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Editors’ Preview

In 2019, the public demand for research on executive politics is not likely to decrease. However, the questions are likely to shift and revisit studies of divided government, as well as relationships between state leaders and the president. This edition of the PEP Report offers two collection of essays with these points in mind. The first set of articles discuss how promoting undergraduate research can benefit research on executive politics. Then we hear from scholars in states that elected new governors and the opportunity for us to learn more about executives in states.

In the first essay, Lauren Bell discusses how student participation in conducting original research enhances student learning. She reflects on experiences working with multiple students to emphasize ways to mentor students and collaborate with them to foster an interest in scholarship. Additionally, Joel Sievert helps to identify numerous resources that are available to help faculty members create these meaningful opportunities for students.

The second collection of essays reflect on a few of the 36 gubernatorial elections from 2018. In each of the four essays, scholars reflect on one of the 19 new governors that will start their new position in January 2019. Essays by Nathaniel Birkhead and Gabriel Sanchez consider what is likely to change in Kansas and New Mexico, where female Democratic Governors won states previously controlled by Republicans. We also learn from Susan MacManus and Ryan Williamson about how competitive elections in Florida and Georgia may impact how powerful the new governors in the two states can be.

The Report also continues to share the benefits about conducting archival research at the most recent presidential libraries. Here the focus is on the balancing the digital and paper collections of the William J. Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, AR.

**Nicholas Howard, Mark Owens, Joel Sievert, and Alissandra Stoyan**

**Leaders of the APSA PEP Section**

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The Value and Lessons of Undergraduate Research

By Lauren C. Bell, Randolph-Macon College

When I joined the Randolph-Macon College (R-MC) faculty in Fall 1999, the institution had only recently begun an undergraduate research program. Funded primarily through grants and private donations, the four-year old Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF) program provided housing and a stipend to selected students to engage in ten weeks of summer research under the mentorship of a faculty member.¹ Consistent with research that shows that undergraduate research in the social sciences lags far behind the natural and physical sciences (see, for example, Parker 2010, Kuh 2008, and Russell et al. 2007), virtually all proposals received in the first few years of the R-MC program came from science students whose projects dovetailed with a sponsoring faculty member’s work.

Not long after my arrival at R-MC, I was approached by a student who was interested in studying whether divided government affects presidents’ abilities to select their preferred Supreme Court justices or to form policy legacies by strategically nominating justices to the Court. The student began by identifying and coding presidential ADA scores, median senator ADA scores, and judicial nominee ideology scores. When she discovered that presidents were no less successful at appointing ideologically-compatible Supreme Court nominees during divided government, she then created what she called the Presidential Priorities Index (PPI) to consider whether the specific priorities that presidents hoped to achieve through their Supreme Court appointments might better explain patterns of behavior in the nomination and confirmation processes. She compiled the PPI by coding State of the Union Addresses, Inaugural Addresses, and Presidents’ biographies for the mention of specific issues and for the position the President took on each one. Using these data, she created a list of five top priorities for each president in her study (Nixon, Ford, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton) and then coded newspaper editorials in order to identify the individual nominee’s position on the five president-specific priorities as indicated in the PPI. Finally, she identified the Senate’s aggregate position on the five president-specific priorities by using Congressional Quarterly’s Congressional Roll Call statistics for each year in which a nomination took place. After analyzing the results, she concluded that “presidents value their own political policy positions over the ideological positioning of the Court’s median … when selecting a Supreme Court justice” (Adolf 2000). This simple conclusion was the result of weeks of work to read and understand sophisticated political science scholarship across several subfields and to use multiple methods of analysis including content analysis and basic game theory.

My role in supervising this project consisted primarily of suggesting appropriate readings, answering coding questions, and spending a few hours each week discussing her progress and strategizing about fruitful next steps. Toward the end of the summer, my role

¹The SURF program still exists at R-MC; it is now the Schapiro Undergraduate Research Fellowships program. Student and faculty stipends have been increased over time, and the program now also guarantees students $500 in travel funding to present their research at a discipline-appropriate conference.
shifted to reading and commenting on drafts of her paper and helping her to format her work in discipline-appropriate ways. In fairness, this was an extraordinary student, which mitigated the extent of the work required on my part. A few months after the SURF program concluded, she and I presented a revised version of this research at the Southern Political Science Association’s 2000 Annual Meeting, where it received a nomination for Best Paper presented in the Law and Courts Section at that meeting.

I have mentored several additional undergraduate research projects for students over the years, both under the auspices of the SURF program and upon the request of a student as part of a semester- or summer-long independent study project. I have found that the presidency is a particularly fruitful area of research for undergraduate students; the President’s visibility contributes to their idea generation process, and the extensive trove of documentary and other evidence available allows for a range of methodological approaches, many of which are quite suitable for undergraduate students to attempt.

Lessons for Mentoring Students

Working with undergraduates in the research process requires thoughtful consideration of how to balance our own needs as scholars with our roles as teachers and mentors. Mentoring undergraduate research is an inherently inefficient process. A biologist colleague of mine once pointed out that if he were simply looking to increase his own research productivity he would not include undergraduates because he is far faster at doing the necessary work than they are. Evans (2010) sums this up succinctly: “Excellent mentorship of undergraduate research is immensely time-consuming. Undergraduates are by definition not disciplinary experts, and their laboratory, library, fieldwork, or studio techniques are rarely mature. Developing those skills is part of the point, of course, but doing so requires a serious commitment of faculty time and energy.” Thus, faculty members agreeing to supervise student research must be aware of the time commitment and should think critically about the extent to which they are able to incorporate undergraduates into their own research without creating delays for themselves. As Greif and Mills (2010) admonish: “Remember that your relationship with R[esearch]A[ssistant]s should be mutually beneficial: You should make progress on your research, and your students should develop as scholars and critical thinkers.”

