

A STATEWIDE STANDARDIZED CURRICULUM

*A Statewide Standardized Curriculum
 Without an American Government Course
 Richard Murgo, Ph.D.*

In the 2012 Florida legislative session, one of many bills that were introduced and passed in the last few days was HB 7135, restructuring curriculum requirements for the Florida Higher education system. The bill, introduced by Representative Bill Proctor sought to enhance S.T.E.M. education, reduce the number of required general education credit hours from 36 to 30, and put in place a set of standardized assessment measures. As necessitated by these assessment measures, the broad sweeping education bill also requires that a standardized core curriculum in each academic discipline be selected by a statewide committee comprised of Florida college and university faculty. The bill was introduced and passed with little or no debate on the floor of the Florida Legislature and was set for implementation in 2014-2015.

A state-wide committee was assembled in all academic areas, including the social sciences. As instructed by the tenets of the legislation, five core course were selected. These core courses would be put in place as graduation requirements for anyone graduating with an undergraduate degree in Florida. The five core social sciences courses selected by the committee were; 20th Century World History, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Anthropology, and Introduction to Comparative Government. While we can certainly debate the merits of these courses and why they were selected as “core” courses, as political

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SPRING/SUMMER 2013

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MEET YOUR NEW OFFICERS

2013-2014 Officers:

President: Kevin Wagner
 Florida Atlantic University

**1st Vice President &
 Program Chair for 2014
 Meeting:** Kathryn DePalo,
 Florida International University

2nd Vice President: Leah
 Blumenfeld, Barry University

Secretary: David Hill
 Stetson University

Treasurer: Aubrey Jewett
 University of Central Florida

**The Political Scientist
 Newsletter Editor:** Judithanne
 Scourfield McLauchlan,
 University of South Florida -
 St. Petersburg

**Florida Political Chronicle,
 Editor:** Marco Rimanelli, St.
 Leo University

A STATEWIDE STANDARDIZED CURRICULUM CONT.

scientists it is the latter that should concern us the most. No one would argue with the benefits of students being exposed to a comparative government course, however the idea that undergraduates could graduate with only this course and not be exposed to the fundamental structure of American government should concern anyone who values civic education.

In an educational environment where it can no longer be assumed that students are exposed to basic information about American government in primary and secondary schools, it has become vital that students are taught to understand the elementary principles of our governmental structure at the university level. The relationship between civic knowledge and democratic values, as well as political participation, is undeniable. As political scientists, we recognize the potentially grave consequences for a democracy that lacks a participating, knowledgeable constituency. Even as we expose students to governmental structures in other countries, a foundational knowledge of their own government remains vital.

Beyond the clear implications for political efficacy and civic engagement, the legislation is problematic for our curriculum structure. More and more secondary schools have become dependent on state colleges for American government courses by means of dual enrollment. Redirecting faculty resources to comparative government courses could significantly jeopardize this role. Moreover, many smaller colleges have few, and in some cases no faculty who teach comparative government. Florida colleges and universities will likely respond to this legislation with an added structure of prerequisite courses in addition to graduation requirements. These remedies would allow the American government course to remain a component of the curriculum, but this could result in insurmountable articulation issues for students who transfer within state institutions as well as from out of state colleges and universities.

For those of us who understand and teach the virtues of civic education, this policy has clearly put in place unintended consequences for students in the state of Florida; it is unimaginable that the Florida legislature would strive to create a curriculum devoid of civic education. Since the bill's passage, the Florida Department of Education has received negative feedback concerning the single comparative government course, as well as the selection of the other social science core courses. As a result, early in this year's legislative session, some amendments have already been suggested. These include recommendations that would delay the implementation of this policy by one year to 2015-2016, and give the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors the ability to approve additional core courses. It has also been recommended that the reduction from 36 to 30 hours for general education courses be eliminated from the policy.

The Florida education system, like many other states, has been witnessing significant political pressure to demonstrate assessable results. In recent years, this pressure has gravitated from the primary and secondary level to higher education. We are beginning to witness how assessment is directly related to the educational policy that is being written in legislative chambers. H.B. 7135, like many bills that were introduced at the end of an extended session last year, had little or no input from those who would best understand the consequences of the legislation. As primary stakeholders in the Florida system of higher education, we deserve a greater voice in the formation and outcome of policy. It is not out of self-interest, but rather it is our concern for the college students who seek an education in Florida that should ensure us a seat at the table.

Richard Murgo, Ph.D.

