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David Trowbridge & Jennifer Woodward

To cite this article: David Trowbridge & Jennifer Woodward (2020): Pedagogy training among political scientists: Opportunities, interest, and obstacles, Journal of Political Science Education, DOI: [10.1080/15512169.2020.1795666](https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2020.1795666)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2020.1795666>



Published online: 28 Jul 2020.



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## Pedagogy training among political scientists: Opportunities, interest, and obstacles

David Trowbridge<sup>a</sup>  and Jennifer Woodward<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Middle Tennessee State University; <sup>b</sup>University at Albany SUNY

### ABSTRACT

Over the last two decades there have been periodic calls for improved teacher training and a growth in scholarship on teaching and learning. Yet, we know little about opportunities and participation in training programs. What kinds of training are political scientists collectively engaging in, especially for tenured and tenure track faculty? Are political science departments providing training programs for both faculty and graduate students? With the cooperation of the American Political Science Association, we included five questions about pedagogical training in a survey of Teaching and Learning Conference participants and in a survey of APSA members in 2018. We find that there is interest in different kinds of training experiences, but most of the training takes place outside the department. Within departments, there may be resource and culture-related obstacles to offerings and participation. Results indicate a need for more resources and career-related incentives in order to encourage participation in these opportunities.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 7 June 2019  
Accepted 15 June 2020





### KEYWORDS

Pedagogy training; teacher training; higher education; tenure and promotion

## Introduction

Interest and opportunities for political scientists to learn about pedagogy have grown in recent years, including numerous publications in the area of teaching and learning in political science and a dedicated journal of political science education.<sup>1</sup> The American Political Science Association (APSA) has also supported “formal mechanisms” in teacher-training (Beltran et al. 2005). One result of APSA’s support was the sponsorship of the Teaching and Learning Conference, a “forum for scholars to participate in the scholarship of teaching and learning, share pedagogical techniques, and discuss trends in political science education” (APSA 2016).

Yet, formalized training has not fully developed in our discipline (Euchner and Jewell 1989; Ishiyama, Miles, and Balarezo 2010) and surveys demonstrate that, at best, half of graduate programs offer training (Ishiyama et al. 2010). Meanwhile, little is known about what options tenure-track and tenured faculty have to pursue pedagogy training. This is surprising given most political science doctoral graduates and practicing political scientists will teach (Nerad and Cerny 2003) and those that are tenured and on the tenure track need to demonstrate competence in teaching for tenure and promotion.

**CONTACT** David Trowbridge  [david.trowbridge@mtsu.edu](mailto:david.trowbridge@mtsu.edu)  Department of Political Science and International Relations, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN, USA; Jennifer Woodward  [jennifer.woodward@mtsu.edu](mailto:jennifer.woodward@mtsu.edu)  Department of Political Science and International Relations, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN, USA.

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Thus, the underlying question of this article is simply, *what opportunities are available to political scientists?* We started our exploration with the following observations: political science departments do not offer many pedagogy opportunities to either graduate students or faculty, and political scientists often claim this is due to a lack of resources and a culture that does not value or reward teaching. We examine these observations here and provide a general status on pedagogy in the discipline through short surveys of political scientists at various stages of their careers. This helped us to learn more about faculty and student interest in participating in pedagogy training, opportunities to participate, and obstacles faculty and their departments face in providing these opportunities. The five question survey was sent to participants in APSA Teaching and Learning Conferences and general APSA members.

## The supply and demand of training

While the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) in political science has grown exponentially over the last decade, there has been less work on how to incorporate the skills and lessons embraced in these works into our graduate and faculty training. Of the research related to training that does exist, it is helpful to divide it into the supply (content and quality) versus demand of training, a categorization borrowed from Pleschová and Simon (2009).

In the supply of training, the number of opportunities has grown. In 1971, of the seventy-three Ph.D. granting institutions in political science, only 25% of departments required teaching as part of the program and only six were known to offer courses in teaching for their graduate students (Benjamin 1971). By 1989, it was estimated that slightly over half (55%) offered training and slightly less than half (43%) required such training (Euchner and Jewell 1989).

However, since that time, offerings may have plateaued. One study of PhD students in 1997 found that half of respondents were at institutions that offered a course in teacher training, whether by the department or by the university (Dolan et al. 1997). Yet, in 2010 another study found that 33% of surveyed *departments*—out of 122—offered training (Ishiyama, Miles, and Balarezo 2010).

Dolan et al. (1997) noted that only 68% of those graduate students required to teach had access to training. They also found that only 43% of departments at institutions that did offer training (departmental or institutional) required students to take it. This is slightly less than what Ishiyama, Miles, and Balarezo (2010) found thirteen years later when they reported 68% of departments that offered departmental training required it. Those programs that do offer training also tend to be public rather than private institutions (Ishiyama, Miles, and Balarezo 2010).

What counts as training across these projects is not always clear. While one department or university might report a workshop as training, another institution might count semester-long courses. For instance, Rothgeb et al. (2007) noted that while many Ph.D. programs provided opportunity for teaching *experience*, many of those same places lacked opportunities for mentorship and training in a number of skills (for example, how to teach writing skills or learn new technologies). In a study of graduate students, 88% reported that training participants only met for one semester or less (Dolan et al.

1997). Perhaps unsurprisingly, studies show that longer-term training seems to generate improved outcomes (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, and Nevgi 2008; Shannon, Twale, and Moore 1998). We also know that training programs need to focus more on individual feedback and critique that comes from observation and mentorship (Buehler and Marcum 2007). Thus, we need to know more about the substance of training programs to know what kind of quality training students and faculty are participating in.