Some faculty incorporate students into their own research because they believe in the value of undergraduate research but do not feel comfortable supervising projects outside their expertise. For my part, I have not used undergraduates as research assistants for my own work in at least a decade. I found that I was spending as much or more time explaining and monitoring what I asked of the student assistants in that setting as I do when I mentor projects that they devise for themselves. Instead, I encourage any student with an interest in research to engage in his or her own project under my supervision, rather than adding them to my own projects. And in my experience, faculty members’ training in research, generally, is sufficient to support virtually all projects that an undergraduate would conceive within the general field of study. Still, when the student’s project is outside the mentor’s own research area, that precludes application to the mentor’s own research and adds to the inefficiency associated with mentoring student research.
Regardless of what approach a faculty mentor takes, **good undergraduate research mentorship requires fostering a significant student investment.** As I noted above, I increasingly encourage students to choose their own research topics, although within certain limits. Doing so fosters their interest and engagement. If this is not possible—for example when institutional, departmental, or personal exigencies promote a research assistantship model—then it is essential to find ways that these students can contribute that will keep their attention. In some scenarios, such as when a faculty member’s research is grant funded, compensation may be available for the student researchers. Other methods to foster engagement include giving them ownership of a specific part of the research and making clear that they will be acknowledged in whatever published work results. Relatedly, **setting expectations before the work begins is essential.** The most successful projects lay out a timeline for the period of research that includes milestones that must be met along the way. Of course, these will change as the research proceeds, although student researchers do not always know this. But establishing clear time frames and expectations and consistently assessing these throughout the duration of the process reduces frustration on the part of both the student and faculty mentor. Many faculty I know at my own and other institutions have formal contracts with the students whose research they are supervising that outline both parties’ responsibilities in the research process.

Finally, **undergraduate research pays dividends to students, faculty, and the profession.** For students, as Lopatto (2010) notes: “There is one more benefit of a good research experience that may be simply stated: a research experience helps one to be a better student.” Undergraduate research can spark a passion for the discipline and help students, particularly first-generation college students, to overcome the imposter syndrome and be confident enough to pursue advanced study. Indeed, among the 16 students I have mentored in these experiences, nine have gone on to earn JD or PhD degrees. Two others are currently enrolled in PhD programs, and two others earned or will earn MPP degrees. All but two presented their research at professional meetings in political science in the year following the completion of their projects. One of the first-generation students I mentored early in my career had his work published in the *Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics* (Barlow 2005).

For faculty, there are opportunities to build relationships with students and ultimately to identify fruitful avenues of research, including opportunities for publication, that we might not have pursued were it not for our students. One of my former SURF students is coauthor with me and one of my own research mentors of *Slingshot: The Defeat of Eric Cantor* (Bell, Gaddie, and Meyer 2015), a publication that would not have happened were it not for the work he did as a participant observer in spring 2014. And as Weldon and Reyna (2015) note: “Graduate students and faculty members who mentor undergrads on research projects report greater quality of work and life.”

Eliot Meyer, SURF Student at RMC
Finally, undergraduate research may spark a life-long passion for research and lead participants to replicate their own experiences. Another former SURF student won a national award from the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences in 2004 for his project on the impact of consumer confidence on public evaluations of the two major political parties. He went on to earn a PhD in political science and currently serves as the political science department chair for a master’s degree-granting institution, where he is in the process of trying to start his own undergraduate research program.

Conclusion

Whether it involves research on the presidency or on another topic, undergraduate research has the ability to be transformative for students. Chickering and Gamson (1987) list student-faculty interaction, such as that which results from mentored undergraduate research, among their principles of good practice in undergraduate education. And Lopatto (2010) notes: “Undergraduate researchers learn tolerance for obstacles faced in the research process, how knowledge is constructed, independence, increased self-confidence, and a readiness for more demanding research. These benefits are an advantage in any career path.” Despite the clear benefits, however, undergraduate research within the social sciences remains the exception and not the rule for most undergraduate students. This is unfortunate, since undergraduate research also has the potential to benefit the faculty research mentors who assist students through the research process, and to encourage the next generation of scholars into the discipline.

About the Author

Lauren C. Bell is Professor of Political Science and Dean of Academic Affairs at Randolph-Macon College. She has authored 5 books including Filibustering in the U.S. Senate, Warring Factions: Interest Groups, Money, and the New Politics of Senate Confirmation and Slingshot: The Defeat of Eric Cantor. She is also a former American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow (1997-98) and a former United States Supreme Court fellow (2006-07).

References


Resources for Undergraduate Research

By Joel Sievert, Texas Tech University

As part of a larger focus on experiential learning, many colleges and universities now place a greater emphasis on undergraduate research. While the exact format varies from university-to-university, faculty across a wide range of disciplines are being encouraged to incorporate undergraduates into the research process as either research assistants or, in some cases, even as coauthors. Many academic conferences also provide opportunities for undergraduate studies to present original research. Outside of the research experience itself, universities and academic organizations seek to provide mentorship opportunities for undergraduates who are interested in academic research. The objective of this essay is to outline various resources that are available to both undergraduates who are interested in research as well as the faculty members who wish to support undergraduate students in these efforts.

