

To: APSA Executive Board

From: Jim Megginson, President

Date: April 20, 1981

Results of the 1981 questionnaire are enclosed, as well as a letter to Norman about the impact on the program. Astute as usual, Norman had already made appropriate decisions about next year's program.

Lawson Veasey will be joining us Saturday as the nominee for board member, filling the vacancy left by James Willis's elevation to vice-president/president elect.

Pam Bryant of the ASPA and Charles Chastain of Arkansas criminal justice educators will also join us for our discussion of the 1982 program; later they will be meeting with Norman to lay further plans.

Please urge your colleagues to collect any information they have for the Newsletter. Charles Hartwig hopes to get an issue out in May.

APSA QUESTIONNAIRE

Spring 1981

The responses show a general satisfaction with the association, its journal, and the annual meeting. Answers to "strengths" were more positive and repetitive than the answers to "weaknesses." Whenever three or four people gave suggestions, these responses should be given considerably more credence than a similar number would be in an objective form that asked specific questions. Several respondents included students and non-members who were not very familiar with the organization. There were 33 responses.

There seems to be a strong call for a broader membership, including non-academics, and for utilizing a broader constituency in the panels. No other responses seem to reflect a broad desire for any changes.

Annual meeting and panel format

General reaction: 2 excellent; 9 good or fine; 5 ok. or satisfied;
3 no suggestions.

- 3 offer more focused panels; greater specificity
- 3 allow more question time
- 2 add a Saturday afternoon panel
- 2 too many concurrent panels; too much competition against the teaching panel
- 1 offer more than 2 panels at a time slot
- 1 add national politics
- 1 separate IR and comparative politics
- 1 have fewer papers and more informal discussion, i.e. a detailed expansion of the panel on teaching political science
- 1 roundtable on disciplinary areas
- 2 use the practitioner approach in PA panels
- 1 student panel was excellent and should be maintained
- 1 some topics need not be offered every year

[Note that PA, IR, and the teaching roundtable elicited the most comments]

Time, place, and two speakers for annual meeting

General reaction: mostly good

- 1 two speakers "just what we need"
- 1 "excellent format--when the politicians come"
- 1 Dr. Grant very good
- 1 "political leaders should definitely be a part of the program"
- 1 speaker enough; leave more time free for thematic roundtable type meeting
- 1 problem finding two satisfactory speakers; invest in one quality speaker
- 1 invite city manager(s), especially Little Rock as speakers
- 1 a place where members have good access
- 1 #1 DeGray; # 2 Petit Jean; # 99 Eureka Springs; #999 Fairfield Bay
- 1 stay out of Little Rock
- 2 prefer Little Rock
- 1 Hot Springs
- 1 DeGray very nice place
- 1 earlier in the year--early February
- 1 later in the spring
- 1 prefer joint meeting with AACHT regardless of the time
- 1 prefer joint meeting with AHA (in April)

[Comments on location and timing are too fragmentary and contradictory to offer any constructive help; evidently the general practices have been satisfactory to most members. Comments about the speakers offer some advice to the program committee.]

APSA Journal

6 excellent
7 good
1 don't know
1 neutral
1 keep
12 no response
1 "on upswing"

2 add student article
1 "excludes a significant segment of APSA membership & interest---IR---as well as theory, etc."
1 too much Arkansas focus
1 better for library sales if its title were less parochial [but no desire to change content]
1 at least 2 articles are worthy of regional journals
1 a waste of time and money

[While the response is favorable, the comments offer little constructive advice; the absence of comments from nearly 40% is striking.]

APSA Strengths

8 opportunity to keep up professionally and to exchange ideas
5 camaraderie
5 its members and their quality
4 informality
2 loyal work [of its members, presumably]
2 rich variety of research interests
1 it's active; many state associations are not
1 papers presented
1 outlet [for scholarly activity]
1 agenda for research
1 "encouraging people from the so-called 'lower' institutions to speak out"
7 no response

APSA Weaknesses

7 need more members
3 need more practitioners (Also: "The association cannot survive without a close connection to Ark. government and those. . . , who have money to spare. Let's encourage them to join us.")
2 need more participation
3 size inhibits quality papers and proper financing of the organization
5 no weaknesses
6 no response
2 high cost of dues, meals, registration

The following had one response each:

[Lack of] communication between meetings

lack of national exposure

elitist

lack of professionalism

"no response to requests" [by officers? by program committee?]

"seeming uncaring attitude toward APSA" [by members? by political
scientists who don't participate?]

panelists, speakers not showing up

lack of panel coordination

need semi-annual journal

financial burden of journal

restaurant policy

"We are not achieving outreach potential and development of interest in
the discipline."

Other suggestions

[I've reclassified some answers when they seemed appropriate above]

Dept. (institutional) memberships

more scotch

"Try to bring in outside groups--high school government teachers, business-
men, or pollsters/analysts, or some such--for some thematic panels,
i.e., business/government relations, political science for high
school curriculum, public opinion, etc."

Membership needs to be broader instead of just college professors