First we need to know what types of programs are typically offered to know where to focus future research on the quality and composition of the most widely available forms of training. As such, our survey asked about a wide variety of teaching activities in order to answer this question while also collecting data on whether or not it was the department or institution (or both) that offered training. Since prior research has indicated departments offer fewer pedagogical training opportunities than institutions, we asked survey participants about their knowledge of opportunities and participation at both levels, while also asking them about their interest in participating in these opportunities and what they believe would encourage departments to offer more opportunities.

Regarding the demand for training, it's important to note for context that most Ph.D. political scientists will go on to teach at BA/MA granting institutions where a significant part of their time (as well as their tenure and promotion requirements) is focused on teaching. One major study found that among aspiring political scientists in graduate programs, most *want* to go on to be higher education faculty (72%) and only a quarter will go on to work to a Research-1 (R1) Ph.D. granting institution (Nerad and Cerny 2003).<sup>2</sup> This reflects the average across disciplines, where roughly 64% of those who find jobs in higher education do so at institutions without Ph.D. programs where hiring and promotion considerations place an emphasis on teaching (Rothgeb, Spadafore, and Burger 2007; Nelson and Morreale 2002).

Given that job opportunities have been unstable but improving (APSA 2014; Jaschik 2010) and institutions are looking to cut costs (Editors 2009; Rivard 2013), new faculty also need to be able to show that they can retain student majors and recruit new ones. After surveying department chairs at political science BA/MA granting institutions Rothgeb, Spadafore, and Burger (2007) discovered that teaching experience and training may make candidates more marketable. They observed strong preferences in hiring committees for candidates who were trained in teaching students how to write, trained with technology in the classroom, and those that were trained in undergraduate advising. However, they found that these were not as significant a factor as teaching *experience* which was among the most valued in hiring considerations, next to publications and presentations (Rothgeb, Spadafore, and Burger 2007).

Ishiyama et al. (2012) also finds a modest correlation between teaching training and job placement. Harris (2015) writes that “the days when a good-quality Ph.D. was sufficient to secure an academic post are gone” in political science. Paraphrasing Mair (2009), Harris tells us that instead, a well prepared candidate will have more than one publication *and* teaching experience.

Further, demand (and a need) for teaching training may also be the result of the emphasis on quality teaching during tenure and promotion decisions. In a survey of 140 randomly selected programs in political science (both graduate and undergraduate), 45% said teaching was rated the most heavily in tenure decisions, as opposed to 41%

that said research, and 14% that said other factors were most significant (Fox and Keeter 1996). The emphasis on teaching was in undergraduate programs, where again, most of Ph.D. students in political science will work. Another study found that in many political science BA granting institutions, good teaching can overcome mediocre research in tenure considerations (Rothgeb and Burger 2009).

These studies suggest that there may be a significant gap between the supply and demand for teaching training. While our survey results provide insight into interest from tenure and tenure track faculty, we already know that many graduate students want to learn pedagogy, nearly half do not have the opportunity, and there are incentives that encourage training (e.g. the job market and tenure decisions). Thus, as described below, we designed questions with participation and interest in mind as well as what might encourage more participation and opportunities.

## Samples and methodology

We set out to survey political scientists across the field in different positions and at different institutions to search for pedagogy training trends. To do this, we contacted APSA for access to their membership list and searched for an available universe of contact information for all political science departments.<sup>3</sup> We were unable to survey the entire membership or departments with APSA memberships. However, APSA provided us permission to include five questions in the previously scheduled 2018 APSA Member Satisfaction Survey and the 2018 Teaching and Learning Conference (TLC) Impact Survey.

The data from the surveys were gathered using Qualtrics. During the spring of 2018, APSA sent the Teaching and Learning Conference Impact Survey to all prior attendees of the TLC, except for first-time attendees. 325 responded out of 2000 surveyed for a response rate of 15.7%. Weeks later, APSA sent out the APSA Member Satisfaction Survey to a random sample of 2000 active members and an additional 500 active student members. 318 responded out of 2465 surveyed for a response rate of 12.9%. In both surveys, only respondents that indicated they were faculty, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, adjunct professors, or in academic administration could see our questions.<sup>4</sup>

Of the 325 TLC survey participants, 277 completed at least one question and 241 completed all five of our questions. Out of the total individual TLC responses, 138 individuals (48% of those reporting their gender) identified as male, 143 (50%) female, and 7 (2%) preferred not to answer the question about their gender. In response to the question asking the participants to identify as members of a racial or ethnic group, 217 (76%) identified as non-Hispanic white, 17 (6%) preferred not to answer, 10 (3%) identified as Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American, 10 (3%) identified as East Asian or Asian American, and 12 (4%) identified as Latino or Hispanic American. Most of the respondents were faculty members, with 42 (44%) at MA or Ph.D. granting institutions, 119 (41%) from BA-granting programs, 23 (8%) from 2-year community colleges, 9 (3%) adjunct instructors, and 11 (4%) graduate students. Regarding rank, 189 (68% of faculty) identified as tenured faculty, 51 (18%) non-tenure track faculty, and 37 (13%) were on the tenure track.

