and there is no indication that APSA does this), we still had 387 regular members at the time.

Moreover, as Thad Kousser reports, the Section received 159 proposals for these three panels at the 2007 Annual Meeting. Assuming that Thad could assign five papers per panel, the Section now has a rejection rate that exceeds 90%. This situation is wholly unacceptable.

As Section President, I have communicated this to the APSA in the various surveys that have been conducted over the past two years and have spoken directly with the meeting organizers. Obviously there are others voicing these concerns because the APSA empanelled the Annual Meeting Review Committee, which has just released its report on the APSA webpage. As you will note, the Review Committee made two recommendations related to allocations. The first is to incorporate rejection rates into the allocation formula, and the second is to make the exact allocation formula available to the membership. As it stands, a general description is available but the specifics are not. For example, the formula appears to be based largely on panel attendance, but the APSA adjusts attendance by such things as day and time without revealing the exact parameters of these adjustments. Similarly, it is not at all clear how co-sponsored panels are counted and whether there is a disadvantage to these arrangements.

In the short-term, I urge each member of the Section to go to the APSA webpage and provide feedback to the Annual Meeting Review Committee. The webpage is set up specifically to elicit that information. Second, with the advice of our Executive Council, I will draft a letter to the APSA as part of this feedback exercise, to reiterate the seeming lack of equity in the allocation process. I also will place this item on our agenda for open discussion at the upcoming Business Meeting.

Even with the allocation of only three panels, this year's Section representative on the Program Committee Thad Kousser has done an outstanding job of organizing the Section's panels. Thad has been particularly effective in working with other sections to increase our panel allocation to six through the creative use of co-sponsorship. Thanks to Thad for success with such a challenging task, particularly in light of the high number of submissions relative to places on the program. In this regard, I strongly encourage you to attend those sessions, not only because of their obvious intellectual merit but also because, as mentioned, panel allocations appear to be tied largely to panel attendance.

Chris Bonneau graciously has agreed to represent the Section on next year's APSA Program Committee and will be accepting proposals soon. Let's plan to keep Chris busy as well and express appreciation to him for agreeing to contribute to the

Section under such difficult conditions.

The Section Business Meeting will be held during the APSA Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 30th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Hyatt Addams, and the reception will follow at 7:00 pm in the Hyatt Field. One of the highlights of the Business Meeting will be the bestowing of the Career Achievement Award and best paper awards. The Career Achievement Award is given every biennium to a political scientist who has made a significant lifetime contribution to the study of politics and public policy in the American states. To identify this year's recipient, I asked Gerald Wright (Chair), Charles Barrilleaux, and Lael Keiser to canvas our membership for the most deserving candidate. As you might imagine, this was a difficult but pleasant task because of the incredible talent among our senior colleagues. After consideration, the committee chose Virginia Gray, and there surely is no more worthy candidate. Among many other achievements too numerous to list, Virginia played a key role in founding the Section and has been a distinguished scholar of state politics and policy throughout her career. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to study state politics without reference to her work. Please join me in congratulating Virginia at the Business Meeting and the reception to be held in her honor. Also, we thank Jerry, Charles, and Lael for a terrific job as the Career Achievement Award Committee.

In addition to the Career Achievement Award, the Section will be presenting two awards for outstanding scholarship. This year's selection committee consisted of Charles Shipan (Chair), Frederick Boehmke, and Nancy Martorano. As recipients of the Best Paper Award for the best paper on state politics and policy presented at the previous year's APSA Annual Meeting, the committee chose Gerald Gamm (University of Rochester) and Thad Kousser (University of California - San Diego) for their paper "Localism and Factionalism in American State Legislatures." For the Best Graduate Student Paper Award for the best paper on state politics and policy presented by a graduate student at the previous year's APSA Annual Meeting, the committee selected Todd Makse (Ohio State University) for his paper "Party Finance Strategy and the Redistricting Cycle." Please join me in congratulating Gerald, Thad, and Todd for their outstanding research, and also in thanking Chuck, Frederick, and Nancy for their excellent choices of winners.

Also at the Business Meeting, the Section will be electing new officers, including a new President and three members of the Executive Council to replace the members whose terms are expiring. Kerry Haynie, Cherie Maestas, and Paul Teske will be ending their service on the Executive Council and, while serving as the Nominating Committee, have nominated Cynthia Bowling, Robert Hogan, and Marjorie Sarbaugh-Thompson as their replacements, along with Richard Niemi as President. Thanks to Kerry, Cherie, and Paul for their excellent service and warm collegiality, and to Cynthia, Robbie, Marjorie, and Dick for their willingness to serve. These nominations will be subject to approval of the Section membership at the Business Meeting.