Conferences
There are an increasing number of opportunities for undergraduates to participate in academic conferences within the discipline. Some of the more well-known opportunities include the Pi Sigma Alpha national and southern conferences as well as the Midwest Political Science Association undergraduate poster session. In addition to national and regional organizations, many state political science associations also have panels dedicated specifically for undergraduate research.
In addition to opportunities for undergraduate students, there are also resources available to faculty who wish to learn more about undergraduate research. The Undergraduate Research and Training section of the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) conducts a yearly round table on the topic of undergraduate research. For the upcoming 2019 SPSA Annual Meeting, the roundtable—"Challenges and Opportunities for Mentoring Undergraduate Research"—will be held on Thursday January 17 from 12:30-1:50 pm. The American Political Science Association’s (APSA) annual Teaching and Learning Conference has a track on teaching research at the undergraduate level. In 2018, the panel topics at the APSA TLC included panels on designing a research methods curriculum and how to teach research methods.

**Mentorship**

There are a number of opportunities within APSA for undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing graduate training in political science. First, the APSA mentoring program offers undergraduates a chance to be mentored by faculty members outside of their home institution. The mentoring program, which is also available to graduate students and junior faculty, matches a mentee with a senior member in the discipline.

Second, APSA offers both fellowship and preparatory programs for undergraduate students from underrepresented groups who are interested in graduate education. APSA’s Minority Student Recruitment Program seeks to help graduate programs identify undergraduate students from underrepresented groups. Departments, advisors, or students themselves can submit their information to the MSRP database, which is then made available to participating graduate political science programs. APSA also supports the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI) Program, which is a five-week summer program intended to introduce students to doctoral studies. The program is open to current juniors and the application deadline for the 2019 RBSI Program is January 18, 2019. The APSA Minority Fellowship Program provides financial support for students from underrepresented groups who are set to begin PhD studies.

In addition to political science-specific mentorship and recruitment efforts, there are opportunities outside of political science organizations. For example, the University of California Riverside’s Mentoring Summer Research Internship Program (MSRIP), which is open to students interested in a number of research areas including the social science, offers an eight-week research program for undergraduate students with educationally and/or economically disadvantage backgrounds (https://graduate.ucr.edu/msrip.html). Students are matched with a faculty mentor and work on their mentor’s ongoing research project. In addition to research, students are also offered GRE courses and general assistance in preparing for the graduate application process.

**Links to Programs Described Above:**

Pi Sigma Alpha Conference - (https://www.pisigmaalpha.org/conference)
Pi Sigma Alpha Southern Conference - (https://www.pisigmaalpha.org/copy-of-conference)
APSA Mentoring - (https://www.apsanet.org/mentor)
APSA Minority Student Recruiting Program - (https://www.apsanet.org/msrp)
APSA Ralph Bunche Summer Institute Program - (https://www.apsanet.org/rbsi)
Florida, The Recount State, Narrowly Elects Ron DeSantis as Governor: 

Big Challenges Ahead

By Susan A. MacManus, University of South Florida

Florida has a history of having very close, competitive elections, and 2018 was no different. Florida’s gubernatorial race, along with its U.S. Senate and Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services (a statewide Cabinet post) contests each required a statewide recount to certify the winner. Republican Ron DeSantis’s margin-of-victory over Democrat Andrew Gillum was 0.4 percent (32,463 votes out of over 8.2 million cast)—the state’s closest gubernatorial election ever! Neither had run statewide races before—DeSantis being a three-term member of Congress, Gillum, the mayor of Tallahassee. Trump’s tweets and appearances in support of DeSantis were critical to his victory.

Big Challenges Facing Gov. DeSantis

DeSantis takes office with less in-depth knowledge of Florida specific issues, in an even more politically divided state, with a changing electorate that is electing more young, racial/ethnic, and female candidates to public office. Virtually all the process- and policy-oriented decisions facing newly-elected Gov. DeSantis will be made in this context.

Executive Branch Challenges

1. **Appointing new staff and agency heads.** A key question is whether DeSantis’ agency heads will be staunchly conservative partisans in the mold of Trump administration officials or include some moderate Republicans and a few Democrats. (He has already chosen one Democrat.) In other words, will the DeSantis full executive team be more like Trump’s or closer to a Jeb Bush or Charlie Crist team? And will his team include more executives with both private and public sector experience?

2. **Assigning responsibilities to the Lt. Governor.** Under the Florida Constitution, the primary responsibility of the Lt. Gov. is to succeed to the governorship should something prevent the current governor from serving. Beyond that, each governor has decided what responsibility(ies) to assign the Lt. Governor. DeSantis chose as his running mate Jeanette Núñez, a popular and well-respected longtime female legislator from Miami who had served as speaker pro tempore the previous two years. Undoubtedly, she will help him maneuver the Republican-controlled state legislature because he comes to office without strong legislative relationships. But will he also use her as an emissary to Florida’s growing Hispanic populations? To connect with female voters at a time when few GOP women hold high positions? (She will be Florida’s first Hispanic female Lt. Governor.)
3. **Interactions with the Cabinet.** Florida’s governor, together with the Cabinet (statewide elected Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services) or some of its members sit as the governing bodies of about a dozen boards, commissions, departments, and divisions. The dynamics of the Cabinet have changed considerably with the election of two new members—both female and friends from their law school days. One is a Democrat (Ag Commissioner), the other a Republican (AG). The new Ag Commissioner becomes Florida’s only statewide elected Democrat. At a minimum, Cabinet decisions are less likely to be as collegial as under the previously all Republican Cabinet. An interesting dynamic to watch is whether splits will occur along party or gender lines.

