

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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How did you learn about APSA? When did you become a member of APSA, and what prompted you to join?

I was introduced to APSA as a PhD student at Temple University. The (amazing) chair of the political science department, Robin Kolodny, ensured that doctoral students and candidates had APSA memberships. While that inspired my initial membership, I re-joined APSA when I began seeking full time academic employment, networking opportunities, and teaching resources. It's not always easy to have your finger on the pulse of the field as a grad student, or early in your academic career, and being engaged with APSA, and some of the relevant sections was, and remains, valuable.

How have APSA membership and services been valuable to you at different stages of your career?

The most obvious way APSA advanced my career thus far is that I found my job on APSA's eJobs database. When I attended the APSA annual conference in 2019, the "Applying for a Job at a Teaching-Oriented Institution" roundtable session was incredibly helpful in preparing me for the portion of the academic job market I wanted to pursue. It was so beneficial that I asked to be on the other side of the table—I have volunteered to be on the 2024 panel—as a means of showing my gratitude, promoting the benefits of working at a community college, and aiding job seekers. Although I'm still early in my career, being an APSA member, and a member of the Political Science Education section has kept me informed, and helped me to connect with like-minded colleagues. This has, in turn, led to fruitful collaboration across institutions that, I hope, will continue to flourish.

Can you tell us about your professional background and your research?

I am an instructor in the Department of Social Sciences at the College of Southern Nevada (CSN). We are amongst the top 10 largest community college systems in the United States, and

we have been designated a Minority Serving Institution (MSI) and Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

I earned my undergraduate degree in philosophy from CUNY Hunter College in my hometown of New York City.

I additionally earned a terminal MA degree in government and politics from St. John's University in my home borough of Queens, NY. I received my PhD from Temple University in Philadelphia, where I had outstanding mentorship and guidance from Heath Fogg Davis.

My dissertation project combined often disparate portions of empirical political science and political theory, as I crafted an existential lens through which I analyzed the motives and actions of the Black Lives Matter Movement, and the alt-right. While social movements and racial and ethnic politics remain central concerns and interests of mine,

my current work is rooted in the Science of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), the pedagogical preparation of political science doctoral students, and the availability of political theory coursework in doctoral programs.

My primary role as a community college faculty member is to teach, and I wear that as a badge of honor. While I am currently working on multiple research projects, I take my classrooms—online and on ground—seriously. Teaching is, perhaps, the greatest privilege of academic life and I strive to empower students to fight for the changes they wish to see in their socioeconomic and political worlds. We must protect and expand American democracy in the face of authoritarian threats and global backsliding, and promoting civic engagement is one way I work towards achieving this goal. Similarly, I believe that we must ensure that all institutions (not just educational) are diverse, equitable, and inclusive of all peoples. Again, this is a central theme of many of my courses, as achieving the lofty ideals of liberty and justice for all can only occur when our socioeconomic, political institutions, and practices meet the needs of all.

Which programs or events would you recommend to people who are not members of the association, and why?

Like many in my position, the APSA Teaching and Learning



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Conference (TLC) has been a wonderful resource. I have yet to attend the stand-alone conference, but my experiences at the APSA-TLC panels, workshops, and reception have all been excellent. TLC, and the Political Science Education section, is comprised of scholars from all parts of our discipline, from all methodological backgrounds, from different types of institutions, who are all welcoming. It is easy to feel like an outsider as a community college faculty member attending a research conference. I have definitely found a home in TLC.

Is there anything else you'd like people to know about you or the work that you do?

If I might be cliché, John Donne famously wrote:

No man is an island,
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.

The mentors I had are why I am able to support my students. I

believe that we must always pay homage to the people who helped us along the way, and we must always pay the deed forward.

My mentors, Rosalind Petchesky, Frank Le Veness, Barbara Ferman, Heath Fogg Davis, and many others, ought to always be recognized for their contributions to this field, and to their students.

My biggest accomplishment is the success of my students. I am proud to say that, since I began teaching (while I was a graduate student) in 2017, I have supported students who have earned one of my school's Outstanding Student Awards, a Baccalaureate Scholarship & Award, and the Harry S. Truman Scholarship. My students have obtained congressional internships, completed the Washington Semester Program, presented their work at conferences and symposiums, and have been accepted into advanced degree programs (MA programs, MPP programs, and law schools).

I would not be where I am today if not for the care and concern of my mentors, and without the students enrolled in my courses. To both groups, I am eternally grateful. ■

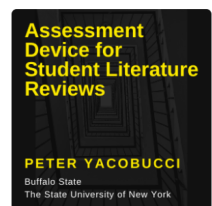
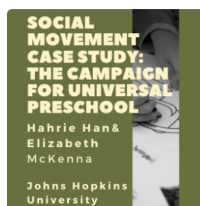
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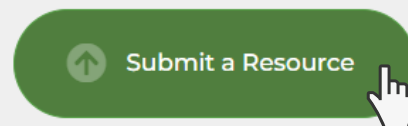
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