Professor & Chair for Political Science & Economics

Tallahassee Community College

Email: Ricmurgo@gmail.com

2013 GENERAL MEETING MINUTES - 16 MARCH

1. Meeting called to order at 12:15 PM by FPSA President Sean Foreman (Barry). FIU President Mark Rosenberg gave welcoming remarks and reflections on political science.
2. President's Report and Announcements:
 - a. Thank you to the administrators and staff at Florida International University's School of International and Public Affairs for hosting the conference.
 - b. The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held on March 8, 2014 at Flagler College in St. Augustine. Kathryn DePalo (FIU) will be the Program Chair for the 2014 meeting and Will Miller (Flagler) will be the Local Arrangements Chair.
 - c. Nominations for the Best Graduate Student Paper presented at the 2013 Meeting are due on May 1, 2013 and should be sent to Sean Foreman at sforeman@mail.barry.edu
 - d. The Best Graduate Student Paper Award for the 2012 was given to Tammie Marcus Clary (Florida Atlantic University) for her paper entitled: "Politicians of a Feather, Tweet Together."
 - e. An issue of The Political Scientist will be published after the annual meeting with a conference review and other recent news and updates.
 - f. The FPSA is in excellent condition as evidenced by the following: strong financial standing; membership is steady and growing; and the Florida Political Chronicle under the leadership of Editor Marco Rimanelli (St. Leo University) published two volumes in 2012. Two more volumes are expected to be published in 2013.
3. Treasurer Aubrey Jewett (University of Central Florida) gave a positive report about the organization's finances. He noted that the online registration and payment system was fully functional and was a tremendous help in preparing for the conference.
4. Old Business – None
5. New Business
 - a. Proposal to revise the FPSA Constitution to eliminate reference to "community colleges" and "two year colleges" and replace with "state colleges." There are three such mentions in the current language of the Constitution.
 - Motion to change the language of the FPSA by-laws (Article V, Section II) to reflect current conditions. It presently reads as such: "There shall be a Council of nine members. No more than six of the nine council members shall be from either the universities and four year colleges on the one hand, or the community or two year colleges on the other."
 - Motion to amend "the community or two year colleges" to "state colleges" in Article V, Section II and other places (Article IV, Section 2 and Article V, Section III) in the by-laws.

A combined motion passed unanimously to update the language by removing "community college" from the Constitution.
 - b. Nominations were accepted for the position of 2nd Vice President. Denis Rey (U Tampa) and Leah Blumenfeld (Barry) were nominated. Blumenfeld was elected by a show of hands.

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2013 GENERAL MEETING MINUTES - 16 MARCH CONT.

c. The Executive Council nominated the following Council Members for 2013-2016: Denis Rey (Tampa) Giselle Jamison (St. Thomas University) and Mirya Holman (Florida Atlantic University). They were confirmed unanimously.

6. Install 2013-14 president, Kevin Wagner (Florida Atlantic University)

7. Meeting adjourned at 12:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Foreman, President
on behalf of David Hill, Secretary

MESSAGE FROM 2011-2012 PRESIDENT HOUMAN A. SADRI

At the 40th anniversary of our association, it is my responsibility to provide a brief report of the status of the FPSA. I am pleased to report that our association has continued to grow and achieve new heights. In fact, we had a record breaking year. Our financial status has never been better; the individual membership has increased; and our institutional associates are growing. Our association success is the result of the efforts of an excellent team of Officers and Board Members with whom, I have had the pleasure of working closely in the past year. We have witnessed major changes, so I would like to use this opportunity to thank all of the FPSA Officers and Board Members for their professionalism and help throughout the year. Special thanks goes to Terri Susan Fine for reviving our newsletter, The Political Scientist, Sean Foreman for maintaining our Facebook page, and Ed Benton for having the past issues of the Florida Political Chronicle available on our website. Our website (www.fpsanet.org) has been continuously upgraded; and will soon include the new issues of our journal in electronic format. We also have two recent replacements. Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan volunteered to serve as the new newsletter editor, since Terri Susan Fine left this position due to a significant increase in her responsibilities with the Lou Frey Institute. Recently, the board members chose Professor Marco Rimaneli as the Florida Political Chronicle Interim Editor until a search is conducted for the permanent journal editor position next year. In the current Conference Program, you notice the hard work of the 2012 Program Chair and Arrangement Chair. I sincerely thank Sean Foreman, our Program Chair. At this year's conference there are 20 panels with more than 100 presenters from 31 colleges, universities, and institutes from all corners of Florida. I am also grateful to Section Chairs: Jocelyn Evans (American National Government), David Ramsey (Political Theory), Jonathan West (Public Policy and Public Administration), Sean Foreman (State and Local Government), Vilma Fuentes and Giselle Jamison (International Relations and Comparative Politics), Mark Logas (Roundtable on Media and Politics), Ed Benton (Roundtable on 2012 General Elections and Florida Politics), Kathryn DePaolo (Roundtable on Teaching), and Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan (Roundtable: The Road to the White House 2012). I have special thanks for our Arrangements Chair, Denis Rey and The University of Tampa for hosting our 2012 conference. Denis has also arranged for this year's luncheon Keynote Speaker: The Honorable Pam Iorio, former Mayor of Tampa (2003-2011) who is also the author of Straight Forward: Ways to Live and Lead. The FPSA officers and Board Members welcome your active engagement with the association. Please let us know if you are interested in any positions or programs.