4. **Implementing campaign priorities.** In his victory speech, DeSantis talked about “keeping our economy growing, improving our water quality and environment, promoting public safety and expanding educational opportunities…[building] a Florida that is cleaner, safer, stronger.” DeSantis’ first budget is due to the Florida Legislature in early February. A big question is if, and to what extent, DeSantis will support a pure market approach or one offering economic incentives to attract businesses and investments, especially if the economy takes a downward turn. And, of course, how successful will he be at pushing his agenda through the Republican-controlled legislature under new leaders and with more Democratic members (House: 73R-47D; Senate: 23R-17D).

**Legislative Branch Challenges**

5. **Getting Governor’s Agenda Through the Legislature.** Early projections are for the governor and the Republican-controlled legislature to be on the same page regarding no new taxes, continued opposition to Medicaid expansion, litigation cost containment, regulatory relief and support for the expansion of school choice options. Less clear is whether he and the Lt. Gov. can effectively ease historical tensions between the two chambers. Although his chief-of-staff has close ties to both the Speaker and the Senate President, the two leaders have different priorities. Each has appointed strong members to their Appropriations committees—promising a real tug-of-war and difficulty in crafting a compromise. Interestingly, both leaders have also brought more females into top leadership and committee positions. The question is whether these women will truly have influence or just be there to shore up the GOP’s image as an inclusive party.

6. **Implementation of amendments passed by voters.** Florida voters approved 11 constitutional amendments ranging from automatic restoration of felons’ voting rights and voter control of gambling expansion to ending dog racing. The new governor will be expected to use his clout to push the legislature if it appears to be wavering on implementing these amendments, especially the one calling for restoration of felon voting rights. A big question is how hard the new governor will push for quick implementation of an amendment that potentially could add an estimated 1.4 million Floridians to the voter rolls which some project will lean heavily Democratic.
Judicial Branch Challenges

7. **Choosing 3 new Florida Supreme Court justices.** Three of the Court’s 7 members must retire on January 8, 2019 due to Florida’s mandatory retirement age requirement (70). These retirees are part of a 4-3 liberal majority; two are females, one of whom is an African American. Gov. DeSantis, himself a lawyer, has said he will appoint “solid constitutionalists” to end to “judicial activism” on the high court. The selection of three conservative justices could make challenges to legislative and gubernatorial policies and procedures a bit less likely to pass, especially on hot topics like school funding, school choice, and the wording of proposed amendments. (Battles between the liberal Court and the conservative legislative and executive branches have been commonplace.)

The lack of an African American on the list of 11 potential nominees initially submitted to the new governor has already stirred objections from the NAACP and other groups. They have put pressure on DeSantis to ask the Judicial Nominating Commission to send him a more racially-diverse list of names to choose from. If DeSantis refuses to ask for a new list, the question is whether there will be an organized move to change the current law allowing governors to appoint all 9 JNC members.

Intergovernmental Challenges: Federal and Local

8. **Relationships with President Trump, Florida’s U.S. Senate and congressional delegation.** DeSantis has stated he is counting on his relationship with President Trump to help secure federal funding to help reduce environmental problems like algae blooms and red tide, fully restore the Everglades, and address the growing opioid problem. There is some speculation that he will ask the president to award Florida a Medicaid block grant to help the working poor. But the reality is that the president cannot unilaterally take such actions. Appropriations are made by Congress. Following the 2018 election, the state now has 2 Republican U.S. Senators rather than a split delegation, and a nearly evenly-divided congressional delegation (14Rs, 13Ds). DeSantis will surely experience opposition from a Democratically-controlled U.S. House and pressure from Florida Democratic congressmembers to push for Medicaid expansion, an assault weapon ban, and criminal justice reform, among other progressive policies.

9. **Looking ahead: U.S. Census and redistricting.** It is never too soon for Florida’s congressmembers, state legislators, and the governor to be looking ahead to the 2020 Census and the 2022 redistricting that will follow. Controversies over whether a citizenship question should be included in the 2020 Census will undoubtedly be raised by Democrats and local officials across the state and by Democratic congressmembers from Florida. The governor will have to weigh in on this volatile issue that will affect state and local finances as well as the number of congressional seats Florida will have following the release of official Census population figures. Currently, it is estimated Florida will gain two seats.
10. **Continued organized efforts to protect local control.** The new governor faces continued opposition from local officials—county and city—and local businesses to state mandates, mostly unfunded. The irony for many Republicans is that the party has traditionally stood for decentralized approaches to governance and economic growth, but recent legislative sessions have seen an increase in state attempts at centralization, mostly driven by legislative leadership. This battle is not over and promises to be one Gov. DeSantis will be thrust into, especially if both the national and state economies worsen.

**The Best Job Ever**

DeSantis’ predecessors all agree that the best job in politics is being governor. Former Gov. Jeb Bush articulated why: “Governors have the power to reform, to innovate, to convene, to drive the conversation and to problem solve. They balance budgets, work across the aisle and are far more responsible for outcomes and accountable to their constituents than their federal counterparts are.”