The APSA membership survey had a sample of 318 total individuals. 236 filled out at least one of our questions and 190 answered all five. Of the APSA sample, 150 (or 59% responding to the gender question) identified as male and 98 (38%) identified as female. Responding

to the racial and ethnic group question, 168 (67%) identified as non-Hispanic white, 10 (4%) Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American, 11 (4%) East Asian or Asian American, and 10 (4%) Latino or Hispanic American. In regards to their positions, 196 (72%) respondents identified as faculty members while 10 (4%) reported themselves as adjuncts. 46 (17%) identified as graduate students, 14 (5%) post-doctoral fellows, and 7 (3%) as part of the academic administration.<sup>5</sup> Of the faculty, 99 (59% of responding individuals) identified as tenured faculty, 16 (9%) as non-tenure track faculty, and 54 (32%) were on the tenure track.

The five multiple choice or multiple selection questions in the survey are as follows (choices are located in [Appendix A](#)):

1. As far as you know, which of the following teaching related opportunities may you or others in your department participate in at your institution?
2. Please select your participation in the following teaching related opportunities that may be available at your institution—Have you participated in this type of opportunity?
3. How important are the following instruments for your department in evaluating teaching for purposes of hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, or contract renewal?
4. In your opinion, what would encourage faculty and teaching assistants in your department to participate in more pedagogical training opportunities? Select all that apply.
5. In your opinion, to what extent would the following factors encourage your department to participate in or provide more pedagogical training opportunities?

By focusing on the views of political scientists themselves, as opposed to department chairs or publically available information about opportunities, we are able to get a better sense of trends in terms of how individuals perceive the availability of opportunities (as sometimes individuals are not aware of opportunities), whether a sample of the general population of political scientists is interested in pedagogical opportunities, and how political scientists think teaching is viewed by those making decisions on tenure, promotion, and retention. Finally, by asking about what would encourage participation in and the offering off pedagogical training, we sought to not only get a better sense of how much these types of programs are valued, but to also provide useful guides for departments that may be interested in offering or increasing their opportunities for pedagogy training.

## Results

Results between the TLC and APSA surveys were quite similar and confirm previous findings that many faculty and graduate students have access to pedagogy training opportunities. Training is mostly via workshops, seminars, and mentoring. Few are participating in practicums, future faculty programs, or courses on pedagogy.

The responses point to the need for more resources in order to encourage participation in these opportunities. First, financial incentives rather than reductions in other responsibilities, are more likely to encourage individual respondents to participate in pedagogy opportunities. While these results were expected given our knowledge of

academic norms to provide small financial incentives for participation in activities outside of routine responsibilities, the results provide empirical markers of the state of the discipline and an indication of how administrators may encourage participation in existing activities. We also found that most opportunities to learn about pedagogy were offered at the institutional level (university or college) over the department level. This was expected as well, given that universities and colleges have more resources than individual departments. Institutions also offered more financial support (e.g. funding for teaching conferences or pedagogy research) than departments. Departments mostly offer mentorship and funding for teaching-related conferences. In addition, we found that if an institution offers a funded initiative to increase pedagogical training, political scientists believe their departments would offer it.

We also found support for the idea that participation would increase if pedagogy training was valued more by the departments and institutions where political scientists are working or if faculty were compensated through increased pay or a reduction in other responsibilities. Survey respondents indicated that participation in pedagogical training is not a significant factor in evaluating teaching for hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, or contract renewal. Instead, teaching is mainly assessed through student evaluations, teaching portfolios, and peer evaluations. Faculty could be encouraged to participate in training via increased pay, course load reductions and increased pay for training organizers, and reductions in service. Meanwhile, political scientists believe departments could be encouraged to offer pedagogy opportunities if it is required for tenure and promotion or is demanded by administrators. Unfunded initiatives or demands from undergraduate and graduate students were not considered sufficient incentives for departments to offer pedagogy training. Finally, we found most opportunities were at the institutional level indicating that this supply of opportunity may simply be seen as sufficient to meet current demands for pedagogy training.

### **Short-term offerings**

Most offerings, as we discuss below, are “short-term” and demand for some of these offerings is being met. By short-term we simply mean training opportunities that could be done in a day or an hour like workshops or seminars, as opposed to longer term opportunities like courses. For example, the most frequent pedagogical training opportunities, as opposed to other teaching activities, offered to TLC participants by their *department* are: mentorship (14%) and funding for teaching and learning conferences (13% each). [Table 1](#) shows the most frequent training and other instructional activity opportunities in both surveys at department and institutional level, excluding solo-teaching.

While studies highlight the success of programs to prepare future faculty or college professors (Gaff et al. 2003, 57–58), only 45% of the APSA members surveyed indicated an *opportunity* to participate in such a program at any level (departmental or institution-wide). When it comes to actually *participating* in these types of programs (see [Table 2](#)), 26% of APSA members and 35% of TLC participants responded that they have participated, indicating that at least some with the opportunity to participate have not done so and TLC participants were more likely to take advantage of the opportunity.



**Table 1.** Most frequently offered training opportunities.

|  | APSA (%) | TLC (%) |
|--|----------|---------|
| Workshop(s) on teaching  | 80       | 85      |
| Competition for a teaching award                                     | 74       | 83      |
| Seminar(s) on teaching   | 71       | 74      |
| Teaching an online course as a sole instructor                       | 64       | 82      |
| Grant or funding to participate in teaching and learning conferences | 60       | 77      |

**Table 2.** Responses to “have you participated in this type of opportunity?”

| APSA membership   | TLC participants  |
|---|---|
| Most participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Seminar</li> <li>• Competition for a teaching award</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Program design</li> </ul> Least participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided practicum</li> <li>• Preparing future faculty program</li> <li>• Courses on teaching pedagogy</li> </ul> | Most participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Grant or funding to participate in teaching conferences</li> <li>• Seminar</li> <li>• Grant or funding for pedagogy research</li> <li>• Competition for a teaching award</li> </ul> Least participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided practicum</li> <li>• Preparing future faculty program</li> <li>• Courses on teaching pedagogy</li> </ul> |

The data also suggest that while that most respondents, faculty and graduate students, have access to some kind of training or teaching activity opportunity, that there is still some demand to be met. [Figure 1](#) shows that the largest gaps between interest and opportunity for APSA respondents. [Figure 2](#) shows the same for TLC respondents. The results are quite different.

