



## **Minutes of the 2006 Annual Business Meeting Legislative Studies Section American Political Science Association**

The business meeting of the Legislative Studies Section was held in Philadelphia on Friday, September 1, 2006 during the annual convention of the American Political Science Association.

LSS Chair Steve Smith heard a motion to approve the 2005 Business meeting minutes. The minutes were approved.

Steve Smith then commended Wendy Schiller for her work in assembling an excellent set of Legislative Politics panels for the 2006 APSA meetings. He noted that Linda Fowler has agreed to organize the panels for the 2007 APSA meetings and that the section is looking for a program chair for the 2008 meetings. Nominations should be sent to Sarah Binder ([binder@gwu.edu](mailto:binder@gwu.edu)).

LSS Secretary/Treasurer John Wilkerson gave the treasurer's report. He noted that membership dropped in 2005 but that it was recovering and above what is needed to cover the section's annual expenses.

Steve Smith then commended Professor Gerhard Loewenberg for his many years of service as the managing editor of the journal, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.

Professor E. Scott Adler presented The Carl Albert Dissertation Award. Topics may be national or subnational in focus – on Congress, parliaments, state legislatures, or other representative bodies.

This year's winner of the Carl Albert Prize for Best Dissertation in Legislative Studies goes to Kathryn L. Pearson, Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota . Her dissertation, titled "Party Discipline in the Contemporary Congress: Rewarding Loyalty in Theory and in Practice," is a superb study of how congressional leadership uses the resources at its disposal (control of the legislative calendar, committee assignments, and electoral support) to encourage party support among its members. Pearson's committee at the University of California , Berkeley included Jack Citrin, Eric Schickler, and Ray Wolfinger (chair).

Honorable Mention for this award goes to Seth Masket, Assistant Professor at the University of Denver, for his dissertation, "A Party by Other Means: The Rise of Informal Party Organizations in California," completed at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Award Committee – Gail McElroy, Scott Adler and Robert Van Houweling.

Professor Stephen Franzitch presented The Alan Rosenthal Prize for the best book or article in legislative studies written by a junior scholar that has potential value to legislative practitioners, sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures and State Legislative Leaders Foundation.

Tracy Sulkin's *Issue Politics in Congress* expands the concept of agenda building to include candidates' reactions to issue-based criticisms in campaigns. Her concept of "issue uptake" will undoubtedly join concepts such as "unorthodox lawmaking" and "homestyle" in the lexicon of legislative understanding. Consistent with the Rosenthal prize, her contribution is of use to both practitioners and academics. Despite a wide range of excellent nominations, Professor Sulkin's book rose to the top with amazing consensus for a selection committee made up of legislative scholars.

Award Committee – Stephen Frantzich, Gary Moncrief and David Canon.

Professor Forrest Malzmann presented the Jewell-Loewenberg Award for the best article in *Legislative Studies Quarterly* in 2005, sponsored by the Dirksen Congressional Center.

The winner was "Influence Without Confidence: Upper Chambers and Government Formation," by James N. Druckman, Northwestern University; Lanny W. Martin, Rice University; and Michael F. Thies, University of California, Los Angeles. The authors hypothesize that the nature of a coalition formed in a lower legislative chamber is based in part upon the calculations that leaders in the lower body make about which party controls the upper chamber. Why? Because they understand the importance of bicameralism to the fulfillment of their policy objectives. It is an argument that both nicely builds upon an impressive research body dedicated to coalition formation. It is also an argument that reaffirms claims that unicameral models are underspecified. It is an important theoretical contribution that is empirically tested by examining which of fifteen thousand potential governments came to together in 129 coalition formation opportunities. It is a nice piece that makes an important theoretical argument that is validated and generalizable.

Award Committee – Forrest Maltzman, Scott Mainwaring, and Kathryn Pearson.

Professor Tracy Sulkin presented the the Congressional Quarterly Press Award for the best paper on legislative studies presented at the 2005 APSA Annual Meeting:

In their paper, "Declining Fortunes: Institutional Change and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 1947-2002," Linda Fowler and Brian Law seek to identify explanations for the precipitous decline in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's external and internal prestige over the past six decades. They find that this erosion in the status of the committee is a result of a combination of a variety of factors, including presidential actions, jurisdictional changes, partisan conflicts, and military events. We were impressed by many aspects of the paper, but particularly the breadth of its arguments and analyses, which tie together the literatures on formal and informal institutional change, party polarization, and interbranch dynamics. Moreover, the conclusion that legislators may have less control over Congressional institutions and arrangements than scholars typically assume is a provocative and important one and will undoubtedly spur further investigation.

Award Committee – Tracy Sulkin, Nolan McCarty and Bruce Oppenheimer.

Professor Diana Evans presented the Richard F. Fenno Book Prize for the best book in legislative studies published in 2005, sponsored by the Legislative Studies Section:

This year's Richard F. Fenno Prize is awarded to Tracy Sulkin for her book *Issue Politics in Congress*, published by Cambridge University Press. In this fresh and original study, Sulkin argues that in congressional campaigns, challengers focus on incumbents' weaknesses. In turn, incumbents move strategically to neutralize those issues and shore up their support with the electorate. To do so, they take up those issues in Congress, a phenomenon she calls "issue uptake." Sulkin shows that losers matter. However, *Issue Politics in Congress* is a winner.

Award Committee – Diana Evans, Andrew Taylor and William Bianco.

Steve Smith suggested (tongue in cheek) that the section be re-named in honor of Tracy Sulkin.

The LSS Business meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Wilkerson  
Secretary/Treasurer