Gov. DeSantis, it’s your turn now!

**About the Author**

**Dr. Susan A. MacManus** is a USF Distinguished University Professor Emerita in the Department of Government and International Affairs, School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies. For years, she directed the annual USF-Nielsen Sunshine State Survey—the state’s most extensive annual public policy survey of adult Floridians (sunshinestatesurvey.org). MacManus has authored or co-authored a number of publications on Florida politics, including *Florida’s Minority Trailblazers: The Men and Women Who Changed the Face of Florida Government*, *Politics in Florida*, 4th ed., *Young v. Old: Generational Combat in the 21st Century?*, and *Targeting Senior Voters*. MacManus and her mother, Elizabeth, are the authors of two local Florida history books published by the University of Tampa Press: *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Early Life in Lutz and Central Pasco County* and *Going, Going, Almost Gone: Lutz-Land O’ Lakes Pioneers Share Their Precious Memories*. She co-edits a series with Dr. David Colburn (University of Florida) on Florida Politics for the University Press of Florida. She serves on the UF Bob Graham Center For Public Service Council of Advisors and on the Board of Directors of the Florida TaxWatch Center for Florida Citizenship. MacManus chaired the Florida Elections Commission from 1999-2003.

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A Reflection on a new Governor in Kansas

By Nathaniel Birkhead, Kansas State University

The 2018 Kansas Gubernatorial race pitted Democratic candidate Laura Kelly against Republican Kris Kobach. Given that Donald Trump won Kansas by almost 20 points in 2016, many were surprised that the race was even close, yet Kelly prevailed over Kobach by 5 points, 48-43. The result was a repudiation of Kobach’s hard-right policies (he ran about 10-15 points behind other Republican candidates for statewide office), but also represented a shift away from the policies of former governor Sam Brownback. In what follows, I briefly outline three questions about Kelly’s win, focusing on how it influences partisan dynamics in the legislature, what sort of the legislative agenda she might put forward, and the possibility that her win reinforces the pipeline of Kansas women running for office.

Partisan Dynamics in the Legislature

The single biggest question going in to next year is how much cooperation Laura Kelly gets from the legislature. Given that the Republicans have a super majority in both chambers (85-40 in the House, 31-9 in the Senate) the answer may be “not much.” Nevertheless, Kansas has a history of moderate Republican legislators joining with Democrats - rather than their more conservative co-partisans - to push policy through. This was certainly the case under Republican Bill Graves (1995-2001), and true to a certain extent under Democrat Kathleen Sebelius (2003-2009) as well.

When Sam Brownback (2011-2018) was elected governor, the Kansas Republican Party shifted dramatically: many incumbent moderate Republicans lost in the primary to more conservative challengers. The emboldened conservative Republican majority helped pass Brownback’s “real, live experiment” of massive business and personal income tax cuts and enact a variety of conservative policies.

The experiment proved to be disastrous for the Kansas economy, and the moderate faction of the Republican Party re-established itself following the 2016 election. In the following session, the moderate Republicans resumed their partnership with the Democratic coalition, and together they reversed many of Brownback’s tax cuts, overriding his veto in the process. They also voted to expand Medicaid, but fell three votes short of overriding Brownback’s veto on that issue.

The Kansas Senate was not up for election this year, and thus its membership is almost entirely unchanged. Similarly, the party margin in the Kansas House will be the same, despite some turnover. As such, the 2019 Kansas Legislative session will offer the opportunity to determine how a shift in executive partisanship influences legislative coalitions (and thus policy outcomes), while holding nearly everything else constant. How will the moderate faction of the Republican Party respond? Will they resume their work with the Democrats to expand
Medicaid, or will they hew closer to the conservative wing of the party, and refuse to take up the measure?

**Kelly’s Legislative Agenda**

More broadly, there are questions about how ambitious Kelly’s legislative agenda will be. The Kansas state legislature is part-time, with shorter sessions and few staffers. As such, we should expect Kelly to be relatively successful in negotiating budgetary items (Kousser and Phillips 2012). By contrast, given the partisan opposition in the legislature, Kelly may be relatively modest in the ideological tenor of her policy proposals – perhaps Medicaid expansion will be the only liberal policy item she emphasizes. The comparison to Kathleen Sebelius may be instructive: facing similar partisan opposition in the legislature, she proposed a relatively modest agenda that primarily focused on budgetary items, and a limited number of non-controversial policies. As Kousser and Phillips (2012) point out, she was quite successful in this regard, though limited in her overall impact on the state. It will be interesting to see whether Kelly adopts a similar approach.

**The Emergence of Female Candidates**

Kelly’s political career also reinforces the work of Lawless and Fox (2010) who emphasize the importance of party recruiting efforts: Sebelius specifically encouraged Kelly to run for the state legislature in 2003 and 2005, and supported her candidacy for governor. More broadly, it is notable that this is Kansas’ third time electing a woman to its highest office (prior to Sebelius’ term, Joan Finney held office from 1991-1995), which also suggests that more women are likely to run for office in the future. Ladam, Harden, and Windett (2018) show that when women are elected to statewide office, they tend to serve as role models for other women, thus motivating them to run themselves. Consequently, Kelly’s victory may have the same effect for other women that Sebelius’ victory had for her.

**About the Author**

Nathaniel Birkhead is an associate professor of political science at Kansas State University. He is interested in the representative relationships between state governments and their citizens, and also how partisanship and ideology in shape legislative behavior. He is currently working on a book manuscript (with Jordan Ragusa) on when and why Congress repeals legislation.

