

# STATE POLITICS AND POLICY

## *Spring/Summer 2009 Newsletter*

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### **From the Section President**

The end of classes and the beginning of summer is a time for renewal, and one can think about the section in that respect as well. You will find information on a wide range of section matters below, but let me highlight a few here. First, remember that the search is underway for a new editor of State Politics and Policy Quarterly.

Next, as we look forward to the annual business meeting at APSA, there is information below on nominations for "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy" and "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy written by a graduate student," presented at the 2008 APSA Annual Meeting. We will also have elections for new officers, so please think of nominating someone for these positions. Plan on attending the business meeting and the reception to follow. Though APSA has not yet announced the schedule, it is likely that the time will again be on Thursday evening.

We have continued the tradition of having a strong spring conference, thanks to conference organizers Tom Carsey (UNC), Virginia Gray (UNC) and Kerry Haynie (Duke). See the below for a recap of the meeting at UNC and Duke and for more information about future SPP conferences.

Finally, I was recently contacted with a question about data availability. If anyone knows whether it is possible to determine a respondent's state legislative district based on zip code, please contact me at [niemi@rochester.edu](mailto:niemi@rochester.edu). Thanks very much.

Dick Niemi

## 2009 State Politics and Policy Conference Recap

On behalf of Virginia Gray, Kerry Haynie, and myself, we would like to thank everyone who participated in the Ninth Annual State Politics and Policy Conference held on May 22-23 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The conference was a tremendous success. More than 100 faculty and graduate students from across the country participated in two full days of scholarly events. More than 50 papers and posters were presented. The quality of the work was outstanding, the discussant comments were superb, and the overall event was wonderful. Several attendees told us that this conference was much better than the large conferences like APSA or the Midwest, and we agree.

The SPP conference always provides a great audience for papers and a wonderful chance to really interact with scholars doing similar work to your own. Of course we all know that State Politics Folks are also the nicest folks in Political Science as well! A special congratulations goes to James Rydberg of the University of Iowa for winning the first ever Best Graduate Student Poster Award for his poster. Thanks to Dick Winters and the other poster discussants for selecting the winner and for providing great feedback to the poster presenters.

The conference website is located at:

[http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political\\_science/state\\_politics/conferences/2009/2009main.htm](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political_science/state_politics/conferences/2009/2009main.htm)

It contains a link to the conference program which includes links to most of the papers that were presented.

The 2009 Conference was sponsored by the Political Science Departments at the University of North Carolina and Duke University, along with the State Politics and Policy Section of APSA and *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*. We are particularly grateful to the two Departments, as well as the Dean of Arts and Sciences at UNC and the Provost at Duke for their financial support of this event. Finally, we also need to thank our excellent army of UNC graduate students who helped out before and during the conference. More than a dozen students did something for us, and it would not have been possible without them.

We had a great time hosting the event, and we hope all who came had a good time. We look forward to seeing everyone next year at the University of Illinois at Springfield!

Best,

Tom Carsey  
[carsey@unc.edu](mailto:carsey@unc.edu)

## 2010 State Politics and Policy Conference: Call for Papers from Program Chair Chris Mooney

*Where else better to celebrate the 10th anniversary of State Politics and Policy Quarterly and the Annual State Politics and Policy Conferences than Springfield, IL? Join us June 3-5, 2010, at the University of Illinois at Springfield for the 10th annual SPPC.*

In addition to the usual stellar panels of academic papers on state politics and policy, we will have special panels and speakers on the conference's theme, "Political Scientists Meet Political Practitioners in the States—'How Can We Help You?'" Planned special events will include:

### *Opening Reception and Roundtable of Former Governors:*

- Topic—"How Can Political Scientists Contribute to Politics and Government?"
- Panelists (others TBA): Governor **Madeleine Kunin**, D-VT, 1985-91 and Governor **James Edgar**, R-IL, 1990-98
- Location: Old State Capitol, Hall of Representatives
- Date: Thursday, June 3, 2010; 7:00 pm

### *Banquet:*

- Topic—"What Makes a Good Governor"
- Speaker: **Alan Ehrenhalt**, editor, *Governing* magazine
- Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum plaza
- Date: Friday, June 4, 2010; 7:00 pm

### *Thematic Panel:*

- Topic—"How Can Political Scientists Contribute to Politics and Government? Four Views from Statehouse Reporters"