In the APSA data, the gaps have two implications. First, departments and institutions could do more to meet interest in guest lecturing, co-teaching, and program design. Second, interest in certain opportunities and activities—namely seminars, teaching on-line, and workshops—are being met. In the TLC responses, the biggest gap between interest and opportunity is in long-term training and impact opportunities and activities: courses, practicums, and program design.

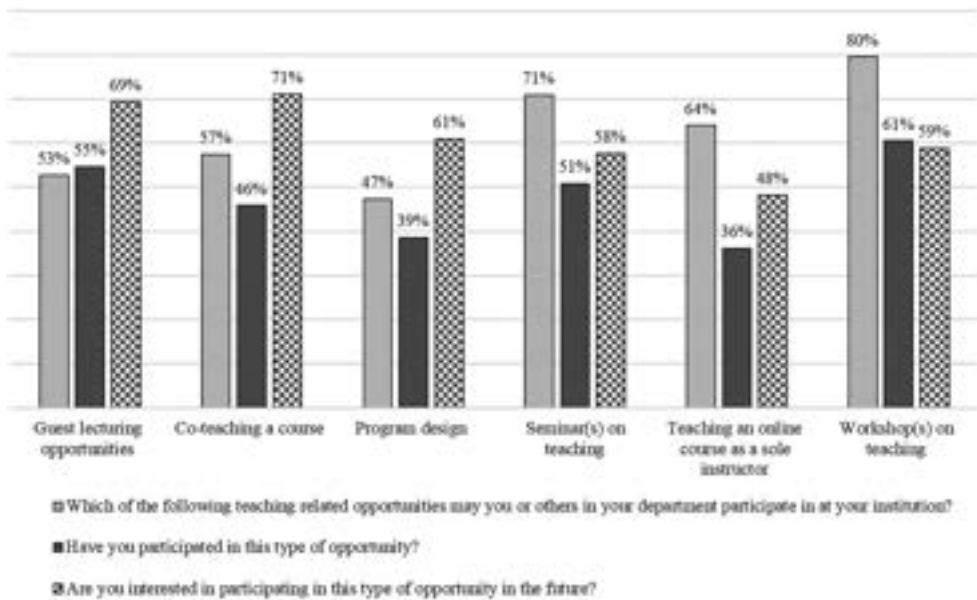
As [Figure 3](#) shows most of these opportunities to learn are offered at the institutional level (university or college) over the department level. For example, according to the APSA survey results, the most common types of training offered were workshops (63%) and seminars on teaching (54%). We found the most frequently offerings by departments for APSA members are: mentorship (13%) and funding for teaching and learning conferences (12% each).<sup>6</sup>

## Participation

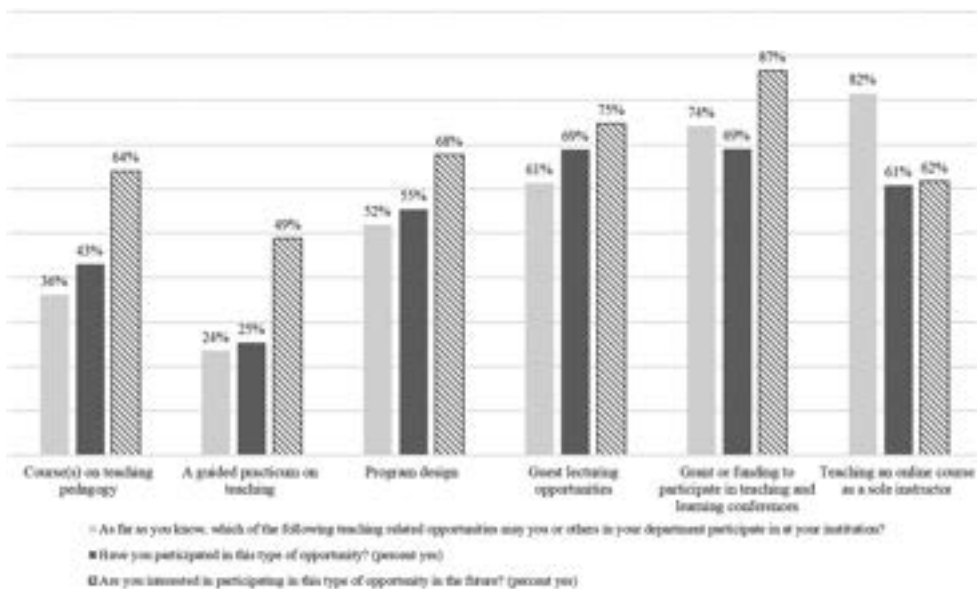
While participation results between APSA and TLC respondents have some distinctions, respondents in these samples shared frequent participation in workshops and seminars which roughly matches responses on opportunities. This tells us that most respondents are going to take advantages of these particular opportunities when they are available.