I look forward to seeing you in Chicago to celebrate the vital contributions of Virginia Gray, to recognize the excellent scholarship that characterizes the Section not only by the award winners but also on the panels and in the audience, and to converse with each other in a way that email cannot match. See you soon in Chicago!

Melinda Gann Hall ([hallme@msu.edu](mailto:hallme@msu.edu))  
Section President

**Paper Award Winners Announced**

Every year, the State Politics and Policy Section and SPPQ hand out several best paper awards. These awards recognize top quality scholarship at its pre-publication stage.

SPPQ Award for the best paper on state politics and policy presented at any professional meeting in the previous calendar year goes to Melinda Gann Hall (Michigan State University), "Mobilizing Voters in State Supreme Court Elections: Competition and Other Contextual Forces as Democratic Incentives."

Best Paper Award for the best paper on state politics and policy presented at the previous year's APSA Annual Meeting goes to Gerald Gamm (University of Rochester) and Thad Kousser (University of California - San Diego), "Localism and Factionalism in American State Legislatures."

Best Graduate Student Paper Award for the best paper on state politics and policy presented by a graduate student at the previous year's APSA Annual Meeting goes to Todd Makse (Ohio State University), "Party Finance Strategy and the Redistricting Cycle."

The Career Achievement Award is given every biennium to a political scientist who has made a significant lifetime contribution to the study of politics and public policy in the American states. This year, the award goes to Virginia Gray, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill.

Congratulations to all of the award winners, and a special thanks to those who served on the awards committees. Please keep these awards in mind as you attend panels at APSA and other conferences - please nominate the papers you feel might be worthy of winning next year.

#### **Panels/Events at the 2007 APSA**

**Section Business Meeting:** Every year we hold a business meeting for the Section to discuss any plans or proposals that might come up. We also distribute the paper awards at this meeting. This year, the Section Business Meeting is set for 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 30th in the Hyatt Addams.

**Section Reception:** This year we are holding a special reception following our Section Business meeting. The main purpose of the reception is to honor Virginia Gray as the recipient of the Career Achievement award. The Reception is set for 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, in the Hyatt Field.

**APSA Panels:** Through creative sponsorship and co-sponsorship, The State Politics and Policy Section is affiliated with six panels at this year's APSA convention in Chicago. Remember, the number of panels each section receives next year at APSA will depend heavily on attendance at panels this year.

**\*\*NOTE: HOTEL AND ROOM ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE - CHECK YOUR FINAL PROGRAM AT THE CONFERENCE.**

29-1 Policy and Disadvantaged People: Lessons from State Government

Thursday, Aug 30, 2:00 PM

Location: Hotel: Hyatt; Room: Hay Market

29-2 New Directions in Pre-K Education

Friday, Aug 31, 10:15 AM

Location: Hotel: Sheraton; Room: Parlor A

29-3 The Impact of Campaign Finance Laws in U.S. States

Thursday, Aug 30, 4:15 PM

Location: Hotel: Sheraton; Room: Columbus A

29-4 Judicial Politics in the American States

Friday, Aug 31, 10:15 AM

Location: Hotel: Hyatt; Room: Addams

29-5 State Legislatures I: Money and Representation

Saturday, Sep 1, 8:00 AM

Location: Hotel: Sheraton; Room: Parlor G

29-6 State Legislatures II: States as Laboratories for Policy and Politics

Saturday, Sep 1, 10:15 AM

Location: Hotel: Sheraton; Room: Columbus A

**\*\*NOTE: HOTEL AND ROOM ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE - CHECK YOUR FINAL PROGRAM AT THE CONFERENCE.**

We'll see you in Chicago!

**Seventh Annual State Politics Conference at the University of Texas a Big Success: Hook 'em Horns!**

The 2007 State Politics and Policy Conference was held on February 23-24 at the Thompson Conference Center at the University of Texas at Austin. The Conference was sponsored by the Department of Government and the Public Policy Institute at UT-Austin and State Politics and Policy Quarterly.

The Conference was organized around 15 panels, covering a wide range of issues on state politics and policy. Sixty-six papers were presented by over a hundred authors representing sixty-seven different universities. The event was also covered by local television news station "News 8 Austin." Please visit the SPPC 2007 Website for a complete listing of panels and to download any of the conference papers:  
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/polisci/statepol/conferences/2007/2007main.htm>

In addition to promoting the scholarly study of state politics and policy, the 2007 conference allowed participants to experience Austin, TX. The conference hotel was located on South Congress Street, which was within walking distance of many unique attractions in a city with the unofficial motto "Keep Austin Weird." The participants were able to experience genuine Texas BBQ at Stubbs, and many visited the LBJ Presidential Library as well as some of Austin's famous Tex-Mex restaurants.

Many thanks to everyone who attended the meetings and to the UT graduate students and staff, especially Jill Strube, who assisted with the logistics and organization of the event.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the 2008 SPPC in Philadelphia!

