

Journal of Political Science Education Special Issue on Teaching Research Methods: Call for Proposals

Call for proposals – Teaching Research Methods in Political Science Education: The Twain shall Meet

The Wahlke (1991) report emphasized the importance of research methods in political science education. However, 22 years later we still struggle with teaching research methods to our undergraduate students. Even though research methods courses are a common part of the political science curriculum (Lewis-Beck, 2001), the importance of these skills within political science does not seem to resonate with the teaching of methods courses. When you poll faculty members, you most probably will hear that teaching methods courses is a rather thankless task (De Boef, 2001). The same can be said about students; they generally avoid or postpone taking these classes (Gibbs, 2010).

Scholarship on teaching research methods taught us that connecting such methods with students' fields of interests is necessary to improve their participation and learning experience (Mvududu, 2005). This remains, however, an important challenge as research methods are often rather loosely coupled with (political science) theory (Scheel, 2002). That is, methods courses are a rather isolated section of the political science education. Research methods are thus in some kind of limbo, caught between needed and unwanted.

The special issue targets contributions that seek to bridge the gap between methods (both qualitative and quantitative) and the study of politics in undergraduate education. It specifically aims to do so through three major perspectives.

- **Designing Research methods courses:**
Questions within this sub-topic can be, but are not limited to: How to successfully design a research methods course so that both students and teachers are engaged? Can we bring political science theory in the teaching of research methods and how should this be done? How can we address heterogeneous interests amongst students? What are the advantages and disadvantages of teaching different types of software packages as part of methods courses?
- **Pedagogical innovations in teaching research methods:**
Possible sub-themes can be, but are not limited to: What techniques can be used to engage students with research methods? What pedagogical tool fosters best long-term retention? Are audience response systems effective in a research methods course?
- **Integrating research methods in the political science curriculum:**
Possible topics within this theme include, but again are not limited to: How can we lift methods out of their isolated status? How can the structure of the curriculum help in teaching and learning methods? How can a curriculum promote methodological skills retention by students?

We encourage all scholars writing on the teaching of research methods in political science education to submit their paper proposal (max 500 words).

The length of the paper should be between 6000 – 8000 words including references (see journal guidelines: www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?journalCode=upse20&page=instructions). According to journal preferences, potential contributions should contain empirical evidence supporting the claims of the paper.

Time-line special issue:

- **31 March** - Deadline abstract (500 words)
(Email to: Koen.slootmaeckers@soc.kuleuven.be)
- **15 April** - Notification of Acceptance/Rejection
- **31 July** - Deadline full paper (6000-8000 words all inclusive)
Formatted according to journal requirements, submit online
- **15 October** - Feedback from peer review
- **31 December** - Submission final manuscript

Editorial team for this special issue:

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