Participation in three offerings (workshops, seminars, diversity training) also indicate that pedagogy training is often provided in short blocks of time with targeted purposes in mind. This begs some questions for future research. Are short blocks offered more than courses and other long term training opportunities to reduce the costs of providing





**Figure 1.** Teaching and training opportunities based on greatest gap between interest and participation (APSA). Represents respondents that answered “yes.”



**Figure 2.** Teaching and training opportunities based on greatest gap between interest and participation (TLC).

the facilities and staff to implement these opportunities, are they more attractive to political scientists with demanding schedules, or are these short blocks (like diversity training) offered to ensure compliance with institutional initiatives and laws like Title IX?

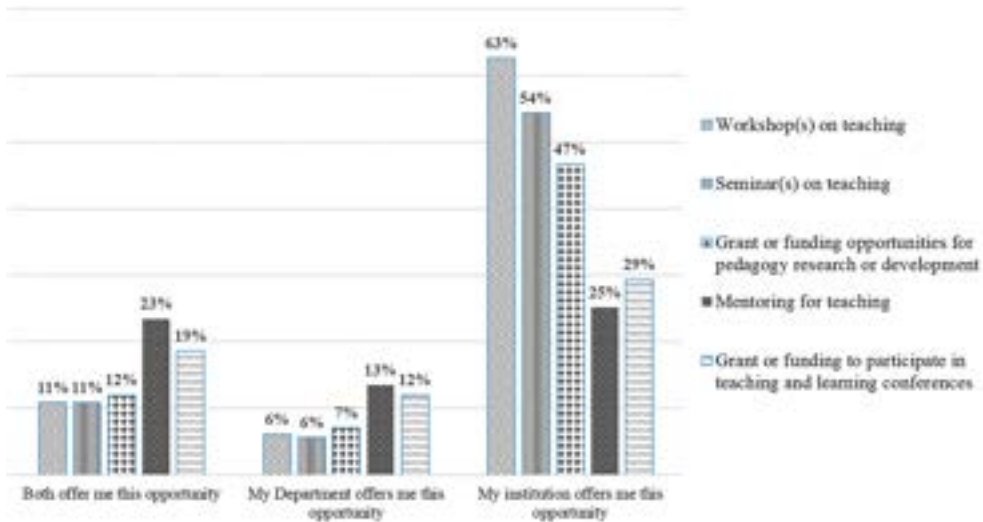


Figure 3. APSA responses to offerings.

### Resources matter

Our findings indicate that the availability of resources is important in both the offering of opportunities and the participation in those opportunities. Seventy-two percent of APSA members and 85% of TLC participants believed increased pay or a stipend for participation in pedagogy training would increase the number of individuals in their department participating in these opportunities. Sixty percent of APSA members and 66% of TLC participants thought a course load reduction for the pedagogy training organizer would help. However, increased pay or stipend for organizer(s) of trainings, along with reduced research responsibilities, were considered less likely to increase the amount of training offered by departments. Table 3 has a breakdown of these answers.

When respondents were asked what would encourage departments to *offer* more opportunities, they answered with a mixture of mandates and resource incentives (see Table 4). Institution-wide teaching requirements for faculty tenure and promotion received the most responses (67% APSA and 85% TLC) followed by funded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training (56 and 81%).

Thus, for departments and institutions to increase *participation* and *offerings* in teaching pedagogy programs, they need to incentivize with a mixture of resources and mandates. While reducing course loads for organizers and services responsibilities may help, financial incentives are what respondents are most interested in. What respondents are least interested in is trading research responsibilities for these opportunities, perhaps because of the value placed upon research in tenure and promotion. In other words, if institutions value pedagogical training and provide financial resources for it, then departments are more likely to offer these types of opportunities. This supports both resource and culture based explanations for why political science departments may provide pedagogy training for their faculty and graduate students.

Institutions (college or university) offer most of the financial support (e.g. funding for teaching conferences or pedagogy research). Of APSA participants, 60% had an opportunity for a grant or funding to participate in a teaching or learning conference, with most (48%)

**Table 3.** Most frequent “yes” answers to “what would encourage faculty and teaching assistants in your department to participate in more pedagogical training opportunities?”

|   | APSA (%) | TLC (%) |
|---|----------|---------|
| Increased pay or stipend for participants             | 72       | 85      |
| Course load reduction for pedagogy training organizer | 60       | 66      |
| Reduced service responsibilities                      | 47       | 48      |
| Increased pay or stipend for organizer(s)             | 39       | 52      |

**Table 4.** Most frequent answers to “would encourage departments to offer more opportunities?”

| APSA  | TLC  |
|---|--|
| <p>Strongly &amp; Moderately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution wide teaching requirements for faculty tenure and promotion</li> <li>• Demand from administrators, external reviewers, or governing board to improve faculty teaching</li> <li>• Funded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training</li> </ul> <p>Slightly encourage &amp; Makes no difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfunded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training</li> <li>• Demand from undergraduate students to improve faculty teaching</li> <li>• Demand from graduate students (MA/Ph.D.) to improve faculty teaching</li> </ul> | <p>Strongly &amp; Moderately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution wide teaching requirements for faculty tenure and promotion</li> <li>• Funded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training</li> <li>• Demand from administrators, external reviewers, or governing board to improve faculty teaching</li> </ul> <p>Slightly encourage &amp; Makes no difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfunded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training</li> <li>• Demand from undergraduate students to improve faculty teaching</li> <li>• Demand or encouragement from department chair</li> </ul> |

coming from the institutional level. Seventy-four percent of TLC participants reported access to grant or funding opportunities for pedagogy research or development, but only 64% of TLC responded that they took advantage of the opportunity. Likewise, 66% of APSA respondents reported having the same opportunity, but only 38% participated. While it is expected that attendees of a conference focused on pedagogy research and practice would be more likely to take advantage of this type of funding, the lower response rate from the APSA membership indicates that resources alone may not increase participation.