**References**


Transition in Executive Leadership in New Mexico Will Yield Important Policy Shifts

By Gabriel R. Sanchez, New Mexico University

The policy consequences associated with the 2018 election may be most pronounced in the state of New Mexico. After eight years of Republican leadership at the executive level, Democrats reclaimed the governor’s office and significantly increased their advantages across other offices useful for policy implementation of the new administration’s agenda. In short, the “blue wave” of 2018 in New Mexico led to Democrats increasing their advantages in the state house and senate, across all state-wide offices, and even in the courts. This is important, as prior research has made clear that Governors are more effective in legislating when their party has control over the legislature (Bowling and Ferguson 2001), as will be the case in New Mexico when newly elected Democrat Michelle Lujan Grisham takes office in 2019.

The ability for executive elected leaders to enact their policy agenda is also dependent on the perception of their colleagues in the other branches of government that they have a mandate from voters to implement the promises they made to voters on the campaign trail (see Edwards, 1989). In this case, incoming Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham won by a robust 57.2% to 42.8% margin over the Republican Steve Pearce. The large margin of victory for Lujan-Grisham will provide the governor with a longer honeymoon period than usual in the state and more leverage to enact her policy agenda.

The new Governor will also benefit from a surplus in new money to utilize to implement her policy agenda. Driven by a rise in oil production in the Southeastern section of the state, New Mexico has 1.2 billion dollars of new revenue to invest (Boyd, 2018). After several years of a rough economic climate, the recent announcement that New Mexico has some of the most profitable oil and natural gas reserves in the world comes as Democrats increased their influence over how these funds should be invested. The positive budget situation will provide some wind behind the new Governor’s sails, however, the state is facing some tremendous challenges across several policy areas that will require policy reform to address.

In any analysis of New Mexico politics, it is critical that we explore the centrality of ethnicity, as the influence of the Hispanic community as voters and candidates in New Mexico politics is unparalleled elsewhere in the nation. For example, newly elected Latina Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham is taking over the executive office from fellow Latina Susana Martinez. The fact that New Mexico voters have elected two consecutive Latina governors is remarkable given that no other state has ever elected a Latina to their executive office and is reflective of the continued leadership New Mexico displays in descriptive representation. New Mexico also has the greatest percentage of Hispanic representation in their state legislature (Casellas, 2010), and following historic victories across congressional races in 2018, now has 100% representation in US house representation from Hispanic or Native American members of Congress!
I utilize a poll we conducted on behalf of KRQE-13 of 2018 voters in New Mexico along with campaign messaging from the new Governor and members of the legislature to help project policy outcomes that could shift with the transition in executive leadership in the state. In the survey we asked voters to identify the most important issue that the legislature and new Governor should prioritize, and ideal measure to communicate what the electorate would like to see the new administration prioritize as they begin the transition process. As reflected in the figure below, improving K-12 education was rated highly among both Hispanic and non-Hispanic New Mexican voters alike. Governor elect Lujan Grisham has been on record attributing her successful election victory to her campaign promises to overhaul the state’s education system. The sense of urgency to address education reform early in her first term is motivated by a recent landmark New Mexico court case which found that the state is violating the constitutional rights of at-risk students by failing to provide them with a sufficient education.

Given this context, there are many changes to the education system we should anticipate with the transition in executive leadership. Governor elect Lujan-Grisham has signaled that she will do away with the A-F grading system for schools and the teacher evaluation system, initiatives former Governor Martinez implemented. Lujan Grisham also campaigned on raising teacher salaries, a policy issue that Democrats in the legislature appear poised to push forward in the January legislative session. This should therefore be a relatively easy win for Lujan-Grisham.

The most important, yet potentially difficult to achieve, education reform is expansion of pre-K or early childhood programs to a much larger segment of New Mexico’s young children. There is clear consensus among researchers that there is a high rate of return associated with investing in pre-K programming. The new Governor will therefore not have to invest a lot of political capital to convince the legislature that this is good and important policy, but will likely need to work toward a consensus of how to pay for making pre-K education accessible to all who want it. The debate has centered on whether to use a small portion of the state’s massive permanent or “rainy day” fund to ramp up expansion quickly, or alternatively, to use the state’s operating budget to incrementally increase access. The incoming Governor has suggested a balanced approach that would draw roughly $57 million per year over a five year period from the

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Permanent fund to achieve universal pre-K access across the state. This will be in my view the most important policy debate in the new Governor’s first term.

Although projected to be a second-tier policy issue on the priority list of the newly elected Governor, legalizing recreational marijuana is sure to get some attention given the continued movement toward this approach across the country and perception that this could generate a much needed new revenue stream for the state. In the KRQE poll we asked voters directly if they would support a bill to legalize, tax, and regulate marijuana sales to adults who are 21 years of age or older if it were considered by the New Mexico state legislature? A robust 69% of New Mexicans who voted in the recent 2018 election would support such a bill, including 55% of Republicans. Governor elect Lujan Grisham has signaled that she would be open to a bill that took a comprehensive and sensical approach to this issue, and these polling numbers suggest that the public is ready to see this happen in New Mexico. If the new Governor is able to work with the senate, who are more conservative than the house and who have been a roadblock to this issue, New Mexico will join the growing list of states who legalize recreational marijuana.