Best regards,

Andy Karch and David Leal

**Eighth Annual State Politics Conference set for Temple University, May 30-31, 2008**

The Eight Annual Conference will be hosted by The Institute for Public Affairs and the Department of Political Science at Temple University, the State Politics section of APSA, and State Politics and Policy Quarterly. The conference will take place May 30th-31st, 2008 at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. The theme, "Elections and Representative Democracy in the States," reflects Temple's developing strengths in the study of elections, public opinion, legislative representation, and public policy, and is intended to invite participation by a broad range of scholars.

Proposals to present a paper at the conference must be received by January 15th, 2008. All proposals should be sent via e-mail to [ipa@temple.edu](mailto:ipa@temple.edu), and should include "SPP proposal" and the lead author's last name in the subject line. Full information on the submission of proposals is available in the [Call for Paper Proposals](#) posted online. More information about the conference itself is available on the [2008 Conference webpage](#).

The hosts for the 2008 conference are:

Michael Hagen (primary contact) ([michael.hagen@temple.edu](mailto:michael.hagen@temple.edu))

Joseph McLaughlin ([jmclau@temple.edu](mailto:jmclau@temple.edu))

Dana Barron ([dlbarron@temple.edu](mailto:dlbarron@temple.edu))

Please contact them if you have any questions.

### Call for Proposals to Host the 2009 Conference

The State Politics and Policy Section of the American Political Science Association announces a call for proposals to host the Ninth Annual Conference on State Politics and Policy. The section president, Melinda Gann Hall, has appointed a committee to solicit proposals for hosting future conferences and coordinate among those institutions wishing to host them. The committee consists of Tom Carsey, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill (chair), Caroline Tolbert, University of Iowa, and Christopher Mooney, University of Illinois at Springfield.

The annual conference is the flagship event of the State Politics and Policy Section. Each conference is co-sponsored by the section and State Politics and Policy Quarterly, but it is primarily sponsored by the hosting institution. Previous conferences have been hosted by:

- Texas A&M University (2001)
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (2002)
- University of Arizona (2003)
- Kent State University (2004)
- Michigan State University (2005)
- Texas Tech University (2006)
- University of Texas at Austin (2007)
- Temple University (2008)

### The Mission of the Annual Conference on State Politics and Policy

The Annual Conference on State Politics and Policy provides scholars interested in state politics - broadly defined - the opportunity to gather and share the latest research developments in the field. Its mission is to expand the breadth and depth of scholarly knowledge about politics, policy, and policymaking as these processes unfold at the state level.

The primary interests of many of the scholars who attend these conferences lie squarely within the traditional domain of the state politics field. However, many others focus more generally on political institutions (such as legislatures and political parties), political behavior (such as voting and public opinion), specific policy areas (such as education or health care), or broader questions of policymaking and representation and use the states as an attractive research venue. Given the goal of expanding knowledge and defining the field broadly, the annual conferences strive to cast a wide net regarding the types of scholars that are invited to attend.

Previous conferences have taken a variety of forms in trying to meet these goals. In

addition to the traditional conference format of paper presentations and panels, past conferences have featured a range of innovations, including graduate student poster sessions, being held in conjunction with a parallel conference (e.g., on term limits), presentations and speeches by state elected officials, and so forth. Those proposing to host the 2009 conference may want to look at the Web sites of these earlier conferences or contact the previous hosts for more information. All of this information is available at: <http://www.fsu.edu/~statepol/conferences/conferences.htm>

Past Conferences on State Politics and Policy have been presented by the host university with budgets of usually around \$20,000-30,000. This includes a \$200-300 per paper stipend and certain conference meals that were provided by past hosts to conference attendees. The host of the 2009 conference does not necessarily need to follow these traditions, but the proposal should make clear what (if any) services the host intends to provide for conference attendees.

#### Proposal Requirements

Proposals for hosting the Ninth Annual Conference on State Politics and Policy should consist of a 2-4 page document that includes the following information:

Proposed theme of the conference (if any)

Proposed budget for the conference

Availability of resources and facilities for hosting the conference

Proposed organization for the conference

Proposed dates of the conference

Complete contact information for those person(s) submitting the proposal  
Proposals should be submitted to the selection committee chair, Tom Carsey at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. **All proposals should be submitted by November 1st, 2007**, to guarantee full consideration. The committee hopes to make a decision early in 2008.

The committee STRONGLY prefers electronic submissions. Electronic submissions may be made by sending an e-mail to Tom Carsey at: [carsey@unc.edu](mailto:carsey@unc.edu) and including the proposal as an attached file (.pdf, Word, or WordPerfect format). Non-electronic submissions should be sent to:

Tom Carsey  
Dept. of Political Science  
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

#### **State Politics and Policy Quarterly**

“As the “Gang of Three” SPPQ editors (Lowery, Weber, Winters), we write to update you on our and some of the Section’s activities.