- Panelists:
- **David Yepsen**, director, Paul Simon Institute of Public Policy, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and former statehouse reporter and columnist for the *Des Moines Register*
- **Peggy Boyer-Long**, former editor, *Illinois Issues* magazine
- **Mike Lawrence**, former director, Paul Simon Institute of Public Policy, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and press secretary to Governor James Edgar
- **Charlie Wheeler**, director, Public Affairs Reporting Program, UIS
- Location: UIS
- Date: Friday, June 4, 2010; TBA

Make sure to arrive on Thursday, June 3, to attend the opening reception and practitioner panel at the Old State Capitol (site of Abraham Lincoln's "House Divided" speech and Barack Obama's 2007 official campaign announcement). On Friday, June 4, we will have a special dinner and keynote speech at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (did I mention that Springfield was Abraham Lincoln's hometown?). Mark your calendars! See [www.sppc2010.org](http://www.sppc2010.org) for more information.

**2009 State Politics and Policy at APSA**

*The State Politics and Policy Section is sponsoring and co-sponsoring 15 panels at APSA this year. These panels are as follows:*

Thursday

- Parties and Party Control in U.S. State Legislatures (8:00 am)
- Judicial Politics in the States (10:15 am)
- Electoral Reform, Voting Technology and Equal Access (10:15 am)
- Policy Responsiveness in the States (10:15 am)
- Comparative State Reactions to LGBT Rights Claims (2:00 pm)
- Key Concepts in State Politics and Policy Research (4:15 pm)

Friday

- Race, Ethnicity, and Representation in the States (8:00 am)
- Rethinking State Policy Diffusion (2:00 pm)
- Gubernatorial Politics (4:15 pm)

Saturday

- Party Organizations in the States (8:00 am)
- Connecticut's New Public Financing System: A First Look (2:00 pm)
- Federal Mandates in the States: Implementation and Resistance (4:15 pm)

Sunday

- Politics and Punishment in the States (8:00 am)
- Social Welfare Policy in the States (10:15 am)

Also, please plan on attending the section business meeting and reception to follow. APSA has not yet announced the time for this meeting, but most likely it will be on Thursday.

At the meeting, we will be electing section officers. Robert Hogan, Louisiana State University (chair); Cynthia Bowling, Auburn University; and Marjorie Sarbaugh-Thompson, Wayne State University are serving as the nominating committee. If you have suggestions for whom to select, please send nominations to Robert Hogan at: [rhogan1@lsu.edu](mailto:rhogan1@lsu.edu).

The winners of our paper prizes will be announced at the section meeting as well, so this will serve as the final call for nominations for these awards. Send nominations for "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy" and "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy written by a graduate student," presented at the 2008 APSA Annual Meeting to Susan Webb Yackee at [syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu).

## Search for State Politics and Policy Quarterly Editor

The president of the State Politics and Policy section of the American Political Science Association, Richard Niemi, announces the formation of a search committee to solicit proposals for a new editor or editorial team for *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*. A highly qualified person or team of persons is sought for a four-year term beginning in 2010 to edit SPPQ issues 12:1-15:4 (Spring 2012 to Winter 2015). Nominations as well as proposals are encouraged.

### Information for Prospective Editors:

The new editor will have complete editorial responsibility for SPPQ, within the journal's established guidelines. He or she can expect to review 75-100 manuscripts per year, publishing 16-20 articles (including those in The Practical Research section of SPPQ). *Soliciting and developing promising manuscripts are among the editor's most important responsibilities.*

The editor's home institution is expected to provide, at minimum:

- Course release time for the editor (preferably, the editor would teach no more than 1-1);
- a 12-month graduate assistant; and
- minimal postage and stationery supplies.

The precise timing of the takeover of editorial duties and other business arrangements are subject to negotiation, but the tentative date for the new editor to begin receiving new manuscripts is June 1, 2010.

Members of the search committee include: Christopher Z. Mooney, Chair ([cmoon1@uis.edu](mailto:cmoon1@uis.edu)); Virginia Gray; Kerry Haynie; Jan Leighley; Richard Niemi; Ronald Weber; and Richard Winters.