The same may be true for institutional support for political scientists attending teaching and learning conferences, like the TLC. While only 33% of APSA members had taken advantage of funding for a teaching and learning conference, 60% were offered funding at some level for these conferences. Although, again we see a larger percent (77% of TLC participants with access to funding to attend teaching conferences) taking advantage of the opportunity. In other words, TLC participants had more opportunities to obtain funding to conduct research on pedagogy and attend conferences focused on teaching than the general APSA population. This indicates that where institutions and departments financially support teaching initiatives, individuals are more likely to participate in opportunities to improve their teaching. However, the lower participation rates for APSA members indicate that partaking in these opportunities must also be valued by departments and institutions to increase participation across the discipline.

### ***Assessing teaching for tenure, promotion, merit review, and contract renewal***

To further measure how mandates and culture may influence the departmental decisions to offer pedagogical training, we asked respondents what instruments are used to evaluate

teaching for hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, and contract renewal. If departments and institutions are interested in supporting teaching, one way this may be reflected is in the types of training, rewards, career incentives available to department members.

If there was a department culture that valued quality teaching, but there was less departmental resources to encourage training, we might expect to find high rates of political scientists participating in low-cost training opportunities. These low-resource or low cost opportunities are things like teaching awards and mentorship (though there is considerable time and emotional investment in mentorship).

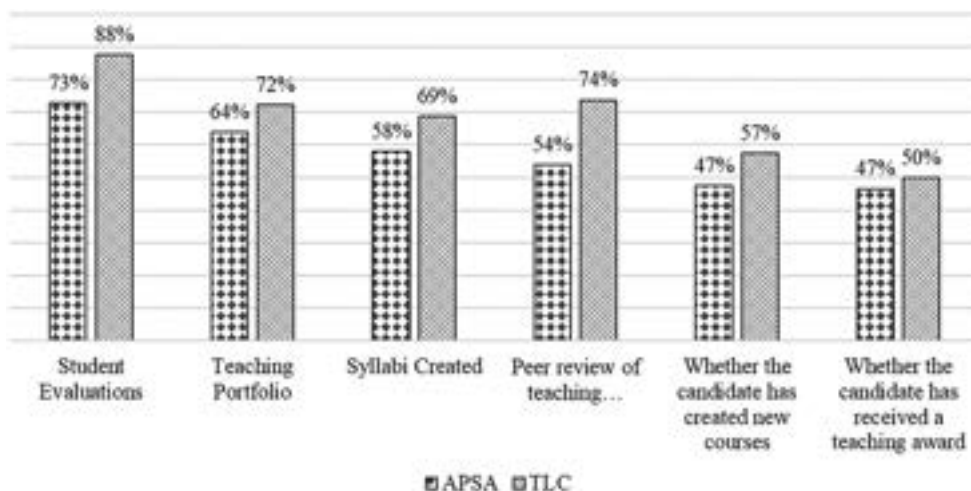
Forty-seven percent of the APSA membership and 60% of TLC participants reported their institution having a competition for a teaching award. Twenty-one percent (APSA) and 17% (TLC) reported the ability to compete for a teaching award at both levels and 6% only at the departmental level for both samples. Just 12% (APSA) and 14% (TLC) reported no opportunity at either level. While many or most political scientists are offered these opportunities, they are mainly offered at the institutional level. As such, there may be more interest in rewarding quality teaching at the institutional level than within political science departments themselves. There may also be an assumption that the interest in these opportunities is already being met at the institutional level.

With the increasing reliance on contingent and graduate student to teach courses, it is also important to note that the ability to receive recognition for quality teaching is much lower outside the tenure and tenure track level. For teaching assistants, graduate students, and adjuncts, only 28% (APSA) and 26% (TLC) were aware of such opportunities. This indicates that instructors outside of tenure and the tenure track increasingly teach courses, but are generally not recognized for excellence in the classroom. While this may not weigh as heavily as might be assumed in hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions (see below), the opportunity to qualify for these awards may reflect whether or not there is a culture that values quality teaching.

As illustrated in [Figure 4](#) below, we found that student evaluations are the most important instrument in evaluating teaching for purposes of hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, or contract renewal. We found that student evaluations were very important for 40% of APSA respondents and 46% of TLC respondents. Another 33% of APSA members and 41% of TLC members also considered it somewhat important, for a total of 74% of APSA member and 87% of TLC members considering student evaluations important for their career assessment and advancement. Generally, course offerings tend to be less significant. This includes the creation of new courses (47% of APSA and 58% TLC respondents at both very and somewhat important), teaching courses required for graduation (46 and 47% at both very and somewhat important), offering independent studies (27 and 25% at both very and somewhat important), and teaching an online course (16 and 21% at both very and somewhat important). Just 46% in the APSA sample and 50% in the TLC sample felt that teaching awards were important to tenure and promotion.