The final policy area to discuss in this essay is immigration, arguably the most salient policy issue in the 2018 election. Given that New Mexico is a border state with the highest percentage of Latino population in the nation, it may be surprising to some that immigration was not as salient to New Mexico voters as it was nationally. When asked what the most important issue Congress and the President should address, 14% of New Mexican voters (17% of Whites) identified “border security to control immigration”, and another 5% (8% among Hispanics) “to protect immigrants rights”. However, when asked about policy priorities for the state government, immigration was not among the top issues for New Mexican voters (only 8% combined across all immigration issues). Immigration should not be a top priority for the new administration, but may see some action given Lujan-Grisham’s commitment to the issue.

Incoming Governor Lujan Grisham has been a vocal critic of the Trump administration’s immigration rhetoric and policy agenda in her role as a leading member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which suggests that she will push to implement more progressive immigration policy at the state level. This could include revisiting access to driver’s licenses for undocumented immigrants, an issue that occupied a lot of time during the Martinez administration, resulting in a two-tiered license system in New Mexico. Governor elect Lujan Grisham may also utilize her executive powers to more aggressively protect Dreamers and immigrant families from federal deportation policies, steps she suggested she would take during her campaign in 2018. With 15% of Hispanic 2018 voters in New Mexico (10% overall) indicating that a top priority for her administration should be stopping the Trump agenda, these efforts would provide representation to this important segment of the electorate.

As political scientists begin to analyze the ways in which policies at the state level will shift as a result of the 2018 election, New Mexico should be an interesting and important case study for those analyses. The state provides a unique perspective on the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation that can inform the wider study of executive politics.
Electoral Politics in Georgia: Their Impact on Future Gubernatorial Races

By Ryan Williamson, Auburn University

The 2018 gubernatorial election in Georgia garnered national attention as Republican candidate Brian Kemp faced off against Democratic candidate Stacey Abrams. Both came in to the race with name recognition and experience as Kemp served as the Secretary of State, having assumed the office in 2010, while Abrams served as the Minority Leader in the Georgia House of Representatives. She obtained this position in 2011 after being first elected to the chamber in 2007. Abrams sought to become the nation’s first African-American woman to be elected governor, while Kemp attempted to keep the governor’s mansion in his party’s hands. Georgia had not elected a Democrat as governor since Roy Barnes in 1998, but favorable partisan tides led many polls to conclude that the race was a statistical tie. Georgia law requires candidates to win with an outright majority, leaving the race unsettled after election night. However, Kemp ultimately prevailed with 50.2 percent of the vote compared to Abrams’ 48.8 percent.

Throughout the campaign, many questioned the legality of some of the actions taken by Kemp in his role as Secretary of State, which oversees all elections in the state including his own gubernatorial bid. Indeed, in her speech on November 17th, Abrams stated, “I know that eight years of systemic disenfranchisement, disinvestment and incompetence had its desired effect on
the electoral process in Georgia." In this essay, I will explore how the political science literature can speak to some of the debates arising from this election. Specifically, the effect of voter identification laws, maintenance of voter rolls, and the use of absentee ballots. I will then conclude with a brief discussion of what might be expected in future elections.

**Partisan Trends in Georgia**

Like much of the Deep South, Georgia is a state dominated by Republicans in recent decades. As previously mentioned, the state has not elected a Democratic governor since the turn of the century. Furthermore, it has not offered its Electoral College votes to a Democratic presidential candidate since Bill Clinton won the state by less than one percentage point in 1992. However, Georgia is home to Atlanta, one of the largest urban centers in the US, and also has one of the largest African American populations of any state. These changing demographics, coupled with other developments in the state, have led some to become more optimistic for Democratic candidates running statewide. As Figure 1 below shows, Democratic candidates have steadily increased their two-party votes shares in the state since 2000, with their strongest performances occurring in both 2016 and 2018.

![Figure 1. Democratic Two-Party Vote Share by Election](image)

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5 Data compiled from The American Presidency Project at https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/
Election Administration Effects on Vote Outcomes

Given the Democrats inability to break through despite improved performances statewide, Abrams and others now contend that they must reform how elections are conducted. Georgia has some of the strictest voter identification laws in the country. Voters are required to show acceptable identification before casting a ballot. If they are unable to produce this, they can cast a provisional ballot. However, the provisional ballot will only be counted if the voter returns with the proper documentation within three days. Democrats typically allege that this practice disenfranchises minority voters, but political science literature does not offer conclusive evidence in support of this claim. Hershey (2009), Mycoff et al. (2009), and Rocha and Matsubayashi (2014) all contend that there is little reason to believe that minorities are disproportionately impacted by the practice. However, Sobel and Smith (2009: 109) contend, “voter-ID laws are inherently suspect and unconstitutional.” Furthermore, Hicks et al. (2015: 29) conclude that strict voter ID laws are “an effort by the [Republican] party to maintain its extant coalition and bolster its electoral competitiveness.” Therefore, though it is possible a change to this law could have helped Abrams or will help future candidates, it is not a certainty.

Another contentious issue during this election was Georgia’s purging of voter rolls. Over 100,000 Georgians were removed from the state’s voter registration list after not voting since 2008. Kemp and other Republicans have argued that these purges are necessary in order to prevent voter fraud while detractors allege it is another voter suppression tactic. There is currently no empirical evidence to suggest that this would have changed the outcome. However, even if that were the case, this practice is unlikely to stop in the future give that, earlier this year, the Supreme Court upheld a similar purging policy in Ohio in Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute.