First of all, you should have received, in the last couple of weeks, the most recent issue of SPPQ, volume 7, issue 2 (summer 2007). Issue 3 of volume 7, with articles by Damon Cann; J. Scott Granberg-Rademacker; Carl Klarner; Robert Lowry; Byron D’Andra and Marvin Overby; and Gerald Wright, is at the printer and will be arriving soon. Chris Mooney is wrapping up his direct responsibilities for SPPQ with issue 4 of volume 7. The “Gang” will be responsible beginning with volume 8, issue 1.

Second, our section meeting, always held in conjunction with the

APSA meetings, will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 30. A reception will follow at 7, which will honor Virginia Gray, our Career Achievement Award winner this year. Another award-winner will be recognized at the section meeting and she is our own section president, Melinda Gann Hall. She is the recipient of the SPPQ Award for the Best Paper on State Politics presented at a conference in 2006 for her paper, "Mobilizing Voters in State Supreme Court Elections: Competition and Other Contextual Forces as Democratic Incentives." As the SPPQ Award Committee chair, Michael Martinez of the University of Florida, put it: "Hall's analysis of ballot roll-off in 478 state supreme court elections between 1980 and 1994 in thirty-five states shows that political, institutional, and contextual influences that shape voter turnout and roll-off in elections for legislators also shape roll-off in state supreme court elections, independent of the effects of the type of judicial election. By extending the analysis of ballot roll-off to judicial elections, Hall challenges critics who have questioned voters' capacity or interest in selecting judges in their states." Please join us at the section meeting and at the reception to honor Virginia and congratulate Melinda.

Third, we write to remind you that the 2007 SPPQ Best Paper Award Committee would very much like your nominations of "best papers presented during the present year." We are now midway through the annual academic calendar with the Southern, New England, Western, and Midwestern meetings behind us, along with the outstanding Austin-UTexas State Politics and Policy conference. There should be plenty of papers that have attracted your attention. If so, please email any of the SPPQ Best Paper Award Committee members: Ben Highton (chair), Barbara Norrander, or Ron Hedlund or any of the SPPQ editors with your nominations at: [bhighton@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bhighton@ucdavis.edu), or [r.hedlund@neu.edu](mailto:r.hedlund@neu.edu), or [norrande@u.arizona.edu](mailto:norrande@u.arizona.edu)."

And, of course, we are always interesting in your own "best papers", so please consider submitting them to State Politics and Policy Quarterly at [sppq@dartmouth.edu](mailto:sppq@dartmouth.edu).

Finally, we write to inform you about a forthcoming special issue of State Politics and Policy Quarterly on "Religion and Politics in the American States.

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

The Impact of Religion on Politics and Policy in the American States

Guest Editors:

Paul A. Djupe, Denison University and Laura R. Olson, Clemson University

In a forthcoming volume in 2008-2009, the State Politics and Policy Quarterly will publish a special issue dedicated to exploring the impact of religion on American state politics and public policy. The journal invites manuscripts from a wide range of theoretical and methodological perspectives whose authors take advantage of the American states as a research setting.

Manuscripts should illuminate the nature of religious influence on politics and policy, for which a comparative, multi-state design is



particularly appropriate and powerful, while maintaining an emphasis on political outcomes. Political outcomes might include the appearance and fate of ballot measures, executive proposals, legislative behavior and statutory actions, dimensions of interest group activity, party and candidate behavior, electoral outcomes, public opinion, citizen participation in the policy process, and public policy implementation and effectiveness.

**The deadline for paper submissions is September 15, 2008.** All manuscripts received by this deadline will be reviewed. All submissions will undergo our double-blind, peer-reviewed process, and will also benefit from the regular editorial reviews by editors, David Lowery, Ronald Weber, and Richard Winters. Manuscripts should be a maximum of 35 pages long (inclusive), double spaced, and otherwise in accord with the general submission guidelines of SPPQ (available on the journal's website: <http://cspl.uis.edu/InstituteForLegislativeStudies/SPPQ/InstructionsContributors.htm>).

We encourage authors to consider draft paper presentations and/or organizing panels at the 2008 Conference on State Politics and Policy to be held at Temple University, May 30-31, 2008; the Midwest meeting, April 3-6, 2008; and the APSA meeting, August 28-31, 2008.

Questions and submissions should be directed to Paul Djupe ([djupe@denison.edu](mailto:djupe@denison.edu)), Laura Olson ([laurao@clemsun.edu](mailto:laurao@clemsun.edu)), or Richard Winters ([sppq@dartmouth.edu](mailto:sppq@dartmouth.edu)).



*Contact Us*