## Discussion and conclusion

There are limitations to what conclusions we can draw from these survey results, but the data should be useful for informing future research. In particular, including political



**Figure 4.** Highest responses for what instruments are important and somewhat important in evaluating teaching for purposes of hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, or contract renewal.

scientists in different positions and at different types of institutions in the surveys allowed us to learn more about interest in pedagogy beyond the graduate student experience, of which there is already some research and discussion. Having found trends amongst the types of pedagogy programs offered, this project allows future researchers to narrow the scope of future inquiries. Finally, we hope that this data will help inform department and institutional decisions about what programs they may want to offer.

The results of these surveys also suggest that for the most part political scientists will take advantage of the pedagogy opportunities they are provided, if there are incentives to do so. Indeed the biggest obstacles to participation in and offering of pedagogy trainings are a lack of resources and a culture that does not reward participation. Regarding resources, participants in both surveys selected the same top choices for what might increase participation among *individuals*. These choices are resource-intensive, like stipends for participants in training (85% of TLC respondents said yes and 72% of APSA respondents) and course load reductions (66% of TLC and 60% of APSA respondents). The next highest selection for both pools was reduction in service responsibilities at 48% (TLC) and 47% (APSA). Given the budget constraints faced by many institutions, it is fortunate that very few respondents were pessimistic that nothing could encourage participation (4% for TLC and 7% for APSA).

For encouraging *departments* to support more training opportunities, views were mixed. Both the TLC and APSA respondents rank funding from the college/university, demand from external reviewers or governing board to improve teaching, and institution-wide requirements for tenure and promotion the highest of eight options.<sup>7</sup> Both samples also had similar choices of what options would make little or no difference in encouraging participation: unfunded wide initiative to encourage pedagogy (72% TLC, 69% APSA) and demand from undergraduates to improve teaching (43% TLC, 49% APSA).<sup>8</sup> In other words, political scientists believe that their colleagues could be

encouraged to participate with institutional *pressure* (tenure/promotion requirements, governing board), not just financial incentives. But the pressure has to be significant (i.e. unfunded initiatives would not work). Thus, if institutions want to see change in participation *without* effecting tenure and promotion requirements, they have to provide financial support for pedagogy training.

In the meantime, there are low cost things political science departments can do to encourage quality teaching, such as offering department level teaching awards to all faculty and graduate students. Likewise, mentorship may continue to be encouraged, not only within the department, but also within the discipline.

Three more points are worth noting:

1. Institutions, as opposed to departments, tend to offer significantly more opportunity for training, specifically in seminars, workshops, and courses.
2. TLC and APSA participants tend to report very similar rates of opportunities, but different rates of participation depending upon the activity.
3. Most interest is in workshops, grants, seminars, and awards. While some of these are resource intensive (grants), others are require fewer resources (seminars, workshops, non-monetary awards).

With these findings, we provide some insight into the demand for these programs and ways in which administrators can encourage participation in them. Respondents acknowledge their departments provide few opportunities for pedagogical training. As such, the institutions where political scientists work need to be active partners in providing resources and incentives to encourage a culture that values quality teaching. At the same time, political science departments may want to consider ways in which they can provide pedagogical training and incentives for department members.

## Notes

1. Research in teaching pedagogy often focuses on training for graduate students and has served as a foundation for the literature on teaching pedagogy in political science. Over 40 years ago, Gerald Benjamin of SUNY New Paltz observed a pattern of warnings that the discipline of political science lacked adequate teacher training for graduate students (Benjamin 1971). Today, research confirms that graduate students and faculty often feel that newly graduating political scientists are ill-prepared to teach (Euchner and Jewell 1989; Gaff et al. 2003; Rothgeb, Spadafore, and Burger 2007). These frequent calls for training are not unique to political science (Bérubé and Ruth 2015; Bok 2013; Burke 2001; Magner 2000). Some have even proposed the addition of a teaching track for doctoral programs (Cassuto 2012; Jenkins 2013, 2015).
2. That stated, we cannot assume that everyone that wants to teach wants formal training which is why we asked questions about interest in participating in certain types of training.
3. Because we wished to understand perceptions of why there might be obstacles to training within the department, we chose not to ask for solely department chair information.
4. The total respondents of 325 and 318 included doctoral fellows, instructors, tenure track, tenured, retired, consulting, government, research organization/think tank, and academic administration. As a result, we do not have answers in the APSA membership survey to report from those that selecting the following answer to “What is your current primary position within the discipline?”: Unemployed, Undergraduate Student, Retired, Research Organization or Think Tank, Other non-Academic, Other please specify, and Government. Results are reported collectively for all respondents that did receive the questions in both



surveys, including tenured, tenure track, graduate students, and other political scientists as our sample only includes a small percentage of graduate students and others and we are interested in trends across the discipline. Because survey participants did not always respond to all questions, to simplify the reporting, results for each question are reported using the number of individuals that responded to the question in each sample. For a complete accounting of responses, including non-responses, the database is available at: <https://mtsu.edu/faculty/dtrowbridge/pedagogyresults2020.php>

5. These percentages are calculated out of the total responses to five positions: adjunct instructor, faculty position, graduate students, post-doctoral fellow, or academic administration. The APSA survey included other categories including retired, research organizations or think tank, government, employed, and other options. However, those selecting the former categories were not provided our survey questions.
6. Program design or development means the establishment of syllabi banks, curriculum review and development, reviewing graduate program, and related activities.
7. These figures include “strongly” and “moderately” encourage.
8. These figures include “slightly encourage” or “make no difference.”