Finally, the state’s “exact match” policy and cuts in early voting have led to some suggesting these practices impacted the election outcome by depressing minority participation. Again, though entirely plausible, there is currently no empirical evidence to support this notion. Prior research suggests that early and absentee voting does not necessarily stimulate turnout. Instead, as Karp and Banducci (2001: 183) conclude, “persons who choose to vote early are already highly motivated to participate in the political process.” Furthermore, as Figure 2 demonstrates, African American males participate at noticeably lower levels that African American females or whites. As such, liberalizing voting laws may not produce a change in outcomes without concurrent mobilization efforts.
Future Gubernatorial Elections in Georgia

As Democrats continue to edge closer to winning the governor’s mansion, their success will require a strong candidate who can mobilize voters and capitalize on favorable partisan tides. However, future Democratic success could indeed hinge on election administration reforms. Abrams has filed a lawsuit against Georgia, and a successful outcome could result in placing the state’s voting systems under federal supervision—although there is no guarantee. Any reforms are unlikely to implemented at the state level as the newly-elected Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger emphasized strengthening voter identification and regularly updating voter rolls. It may therefore take several more electoral cycles before another Democratic candidate wins statewide.

Meanwhile, political scientists should continue to endeavor to provide definite answers to questions regarding the impact of voter identification laws, voter roll purges, and other relation issues in election administration. Doing so will not only provide the discipline with a better understanding of factors shaping state and federal elections, but will speak to ongoing policy debates as well.

About the Author

Ryan D. Williamson is an assistant professor of political science at Auburn University. He was also a APSA Congressional Fellow (2017-2018). His research has been published in Congress & the Presidency, the Journal of Politics, Research and Politics, Social Science Quarterly, and State Politics and Policy Quarterly.

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6 Data compiled from the Georgia Secretary of State’s Office at http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/Elections/voter_turn_out_by_demographics
References


User’s Guide to the Collections at The William J. Clinton Presidential Library

By Mark Owens, The University of Texas at Tyler

The library’s collection serves as a resource for individuals studying the presidency of President William J. Clinton. All documents in the collection reflect President Clinton’s time in the White House. All other records related to the administration of Governor Bill Clinton are available in Little Rock at the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies.

The scope of the library’s collection is immense. The collection includes approximately 78 million documents, 29 million emails, and 2 million media files. Six percent of the collection is open to the public and 1 percent has been digitized, available online. The digitized collections are organized by FOIA requests and each pdf represents a folder within the collection.

The Clinton Presidential Library serves as the twelfth presidential library administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. The Clinton papers provide the most recent access to batches of documents to study the policy advice staff give within the administration.
Accessing material in the collection:

The Clinton Presidential Library’s holdings are organized in two ways. Holdings which are identified with an “S” indicate the collection was systematically processed for documents related to specific staffers or offices. The second type of collections end with an “F” to note the collection is based on a request about a project or specific policy. The Guide to Holdings (Textual) identifies the scope of the documents that are available within related subject files.\(^7\)

Take time to review finding aids and collections of digitized documents. Also, contact an archivist before you book your trip to visit the reading room. An archivist will be able to identify the extent the subject files you are interested in are digitized. This will help you identify what documents require you to be present or request scans of the batches available on site. Gathering these details are important, because the holdings tied to Freedom of Information Act requests after 2013 are in most cases completely available as digitized files. Researchers will also find more than 198 declassified records available online, because all of the prior mandatory declassification review requests.

I learned this lesson by studying documents related to the line-item veto. The Line-Item Veto Findings Aid (2007-0634-F) was generated from a FOIA request at a time when most collections were processed in boxes and not digitized. However, there are digitized documents available online that are part of the collection. The documents available online as PDFs represent the documents previously restricted under the P2 or P4 classification that were digitized in batches between February and October of 2014. Therefore, to view the complete collection a researcher must view documents in the reading room and online at the Clinton Digital Library. Details of when the collection was processed are important to determining the breadth of research you can accomplish without taking a trip to Little Rock.

If you have the flexibility to work on a long-time table, submitting your own FOIA request that specifies dates, individuals, and identifiable actions (laws, orders) will return documents relevant to your research that have not been seen by other researchers. Archivists at the Library also suggested that researchers monitor the Letters of Notification to Release, managed by the National Archives and Records Administration, to view letters that indicate what FOIA requests have been approved and the timing of their release to be processed by the library. At the time of my visit the Clinton Foundation was working with the White House Counsel to address the scope of documents that could be released related to a FOIA request for documents related to Supreme Court nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh.

For additional guidance, consult tips written by David Ferriero in 2010 about digitizing the papers of Elena Kagan at the Clinton Library. A larger user guide with tips on where to stay and eat is available in the PEP’s document library on APSAConnect and markowens.org.

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\(^7\) See the Clinton Library’s general Research Guide.
Upcoming APSA Section Award Deadlines:

Please check details about awards for the PEP Section at http://www.apsanet.org/section9

On February 1, 2019:

On March 1, 2019:
1. Founders Best Graduate Student Paper Award honoring Stephen Wayne. This includes all papers presented at the 2017 APSA or regional meetings in 2017 or 2018.
2. Founders Best Paper Award honoring Lester Seligman. This is limited to papers presented at the 2018 APSA annual meeting.
3. Legacy Award for a book, essay, or article published at least 10 years prior to the award that has made a continuing contribution to the field of executive politics.