Houman A. Sadri

2011-2012 FPSA President

Associate Professor, Political Science

University of Central Florida

Email: Sadri@mail.ucf.edu

FPSA AWARD FOR BEST GRADUATE PAPER

Every year the Florida Political Science Association recognizes the best graduate paper presented at the annual meeting. The recipient of the award is recognized at the following meeting with a plaque and a \$250 check from the association. In addition, the paper is considered for inclusion in the next volume of the association’s journal, *The Florida Political Chronicle*.

The winner of the 2013 Best Graduate Paper Award is Essien Ukpe from University of Uyo for her paper entitled: “The Arab Connection and the Upsurge of Insurgency in Africa: A Case Study of Boko Haram in Nigeria”

For information on our previous winners and to read the winning papers please visit our website:

www.FPSANet.org/Awards

FPSA AWARD — BERNIE SCHECHTERMAN



Photo Credit:
Judithanne Scourfield McLaughlan

FPSA AWARD—ED BENTON



Photo Credit:
Houman Sadri

IPAC CONFERENCE AT UCF

FPSA Members & the IPAC International Conference
Houman Sadri, Associate Professor

In association with the UCF Political Science Department, the Information and Policy Analysis Center (www.IPACnet.org) sponsored an international conference titled “Globalization, Information, Policy & Knowledge Production” at the Orlando campus of University of Central Florida 21-24 February 2013. The conference theme was “Challenges and Opportunities for Improving Intellectual Capital and Research Productivity.” More than 100 scholars from the US and countries as far as China, Lebanon, Malaysia, Thailand, Venezuela participated in this conference.

To exchange knowledge and experience on issues of research and teaching productivity, the papers and presentations were from academic and policy communities in addition to nonacademic participants. The IPAC conference provided an opportunity to scholars and policy makers, at both public and private organizations, to present their current research and share their findings with an international audience. Beyond the fields of Political Science and International relations, the conference paper relations, the conference paper represented variety of other disciplines, including Anthropology, Business, Education, Human Resources, Management, Organizational Behavior, Policy Studies, Psychology, and Sociology to name a few.

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IPAC CONFERENCE AT UCF CONT.

The conference presenters and participants included both junior and more senior scholars. In fact, a number of Florida Political Science Association members including Drs. Marco Rimanelli (Political Chronicle Editor) and Houman Sadri (former FPSA President) participated as well.

Houman A. Sadri

2011-2012 FPSA President
Associate Professor, Political Science
University of Central Florida
Email: Sadri@mail.ucf.edu

MESSAGE FROM 2012-2013 PRESIDENT SEAN D. FOREMAN

It was another wonderful year for the Florida Political Science Association (FPSA). The FPSA continued to evolve and progress as a result of the great work of our members making important contributions throughout the academic community.

Some notable accomplishments of the FPSA in the past year include the revival of *The Florida Political Chronicle*, our scholarly journal. The *Chronicle* returned to publication in Fall 2012 under the leadership of editor Marco Rimanelli, an international relations professor at St. Leo University. The *Chronicle* is now published online and in full color. The special “2012 Presidential Election Issue” was promoted to the national press corps while they were in Tampa for the Republican National Convention. Another volume was published in December 2012 with great practical and theoretical articles by our colleagues. An upcoming edition is scheduled to be released in June 2013 and another one will follow in late 2013. Each volume features one of the winning selections from the FPSA Best Graduate Student Paper competitions in recent years. Visit www.fpsa.org to read *The Chronicle* volumes both past and present.

We have had many great contributions for the Best Graduate Student Paper competition the past several years. I have had the honor of serving as the award committee chair for three years. Now I have the privilege of announcing the 2013 winner: The Arab Connection and the Upsurge of Insurgency in Africa: A Case Study of Boko Haram in Nigeria by Essien Ukpe, University of Uyo. Not only did Essien write a great paper but he also traveled from Nigeria to participate in the FPSA conference.

An online registration system for membership and conference payment was implemented last year. The system has been successful and has greatly reduced the time required by our secretary Aubrey Jewett (University of Central Florida) to manage our financial account. The FPSA continues to be economically vibrant due to the great stewardship of our treasurers and our entire executive council.

Our web site is continually updated and more information about the organization is online. You can learn about conferences, read all current and historical editions of the *Chronicle*, and see the FPSA’s by-laws and Constitution.

At our 2013 meeting, a resolution to eliminate the word “community” in reference to the former two-year colleges was unanimously approved and implemented. We continue to strive to include faculty participation from all educational institutions across the Sunshine State.