## Acknowledgments

The authors wish to express great thanks to the number of people who took their valuable time to review different aspects of this project. While they did not see the manuscript, the following people provided important feedback on our questions: Victor Asal, Wendy L. Johnston, Vanessa Leffler, Wesley Nishiyama, Julie Novkov, Jessica Pidgeon, and Patricia Strach. Panel attendees and discussants at the 2016 Teaching and Learning Conference, the 2019 Southern Political Science Conference, and the 2019 Midwest Political Science Conference provided critical feedback at different stages of development and writing. Finally, this project would not have been possible without the cooperation of the research staff at the American Political Science Association who graciously allowed us to include questions on their surveys of members.

## Notes on contributors

*David L. Trowbridge* is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Middle Tennessee State University where he teaches courses in American politics and legal studies. His research resides at the intersection of law and social movements, particularly in the area of cause lawyering. He received his doctorate in political science from the University at Albany, SUNY in 2018.

*Jennifer Woodward* is an Assistant Professor at Middle Tennessee State University and Research Fellow at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy’s Center for Policy Research. Her scholarship focuses on the development and implementation of civil rights laws in education and employment. By looking at the potential of law, courts, and government agencies to shape and be shaped by society, she evaluates the everyday encounters between individuals and the laws designed to protect them. During her career, Woodward has worked at the College of William and Mary, American Bar Foundation, New York Latino Research and Resources Network, New York State Department of Civil Service, and the University at Albany, State University of New York where she received her doctorate in 2013. Her prior research includes publications on the formation of the National Organization for Women, the implementation of school desegregation in Nashville-Davidson County, TN and bilingual education laws in New York. Currently, Woodward is working on projects related to the early interpretations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, institutional capacity of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the importance of teaching pedagogy in higher education.



## ORCID

David Trowbridge  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2548-2002>

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## Appendix: Survey questions

Question 1: As far as you know, which of the following teaching related opportunities may you or others in our department participate in at your institution? Please select the option that is relevant to your experience at your current primary institution.

*Opportunity (column options):* My department offers me this opportunity, My institution offers me this opportunity, Both offer me this opportunity, Neither offer me this opportunity, Don't know

*Offerings (row options):* Preparing Future Faculty programs/College Professor Training Program; Mentoring for teaching; Seminar(s) on teaching; Workshop(s) on teaching; A guided practicum on teaching; Diversity in the classroom training; Program design (i.e. reviewing the graduate program or department's curriculum, assisting in establishment of syllabi banks); Course(s) on teaching pedagogy; Guest lecturing opportunities; Teaching assistantship; Co-teaching a course; Teaching a course as a sole instructor; Teaching an online course as a sole instructor; Competition for a teaching assistant, graduate student, or adjunct teaching award; Grant or funding opportunities for pedagogy research or development; Grant or funding to participate in teaching and learning conferences; Other (please specify)

Question 2: Please select your participation in the following teaching related opportunities that may be available at your institution.

*Participation (column options):* Have you participated in this opportunity? (Yes or no). Are you interested in participating in this type of opportunity in the future? (Yes or no).

*Offerings (row options):* Preparing Future Faculty programs/College Professor Training Program; Mentoring for teaching; Seminar(s) on teaching; Workshop(s) on teaching; A guided practicum on teaching; Diversity in the classroom training; Program design (i.e. reviewing the graduate program or department's curriculum, assisting in establishment of syllabi banks); Course(s) on teaching pedagogy; Guest lecturing opportunities; Teaching assistantship; Co-teaching a course; Teaching a course as a sole instructor; Teaching an online course as a sole instructor; Competition for a teaching assistant, graduate student, or adjunct teaching award; Grant or funding opportunities for pedagogy research or development; Grant or funding to participate in teaching and learning conferences; Other (please specify)

Question 3: How important are the following instruments for your department in evaluating teaching for purposes of hiring, tenure, promotion, merit review, or contract renewal?

*Importance (column options):* Very important; Somewhat important; Not very important Not at all important; Not applicable; Don't know

*Instrument (row options):* Student evaluations; Teaching portfolio; Syllabi created; Peer review of teaching by other faculty members/chair/dean/other administrators; Whether the candidate teaches courses that the college or institution requires for graduation; Whether the candidate has created new courses; Whether the candidate has sponsored independent studies; Whether the candidate has supervised graduate theses or dissertations; Whether the candidate has supervised undergraduate theses or research; Whether the candidate has received a teaching award; Whether the candidate has taught an online course; Other (please specify)

Question 4: In your opinion, what would encourage faculty and teaching assistants in your department to participate in more pedagogical training opportunities? Select all that apply.

*Instrument (row options):* Course load reduction for pedagogy training organizer, Increased pay or stipend for participants; Increased pay or stipend for organizer(s); Reduced research responsibilities; Reduced service responsibilities; Other (please specify); I don't think anything would encourage increased participation in pedagogy training opportunities; Don't know

Question 5: In your opinion, to what extent would the following factors encourage your department to participate in or provide more pedagogical training opportunities?

*Importance (column options):* Strongly encourage; Moderately encourage; Slightly encourage; Would make no difference; Don't know; Not applicable

*Factors (row options):* Demand from administrators, external reviewers, or governing board to improve faculty teaching; Demand from faculty to participate in training opportunities; Demand from graduate students (MA/Ph.D.) to improve faculty teaching; Demand from undergraduate

students to improve faculty teaching; Demand or encouragement from department chair; Unfunded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training; Funded institution wide initiative to encourage pedagogy training; Institution wide teaching requirements for faculty tenure and promotion.