To apply, candidates should email (as PDF attachments) the following to the chair of the search committee ([cmoon1@uis.edu](mailto:cmoon1@uis.edu)) by **November 15, 2009**:

- A letter of interest explaining the candidate's relevant experience, goals for the journal, ideas for innovations or changes (if any), and a discussion of the resource support to be provided by his or her home institution, and
- A current curriculum vita.

If you wish to nominate a person to serve as editor or if you have questions about the journal or the position of editor, please contact the chair of the search committee. See:

[http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political\\_science/state\\_politics/](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/political_science/state_politics/)

for more information about the search.

**Book Review of *State and Local Politics: Institutions and Reform***

*State and Local Politics: Institutions and Reform* by Todd Donovan, Chris Mooney, and Daniel Smith, is a worthy competitor in a crowded field. As the title implies, it is a text raising important issues about reform in state and local government. The text's unassuming cover belies well-designed content appropriate for introductory courses and useful for more advanced researchers. The text contains a wealth of statistical information presented attractively in a series of maps and tables

The authors have done a remarkable job analyzing state and local politics within the rather restrictive format of a textbook. The book is comprised of fifteen chapters, arranged topically. Perhaps the most interesting of these is the chapter on state legislatures. While most texts cover this material, Donovan et al include discussions about how electoral considerations influence leadership decisions relating to agenda items, party resources, and personal time commitments. The depth of coverage in each chapter is somewhat greater than one finds in most introductory texts. Each chapter concludes with a summary, list of key terms, and suggested readings for further research. These suggested readings are varied and quite interesting.

The text offers students three vignettes to spur critical thinking: "Institutions Matter," explaining how institutions affect policy, "Reform Can Happen," emphasizing grassroots efforts to change government, and "Comparisons Help Us Understand," allowing students to compare policy action across different states. Not all of these appear in every chapter, but when they do, they function as stimuli for class discussion, short assignments,

or quick research projects, depending on how one organizes one's course.

The text is well-organized, with a strong introductory essay outlining the chapter's contents. Students respond well to the text, claiming it is useful, easy to read, and very interesting. Its primary weaknesses are that it does not contain a list of illustrations and maps, which would make finding specific maps easier, and it does not organize the chapters themselves into larger theoretical topics. Not organizing them theoretically allows a professor to mix and match chapters, but it also leaves students with fewer visual cues around which to organize their thinking about state and local politics. Like all general texts, this one does a disservice to rural communities, but it compensates by its very strong focus on theories of state and local government. This theoretical focus permits students interested in rural government to pursue interesting research examining the differences in urban and rural governance.

*State and Local Politics* is a welcome and useful addition to the field of state and local government. It is not only a useful text for introductory courses, but is a welcome addition to anyone's research and reference shelf. It should become a standard text in the field.

Michael P. Bobic  
West Virginia Wesleyan College

## Call for Papers: Southern Political Science Association

The 2010 Southern Political Science Association's 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting will be held in Atlanta, Georgia from January 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. In addition to individual paper submissions, State Politics section coordinator Tom Carsey also

welcomes proposals for entire panels and volunteers to serve as discussants. Proposals may be submitted at the website and are due August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Information about the conference is available at <http://www.spsa.net/>.

## Reminders and Important Dates

August 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2009	Submission Deadline for 2010 SPSA Meeting
September 3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> , 2009	APSA Annual Meeting in Toronto
December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2009	Submission Deadline for SPP Conference
January 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup>	SPSA Annual Meeting in Atlanta
June 3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	10 <sup>th</sup> Annual State Politics and Policy Conference at the University of Illinois at Springfield.
May/June 2001	11 <sup>th</sup> Annual State Politics and Policy Conference at Dartmouth College.

Send nominations/applications for:

- Section officers to Robert Hogan at [rhogan1@lsu.edu](mailto:rhogan1@lsu.edu)
- 2008 APSA "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy" and "Best Paper on State Politics and Policy written by a graduate student" to Susan Webb Yackee at [syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu](mailto:syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu)
- *State Politics and Policy* editor to Chris Mooney at [cmoon1@uis.edu](mailto:cmoon1@uis.edu)

Any announcements or information for future newsletters should be sent to Shannon Jenkins at [sjenkins@umassd.edu](mailto:sjenkins@umassd.edu).

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All address corrections should be sent directly to APSA.

Shannon Jenkins, Newsletter Editor.