Our next FPSA annual meeting will be on March 8, 2014, at Flagler College. We are pleased to move toward the north-central part of the state and to visit St. Augustine as Florida celebrates the 500 year anniversary of Ponce de Leon’s arrival to our shores. We hope that you will join us to share your latest research, learn what others are working on, and to network.

Be sure to put in a paper proposal and also consider submitting your work for review to the *Florida Political Chronicle*. The FPSA continues to be an organization where graduate students can “get their feet wet” by presenting their research and where some of the top scholars in Florida come together to network and share their latest scholarly

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MESSAGE FROM 2012-2013 PRESIDENT SEAN D. FOREMAN CONT.

in Florida come together to network and share their latest scholarly contributions.

I wish incoming FPSA President Kevin Wagner (Florida Atlantic University) and all the officers a great year, and am excited to continue supporting this fine professional organization.

Sean D. Foreman, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Political Science

Barry University

Email: Sforeman@mail.barry.edu

2013 FPSA CONFERENCE ROUND-UP

FPSA's 41st Annual Meeting on March 16, 2013, was a great gathering at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami. A big thank you to FIU's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) for hosting us in their wonderful, new facilities!

More than 90 professors and graduate and undergraduate students presented their research. The conference continues to grow beyond being a Florida-based event to hosting participants from several states and countries. There were presenters from Canada, Jamaica and Nigeria and from states throughout the U.S.

FIU President Mark Rosenberg addressed the conference attendees during lunch. President Rosenberg, a tenured FIU political science professor, spoke about the need to combine theoretical lessons with real world experiences and opined how major theoretical models have changed as global events have rapidly evolved. Rosenberg, who also previously served as Chancellor of the State University System, provided lessons on how "all politics is personal" citing examples from his time working with legislative leaders in Tallahassee and with world leaders in Latin America.

The Roundtable on Florida Politics returned this year. Aubrey Jewett moderated the lively post -2012 election dialogue. Anthony Man, political reporter for the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, joined a handful of professors to prognosticate on state and national elections. You can probably find the video on YouTube.

Thanks to Kathryn DePalo of FIU for organizing the venue. The rooms were well equipped and welcoming to participants. SIPA Director John Stack and Rebecca Salokar, chair of the FIU Department of Politics and International Relations, helped to make the event more hospitable by providing the elegant rooms and sponsoring refreshments.

Whether your area is national or local politics, or if it is comparative or international politics we have a place for you in our annual conference program. We hope to see you at next year's meeting at Flagler College in St. Augustine on March 8, 2014.

Sean D. Foreman, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Political Science

Barry University

Email: Sforeman@mail.barry.edu



**FLORIDA
POLITICAL SCIENCE
ASSOCIATION**

Visit us online:
<http://www.FPSANET.org>

Our Mission:

The Florida Political Science Association (FPSA) is committed to promoting political science research, education, and service throughout the state of Florida. Our board of officers represents the diverse educational opportunities available for higher education in Florida. From the University of West Florida in Pensacola to Florida International University and the University of Miami, our association spans the state bringing together political scientists at public and private institutions to network, to collaborate on research, and to discuss innovative strategies in the classroom.



The Political Scientist Newsletter
Editor: Judithanne
Scourfield McLauchlan
Email: jsm2@usfsp.edu

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The *Political Scientist*, the newsletter of the Florida Political Science Association, is a semi-annual publication (Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer editions). The *Political Scientist* is published electronically, sent to all members of FPSA and posted on the FPSA website (www.fpsanet.org).

Please submit your:

*Announcements (e.g., program announcements, job vacancies, promotions and awards, related conferences and calls for papers)

*Book reviews about textbooks, teaching materials

*Short articles about teaching Political Science (innovative methods, new courses, curriculum development)

*Short research articles

*Research and Resources (literature reviews on specific topics, research notes, examination of new research threads)

*Condensed versions of papers presented at FPSA Annual Meetings

Deadline for the Fall/Winter 2013 Edition:
November 15, 2013

Deadline for the Spring/Summer 2014 Edition: Wednesday January 15, 2014

Please send submissions via email attachments to the Editor

Submissions should be no more than 3 to 4 pages, single-spaced.

Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan
Associate Professor of Political Science
University of South Florida St. Petersburg
jsm2@usfsp.edu

SAVE THE DATE!

**The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held on
Saturday March 8, 2014 at Flagler College
in Saint Augustine.**

Program Chair: **Kathryn DePalo**
Senior Lecturer, Political Science
Florida International University
Email: Kathryn.Depalo@fiu.edu

Local Arrangements Chair: **Will Miller**
Assistant Professor, Public Administration
Flagler College
Email: wmiller@flagler.edu